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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

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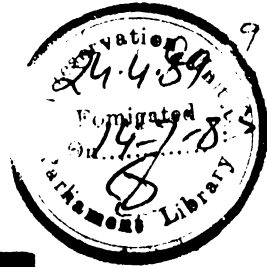
(28th February to 13th March, 1945)

TWENTY-SECOND SESSION

OF THE

FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,

1945



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

President :

The Honourable Sir ABDUR RAHIM, K.C.S.I.

Deputy President :

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Syed GHULAM BHIK NAIRANG, M.L.A.

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

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

Sardar SANT SINGH, M.L.A.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Monday, 12th March, 1945

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

MEMBER SWORN:

Mr. Mullath Kadingi Vellodi, C.I.E., I.C.S., M.L.A. (Government of India Nominated Official).

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(a) ORAL ANSWERS

DUTIES, ETC., OF INDIA'S AGENT GENERAL IN AMERICA

895. *Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Will the Foreign Secretary please state:

- (a) the duties of the Agent General of the Government of India in U. S. A.;
- (b) whether any books or pamphlets are published by him from time to time in U. S. A.; and, if so, on what subject and on whose instructions;
- (c) the annual expenditure of the Agent General's Office and establishment; and

(d) whether all the expenditure of his office, etc., and the amounts spent through him are subject to normal checks of audit?

Sir Olaf Caroe: (a) To represent India in the U. S. A.

(b) As already stated in answer to several questions during this Session, the Indian Information Services print and circulate publications prepared from material supplied by Government which is also released to the Press in India.

(c) For 1944-45 the revised estimates amount to Rs. 8,71,772, including Rs. 4,46,172 for the Information Services.

(d) Yes.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know what is meant by representing India in the United States?

Sir Olaf Caroe: Exactly what is said.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know whether they have got any list of duties allotted to the Agent-General of India?

Sir Olaf Caroe: It would not be possible for me to deliver a homily or to give a complete list of the duties of the head of the diplomatic mission. It covers a very very wide scope indeed and it will take a long time to do so.

Mr. Badri Dutt Pande: Is there any age limit of this representative or will he be India's representative for ever? I mean is he going to retire or will he be the representative for ever?

Sir Olaf Caroe: I do not think that there is any age limit.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know whether he issues books and pamphlets on his own initiative or whether they are written here and circulated in the United States?

Sir Olaf Caroe: The Honourable Member seems to have extraordinary ideas about these books. I do not know what he means by books.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Exactly what I have said.

Sir Olaf Caroe: There is a tremendous lot of publicity material which comes out here in India and that is also made available to the Agent-General for circulation in America.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Are any of these distributed free by him?

Sir Olaf Caroe: Yes, I think some of them are distributed free and some of them are sold.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know whether the Honourable Member will be pleased to lay on the table of the House some of the publications which are distributed free by the Agent General in America?

Sir Olaf Caroe: I will consider that.

COMPANY OWNED RAILWAY LINES

896. *Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state how many of the Indian Railway lines are still company-owned and managed?

(b) What are those lines?

(c) When will the option of acquiring them arise?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Twenty narrow gauge Railways.

(b) and (c). A statement is placed on the table.

List of Railway Lines owned and managed by Companies

S. Nos.	Railway	Date of option of purchase	Remarks Authority empowered to purchase
1	Ahmadpur-Katwa	31-3-48 or at the end of every 10 years thereafter.	Government.
2	Arrah Sasaram Light	12-10-1951 or at the end of every 7 years thereafter.	District Board of Shahabad.
3	Bankura Damodar River	31-3-1947 or at the end of every 10 years thereafter.	Government.
4	Baraset Basirhat Light	15-5-52 or at the end of every 7 years thereafter.	District Board of 24 Parganas.
5	Barsi Light.	1-1-1949 or 1-1-1954 or at the end of every 10 years thereafter.	Government.
6	Bengal Provincial	4-1-1952 or at the end of every 7 years thereafter.	District Board of Hooghly.
7	Bukhtiarpur-Bihar Light	21-6-1950 or at the end of every 7 years thereafter.	District Board of Patna.
8	Burdwan-Katwa	31-3-1946 or at the end of every 10 years thereafter.	Government.
9	Darjeeling-Himalayan	4-5-1949 and thereafter at intervals of 10 years.	Government.
10	Darjeeling-Himalayan Railway Extensions.	31-3-1946 or at the end of every 10 years thereafter.	Government.
11	Dangere-Jawalpurganj	31-3-1948 or at the end of every 10 years thereafter.	Government.
12	Dehri-Rohtas Light	10-11-1950 or at the end of every 7 years thereafter.	District Board of Shahabad.
13	Futwah-Islampur Light	31-3-1948 or at the end of every 10 years thereafter.	Government.
14	Howrah-Amta Light	26-3-1951 or at the end of every 7 years thereafter.	District Board of Howrah.
15	Howrah-Sheakhola Light	26-3-1951 or at the end of every 7 years thereafter.	District Board of Howrah and Hooghly.
16	Jagadhari Light	11-8-1952 or at the end of every 10 years thereafter.	Local authority with previous sanction of the Punjab Government.
17	Kalighat-Falta	31-3-1947 or at the end of every 10 years thereafter.	Government.
18	Matheran (Hill) Light	1-1-50 or at the end of every 5 years thereafter.	Government.
19	Shahdara (Delhi) Saharanpur Light	18-4-1948 or at the end of every 7 years thereafter.	Government.
20	Tespore-Balipara Light	1-9-1952 or at the end of every 7 years thereafter.	Government.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know what is the last option of purchasing these Railways?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: 1952.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: What is the amount of money involved in this?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Sir, I require notice of this question.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether it is not practicable for the Government of India to acquire these lines before the taking-over becomes actually due?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That is a matter for consideration. In the case of a number of them, the option lies with the District Board.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know whether these twenty narrow gauge railways are mainly run by District Boards?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: They are mostly run by different companies.

NECESSARY NUMBER OF ENGINES

897. *Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

(a) the number of mail passenger and goods engines necessary for the efficient running of the Indian Railways;

(b) how many of those are proposed to be manufactured by the locomotive manufacturing workshops proposed to be set up by Government; and

(c) for how many years imports of locomotives will be necessary and when they expect to be fully self-supporting?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) and (b). I presume the Honourable Member is referring to the post-war period. The number of engines necessary for the efficient running of the Indian Railways is dependant upon the traffic offering and a precise answer is therefore difficult until the extent of industrialisation, road transport development and all other relevant factors affecting the probable load are taken into consideration. Estimates of the requirements of new engines will therefore have to be revised periodically in accordance with the forward position. The position so far as it can be foreseen today is set out in paragraph 6 of my speech when introducing the Railway Budget for 1945-46. The initial output of the locomotive building workshops at Kanchrapur and Singhbhum is estimated to be 120 locomotives a year, which is approximately two-thirds of the demand at present expected. Consideration is being given to the question of a third locomotive building workshop.

(c) The date when India will be independent of imports of engines depends upon the demand, for locomotives, the progress made in the locomotive building shops now projected and the ability to construct in India such special types as electric or diesel electric locomotives.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Do I take it that approximately 120 locomotives will be manufactured in India in the post-war period, which means two-third of India's needs? Have I understood the Honourable Member correctly?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Yes.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: If that is correct, he must have made some estimate on some basis. On that basis what is the number of passenger and goods engines that the Indian Railways require?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The estimate is an approximate one, and as I explained in my Budget speech, the engines which we have ordered during the war are goods engines although they can be used for passenger services. We have not ordered any special passenger engines. Therefore probably the majority of those which will be built in the workshops will initially be passenger engines.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: If I may remind the Honourable Member it is in pursuance of his suggestion that I have put these supplementary questions, and now he again does not answer them. It is rather strange. I want to know if the Honourable Member can prepare an estimate in the normal state of things and let us know how many mail passenger and goods engines are required.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I have answered that rather fully.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: India being dependent in the matter of engines, may I ask the Honourable Member whether the Government of India is proposing to standardise the gauges of railways in India in order to have one standard or gauge for Railways?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That hardly arises out of this question. The standardization . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That does not arise out of the question. Next question.

NECESSARY NUMBER OF WAGONS

898. *Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

(a) the number of wagons necessary for the efficient working of Indian Railways;

(b) how many of them are being manufactured in India and how many imported; and

(c) what will be the estimated number of wagons needed in the post-war period and whether any attempts are being made to make the manufacture of wagons self-sufficient for the needs of the Indian Railways?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) and (b). It is expected that the number of wagons referred to in paragraph 7 of my speech introducing the Railway Budget will, if delivered to schedule, be adequate for the efficient working of the Indian railways under the expected wartime load. The statement also gave the numbers to be imported and to be manufactured in India.

(c) In answer to the first part of the question, I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply already given to part (a) of his starred question No. 897. As regards the second part, it is anticipated that wagon building firms will be in a position to make India self-sufficient for the needs of her railways of all gauges in the post-war period.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: In reply to my last question the Honourable Member said that the number will depend on various factors. Can he give me any approximate number as he has given about the engines?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: We have not made any definite programme for post-war orders, but we hope to keep the wagon-building firms full of orders. When I say 'full of orders' I mean we hope to keep them occupied with orders at least at the pre-war figure, if not greater, and in any case I am satisfied that the Indian wagon-building industry will be able to take care of all India's requirements of wagons.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: What portion of the Indian wagons are manufactured by the railway workshops?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: None, I think. They are all built by the different firms.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: In view of the fact that the Honourable Member himself has referred to the fact that the supply of wagons depends upon the different gauges, may I ask him now whether he is proposing to standardize the gauges in India?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: As I have said, that does not arise out of this question, but the wagon-building firms can build either meter gauge or broad gauge wagons according to requirements.

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

TIMBER CONTROL

899. *Mr. Mann Subedar: (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state when timber control was introduced?

(b) Is it a fact that all available quantities of timber were frozen?

(c) Have they all been purchased for the military?

(d) Are all new sources of timber taken up by Government, or is anything left for the civil population?

(e) If so, in what manner is the requirement of the civil population permitted to be met?

(f) What is the method of timber control?

(g) Are ceiling prices imposed?

(h) If so, how do they compare with pre-war prices?

(i) What is the total amount of increase in the timber production in India from forests of the Central Government, forests of the Provincial Governments, and forests of Indian States?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) There is no official general timber control. Owing, however, to shortage of railway transport for moving timber for military and essential civil purposes, most of the Provincial Governments have, at the request of the Central Government, issued orders restricting the movement of private timber by rail except under permits issued by the Provincial Forest Officers. The only special control order that has been issued is contained in the Supply Department's notification No. SS/317, dated the 8th January, 1945, which extends only to the Presidency town of Bombay and applies only to timber brought into the port of Bombay from other parts on the west coast of India.

(b) No.

(c) The question does not arise.

(d) All the timber is not purchased by Government. The percentage varies in different parts of India. In the U. P., Government purchases amount to 60 to 70 per cent. of the timber available, whereas in other Provinces, and States the average is 30 to 40 per cent.

(e) The civil population obtain their requirements from the trade in the usual way.

(f) I would refer the Honourable Member to answer to part (a) of the question.

(g) There is no official general price control on timber.

(h) Does not arise.

(i) No definite figures are available.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Have Government cared to see that this war time denudation of our forest wealth is not causing serious inroads into the economy or continuity of the forest wealth of this country?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I understand that the Department represented by my Honourable friend Mr. Tyson is taking full note of this fact and taking adequate steps towards it.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will Government consider the acute shortage of timber for civilian population and would they consider methods of relieving that?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Yes, subject to war necessities.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is it not a fact that the Adviser for Forests, Mr. Howard, has expressed grave concern about the inroads that are being caused by war time destruction of this forest wealth?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I understand it is not a fact; and I read it somewhere authoritatively stated that not more than 5 per cent. of the existing timber has so far been removed.

PROGRESS IN METALLURGICAL INDUSTRIES

900. **Mr. Manu Subedar:** (a) With the Honourable the Supply Member please state what progress has been achieved in India during the war in metallurgical industries, particularly in non-ferrous industries?

(b) How many new factories have been set up?

(c) Which of them were set up with direct or indirect Government help?

(d) For how many of them have Government assisted in securing material, plans or technical personnel and which are these factories?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) It is only possible to indicate the main lines of progress. In the steel industry, productive capacity has been very greatly expanded during the war and many new types of steel and high grade products have been produced for the first time in India, such as wheels, tyres and axles made from Indian acid open hearth steel manufactured from Indian raw materials. In the non-ferrous industry the production of antimony, lead and aluminium from Indian ores

has been established. Tin smelting from imported ore has also been started. Considerable progress has been made in the field of processed non-ferrous metals where practically no production existed before the war and India now produces sheets, strips, wires, rods (rolled and drawn) and tubes and other non-ferrous sections. Finally the alloying of non-ferrous metals and the refinement of scrap to specification have been developed by new firms.

(b) Ignoring small firms with little or no equipment, some 29 new factories have been set up in the non-ferrous industry. Additional plants have been installed by six old non-ferrous concerns and by eight pre-war steel concerns, as well as at 2 Ordnance Factories.

(c) All the new factories received some form of direct or indirect assistance from Government.

(d) A statement is laid on the table.

Statement

Assistance has been given to 15 firms as follows:

1. Aluminium Corporation of India Limited Calcutta	} Materials, plant and technical personnel. Assistance in erecting a refining furnace.
2. M/s. Tata Iron and Steel Company	
3. Indian Copper Corporation Limited, Ghatsala	
4. M/s. Venesta Ltd., Kamarhatti	} Materials and Plant.
5. M/s. Steel Corporation of Bengal	
6. M/s. J. K. Iron & Steel Company, Cawnpore	
7. M/s. Singh Engineering Company	
8. M/s. Mukand Steel Works	
9. M/s. Hume Pipe Company, Bombay	
10. M/s. National Iron & Steel Company	
11. M/s. The Mysore Iron & Steel Works	
12. M/s. National Rolling Mills	} Plans. Technical personnel.
13. M/s. National Tube Manufacturing Company	
14. M/s. Indian Steel & Wire Products	
15. M/s. Jemco	

Prof. N. G. Ranga: From where do the Government get the raw material for tea tin?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I should like to have notice of that.

Mr. Manu Subedar: May I know if Government will give an assurance to this House, that in the case of non-ferrous metals, for security reasons, Government will see that every one of these factories which has been set up with their assistance, as the Honourable Member said, will not be permitted to go down immediately after the war?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I do not think Government can give any assurance that every one of these factories set up during the war will be given assistance. It depends upon the business efficiency and capacity of the firm; but Government are seriously considering if steps might have to be taken to safeguard them during the transition period, during which time industry will take steps to improve their quality, their technical establishment, and above all their machinery, after which I hope according to the best advices that I have received that there would not be any serious question of their being unable to compete with the best products from overseas.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will Government see that India is not short of these materials in the event of another war and they are not sent out for security purposes and will

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I do not think we need consider now about the next war.

Mr. T. S. Avinashlingam Chettiar: May I know if the Government will consider the advisability of stopping all non-ferrous scrap from being exported from this country?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: At present there is no question of exporting any metals from this country.
†901*.

WITHDRAWAL OF RECOGNITION OF NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY ACCOUNTS UNION
902. ***Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the North Western Railway Accounts Union was recognized by the General Manager, North Western Railway, Lahore;

(b) whether it is a fact that this recognition was withdrawn; if so, for what reasons;

(c) if for misbehaviour, whether the Union Executive was chargesheeted; if not, why not;

(d) if the recognition was withdrawn for the so-called merger talks of Unions on the North Western Railway, whether such a recognition was withdrawn from other Unions, such as North Western Railway Recognized Union; if not, why the Accounts Union was differently dealt with;

(e) whether it is a fact that the North Western Railway Accounts Union has protested against the withdrawal of their recognition; if so, how the same was disposed of; whether the Railway Board also considered the matter; if so, with what results; and

(f) whether it is a fact that the Accounts staff are asked to refer all matters pertaining to their Department even of general nature through or to their Chief Accounts Officer acting as a Principal Officer of North-Western Railway Agency; if so, how Accounts employees are assured of any redress of grievances in the absence of non-recognition of their Union?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The North Western Railway Accounts Union was recognized formerly by the Financial Adviser and Chief Accounts Officer, previously known as the Chief Accounts Officer, North Western Railway, and not by the General Manager.

(b) to (d). The Union lost its identity by voluntarily merging into the United Union. As regards the latter part of part (d), the unions, other than the North Western Railway Accounts Union, constituting the United Union were not previously recognized. The North Western Railway Recognized Union did not join the merger.

(e) Government are informed that subsequently, the Accounts Union seceded from the United Union, and then raised the question of its recognition. They were advised by the Railway Administration to consider, in consultation with other Unions, the possibility of combining into one Union with branches at large stations. As regards the last part, the Railway Board have not yet had any occasion to consider the matter, and the question will only arise if and when a representation is submitted to them against the final decision of the Administration.

(f) Accounts staff, like other railway staff, represent their grievances through the usual official channels, while the existing unions recognised by the North Western Railway provide for the representation of all staff, including Accounts staff. Non-recognition of the North Western Railway Accounts Union does not, therefore, place the Accounts staff at any disadvantage as compared with other staff.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if the heads of the other Unions are non-officials?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I should require notice of that question.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Has the United Union been recognised?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I think there are three unions recognised and I believe that is one of them.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Are all the office-bearers of these three Unions employees of the Railways?

†This question has been postponed to be answered on the 20th March, 1945.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I shall require notice of that question but two members of the Accounts Staff, which is the staff concerned, are office-bearers of the United Union.

MUSLIMS ABSORBED AS WIRELESS OPERATORS ON BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY

†903. ***Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if it is a fact that the number of Muslims absorbed was short of communal quota in the newly created posts of Wireless Operators on the Bengal and Assam Railway in the years 1943 and 1944?

(b) If the reply to (a) is in the negative, will he be pleased to state (i) the number of posts, and (ii) the number of the Muslims and non-Muslims absorbed?

(c) Is it a fact that two Muslims were reverted ignoring the deficiency in the Muslim quota?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The question of applying the communal reservation percentages for Muslims to the posts of Wireless Operators on the Bengal and Assam Railway does not arise, as these posts were not filled by direct recruitment.

(b) and (c). Do not arise in view of the reply to part (a).

MUSLIM APPOINTED AS WIRELESS SUPERVISORS ON BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY

†904. ***Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if it is a fact that in the newly created posts of Wireless Supervisors on the Bengal and Assam Railway in the year 1944 Muslims were not given their due quota?

(d) If the reply to (c) is in the negative, will he be pleased to state the number of all the Supervisors who were taken as stated in part (a) above?

(c) Is it a fact that all the Muslim Wireless Operators possess the requisite qualifications for the said posts?

(d) If the reply to (c) is in the negative, will he be pleased to state the qualifications of the Muslims and non-Muslims who were not made Supervisors and of those who were appointed Supervisors, and why?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The reply is in the affirmative. I understand that there were no Muslim candidates for the post of Chief Wireless Inspector and of the two Muslim applicants for the post of Wireless Inspector, only one presented himself at the interview and was not found suitable.

(b) and (d). I lay a statement on the table of the House giving the results of the advertisement and selection by communities.

(c) Government have no information but apparently they could have applied for the posts advertised.

Statements showing the number of candidates who applied for the posts of Chief Wireless Inspectors and wireless Inspectors and were selected.

	Chief Wireless Inspectors						Wireless Inspectors					
	Hindus	Muslims	Scheduled Castes	Anglo-Indians	Others	Total	Hindus	Muslims	Scheduled Castes	Anglo-Indians	Others	Total
Number of applications	9	..	..	1	1	11	83	2	..	1	..	36
Number selected for interview	9	..	..	1	1	11	32	2	..	1	..	35
Number actually turned up for interview	6	..	..	1	1	8	24	1	..	1	..	26
Number selected	2	..	..	..	..	2	5	..	..	..	..	5
Number offered employment	1	..	..	..	..	1	4	..	..	..	..	4

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

MUSLIMS APPOINTED AS CIPHER OPERATORS ON BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY

†905. *Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if it is a fact that Muslims were not recruited to the advertised posts of Cipher Operators on the Bengal and Assam Railway in the year 1944 according to their quota given to that Railway Administration?

(b) If the reply to (a) is in the negative, will he be pleased to state the number of the Muslims and non-Muslims who were appointed as stated in part (a) above?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The reply is in the affirmative; suitable Muslim candidates were not available in sufficient numbers.

(b) Muslims 14, Non-Muslims 27

MUSLIMS APPOINTED AS RADIO, cum WIRELESS MECHANICS ON BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY

†906. *Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if it is a fact that Muslims were not appointed according to their quota in the advertised posts of Radio Cum Wireless Mechanics on the Bengal and Assam Railway in the year 1944?

(b) If the reply to (a) is in the negative, will he be pleased to state the number of Muslims and non-Muslims appointed as stated in part (a) above? If the reply to (a) is in the affirmative, what are the reasons therefor?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) the reply is in the affirmative.

(b) Only one Muslim candidate applied and he was absent at the interview.

MUSLIMS APPOINTED AS TELE-PRINTERS ON BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY

†907. *Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state the number of Muslims and non-Muslims who were selected in response to the advertisement for tele-printers on the Bengal and Assam Railway in the year 1944?

(b) Is it a fact that Muslims' case went by default?

(c) Is it a fact that advertisements were made in such terms as to exclude Muslims?

(d) How is Muslim quota proposed to be filled in there?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Government are informed that in view of subsequent arrangements having been reached with the Post and Telegraphs Department regarding the maintenance of tele-printer equipment, recruitment to the advertised vacancies of teleprinters was abandoned.

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

(c) The reply is in the negative.

REVERSION OF MUSLIM DISTRICT TRAIN CONTROLLERS (CALCUTTA), BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY

908. *Hajee Chowdhury Muhammad Ismail Khan: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if it is a fact that in the Calcutta District, Bengal and Assam Railway, in the year 1944, Muslim District Train Controllers in the Scale of Rs. 300—10—350 who possessed the following qualifications were reverted to the posts of Section Controllers:

(i) passed all the departmental examinations,

(ii) completed all the theoretical and practical trainings in the transportation side,

(iii) worked as District Train Controllers for about three years even during the war without any blame, and

(iv) approved as District Train Controllers by the Traffic Selection Committees?

(b) If the reply to (a) is in the negative, will he be pleased to state the number of Muslim District Trains Controllers in the Calcutta District in the year 1944 who were reverted subsequently, and the number of those Non-Muslims who replaced them?

(c) Is it a fact that no enquiry was made before the reversion of Muslims?

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

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I have called for the information and will lay the same on the table of the House in due course.

MUSLIM SUPERVISING ASSISTANT STATION MASTERS ON BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY

909. *Hajee Chowdhury Muhammad Ismail Khan: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state the number of Muslims and non-Muslims on the posts of Supervising Assistant Station Masters in February, 1945, on the Bengal and Assam Railway?

(b) Is it a fact that there is an inadequate representation of Muslims in this category, if so, what effort has been made to make up the Muslim quota?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) I regret I cannot undertake to collect the information under present conditions.

(b) Government have no information, but no percentage can be reserved for Muslims in this category, as it is not open to direct recruitment.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: May I know if there is nobody in the administration to look after the communal percentages?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: Do they not send any report to the Railway Board even for a year?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Regularly.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: Why cannot the Honourable Member get a statement of that fact? Probably it must be in the office.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I am not prepared to ask for this large amount of detail under present conditions when the railways, and particularly this railway in question, are at war.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: Does the establishment section of the Railway Board get this detailed information or not? That is the point.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No; not as a regular thing.

Mr. Sri Prakasa: Is there any communal proportion maintained among those who are in charge of communal proportions?

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: May I ask my Honourable friend—he said that he gets a report from the officer who is looking after these matters—whether he will kindly make that report available to such Honourable Members as ask for it?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No; it is a confidential report to the Board; but as the Honourable Member knows, the general statistics are published each year, and it is the function of the Home Department to see that the recruitment percentages are fulfilled. In the case of the Muslim community they have been fulfilled with a deficiency of 1 per cent.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: The question is about these recruitments which have taken place through the Department indirectly.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I do not quite follow.

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

REVERSION OF CERTAIN MUSLIM SUPERVISING ASSISTANT STATION MASTERS ON BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY

910. *Hajee Chowdhury Muhammad Ismail Khan: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if it is a fact that on the Bengal and Assam Railway Muslims who were promoted as Supervising Assistant Station Masters by the District Traffic Superintendent, Katihar, in the month of September, 1944, are now being reverted without any fault of theirs?

(b) If the reply to (a) is in the negative, will he be pleased to state the established charges or disqualifications justifying their reversion?

(c) Is it a fact that the promotions were made unconditionally?

(d) Is it a fact that the non-Muslims junior to them are now required to replace them?

(e) If the reply to (d) is in the negative, will he be pleased to state the comparative seniority?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) to (e). Government are informed that one Muslim holding the post of Crew-in-Charge—a category which is not the avenue of promotion to the post of the Assistant Station Master—was temporarily promoted by the District Traffic Superintendent, Katihar, as Supervising Assistant Station Master in September, 1944. He was replaced by an employee selected by the Traffic Selection Committee held in October, 1944.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: Was he given a chance to appear there and to be condemned for this purpose?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I shall answer that in the next question.

IGNORING CLAIMS OF RECOMMENDED MUSLIMS OF KATIHAR BY TRAFFIC SELECTION COMMITTEE, HEAD OFFICE, BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY

911. *Hajee Chowdhury Muhammad Ismail Khan: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if it is a fact that, on the Bengal and Assam Railway, senior, qualified and efficient Muslims who were tried and recommended as Supervising Assistant Station Masters by the District Traffic Superintendent, Katihar, were not called for interview and examined by the Traffic Selection Committee Head Office, Bengal and Assam Railway, on the 31st October, 1944? What were the reasons for not allowing them to appear before the Selection Committee, referred to, on the 31st October, 1944?

(b) If the reply to (a) is in the negative, will he be pleased to state the number of Muslims from Katihar examined by the said Committee?

(c) Is it a fact that the same Muslims were asked to appear before the Traffic Selection Committee for the posts of Junior Transportation Inspectors on the 27th January, 1945? If so, why?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) I understand that one Muslim Crew-in-Charge, referred to in the reply to Question No. 910, was not called for interview owing to the fact that the post of Supervising Assistant Station Master is not the avenue of promotion for a Crew-in-Charge.

(b) No Muslims were called from Katihar.

(c) The Muslim Crew-in-Charge referred to in the answer to part (a) was so called, as the post of Junior Transportation Inspector was within his avenue of promotion.

IGNORING CLAIMS OF MUSLIMS BY TRAFFIC SELECTION COMMITTEE, HEAD OFFICE, BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY

912. *Hajee Chowdhury Muhammad Ismail Khan: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether on the Bengal and Assam Railway in the year 1944-45 Muslims were not examined by the Traffic Selection Committee at the Head Office in the same manner as non-Muslims were examined for the different posts controlled by the said Committee?

(b) If the reply to (a) is in the negative, will he be pleased to state (i) the number of meetings of the Traffic Selection Committee held during the said period, (ii) the names of the posts for which selection was made by the Traffic Selection Committees, (iii) the number of the Muslims and non-Muslims examined and (iv) the number of the Muslims and non-Muslims selected?

(c) Is it a fact that efforts are made not to recommend Muslims according to the quota of 45 per cent. from district for any selections to be made by the Committee referred to above? If so, why?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) No differential treatment was accorded to any particular community by the Traffic Selection Committee at the Head Office of the Bengal and Assam Railway during the year 1944-45.

(b) I lay on the table of the House a statement giving the required information.

(c) Government have no reason to believe that any discrimination is shown. I would, however, remind the Honourable Member that promotions are not made on communal considerations and the percentage referred to by him.

relates to the reservation for Muslims in direct recruitment to subordinate services.

Date of selection	Particulars of posts	Candidates inter-viewed		Candidates selected	
		Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim
11-1-1944	Head Clerk Wire Section	7		2	..
	Guard 'B' Class S. M. (Imp.)	2		1	..
	Class 'A'				..
12-5-1944	G. Y. S. R.	2	..	2	..
	G. S.	4	..	1	..
	Jr. G. S.	1	..	1	..
	Sr. Inspector, W. and W.	1	..	1	..
	Jr. Inspector, W. and W.	5	..	3	..
	Trains Clerk 'E' Class	4	1	2	1
	Head Instructor, CA Training School.	2	..	2	..
	Tele. Inspector	1	..	..	..
	Signaller Spl. Class	1	..	1	..
	S. M. (Spl.)	5	1	3	1
	Shed Inspector	11	..	5	..
31-5-1944	C. I.	74	18	39	13
31-5-1944	Tracer Clerk	14	5	6	5
2-6-1944	Office Clerk 'E' Class	19	1	14	1
24-7-1944	Asstt. C. I.	2	1	..	1
5-10-1944	Tracer	2	1	1	..
20-10-1944	Yard Master	6	1	6	..
	Yard Inspector (Asstt. Y. M.)	9	8	9	2
	Asstt. G. Y. S. R.	9	7	1	1
	G. S. R. Class 'A'	11	3	7	..
	A. G. S. R. Class 'B'				..
	Asstt. Instructor (B. S.) and Claims Instructor.	15	1	12	1
31-10-1944	T. I.	17	3	17	3
	S. M. (Imp.) Class 'B'	12	..	12	..
	A. S. M. (Imp.)	21	9	20	9
	Y. F. Class 'C'	9	5	9	4
	S. M. (Spl.)	2	..	2	..
30-1-1945	Clerk 'F' Class	1	..	1	..
31-1-1945	T. C. Spl. Class	1	..	1	..
	Ed. B. C.	1	..	1	..
	Passenger Guide/SDA	17	4	5	2
	Asstt. C. I.	77	24	23	4
		363	93	210	48
		i.e. 23 per cent.		i.e. 23.66 per cent.	

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: Is it not a fact that in this case Muslims were not even asked for. I referred that matter to the Honourable Member through a letter from Calcutta.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I am not aware of that.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: I wrote a letter and in reply I was told that the matter will be looked into.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I receive a great number of letters on these subjects and I cannot recollect this particular one.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: Things have not improved and that is why we have to bring up this matter again.

FUEL ECONOMY ON RAILWAYS

913. *Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

(a) the steps taken by the Railway Administration for fuel economy;

(b) if Government have a definite scheme for fuel economy; and, if so, whether Government will place a copy of it on the table of the House;

(c) if it is a fact that a special Department in charge of new officers has been created on all Railways to deal with this question; and, if so, the number of these officers and their salaries and the total expenses of this Department on each of the Railways;

(d) if the answer to the first part of (c) is in the affirmative, what result has been achieved since these Departments were created; and

(e) if the management of any of the Railways has received suggestions from their Labour Unions for saving fuel and increasing production; and, if so, what action has been taken on them?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) I would refer the Honourable Member to paragraph 64 of Volume I of the Report on Indian Railways for the year 1948-44, in which the steps being taken by railway administrations to ensure fuel economy are clearly enumerated.

(b) There is a Fuel Economy Organization under the Coal Commissioner, which maintains close contact with the major industries, studies their fuel consumption and co-relates the data with the object of determining the minimum quantity and the right quality and size of coal required by the various consumers. The Organization is also printing and distributing a number of pamphlets and posters on the subject of fuel Economy. The assistance of Provincial Administrations was sought in Supply Department letter No. 2-CD-(2)/44, dated the 18th October 1944, a copy of which is placed on the table of the House. The response to this letter has been good.

(c) No. The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative, and the second part does not therefore arise. I would, however, add that the fuel economy organisations, which have for a long time existed on railways, have been strengthened. On the nine principal railways, 10 Fuel Officers' posts have been temporarily created at a cost of Rs. 5,500 per month.

(d) Does not arise. For the Honourable Member's information, I would add that the average figure of coal consumption per thousand gross ton miles for goods and passenger train working on Class I railways has been materially reduced between January and September, 1944, as the result of economy measures.

(e) Government have no information but I may state that all practical suggestions received from whatever source in respect of fuel economy are welcomed and given full consideration. Responsibility for increasing coal production does not lie with the railways.

Copy of letter No. 2-CD(2)/44, dated the 18th October 1944 from the Government of India, Department of Supply (Main Secretariat), New Delhi.

SUBJECT:—Fuel Economy.

As a result of war conditions and war expansion of industry in India, the amount of coal at present available is, as your government is/you are aware, falling short of demands by a considerable amount.

(i) A survey of the usage of coal throughout the country carried out during the past 10 months by the technical staff of the Coal Commissioner and certain reports submitted by Provincial Officers leave no doubt that a very large quantity of coal is being wasted owing to insufficient attention being paid to economy. It is believed that by taking only elementary precautions a saving of at least 500,000 tons of coal per annum can be effected and that more elaborate precautions might in the course of a few years very well treble this saving.

(ii) In consequence the Government of India have decided to proceed at once with a Fuel Economy campaign and will constitute a Fuel Economy Section in the office of the Coal Commissioner to run it. It will, however, be appreciated that it is impracticable to engage sufficient trained fuel technologists to staff a Central Organization capable of covering the whole country effectively. For this reason it is proposed to delegate responsibility for carrying on fuel economy campaigns. So far as organized industry is concerned the Coal Commissioner is already in negotiation with the responsible Associations and other (e.g. the Jute association, the Tea Association and the Textile Commissioner). There are many consumers, however, who are neither members of any recognised association nor working under the aegis of any department of the Government of India, and in the case of these smaller consumers, whose requirements are at present collated by Provincial Governments the scope for the exercise of economy is at least as great as among organized industries. I am according to request the assistance of provincial Government/Your assistance in this important matter and to suggest that a suitably qualified officer elected from the office

of, e.g., the Directorate of Industries, Boiler or Factory Inspectorate should be placed on special duty for the purpose of the campaign among consumers with whose coal requirements the Provincial Government is/you are concerned. It is considered that an officer with considerable experience of boiler or industrial furnace practice will be required to organise the details of such a Fuel Economy campaign.

2. Reports received by the Coal Commissioner suggest that the first line of attack in this campaign will lie in the direction of the lagging in an adequate way of all steam pipes and boilers, the stoppage of steam leaks in steam pipe lines and of air leaks in furnace brick work and the provision of suitable means of water softening. The Coal Commissioner is arranging to ensure that supplies are available of the materials necessary for remedying such defects.

3. I am to request the Provincial Government/you to give their/your early consideration and, if they/you agree to the scheme, to advise the Government of India of the name of the officer that they/you will appoint or if an officer has already been appointed for fuel economy duties, the name and designation of such officer.

4. I am to add that it is proposed from time to time to call into conference all Fuel Economy officers, whether appointed by Provincial Governments organized industry, or any department of the Government of India, in order that full advantage may be taken of experience gained and efforts may be suitably coordinated.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know whether among the measures taken to ensure fuel economy one of the measures was the closing of some railway stations? May I know whether this is a war-time measure and whether the stations will be reopened at the end of the war?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: It is a war-time measure but it may have to continue so long as fuel shortage continues.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: Is it not a fact that on the South Indian Railway a special department has been created under a highly paid officer, with assistants and staff to deal with this question of fuel economy?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: To my certain knowledge, from my personal experience of the South Indian Railway, I know that they have particularly studied coal economy for many years, principally for the reason that they are so far away from the coal fields and their coal problems require special study in the interest of economy. What precise steps they have taken recently in this regard I am not aware but I do know that they have in the last year achieved a very substantial economy of coal.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: May I know whether the expenditure involved in creating a new department for fuel economy is compensated by the result?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I have not the slightest doubt that in the present emergency the saving in coal fully justified the expenditure.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: What is the extent of the coal saved by the economy campaign?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I have some figures with me to show that between January, 1944, and September, 1944, the direct savings have been of the nature of 43,000 tons per month.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: What percentage?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That is about 5 per cent of the fuel consumption and there have been further indirect savings amounting to 4,000 tons per month.

MEDICAL AID FACILITIES TO FAMILIES OF RAILWAYMEN

914. ***Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

(a) what facilities for medical aid are provided to the families of Railwaymen particularly with regard to the need for maternity and child welfare; and

(b) if the Railway Authorities have reserved wards in all Railway hospitals for women, and, if the staff of these hospitals include women doctors; and, if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Facilities for medical aid are given to Railway employees and their families in accordance with the provisions of Section II of Chapter IX of the State Railway Establishment Code, Volume I, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House. Maternity and child welfare activities vary from railway to railway and are mostly financed by the Staff Benefit Fund under rule 1208 (d) of the Code referred to. Some railways have well-organized centres with ante-natal and child welfare clinics where trained Nurses and/or Midwives, Nurse Dais and Dais are provided to

the extent possible. In certain instances, railways contribute to Municipal or Government Maternity Centres for catering to the needs of families of railway-men.

(b) There are female wards in some hospitals, but not in others, and there are women doctors on some railways but not on others. Government are, however, considering an expansion of maternity and child welfare activities on Railways as a facet of post-war planning.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: May I know, Sir, if Government have taken care to see that all the measures mentioned by the Honourable Member are being applied by all the railway authorities?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Yes, Sir. Government do their best to see that it is done.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: With regard to part (b) of the reply, may I point out that great hardship is caused to the families of railway employees by lack of proper facilities for medical aid in Railway hospitals in many places?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: In certain places the facilities may not be adequate but as I have said Government are considering the expansion of maternity and child welfare institutions.

REVISION OF SCALES OF PAY OF SUB-ASSISTANT SURGEONS (RAILWAYS)

915. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) With reference to the Honourable the Railway Member's answer to supplementaries to question No. 541, asked on the 21st March, 1944, stating that the question of revision of scales of pay of Sub-Assistant Surgeons was under consideration of the Medical Section of the Indian Railway Conference Association, will the Honourable Member be pleased to lay on the table of the House a copy of the Resolution passed on the subject?

(b) Is it a fact that this resolution was approved by the required majority of the General Managers of the Indian State Railways?

(c) If the reply to (b) above is in the affirmative have the revised scales, as proposed in the Resolution, been put into effect? If not, why not?

(d) Is it a fact that the Sub-Assistant Surgeons on the North Western Railway have resigned *en-masse*? If so, on what grounds and how many have resigned?

(e) If the reply to the first part of (d) above is in the affirmative, is it proposed to accept their resignations? If not, do Government propose to meet their demands?

(f) What is the total strength of the cadre? How many of the total are serving at present?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The rules of the Indian Railway Conference Association do not permit of the publication of the proceedings of the Association for public use. I, therefore, regret my inability to comply with the Honourable Member's request.

(b) The reply is in the affirmative.

(c) It is not the Government's policy to undertake a wholesale revision of scales of pay during the war. Pending a more comprehensive post-war consideration of the terms of service of Railway medical personnel, Government have, as a temporary measure, raised the maximum of the scales Rs. 65—5/2—85 and Rs. 100—10/2—120 to Rs. 120, by increments of Rs. 5, and to Rs. 170, by increments of Rs. 10, respectively.

(d) and (e). Government understand that a large number of Sub-Assistant Surgeons submitted a representation, stating that if they were not given the benefit of fixation of pay, with due regard to length of service, in the scales of pay recommended by the Indian Railway Conference Association, their representations should be regarded as resignations from service with one month's notice. The question of accepting these conditional resignations does not arise in view of the Government's action mentioned in the reply to part (c).

(f) The total sanctioned strength of Sub-Assistant Surgeons on the North-Western Railway is 116, including 18 temporary posts. 111 Sub-Assistant Surgeons are actually serving at present.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I know if it is a fact that the resignations given by all the Assistant Surgeons serving in the North-Western Railway?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No, Sir.

Sardar Sant Singh: Is it a fact that they have been threatened with prosecution under the Defence of India Rules unless they withdraw their resignations?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I am unable to say so. They come under the Essential Services Order but I do not know whether that has been applied to them. Action has however already been taken by Government.

Mr. Manu Subedar: If most of the people attending the Indian Railways Conference Association meeting are Government servants, what is the objection to the proceedings of that conference being made available to Members of this House?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Some of them are States servants and I may remind the Honourable Member that some of them were until very recently Company servants. The subject raised by my honourable friend is a matter for consideration, but speaking offhand, I should say it is undesirable to make these reports public because we want the officers to speak freely in their individual capacity. Otherwise it might be embarrassing to them and to Government if the proceedings were fully published. I should say myself that the balance of advantage lies in keeping these proceedings confidential, because thereby they can be made fuller.

Mr. Manu Subedar: In view of the fact that the States' representatives do not play a leading or very important part and that the Companies are now gone, will the Honourable Member consider the advisability of placing before Members of this Legislature such portions of the conclusions reached by this Conference which may be useful to Members of this House?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I have nothing to add to my previous reply.

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

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY SUB-ASSISTANT SURGEONS PERMITTED TO JOIN INDIAN ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

916. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that several Sub-Assistant Surgeons serving on the North Western Railway applied for transfer to the Indian Army Medical Corps? If so, how many applied and how many were spared?

(b) What was the basis on which the individual candidates were spared?

(c) Is it a fact that the present scales of pay of the Sub-Assistant Surgeons on the North Western Railway are not remunerative? If so, what steps do Government propose to take to allow employees to better their prospects in military service? If not, do Government propose to revise their present scales of pay to induce them to stick to service on the North Western Railway? If not, why not?

(d) What benefits will be allowed to the Railway Sub-Assistant Surgeons permitted to join the Indian Army Medical Corps on their reversion to the Railway after the War, and will these benefits also be conferred upon those who were not spared to join the Indian Army Medical Corps? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) and (b). 18 Sub-Assistant Surgeons applied for commissions in the I.A.M.C. and 13 of these, who applied first, were spared. The remaining five, who applied subsequently, could not be spared owing to the difficulty in securing medical personnel to replace them.

(c) The Honourable Member is referred to the reply to part (c) of the preceding question.

(d) No special benefits, are being granted to Railway Sub-Assistant Surgeons, permitted to join the India Army Medical Corps, on their return to the Railway after the war. The latter part of the question does not arise.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Why is it that their representation for higher scales of pay was considered as their resignation?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I am afraid I have not followed the Honourable Member?

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Why is that their representation for higher scales of pay was considered as their resignation and their services terminated?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I still do not quite understand.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: The Honourable Member said in answer to his reply to question 915 (d) that their representation for higher scales of pay was considered as their resignation.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No, Sir.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Then what did you say?

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

Prof. N. G. Ranga: What is your ruling?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): You are not entitled to go on interrupting.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: I am not interrupting anybody. I am asking for information.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has given his reply and he is not going to repeat it.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: I asked the Honourable Member to speak loud enough.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member did speak loud enough. Next question.

†917.*

SURPLUS MOTOR VEHICLES SOLD

918. *Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde: (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to state how many motor vehicles were sold in the year 1944 which were treated as (i) surplus, (ii) obsolete, and (iii) salvage?

(b) Were they sold in public auction or by private sales?

(c) Is it a fact that orders were placed for the import of large number of small cars from United Kingdom?

(d) Are these cars going to be paid from the sterling balance?

(e) What is the price per unit?

(f) Are similar orders being placed in U. S. A. for big cars? If so, how are they going to be financed?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) It is not possible to furnish the information in the manner required by the question. Under the scheme for the disposal of used motor vehicles those accepted as 'potential runners' are given to reconditioners in the motor trade for reconditioning and subsequent disposal in accordance with control orders issued by the War Transport Department. All vehicles not accepted for reconditioning are made over to the Army Salvage Organisation for break-down to component parts and scrap.

(b) 26 vehicles were sold by auction in Calcutta, under special circumstances. These vehicles had been completely cannibalised by the military authorities and in most cases engines, wheels, etc., had all been removed. They were, therefore, immobile and were disposed of *in situ*. There were no private sales.

(c) The Government of India hope to obtain a certain number of light British cars for the use of essential users some time during the year. The number of cars expected is about 2000, most of which will probably be 10 H.P. Austins, but it cannot be stated even approximately when they will arrive.

(d) Payment for these cars will *pro tanto* reduce the sterling balances.

(e) There is no information yet as to what the price per car will be.

(f) The possibility of obtaining some higher powered cars from the U.S.A. or the U.K. is being explored. The question of finance will be considered after the availability has been ascertained.

Sardar Sant Singh: What is cannibalising?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Just as one man eats another, so one machine eats another by getting the parts from the other car so that it may be a whole by itself.

*This question has been postponed to be answered on the 20th March 1945.

Mr. Sri Prakasa: Does the Honourable Member refer to such cars in the same way as one human being eating another?

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

HIGHER INITIAL PAY OF FEMALE TELEPHONE OPERATORS.

919. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state if the initial starting pay of Engineering Supervisors, Telegraphs, Telephones and Electrical Supervisors is Rs. 80? Is it also a fact that the initial starting pay of the female Telephone Operators is Rs. 90? If so, what are the reasons for the discrepancy in the initial pay?

(b) Is he aware that the female operators drawing higher salaries than their supervisors cause good deal of embarrassment in maintaining the discipline of the department? What steps do the Department propose to take to remove this grievance of the supervisors?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: (a) The reply to the first part is in the affirmative. As regards the other parts, the initial pay is Rs. 90, only in the case of female Telephone Operators employed in the Delhi Telephone Division on a temporary basis for the duration of the War. Higher initial pay is granted to them in this Division in view of the special conditions prevailing there.

(b) The reply to the first part is in the negative; the second part does not arise.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I know what is the initial pay of the temporary hands employed as telephone operators so far as males are concerned.

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: There is another question of the Honourable Member a little later. There the figures are given.

RAISING THE PAY OF ENGINEERING SUPERVISORS, WIRELESS

920. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state the initial pay of Engineering Supervisors, both telegraphs and telephones and Electrical Supervisors and also that of Engineering Supervisors, Wireless?

(b) Is it a fact that the status and grades of pay of both are the same in the Department?

(c) What are the reasons for raising the pay of the latter while maintaining the pay of the former at the existing level?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: (a) The initial pay in the revised scales is Rs. 80 p.m. for all branches.

(b) Yes.

(c) The minimum starting pay for Wireless Supervisors has not been raised generally, but it has been fixed at the point Rs. 140 for those Wireless Operators on the revised scales who have qualified in the lower and higher proficiency examinations and are in receipt of special pay on this account, in order to protect them from loss on promotion as far as possible.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: May I ask Government to substitute the word "woman" for "female"?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: The Honourable Lady is referring to a previous question.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: That is better language

DIFFERENT SCALES OF PAY OF TELEPHONE OPERATORS

921. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state if it is a fact that Telephone Operators are paid at the following scales:

- (i) permanent male operators Rs. 40—3—85,
- (ii) temporary male operators Rs. 60—4—80, and
- (iii) temporary female operators Rs. 90—5—120?

(b) Is it a fact that all the three above categories perform the same kind of duties and have the same responsibilities? If so, why is there difference in scales of pay, and why are the female Operators paid 50 per cent. more than the male Operators?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: (a) This is generally correct in the case of Delhi only. But even there, for permanent Telephone Operators there is a first grade of

Rs. 95—4—115, and the scales of Rs. 90/120 and Rs. 60/80 are applicable only to staff employed on a temporary basis for the duration of the War.

(b) The reply to the first part is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, increased rates are granted in view of the difficulties experienced in obtaining suitable staff on the usual scales. Higher rates are granted to women as the difficulty of recruiting them is greater in their case.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I know why temporary operators are getting 50 per cent. more than permanent hands?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: Permanent operators have the benefit of earning a pension. Temporary operators have been taken only for the period of the war. In view of the very large demand for men from all Departments, if the service has to be run, we have to pay a little more, considering that they are going to be discharged from service at the end of the war and are not going to get any pension.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Does the Honourable Member suggest that the difference of Rs. 20 is pensionary contribution?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: No, Sir, that is the inference which the Honourable Member is drawing.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: It is not a wrong inference: it is exploitation if you pay Rs. 40 to a permanent hand because he does not leave.

TELEGRAPHISTS WORKING AS ENGINEERING SUPERVISORS, TELEGRAPHS IN FIELD SERVICE

922. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state the number of telegraphists working as Engineering Supervisors, Telegraphs in field service? How many of them are Hindus, Mohammedans, Sikhs, Parsees, Anglo-Indians and others?

(b) Is there any proposal to raise them to the grade of Deputy Assistant Engineers, Telegraphs, Class II, on their return from Field Service?

(c) If so, will it be done in accordance with the seniority or is it contemplated that Anglo-Indians alone should be accorded special treatment in the case of promotion?

(d) How will the Department compensate those members who have been serving in India under similar war conditions, if their seniority is affected by such promotions?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: (a) None at present. The latter part of the question does not arise.

(b) No.

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

SAVING DUE TO REDUCTION IN PETROL RATION, ETC., IN MADRAS PRESIDENCY

923. *Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde: (a) Will the Honourable Member for War Transport be pleased to state the saving per month effected in reducing the petrol basic ration to one third of the civil consumers in the Madras Presidency?

(b) How much more petrol is being consumed per month by public transport vehicles including commercial trucks in that Presidency over the consumption in the year 1940?

(c) What is the saving effected per month by the introduction of charcoal gas plants for public transport vehicles in that Presidency?

(d) How many public transport vehicles and commercial vehicles are running now on petrol only?

(e) What is the average consumption of petrol per month of a commercial truck in that Presidency?

(f) Is it not the policy of the Government of India to encourage the fitting of gas plants to commercial trucks and transport passenger vehicles to save petrol?

(g) Is it not possible to increase the basic ration of civilian consumers by the saving effected by fitting gas plants to at least commercial trucks? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) to (e). The information asked for by the Honourable Member is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

(f) Yes.

(g) No. The need for the maximum possible economy in civil consumption of petrol by every means possible still continues.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Has not an additional supply been made available from the Middle East after the easing of the war situation in that area?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That may be so, but the requirements of this country for military purposes have also increased.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Is it not the case that Americans are producing enormous quantities and are willing to offer to the Government of India for civil consumers a larger quantity, but that Government will not have it?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I have no information on that, but there are of course many other difficulties arising.

DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS VEHICLES

924. *Mr. Satya Narayan Sinha: (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state if there is any scheme under contemplation for the disposal of surplus vehicles—military and civil?

(b) If the reply to (a) be in the affirmative, what is the percentage of vehicles which are going to be dismantled and auctioned off to the buyers of waste materials?

(c) What percentage has been found serviceable after repairs and renewals?

(d) What are the agencies through which Government propose to make these vehicles road-worthy?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) It is presumed that the Honourable Member is referring to motor vehicles. A scheme is in operation for the disposal of used motor vehicles no longer required by the Defence Services. It does not cover "civil" vehicles, which are not likely to be many and which have not so far come up for actual disposal. When vehicles owned by Civil Departments are reported, such cases will be considered on its merits.

(b) and (c). As the scheme has not been in operation sufficiently long, it is not possible to estimate any percentages at present. The number of vehicles hitherto accepted for reconditioning has been comparatively small; the greater proportion are unfit for any purpose other than scrap, and are, therefore, being broken up by the military authorities.

(d) Approved registered dealers of the motor trade.

Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Ohetty: Are Government still requisitioning private cars for their use?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I have no information on that subject.

Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Ohetty: Will Government consider the advisability of sale by public auction?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: At the present time reconditioned cars are sold only to persons who are given a permit by the War Transport Department as essential users. It is therefore not possible to have them publicly auctioned.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Ohetty: Can the Honourable Member give any statistics with regard to the number of cars cannibalised and the number of cars reconditioned and used by the Department itself?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The total number of vehicles accepted for reconditioning by the various Regional Committees are: Cars—49, Trucks—71, Total—120.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will Members of the Assembly be eligible to get them when they are disposed of?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Those who are essential users.

DISPARITY IN PRICES OF FOODSTUFFS AT GRAIN SHOPS OF DIFFERENT RAILWAYS IN A CITY

925. *Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

(a) whether Government are aware that there is disparity in the prices of food-stuffs supplied at the grain shops of different Railways in the same city and that this causes a difference in the dearness allowances to employees on these Railways; and, if so, the reasons for maintaining the disparity;

(b) if it is a fact that the Officer-in-Charge of the Bengal Nagpur Railway grain shop in Nagpur is the Assistant Works Manager and that representations have been made to the Bengal Nagpur Railway authorities that the employees dare not complain about the management of this grain shop and the poor quality of the stuff sold there for fear of incurring the displeasure of their Assistant Works Manager;

(c) whether Government propose to consider the advisability of (i) a uniform policy of placing the grain shops in the charge of officers who have no connection with workshops, and (ii) charging uniform prices at least in the same city or locality?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The reply to the first part is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, grain shop prices are based on the prices prevailing in February 1943 in territories served by each railway. Presumably the reference is to Nagpur which is served both by the Bengal Nagpur and G. I. P. Railways. The Bengal Nagpur Railway prices are based on the prices prevailing in the areas served by that Railway and will therefore vary from the prices fixed by the G. I. P. Railway based on those prevailing in the area served by the latter.

(b) Government have no detailed information, but will communicate this part of the question to the General Manager, Bengal Nagpur Railway, for such action as he may consider necessary.

(c) (i) This is a matter of detail which is within the competence of each Railway Administration and Government do not propose to interfere.

(ii) This does not arise in view of the reply to part (a) above.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: Do not Government realise that it is important to have these grain shops in charge of independent officers, independent in the sense that they have no connection with Railway employees in workshops?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No, Sir.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: In view of the fact that different prices are charged by grain shops in the same city, will Government of India take steps to see that prices are made uniform in at least the same city?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: If the Honourable Member will consider the situation he will realise that there are difficulties. These prices are fixed by Railways and not on an All-India basis. There are therefore differences between two Railways. If you make prices uniform in the same city different servants of the same Railway will be receiving different benefits, and while it is desirable that you should have uniform prices in one city, it is also desirable, in fact more desirable, that the servants of the same Railway should all receive the same benefit. At the same time I agree that it is desirable to increase uniformity, and where possible that is being done.

CLOSING DOWN OF THE BAILLY MUNITIONS FACTORY, NAGPUR

926. *Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

(a) if and since how long the Bengal Nagpur Railway Munition Factory in Nagpur, known as the Bailly Munition Factory, has been closed down and its staff quarters have remained vacant;

(b) the loss of revenue per mensem to Government caused by keeping these quarters vacant;

(c) how many Railway employees could be accommodated in them; and

(d) if Government are aware that housing problem is very difficult in Nagpur, and the Railway employees find it hard to secure accommodation; and if so, what steps do Government propose to take to help them?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Enquiries are being made from the Railway Administration concerned and a reply will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

STOPPING OF BOOKING OF CLASS IX TIMBER AT JAGADHRI

927. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable Member for War Transport please state:

(a) whether it is a fact that booking of class IX timber had been stopped at Jagadhri, North Western Railway; if so, since when it was stopped; and

(b) whether Government are aware that a large quantity of class IX timber is lying there; and when the booking for class IX timber is likely to be re-opened?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The booking of traffic of all kinds in priority Class IX was stopped at all stations on the North Western Railway on 19th January 1945 as there are insufficient wagons available to move all traffic offering and it is necessary to give preference to the more essential traffic.

(b) Government are not aware of the exact quantity of timber lying at Jagadhri. I cannot forecast when booking in priority Class IX will be resumed on the North Western Railway but this will be done in full or in part when the wagon position improves.

DISCONTINUANCE OF TRAIN HALTS AT SITAMPET AND KAVUTARAM RAILWAY STATIONS

928. *Mr. A. Satyanarayana Moorty: (a) Is the Honourable Member for Railways aware of the great inconvenience and hardship caused to the travelling public residing in and around the villages Sitampet and Kavutaram on the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway by suspending the train halts?

(b) If so, does he propose to reconsider the desirability of opening the halts at the two places mentioned in (a) to facilitate conveyance to thousands of people who go up and down to Bezvada?

(c) Was there any complaint about the inadequacy of the width of the platform size of the passenger sheds at the two places above-mentioned by the Andhra Desa Passengers' Association on or about the 10th February, 1942?

—(d) Is it not a fact that the above halts referred to came into effect on the 1st May, 1942?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Any curtailment of transport facilities which have been in existence for some time must necessarily cause a certain amount of inconvenience and hardship to the travelling public.

(b) This is a matter which should be represented to the Railway Administration through the L. A. Committee. I am, however, bringing the matter to the notice of the General Manager, M. & S. M. Railway.

(c) I have not been able to trace the receipt of any such complaint.

(d) I understand one of these halts was eliminated on the date mentioned but have no information about the others.

LOW LEVEL PLATFORM AT PALAKOL RAILWAY STATION

929. *Mr. A. Satyanarayana Moorty: (a) Is the Honourable the Railway Member aware of the extreme depth of the platform from the Railway foot board at Palakol Station (Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway) of the West Godavary?

(b) Is he aware of the hardship of old men, women and children who find it difficult to ascend or descend from the train on the platform? If so, does he propose to make the necessary arrangements to raise the platform without causing any inconvenience to the travelling public?

(c) Is he aware of the large number of passengers going up and down from Palakol as it is one of the most busy centres for trade in the district?

(d) Why is there no Waiting Room for higher class passengers? Do the Railway authorities propose to provide a Waiting Room at the station of Palakol?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Palakol station has a rail level platform.

(b) Yes. Provision has been made for a high level platform to be provided at this station in the Post-war Reconstruction programme of the M. & S. M. Railway.

(c) There is a fair amount of passenger traffic.

(d) An upper class waiting room is not provided as there is no upper class accommodation on trains serving this station. The answer to the second part is in the negative.

SHIPS BUILT IN INDIA

930. *Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde: (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to state how many ships have been built in India since 1940; and (b) how many of them have been built in the Vizagapatam Harbour and, what is their tonnage?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) A considerable number of naval vessels not exceeding 1,500 tons each have been built but it is not in the public interest to give the exact number.

(b) None.

Mr. Manu Subedar: May I know whether attempts have been made to build ships of a bigger capacity than 1,500 tons?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Yes; attempts are being made.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Have they been built in Government dockyards or in private companies dockyards?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Attempts are being made by private companies also.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Have they all been built in Government or private companies dockyards?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Both.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Are these ships being built on Government account?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: For Government purposes.

Mr. Manu Subedar: What is the nature of assistance that Government gives?

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

85. Mr. Satya Narayan Sinha: Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

(a) the hours of employment of the Waiting Room bearers at Ambala Cantonment, Amritsar and Lahore Stations on the North Western Railway;

(b) the number of those bearers for each room at those Stations;

(c) whether they enjoy weekly rest without performing twenty-four hours' duty in relief;

(d) what period of inaction they have on each day; and

(e) the reasons for not treating them as continuous workers when they are always attentive at the place of duty?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) to (e). Government have no information regarding these details; a copy of the question is, however, being sent to the General Manager, North Western Railway, for information and such action as he may consider necessary.

86. [Cancelled]

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT

COMPOSITION OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION TO SAN FRANCISCO CONFERENCE.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have received notice of an adjournment motion from Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh who wishes to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the selection by the

Governor-General in Council of Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar and Sir Firoz Khan Noon as India's representatives to take part in the Conferences to be held shortly in London and San Francisco.

There is another adjournment motion notice of which has been given by Mr. Krishnamachari to the same effect. He wishes to discuss the composition of the Delegation chosen by the Government of India to represent India at the San Francisco Conference to the exclusion of the non-official representatives of the people of this country.

Is the delegation sent by the Government of India?

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari (Tanjore cum Trichinopoly: Non-Muhammadan Rural): The Press Communique today says that the Governor General in Council has chosen the Delegation.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Is it not their responsibility to choose the delegates?

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: The Press Communique says that the Governor General in Council has selected and that is why this House is competent to express an opinion on it.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Then, is it the case of the Honourable Member that he is entitled to question the selection?

Honourable Members: Yes, Sir.

Sir Olaf Caroe (Secretary, External Affairs Department): Sir, may I call your attention to a ruling or an interpretation of a ruling which you gave on the 2nd November, 1944, when a somewhat similar matter was moved on a motion for adjournment before this House, about the World Monetary Conference. You drew a distinction on that occasion between the selection of delegates, when it was the definite responsibility of the Government to select the Delegation and the selection of non-officials and you said, Sir,—“If there has been any misunderstanding that the admission of that motion (this was a previous motion about non-officials) meant that it is not the responsibility of the Government of India to make the selection in such cases but that they are bound to consult any particular representative bodies, then I must make it clear that I did not mean to lay down any such proposition. It is the primary responsibility of the Government to make the selection”.

You then went on to say—

“though in a proper case it is the right of this House to call in question any action taken by the Government in this respect.”

I would submit that in a case like this which refers to an International Conference it is widely recognised that it must be the responsibility of the constitutional Government to make the selection.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Who are the representatives sent by the United Kingdom Government?

Sir Olaf Caroe: It is the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Eden and Mr. Attlee, Deputy Prime Minister, and also a member of Government. The whole background of this Conference is that the delegation should be official, that is to say, official in the sense that it should be on a ministerial level. They should be Ministers or Members of the Government and little purpose would be served by debating in this House a suggestion that India should act differently from any of the other Governments in the Commonwealth and should send a delegation which was not made up of members of the Government.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): That is a matter for discussion.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): I have got another ruling of the 8th November, 1943, on an adjournment motion which I had made. The concluding portion of that ruling is

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That is the non-official delegation sent to explain the war effort?

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: I am afraid, in regard to the question of interpretation of this ruling, the position is not on all fours with what happened in

November 1944. My proposed motion refers to the composition of the Delegation chosen by the Government of India to represent India at the San Francisco Conference to the exclusion of non-official representatives.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Where is the obligation on the part of the Government to choose non-official representatives for this Conference?

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: The obligation may or may not be there. The position is that the House is competent to express an opinion on the second question raised by the Member speaking for Government. What the Honourable Foreign Secretary said is not quite true so far as the United States of America is concerned. There, the delegation has been chosen in such a manner that all parties even the party in opposition, the Republican Party is being represented. So, I do not think that the assumption of the Honourable Member is at all correct.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I understand that the British Government have chosen two Ministers.

Sir Olaf Caroe: I referred to British Commonwealth Governments. I do not think we should get ourselves involved in discussions about the constitutional differences between British Governments and the United States. As the Honourable Member probably knows, the Senate of the United States has a very special position in matters of foreign affairs. If we start debating them in this House, it would not be really relevant and we shall not get much further. What I said was that the British Commonwealth Governments are sending delegations on the ministerial level and the delegation from the United Kingdom consists of the Foreign Secretary and the Deputy Prime Minister and that is the general principle which is to be observed by the Dominions also.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): What happened after the last War?

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: At the conclusion of the last war, the 1919 Act was not in force. The United Kingdom Delegation referred to is composed of two different parties, though they form members of a Coalition Government.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): There is no such thing here. This motion raises a very important question. But the
12 Noon motion is not in order because it is entirely the responsibility of the Government of India to choose their delegates to this Conference. I further understand that in doing so, they are following the practice of the British Government in this matter. It was undoubtedly open to the Government of India to choose non-officials to assist the delegation or form the delegation themselves, if they so desired. But under the constitution, it is impossible for me to hold that in selecting Members of the Government of India to represent the Government at this Conference, they have departed in any way from what has been the practice in this country or Britain in a matter of this sort. I am not aware of any convention of this House by which the Government of India would be required to choose non-officials to represent them in the Conference. I hold that the motion is not in order.

GENERAL BUDGET—LIST OF DEMANDS

DEMAND NO. 16.—DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIES AND CIVIL SUPPLIES—*contd.*

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Today is the turn for the Nationalist Party. Cut Motion No. 5, relating to Demand No. 16. Department of Industries and Civil Supplies. This Demand has already been moved.

Cloth and Yarn Position

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta (Chittagong and Rajshahi Divisions: Non-Muhamadan Rural): Sir, I move:

"That the demand under the head 'Department of Industries and Civil Supplies' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury (Bengal: Landholders): I rise to a point of order. So far as I remember, there was a debate on a cut motion last Saturday

[Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury.]

which was not concluded. Can the present cut motion be taken up before that debate is concluded?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That motion related to Unattached Members and that will come up again this evening during the time allotted for Unattached Members.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: Sir, under this Motion, I want to discuss the cloth and yarn position in the country. The cloth situation has become really very serious in many parts of India, in fact the whole of India is suffering from an acute shortage of cloth. It is no exaggeration to say that such a situation of absolute want of cloth is unprecedented in the annals of India, both before and after British rule. This calamity is not confined to one Province, it is applicable to all the Provinces. The difficulty is experienced in Delhi and the Centrally Administered Areas, in the Provinces of Bihar, Bengal, Madras, U. P. and several other States; of course the acuteness of shortage varies in degrees in different Provinces. So far as the degree is concerned, I find the situation described in this way in the *National Call* of the 9th March. With your permission, I shall read a short extract, because it applies more or less to the position in many other Provinces. It says:—

"The Public of Delhi in general and its cloth trade in particular are faced today with a serious situation. Apparently there is so acute a shortage of cloth these days that hundreds of men, women and children after fruitlessly waiting for hours together return disappointed from market to their houses. *Dhotis*, *saris*, long cloth, *mulumul*, shirtings and other such cloth of daily use have completely disappeared from the market. Pathetic scenes are every day witnessed in front of different shops where women with children in their laps uselessly cry for two and half yards of *mulumul*. Long queues sometimes formed before the rise of the Sun are everyday seen and sometimes police help is secured to keep them under control."

Now, Sir, that is a description which applies to Calcutta as well. There in order to regulate big crowds which appear daily in front of approved Government shops for a *dhoti* or *saree* police help is necessary to regulate the crowd. It is reported that an unfortunate incident occurred one day. The rush of crowd was so great in front of a shop in Wellington street, that a young man of 20 or 21 years received a *lathi* blow on his head from the police and an old woman of 60 was run over by a lorry. That is a description which applies to some other Provinces. The position is so bad that as far as the Province of Bengal is concerned—I am speaking of Bengal in particular, because I am not acquainted with details of other Provinces, but I am sure the position is equally bad in several other Provinces—the position in Bengal is so deplorable that many women almost go naked. The position is so bad that womenfolk cannot go out of their houses. It is reported that some women committed suicide being unable to go out for want of cloth. This was brought to the notice of the Honourable the Commerce Member the other day in this House. (Interruption.) I do not think he said he did not credit it. He said he had heard such reports. I do not know whether he since made enquiries and found out the truth or otherwise of that allegation. At all events the position is this. Dead bodies are dug up from graves for taking away the cloth to be found on them. From the burning ghats, the cloth of dead bodies are removed and taken to the bazaar for sale. From this you can deduce the acuteness of shortage of cloth in that Province. In my own District, there is a Bar consisting of sixty Members. And between the sixty members of the bar only ten pairs of saris were distributed for six months. And these poor people unable to distribute them among themselves held a lottery. There were only ten pairs of saris for sixty families for six months; that is the position there. I find that the situation is so acute in Calcutta that on the 10th March last a "cloth day" demonstration was organised by the leaders of the different parties in order to emphasize their difficulties. It is a sad state of things, specially for women, because saris and dhotis are not available at all. As regards the other varieties of cloth, they may be available in different degrees, but so far as dhoties and saris are concerned they are not available at all in Calcutta. And as regards Delhi I have read an extract, and I can bear personal testimony to

this fact, that in Chāndni Chowk you will not get one sari or dhoti to purchase. I need not discuss this position or elaborate the point. Sir, it is not correct to say that in Bengal there is shortage of cloth or even acute shortage; it is literally famine in cloth. There is no exaggeration in that description. We had a famine there in the matter of food; now has come another famine, and this time it is in the matter of cloth. There can be no controversy about this; it is admitted by the Provincial Government, though I do not know whether it is admitted equally by the Central Government. In Bengal the Minister in charge said that he was powerless to do anything because he was not getting proper supplies from the Centre and it is the Central Government that is responsible. And here in the Centre we were told the other day by the Commerce Member that he had sent more supplies to Bengal than they were entitled to get under the quota system. This again is the same unseemly controversy between the Centre and the Province, one blaming the other. So far as we are concerned, it is very much like the common experience of lawyers in criminal cases that when there are two accused and the prosecution case is irrefutable, one accused lays the blame on the other and says he, the other one, is guilty and not he himself. The same thing happens between the Centre and the Province. That was the controversy at the time of the food famine, and that is being repeated now in this cloth famine. Our case is that both the Centre and the Provinces have to share the blame equally. Why should there be this shortage of cloth? My case is that as the food famine was a man-made famine, so is this cloth famine a man-made one. Sir, the House will excuse me if I deal particularly with the case of Bengal because I know the position there more than in other provinces.

My submission is that the internal production is insufficient. The quota given by the Central Government is very unfair, and whatever cloth or yarn is available it does not reach the people. Therefore insufficient production and insufficient supply from outside are responsible. But there is other important reason to which I shall refer later on. As regards the quota my complaint is that the quota given to Bengal is very low; it is almost half of the quota that is given in other provinces. But I should not be misunderstood; I do not complain about the quota to other provinces. My only complaint is that an insufficient quota has been given to Bengal. The Bengal quota has been fixed on a double basis, the first being the pre-war consumption and the second being the population basis. My contention is that both of these are wrong. The pre-war consumption has been taken to be 10 to 12 yards, but that has been challenged from many quarters, and up till now we have not been told how that basis was arrived at. It was stated the other day in very guarded language by the Honourable the Commerce Member that it is "believed" that 10 to 12 yards were the pre-war consumption, but the data for that belief have not been given.

As to the population basis, calculation has been made on the last census figure of 61 million; but it is well known that the population of Bengal is no longer 61 million but it is now 65 million. - Therefore necessarily the quota is inadequate.

That is about the quota of cloth. As regards the quota of yarn, that again is very insufficient. The estimated production of Bengal handlooms is 9,000 bales per month; the yarn required is 8,000 bales per month, but what has been allowed is only 5,442 bales. Then there is a large number of mills there which are only weaving and not spinning, and their production is handicapped owing to lack of supply of yarn. Of the supply of yarn now available a portion goes to non-weaving mills for manufacture of nets, belting factories, bandage-cloth makers, bookbinders, and others like the Bata Shoe Factory, etc. So that actually the handloom's share of yarn is not 10 p. c. but very much lower.

That, Sir, is one reason for the unsatisfactory state of things there. Another reason is the very heavy purchases made by military people, purchases for the requirements of the Red Cross, hospitals, etc. You have to remember that Bengal is a war zone, and therefore in all fairness there should have been

[Mr. Akhil Chandra Dutta.]

special allotment given to Bengal for this purpose. It was admitted the other day by the Commerce Member that there was this necessity for a special allotment, but that was not done. We have been told that the matter is now under consideration. But why was not this obvious fact taken into account at the time when the quota was fixed? And then when the injustice has been pointed out why was no immediate decision taken? Why is so much time taken to give relief in a matter of this kind?

Then, Sir, there are other reasons for this acute shortage. There is export,—export to China, to Tibet, to Burma, to Africa and to the Middle East. Exports are both legitimate and illegitimate. Smuggling has been going on for a long time. Government has not taken any proper measure to prevent smuggling into Tibet and smuggling into China. As regards what are called legitimate exports, I wonder why export should be at all allowed from Bengal where there is so much inadequacy of supplies. It is like the food question. The difficulty is aggravated by exports.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has one minute more.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: Where does this available cloth go? How do you explain the mysterious disappearance of cloth? The only explanation is that it goes from the open market to the black market, and that is not only due to dishonesty and greed of traders, which is so much emphasised, but it is also due to Government machinery of distribution which is not only inefficient but also corrupt. Why should not the Government be able to fight the black market? They can fight the terrorist movement, they can fight the Congress within a few hours—on the 8th of August they could hunt down the whole Congress within a few hours—but they cannot fight this black marketing.

Some suggestions have already been made. Another suggestion is that rationing should be introduced and the recommendation of the All-India Textile Panel should be carried out, namely, that mills should sell 10 per cent. of their output direct to consumers through their own retail shops.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Honourable Member's time is up.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: Just one word more, Sir. What is the remedy? The remedy at the present moment is the production of *khadi*. Bengal Ministers are going out into the villages to preach *khadi*. I hope Members of the Central Government would follow suit. That is the only remedy for the solution of this problem, and I hope that the Government of India will carry out an honest and vigorous drive to preach *khadi*. Sir, with these few words I move this motion.

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

"That the demand under the head 'Department of Industries and Civil Supplies' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Nawab Siddique Ali Khan (Central Provinces and Berar: Muhammadan): On behalf of the Muslim League Party I beg to support the cut motion moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta.

Sir, I believe the Honourable Members in this House remember that in the last Session I moved an adjournment motion to draw the attention of the Government of India to the pitiable and miserable condition of the handloom weavers of Nagpur, Jubbulpore, Kamptee, Burhanpur and other places in the Central Provinces and Berar which are inhabited by the weavers. Sir, this state of affairs does not affect any particular community, but it affects Hindus and Muslims alike who are in the profession. My Honourable friend Haji A. Sathar Essak Saif, the Honourable Mr. Hussain Imam and myself went in a deputation to the Honourable the Commerce Member. He was very sympathetic and promised to write to the Textile Commissioner, Bombay, to give immediate relief to the sufferers. He also announced that in the near future

he was going to appoint an All-India Handloom Weavers Board to safeguard the interests of handloom weavers. But, Sir, the sufferings of these poor people are not over, because yarn famine still exists in many provinces in general and in my province in particular.

In the last month representatives of handloom weavers came to Delhi and several telegrams and representations were received by us. These people were given to understand that if they form co-operative societies their difficulties will be solved. Accordingly in Nagpur and Kamptee they formed co-operative societies. In Nagpur they formed the Ansar Co-operative Dyeing Society, Limited. The membership of this society is about 1,000 and the number of handlooms of these members is about 2,500. The society was so efficiently managed that on the recommendation of the Registrar, Co-operative Societies, Nagpur, it began to obtain yarn direct from the Textile Commissioner, Bombay. This continued for about two months but since December 1944 it was abruptly stopped without assigning any reason. This will be corroborated by a telegram which I received in the second week of February; it has been sent by Seth Abdul Raof Sardar, an influential and revered Momin leader of my province. He says:

"Yarn famine in Nagpur. Weavers starving. Industry being ruined. Monthly quota Ansar co-operative dyeing society withheld by Director Industries Nagpur. No supply for last three months."

Very recently my Deputy Leader, Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, also received a telegram from Burhanpur. It reads thus:

"Another deadstop in supply of yarn to weavers in Burhanpur since November last. Provincial Government totally indifferent. Maintaining mysterious silence. Situation once again causing anxiety. Earnestly appeal urgent Central Government direct Textile Commissioner Bombay release immediately sufficient quota of yarn monthly to Burhanpur weavers for hand and powerlooms."

Sir, it is evident from these telegrams that handloom weavers are starving and are put to a lot of trouble. I approached the Honourable Member again. His department, in reply to my letter, expressed its inability to interfere in the matter and advised me to take it up with the Central Provinces and Berar Government. I find from the letter that the Textile Commissioner, who is fortunately amongst us today, is responsible only for the allocation of yarn quotas to the different provinces. When you go to the province, the authorities say that the quota allotted is not enough to meet the present demands of the weavers. Fine yarn which is badly needed by the weavers is not available in the open market, but if you pay an exorbitant price, that is double the price of the control price, you can have it in the black market. These profiteers are making money while the poor weavers are starving. It has been said that the yarn distribution scheme is to be introduced. We are also told that the All-India Handloom Weavers Board will be formed shortly. God alone knows, Sir, when this heavy Government machinery will begin to move and when the sufferings of the poor weavers will be alleviated. Sir, let us hope that it may not be a case of:

"Ta Tiryaq As Iraq Awurda Shawad Mar Guzida Murda Shawad."

When translated it means: By the time the antidote is brought from Mesopotamia the man who has been bitten by snake dies.

I have another complaint against the Commerce Member. The handloom and powerloom weavers are not adequately supplied with shuttles, dyes and chemicals. Sir, my province manufactures a large quantity of handloom cloth of different kinds and it used to be sent to Bombay, Ahmedabad, Sukkur and Shikarpur. But since the control order came into force the Textile Commissioner has prohibited the despatch of this handloom cloth by post to these markets and there is also the transport difficulty in the despatch of these goods. Thus the weavers have been deprived of earning their livelihood.

In the end I would suggest that the Honourable Member should (1) supply fine yarn and necessary things to the weavers and direct the Textile Commissioner to permit the Ansar Co-operative Dyeing Society Limited to obtain its

[Nawab Siddique Ali Khan.]

yarn direct from Bombay until the new distribution scheme comes into force: (2) allow handloom cloth to be transported to established markets: (3) take drastic measures against the profiteers, and (4) form an All-India Handloom Weavers Board.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): The profiteers form the control board. How can they take action against them!

Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: I do not know what the Honourable Member has to say in defence. That is his lookout. An All-India Handloom Weavers' Board should be formed immediately and it should consist of the real representatives of the handloom weavers.

Sir, I support the out motion.

Mr. Sami Vencatachalam Chetty (Madras: Indian Commerce): There is no denying the fact that the position of cloth is as bad, if not worse than the position of food in this country. But at the same time I cannot withhold my tribute to the officers of the Textile Control Department for the very herculean attempts they are making in order to see that the black market is eliminated, that as much yarn as is necessary for handloom weavers is sent, that each province gets its quota of cloth and all that kind of thing. I am afraid, Sir, that in the early stages of the promulgation of this order the mills themselves were not quite prepared to co-operate with the department. They were long used before that to very high profits both in yarn and cloth and they felt it was rather a raid on private rights that this Control Department should now come and exercise control over them. The matter of cloth and yarn being somewhat of a technical nature, the Department concerned had to face no doubt a number of difficulties before they were able to tackle these mills. No doubt, even now (though many mills are said to be co-operating with the Department) with very few exceptions, the mills are co-operating only half-heartedly with the Department.

If I may take some pride in my province, I must say that the Buckingham and Carnatic Company have set an example of how best they could co-operate with the Government in the matter of proper distribution of their cloth. I must say that the other mills have not up to this day gone to that length of co-operating with the Department in the matter of distribution. I know also, Sir, that if there is one section of the present multifarious departments of the Government about which I do not hear of corruption and inefficiency, I must admit that it is this Textile Control Department. But at the same time they are up against a number of factors over which they do not seem to have proper control. In the first place, I still doubt whether they have removed all the sons-in-law and brothers-in-law between the manufacturer of goods and the wholesale dealer and I feel these relations still remain on as *binami* persons.

Next, is the question of the wholesalers. In Madras in regard to B and C goods the wholesalers were given specific instructions how to distribute their cloth which they got from the mills. The wholesalers by themselves have no choice whatsoever to vary the proportion or the quantity of cloth to be given to the retailer. Each retailer has got his quota fixed by the mill, but the quantity passed through the wholesaler and the wholesaler got some sort of commission for distributing to the proper retailer and sending back the money. That system is not followed in other provinces. What the wholesaler is now doing is that he sits tight upon the quantities that are delivered to him and will not part with them even to the regular authorised dealers unless there is some competition amongst the retail dealers in order to make higher offers of prices over which I am afraid the Department has not been able to exercise proper control.

Now, Sir, another factor which contributed to the cloth not reaching the proper consumer is the very confusing orders of the Department itself. Whether out of ignorance or out of want of information they issue fortnightly or weekly orders, which are very often directly contradictory to each other. I

know a few months ago, about November or December last, many Madras merchants were asked to buy their quota from wholesale dealers in Bombay. They bought, paid the money but no permit was issued for export or booking of the consignments to their respective stations. The result was that the Chief Controller or Provincial Controller went from one place to another, from Bombay to Madras and *vice versa*, to issue the orders for booking. I wonder why there should have been such a delay. This delay which was caused by the issue of contradictory orders resulted in a scare and in the wholesalers asking for better rates from the Madras dealers and it culminated in a modified form of black market. I understand the same position is prevalent in Delhi. I am told that the wholesalers in Delhi were asked to enter into transactions with up-country people, in Rajputana and some other States and in U.P., and yet they are not permitted to export those goods out of Delhi. I do not know whether it was by design or merely by accident the Provincial Officers seem to be enthused for not issuing permits for booking on the ground of safety of their areas regarding this commodity. This is what is happening every day so far as food is concerned and I think it is happening even in matters of piecegoods and yarn. The District Magistrate of a particular place thinks "I have got so much goods in this district. I do not want my people to starve. Therefore I won't issue permits whatever might be the orders I might have received for distribution of cloth to some other place. I won't permit its being exported to other places at the expense of my district". Then the Central authority is at its wits' end to find out whether their orders should supervene over the provincial order or *vice versa*. This arises on account of a good deal of confusion and I think much of the confusion is due because the Department though in the matter of textiles, they have got a sort of non-official co-operation, they have not listened to their advice as to what is it that they have got to do in respect of such confused situations.

The Railways act as a great impediment in the proper transportation of goods from one place to another. The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall is a very cheerful man. He appears to be quite unconcerned about this thing but much of the mischief either in regard to food, cloth or yarn is due to the lack of facilities for transport, perhaps just as much as the indifference of the manufacturers themselves. With regard to the distribution of yarn, even there the distributory system is not well conducted. No doubt you give yarn to some dealers to distribute it to handloom weavers but there is no guarantee that the handloom weaver who receives or is expected to receive the yarn from the distributor would turn that yarn into cloth and bring it to the market. Why is it that you have not stated that unless he turns the yarn into cloth and sells it to some dealer he would not get the yarn. Very likely many handloom weavers might make a profit of Rs. 2 or 3 per bundle without turning out cloth at all and this yarn might easily go into the black market. There is no check over the production of the handloom weavers nor did the Department make any serious attempt to organise these handloom weavers. In certain parts of the country, where handloom weavers are accustomed only to produce cloth out of fine yarn, Government have taken no great care to see that it is supplied with fine yarn, because the mills are consuming more of fine yarn and would not like to spare it for outside market. You cannot also deny, whatever you might say in public, that the demands of the War Department or the Defence Department continues to be quite as large, if not larger than what it was a few months back apart from exports which this department or some other department of the Government allows. Therefore it is that the mills are not able to give you all the cloth that is required for civilian consumption and even if it comes to civilian consumption, at any rate the mills have not used their agency system properly in order to see that the cloth does reach the consumer and the consumer only.

The Textile Department of the Government sometime ago made a show of helping the people by asking the mills to manufacture what is called Standard Cloth. The standard cloth scheme worked only in Madras Province and in no other. Why? Because your authority over those licensees and over those

[Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty.]

mills was so slender and the people also did not care to co-operate with you. It must be said to the credit of Madras that it did co-operate with you and sold their standard cloth but how did you treat the Madras licensees? I will give you an example. You allowed the mills to manufacture similar cloth and mark the price almost about the same as that of the standard cloth, if not a little less. The mill standard cloth and the authorised standard cloth were sold to the wholesalers along with fine materials, a portion of this at a slightly lower rate and the wholesaler got more commission than he would get under the standard cloth licensed by the Government. Thus to the licensees of the standard cloth you gave 8 per cent., whereas the wholesaler got from the mill for the same kind of standard cloth as much as 20 per cent. He reserved 10 per cent. for himself and passed on the other 10 per cent. to the retailer. That is the way you worked the standard cloth system.

I do not see why you should not organise hand-spinning and hand-weaving also. Now is the time when you want all sorts of cloth and if you neglect one at the expense of another you are bound to suffer.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty: Sir, I am speaking on behalf of my Party and as such I am entitled to a little more time.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I do not know whether any such arrangement has been definitely arrived at that anyone wishing to speak on behalf of his Party should have more than 15 minutes. I allowed that yesterday because I was not quite sure as to what the arrangement was that the Parties had arrived at on this point. The suggestion was made and I said that if any such arrangement was arrived at I should be informed beforehand. Is it the desire of the House that any Member speaking on behalf of his Party should have 20 minutes? If that is their desire I have no objection.

Some Honourable Members: We agree.

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty: So far as Bengal is concerned, I really want to know whether it is the want of money or the want of cloth that is the trouble. If it is want of money, certainly Government have no excuse whatever, whether it be the Central or the Provincial Government to keep the people starving for want of cloth. And if it is only a question of want of cloth, where has the cloth gone? And what was the control which was exercised by Government in order to see that the cloth was received by the consumer?

An Honourable Member: It has gone underground.

Mr. Sami Venkatachelam Chetty: If that be so, I know if Government decide to ferret it out, they can do it. There is no denying the fact that they have ample powers under the Indian Penal Code, and they have got more powers under the Defence of India Rules, and anything can be done. I am surprised that people should die because they cannot cover their nakedness, and Government sit quiet here. Sir, if we criticise today this Department so far as cloth and yarn are concerned, it is in order to tell them that they have not been able to understand the whole process of manufacture and distribution and make proper arrangements for distribution for civilian needs. I am not so pessimistic as to suppose that the quantity of cloth is not quite sufficient. At least for the period of the war rationing must be introduced, your standard cloth must be reintroduced with greater vigour, and the sale at a cheaper rate of unauthorised mill-made standard cloth should be stopped. You may raise the commission for the standard cloth that is sold by licensees. Another point which I want to mention is with regard to the delivery of the standard cloth. In a number of bales I have seen damaged goods which I suppose were included by the mills in order to discourage the manufacture of standard cloth. These damaged goods were returned to the respective Government Departments and money demanded, but although it is now nearly more than 18 months since the claim was made, payment has not yet been made. In any case it will

be most criminal on the part of Government if a single man should complain that he has not the cloth with which to cover his shame.

Sir Vithal N. Chandavarkar (Bombay Millowners' Association: Indian Commerce): Sir, I am not standing here to defend my constituency or to show to the House the amount of co-operation we have given to the Textile Control Department. The Honourable the Commerce Member, if he is so inclined, will tell the House the amount of co-operation which we have given in the matter of introduction as well as of enforcement of the control order.

I shall speak first, Sir, about Bengal. I am not disputing the facts which have appeared from time to time in the press or which have been given to the House by the Honourable the Deputy President. Now the figures which I have with me were obtained by me in response to a request by my friend Mr. Neogy who had warned me that this motion was coming. These figures tally with the figures which appeared in a press article in Bombay some time ago. According to these figures the population of Bengal was entitled to receive for the 7 months ended January 1945, 1,20,050 bales. Actual shipments to Bengal were 1,79,034 bales. They were also allowed to keep their own manufactures which amounted to about 20,000 bales.

Now, there are various reasons why the cloth did not reach to the consumer. According to information we have, cloth is being increasingly smuggled to China where I understand one yard of cloth is being sold at the very attractive price of Rs. 10. Until recently I understand there was no ban on the export of cloth to Tibet, and large consignments, according to our information, have gone across the borders via Kalimpong.

In May 1944 a Committee was appointed to suggest ways and means as to how cloth could be made to reach the consumer. I was a member of that Committee, and the Textile Commissioner was also present at our meetings. There was a general measure of agreement between all my colleagues that unless provinces were brought under the control of the Textile Commissioner, it would be very difficult to enforce the control order. Our suggestion was,—it has not been accepted by Government—that unless Provincial Controllers are brought under the supervisory control of and made subordinate to the Central Commissioner, as Income-tax Officers are under the control of the Central Board of Revenue, there will be chaos and no proper enforcement of the control orders. By a unanimous vote of the Control Board when we met two months ago we reiterated our view in a resolution which we have submitted for the consideration of the Central Government.

Yesterday the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies talked of constitutional difficulties. I ask, if constitutional difficulties in the matter of the introduction of the Estate Duty Bill can be removed, can they not be overcome in order to supply people with one of their essential requirements? Are Government going to sit in Delhi and say, 'We have got to respect provincial autonomy, we cannot interfere?' In a similar emergency even in regard to self-governing municipalities there is a provision. Bombay Municipality is one of the most independent and self-governing municipalities in the country, but if the Bombay Government find that there is danger to public health and life, and the Municipality is not carrying out its duties, they have the right to interfere and take such measures as are necessary and debit the cost to the municipality.

I submit the control of food was a failure at first because the Central Government was vacillating; cloth has also been a failure, because all the Provincial Controllers have not been placed under my friend the Textile Commissioner. I was present by the kind invitation of the Textiles Commissioner at a conference where all the Provincial Controllers were gathered. Then mentality seemed to me, why should I sacrifice my Province for the sake of other Provinces? So long as this mentality is there—my Province first and the devil for others—I am afraid that whatever measures you may pass or take, whatever co-operation you may get from the millowners or from the dealers, it will be difficult to bring the goods home to the consumer. The bottom man

[Sir Vithal N. Chandavarkar.]

has got to be tackled, merely tackling the top man by, say, restricting sales of the mills, directing the mills to sell the goods to quota holders or freezing the goods in the hands of the mills will be of no avail. There are large stocks lying in Bombay as a result of the new distribution order, because it takes time to evolve measures for enforcing a new distribution scheme. There is a general impression that we dominate the Textile Control Board which is not correct as there are only three or four members who represent mill owners in the Distribution Committee of the Textile Control Board. The other members are representatives of distributors interests, consumers interests and provincial interests. I am not a member of the Distribution Committee. Various schemes have been brought forward and discussed informally between the Secretary to Government and ourselves, but when an agreement is arrived at and the scheme is passed by the Control Board it is said we are the makers of the scheme. Last time we insisted that the Government scheme for distribution should be submitted to us in writing, and that was done. Therefore the scheme of distribution which is now before the public is a scheme for which the Honourable the Commerce Member is responsible and not we nor anybody else. Now it is up to them to enforce that scheme. If statistics are to be believed, 4,800 million yards of cloth are available for civil consumption after providing for exports and for military requirements. This gives an all India average of 12 yards per head on 1941 census basis as against the pre-war figure of 16 yards per head. Now Bombay where the normal consumption was 25 yards per head before the war is getting 18 yards per head. The Punjab is getting 18 yards as against 22 yards. Bengal which was getting 12 yards per head before the war is allowed to buy 10 to 10½ yards per head.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): That is wrong.

Sir Vithal N. Chandavarkar: I am giving the figures which we have. The Honourable Member will correct if they are wrong. For all-India the average on 1941 census basis ought to be 12 yards per head. As the Honourable Member from Madras pointed out, there are bottlenecks everywhere: as a result of the freezing orders there are bottlenecks in manufacture, and we have the transport bottlenecks. A friend of mine who is manufacturing standard cloth on a large scale was complaining bitterly that more than 2,000 bales of standard cloth were lying in his godowns awaiting despatch. That is the position, and therefore before the House draws any adverse inference against us—I am not here to defend myself because I do not accuse myself—they should consider the facts. We are anxious that goods should reach the consumer.

On the export question—I am told that in my absence questions were put and our attitude has been misrepresented. Our attitude has been since the

1 P. M. scarcity started that our first duty is to the native of the soil. Secondly, if Government for political reasons want to export, then

the export should be allowed to countries from whom we get reciprocal advantages in the matter of food imports, etc. Thirdly, our contention is that if exports have to be made, then they should be made only to countries with whom we hope to continue these exports after the war is over. We do not want fair weather friends; we want to get friends who will be with us, whether in fair or foul weather. But what is the Government doing? For political reasons, at the request of H.M.G. they have been asking us to export goods to the middle east countries where there are no controls. I understand that one country in the middle east takes all the goods that are sent from India at controlled rates, and they have a state monopoly there and they sell it at 75 per cent. or 100 per cent. profit. Whatever the need might have been when the war was going against us to bribe these countries into neutrality, now that we have practically won the war there is no need to bribe these countries of the Middle East into neutrality. Government must see whether they should not say to them now—"We will not give you cloth, because you do not give

us anything back". That is our attitude; and I think Mr. Neegy is in a position to confirm that attitude, because it was enunciated by a colleague of mine at one of the earlier meetings of the Textile Control Board.

Before I sit down, I would like to urge upon the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies this fact: I tell him he may go on passing orders; he may go on promulgating Defence of India orders; but until the whole country is treated as one in the matter of distribution, until all the provincial controllers are placed under the control of the Textile Commissioner—the Provincial Governments should be asked to help, but the general policy should be that once the order is issued, the Provincial Controllers should be made accountable to him and nobody else; in any question of conflict between the Provincial Government or the Textile Controller, the Textile Controller must prevail; and unless that is done and unless questions are tackled in this way, I am afraid all these present anomalies will continue.

As far as yarn is concerned, I will state the position. The textile directorate placed before us figures based on the average of September 1944, and they showed there was a great shortage of yarn. We produced certain figures and they have not been challenged. There is according to some of us no physical shortage of cloth or yarn. What is happening, as my friend, Mr. Chetty, indirectly hit the nail on the head, is this: handloom cloth is not controlled or tex-marked, and it is profitable to make handloom cloth today and I do not grudge that profit to them. A lot of yarn is going there and people are hoarding that yarn, because yarn does not deteriorate by being kept for some time. Yarn is hoarded by these small power loom and small handloom owners.

Prof. N. G. Ranga (Guntur cum Nellore: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Not handloom weavers.

Sir Vithal N. Chandavarkar: They are not peasant weavers but they are master weavers who are doing this thing: they have the capacity to buy yarn, and if Government were to carry out a proper investigation and employed trained statistician, instead of asking some person who may be an expert in selling machinery but who is not an expert in preparing correct statistics as regards cloth and yarn; I am sure they will find that as far as yarn is concerned, there should be no physical shortage. Why do we not increase production? I tell you the reasons as regards dhotis and sarees . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has one minute more.

Sir Vithal N. Chandavarkar: Production has gone down; a large number of looms which were manufacturing dhotis and sarees have been working for Government orders; there is also a shortage of colours for borders; there is a shortage of double yarn for borders: we cannot import doubling and winding machines. These disabilities are there and we have been pressing on the Textile Control Board to allow us to import a larger number of doubling and winding machines for these purposes. If the Supply Department were to release a certain number of looms for these lines, we can go on to the manufacture of dhotis and sarees and thus relieve the shortage in them.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque (Member for Commerce and Industries and Civil Supplies): Sir, at the very outset I must acknowledge the help and co-operation that we have received from the textile industries; and yet with all that I have my fundamental difference of opinion with Sir Vithal Chandavarkar, I have not so far agreed that the handloom products should be tex-marked. For decades past the handloom weavers of this country have had to live under miserable conditions. I took the fullest responsibility on me when I decided, in spite of many efforts made, that if the handloom products are able to rehabilitate themselves in the midst of the war, it will be a gain to the country at large; and therefore I took the responsibility of settling that handloom products should not be tex-marked in any way.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Continue the good work.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am quite aware of the present distressing position. My friend asked me, why there should be shortage in Bengal. It is better that he may not ask me that question. (*An Honourable Member:* "Why"?). If I were to give the reason I would have to go back to the economic and political history of Bengal for the last thirty years: ever since I was a little child I have seen in my province more of politics than of economics; and even now I am not certain if life in the province is not dominated more by political than by economic considerations. I remember a day when the whole of Bengal boycotted foreign cigarettes: I know at least two districts of the province which grow a large amount of tobacco and I ask my friend Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta, who comes from the same province as mine as to why it is that not even a single factory was started to utilise the raw tobacco leaves for the purpose of manufacturing cigars and cigarettes. My friends can read the history of the development of the sugar industry in Bengal and find out why it is not in the hands of Bengalis. It is no use asking me the why and wherefore—I am dealing for the time being with established facts; I admit the difficulties of the present situation.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: It is not a recent event?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The recent events are due to the unhappy and unbalanced life that we led in the past. We thought that life was going to be as easy and as picturesque as we had in the past. But things have changed. One of the difficulties of the present Bengal position is that Bengal is the largest consuming centre in India but it is the least productive centre so far as yarn and textiles are concerned. My sympathies, as they must be not only as one who comes from that province but as it should be for every one else, must go to that unfortunate province in the present situation. Following the most distressing and tragic situation in that province, I realise that there have been immense difficulties in the matter of supply of cloth and yarn to that province. I myself come from a town which for centuries past has been reputed to produce the finest products of textiles almost with an international reputation; but when I go to my home town I find that there is difficulty of fine yarn. We were happy in the past because we imported fine yarns from other countries; and the penalty has to be paid some day for our own acts. It was because we did not visualise the future that we are now in this difficulty. Depended more on others, we cannot find out how to live today . . .

Mr. Sami Vencatachalam Chetty: It is only sympathy that goes there, not cloth, is it?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I may say that if I was a practising lawyer I would have argued that. (*An Honourable Member:* "You are".) But I have left the profession some time back and therefore I will deal with facts rather than with arguments of that nature. So far as Bengal position is concerned, before I deal with it, I would like to deal with the all India cloth and yarn position. I have been criticised more on the ground that I have not been able to take charge of the provincial distribution, not on the ground as to what we have done so far. The present system is this. We find out the total quantity of available cloth and yarn and try to distribute it on an equitable basis. Here again, unfortunately, reliable statistics as to the quantity of yarn and cloth needed and produced are not available, specially with reference to the handlooms. The only report which we have had is the report of the Fact Finding Committee and it is on the basis of the report of the Fact Finding Committee as also with such materials as are available in some of the economic reports that the question of allocation was decided upon and this allocation was based on the fact that we went by the number of looms that are existing at the present moment.

Let me speak first about the yarn. Compared with 1935-36 which I have taken to be normal years, the production in 1943-44 and in subsequent years has increased by at least 60 per cent. The total quantity of yarn available in 1935-36 was roughly about 1087 million yards. As against that, India in 1935-36 was roughly about 1,067 million yards. As against that, India is

producing today roughly about 1,500 to 1,600 million. We are not in a static condition of life. We are in a country where standards of living are gradually rising up and therefore in spite of 60 per cent. increase in production, we are not able to meet the demands of the country. (*An Honourable Member: "Export?"*) No. I hope my friend will kindly wait for the facts. So far as fine yarn is concerned, there has been practically no exports from this country. As against about 86 millions, only 2 thousand yards were exported in 1943-44. If my friend says that 2,000 yards out of 85 million will affect the situation, my friend can interrogate till doomsday. It is not a fact. Then again so far as the total export is concerned, the coarser yarns have been exported to the extent of only 15 million out of a production of 1,616 million. The export there also has been infinitesimally small. A large quantity of yarn is consumed by mills themselves for their own purposes, particularly the finer yarns. Naturally, only what is left over can be available for the purpose of distribution among the handlooms in this country. Here I have my fullest sympathy with Prof. Ranga but I am on the horns of a dilemma. I have got the total quantity fixed. Either the mills will consume it or the handlooms. If it is not consumed by the mills, then the production of the total quantity of textiles will be reduced.

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

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

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

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Haque: Sir, as I was explaining that as a result of constant pressure and efforts on the part of the Department, we have been able to get more production of yarn in the country both fine and coarse yarn, and also textile in general. But unfortunately, that is not enough for the existing needs of the country. As I have said the pre-war consumption of textile was roughly between 10 to 12 yards per head. The total amount which is now available for distribution to the whole of India is also approximately about 12 yards per head. Therefore, we have been able, in spite of defence needs, and a small quantity for export, by increased production to get 12 yards per head for the whole of India. But as I said before, there is a rise of a consuming class, in their purchasing powers. That is the difficulty. I should only say one word more about Bengal position so far as yarn and cloth are concerned. I think the controversy about yardage should not be there. In spite of the fact that a quota was fixed at ten yards, as I had explained, in actual fact we have tried to supply to the Province more than that quantity. In Bengal as against ten yards per annum for the last seven months we have at least given at the rate of 13.9 yards per annum. Therefore we have not really stuck to ten yards and hence to criticise us on the ground that we are supplying only ten yards is not entirely correct. Again, I can assure the House that we will try to keep up, as much as we can, over and above the ten yards quota for the special needs of Bengal or for any deficit area which is in the country.

As regards yarn, the total available number of bales is roughly about 68,000 bales for the whole of India after consumption by the mills. My friend says why don't you take more from the mills. That is a very good suggestion. You have two cows, take away the cows and give the milk to others. That is a very nice proposition. You do not want to leave anything for the mills. These mills started their looms for their own consumption; over and above that they are producing and that quantity is available. You ask me to take more from them.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: They are consuming much more than before.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Haque: If they are consuming more, they are also producing more. They do not eat yarn. They do not make yarn sometimes as we make it in politics.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Let the handloom weavers use them.

The Honourable Sir M. Azisul Huque: They are utilising yarn for the production of textiles. Out of these 65,000 to 68,000 bales, we have distributed *pro rata* on the basis of facts available to us. Let me here say that after doing that, we knew there might be difficulties here and there. We have written to the different Provinces so that they might give us actual facts on the basis of which we can allocate. Two months before we wrote to the Provinces. As far as my impression goes, excepting from one Province, no reply has come from others. Whatever that may be, for the time being we have allotted as quota for Bengal roughly about 6,148 bales out of 68,000 bales, that is roughly about one-eleventh and we will try, because we have got a little surplus at our hands, it may be possible we will get a little more, we will try to supply specially to Bengal, C.P. and other places more.

I will just now try to recapitulate what happened. It was towards the end of May 1943 that the first Conference of Provinces and States was convened to discuss the entire cloth situation. At that time, we had to face two problems, one the cloth famine, but with enough cloth in the country, and secondly, high prices. Sir, we simultaneously took two measures, the first measure was to put all the hoarded stock into the market. We declared a date within which all the clothes were to be sold but at that time we had practically no data. We made an approximate estimate of stocks, a guess and an estimate and we gave roughly about four months times for their sale. As soon as we did that, then within the course of a month or two those who pleaded that there was no stock available in the country said that there was so much stock that they would not be able to sell them in four months. We took figures for stock of the entire quantity available in the country. At the end of July, we found that there was lying with the dealers, quite apart from the continuous mill production, a quantity of cloth equal to 2,700 million yards. It would have been a mistake on our part if we had forced the sale of that huge quantity in four months. Therefore, we decided that the quantity in view of the special conditions and the conditions before that, ought to be consumed within the following six months and we fixed 31st December as the last date of sale, and we stuck to the date. We ordered that quantity to be sold, and if it was not sold, then it was frozen or distributed in such a way as the Textile Commissioner decided. Along with that, we also introduced the scheme of standard cloth. The standard cloth production required fixation of price, its production, then distribution and to a certain extent reduction of categories. For a time it went off well, but then came inevitable difficulties in distribution in some areas. May I here state that we did not despatch cloth of any kind except on indents and indents from the different local areas failed to equate to their needs. Supposing a man wanted five or six yards sized cloth, he did not really indent as much as he needed. There were difficulties and they were rectified. Then came a certain falling off in the demand for standard cloth. I know there were some Provinces who asked us not to send any more standard cloth.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Because of its bad quality, was it not?

The Honourable Sir M. Azisul Huque: No, that is the danger of stating a fact without knowing.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Let us know the true facts.

The Honourable Sir M. Azisul Huque: It is not a fact. The standard cloth was not the entire production of the country. There are other varieties and this was left to trade adjustment with over-all profit margin fixed.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar (Salem and Coimbatore *cum* North Arcot: Non-Muhammadan Rural): The Honourable Member has not given the reason why certain Governments refused to take standard cloth.

The Honourable Sir M. Azisul Huque: Because as I said there was a new consuming class in the country who having enough purchasing power in their

hands were not prepared to use the coarser variety but were anxious for the finer variety. I am quite prepared to state these facts because that was the reply given to us. On the other hand, I have seen with my own eyes in some Provinces, particularly in Bihar, in rural areas, there was a very wide demand for standard cloth and I have seen how standard cloth did sell. Well, Sir, the circumstances under which one Province did not want standard cloth and another Province wanted such standard cloth as we could supply were all due to local conditions. In any case, so far as the rest of the cloth is concerned, it was left to trade. As my Honourable friend Mr. Sami Vencatachalam Chetty said there came a new body of wholesalers who took away the entire margin of profit, 20 per cent. intended for the entire chain of distributors. We left the margin of 20 per cent. between the mill and the consumer and we thought that the trade will play the game and that the 20 per cent. would be equitably distributed. Last year, when I went on tour, I found that some of these wholesale dealers in some areas played havoc with the system. They took away the entire 20 per cent. and with this 20 per cent. profit in view, though I do not know personally, sons-in-law and relatives and others crept in. As I said, I have heard about it from different areas. In any case, the fact remains that a section of these wholesale dealers played havoc with distribution system almost in every part of India. Naturally the licensing system had to be introduced in some of the provinces. Licenses were cancelled in cases of malpractice. Then we thought that the state of affairs in which the retail trader and the consumer are at the entire mercy of the wholesale dealer is not a satisfactory system. I saw with my own eyes that a man in Calcutta who is a wholesale dealer was not prepared to sell it to a retail dealer in the mofussil without taking less profit than 20 per cent. Naturally what could the poor man do? If he has to keep to the letter of the law he must pay the transport charges, he must pay from his own pocket the godown charges, the railway freights and then sell with no profit. That state of affairs could not continue, and we thought that a new distributive system should be devised. We discussed this with all Provinces and States and we are just about to introduce a new system throughout India with the unanimous agreement of all the distributing agents, part of which has been introduced in Bombay, Ahmedabad and the rest of the part, I expect, to be introduced throughout India in the course of the next few weeks. Under this system all wholesale purchasers from mills, that is to say, those persons who actually take delivery of goods from mills, will constitute into a number of groups according to the area; that is, the Ahmedabad group or the Bombay group or the Calcutta group, etc. And they are not to sell cloth to anybody except under the authority of the Textile Commissioner of the Central Government. In other words, any sale by any of these wholesale direct dealers will be under the authority of the Textile Commissioner. After that the Textile Commissioner will allot the total quantity available to the provinces and States; and then come the provinces and States. The provincial authorities will select and give licences to their own distributing dealers and allocate the quantity which has been allotted by the Textile Commissioner among the distributing dealers in different parts of the province. The result will be that only those licensed dealers who have been licensed by the Provincial Government.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghaznavi (Dacca *Cum* Mymensingh: Muhammadan Rural): Is it subject to your approval?

The Honourable Sir M. Azisul Huque: So far as the provinces are concerned, we will certainly keep a watch over it, but the licenses are to be granted by the provinces; because, in the first place, neither I nor the Textile Commissioner can possibly know, in 450 or 460 districts of India, who the actual dealers are. But the Provincial Government will distribute among its own dealers, and none except one, who is licensed by the Provincial Government will be able to purchase any cloth from these wholesale units.

Sardar Sant Singh (West Punjab: Sikh): Will the Central Government issue any instructions to the Provincial Government to whom to give licenses, or will previous trade interests be taken into consideration?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I consider myself that the Provincial Government and their authorities are as much responsible and as anxious to do the best to their own people as I am, and I do not, except when there is gross abuse of power, wish to butt in upon any matter which lies entirely with them. Sir, I know there are troubles; I know there is likely to be abuses. But can you devise any human system (except God himself) which can take all the power in one's own hands and consider that every one else must necessarily make abuses? For a country like India you cannot. You have to think out of more devolution, more distribution, more responsibility; and I consider that my Honourable friend Sardar Sant Singh is as much competent and responsible as I myself in a matter of this character. The position today is this that the Provincial Government is responsible for distribution, but I must frankly admit that they have not much control over the dealers.

Mr. Manu Subedar (Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau: Indian Commerce): They have no experience; why don't you take control?

An Honourable Member: And there is a lot of corruption too.

Mr. Sami Vencatachalam Chetty: Why should the Provincial Controllers come into this scene if the wholesaler of that province who takes delivery of goods from the mills is made responsible for the distribution over retail dealers? Why should these men come in?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: That is a system which we have tried to our dismal cost. We thought that the wholesale dealers will take delivery and equitably distribute it. They did not do it and that is why we have to change the system.

Mr. Sami Vencatachalam Chetty: Are you aware that the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills are following that system?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: They may do it, but I cannot say, the same thing of other areas.

Now, therefore, the system will be that the Provincial Governments and States will not only be responsible for the distribution of cloth but will actually control the people who will distribute the cloth, and therefore they will be able to keep a firm hand over the whole situation. And, as I say, the Provincial Governments and States will make their own distributive arrangements. Here I might say that the margin of profit has now been allocated. Those who take directly from the mills will be allowed only 3 per cent. out of the 20 per cent. margin, and out of 17 per cent. our general direction is that the actual retailer in the village or in an outlying town must have at least 8½ to 10 per cent. of the profit in order that it may be worth while for him to take this cloth to the villages. In other words, we have not left it as before to the discretion of any section of the trade, but we have allocated the share of the man who takes from the mill to 3 per cent., the man who is the wholesaler in the metropolitan towns to about 8½ per cent. and the man in the village to 8½ to 10 per cent. according to circumstances.

This is the position which we have come to so far. I know that no human system can be perfect. I know that whether it is administration by the Central or by the Provincial Government, there can be abuse; and I myself do not claim any virtue, specially because I am a part of the Central Government, which cannot be equally claimed by those who are responsible in the Provinces.

Sir, we have done so far that there is today not a single piece of cloth coming out of a mill anywhere in India which has not the stamp of the month of production, a stamp of the wholesale price, a stamp of the consumer's price, and in addition a legal liability that every one of these cloths must be sold out within a date, which is six months in so far as the wholesaler is concerned and 12 months so far as the retailer is concerned. I know there have been quite a number of cases in which cloth has been hoarded and the men have been prosecuted because cloth which was to be sold out in six or twelve months has not been sold. At the same time the system is not too rigid. If there is a *bona fide* case where the cloth could not be sold for good reasons, we have

ourselves given permission to have it sold out in later months and we have given special permits. This stamp of the date of production and of the price are given by mills and not the Textile Commissioner's office. But it is in accordance with a schedule—a schedule of over 30,000 items and in every case we had to assess the price on consideration of varying component factors coming into the question of production. There have been cases of malpractices found, and in any case where there has been a malpractice we have immediately arranged that there should be no more direct stamping by these mills except under our pre-inspection. We have put our inspectorate and supervisory staff there, and as soon as a malpractice has been brought to our notice we have placed our men there. Sir, in addition to that owing to various malpractices we have taken charge of the entire distribution of cloth of twelve mills in Bombay, Ahmedabad and other places. Some of them are very big ones but we have not hesitated to take immediate action in taking charge of the entire control of distribution of these mills. But surely my Honourable friends would not ask me that simply because one holds a certain particular doctrine he must take command of all the mills in India, even though they are not guilty of malpractices. Again we have not only taken charge of distribution, but we have taken charge of the entire production and distribution of two big mills. We have started prosecution against three other mills for malpractices, and whenever any case is brought to our notice, I can assure the House, that we take immediate steps to find out, and if necessary, have followed it up by the necessary steps in the matter.

The price today, as I said yesterday, is just half of what it was in June, 1948. And here when the discussion turns round the question of 10 yards and 12 yards per population, I will only say that I hope it will be realised that when the total distribution is on the basis of 10 or 12 yards it does not necessarily mean that every purchaser should have that quantity. It is well known that if there is a population in a town of, say, 10 thousand—everybody does not go to purchase cloth: quite a lot of women do not go, quite a lot of children do not go, men who are not in good means do not go to purchase—and if one out of three on the average goes to make purchases and when there is ten yards of cloth per head for distribution, every purchaser should have a quota of about 30 to 40 yards.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa: Muhammadan Rural): But not more than 10 yards is sold to one individual.

The Honourable Sir M. Asirul Huque: As I have said, if the new system is introduced, that question will be looked into.

Then, Sir, we have suffered to a certain extent owing to difficulties of quick transport and also because our finer quantities are not available to the fullest extent. Sir, war means sacrifice, and if the only sacrifice we have to do is to forego the use of fine cloth. I believe we have got over very cheap. I personally do not think that the absence of fine cloth as we need is such a penalty which we should not be prepared to pay in the midst of difficult conditions all round.

Sir, my Honourable friend yesterday demonstrated a piece of cloth. I am required to have in my command the production of every mill in India and I have to take command of the most efficient mills as also of the most inefficient mills. Sir, supposing I fix the price on a general level, then it may be that the man in the margin is not getting enough or that the man at the top is getting more than he should, and that being so we have tried to assess the value of cloth in accordance with the actual cost of production *plus* such margin as we have uniformly allowed to all mills. If my friend's mill produced the finest cloth at a certain rate and I produce the coarsest cloth at the same rate, what would my Honourable friend ask me to do in the general interest of the country?

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: I appreciate the explanation given by the Honourable Member. My only point was that the department should also see which mills are prepared to do at cheaper rates. In October a certain class of

[Mr. Muhammad Nauman.]

muslin which was far better in quality was produced at a price of annas eight per yard, whereas a coarser muslin is selling at eleven annas a yard in January 1945. So I said, was the trend going up?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I can quite appreciate that point, but I was trying to explain that it is just possible that whereas the fine cloth of one mill is fixed at eight annas, the coarse cloth of another mill is also approximately of the same price, and if I am to control all the mills I must allow a margin for cost of production and profit. Sir, at the same time if I am to be told that Indian or any society has come to such a position that we have got the millennium, we have got heaven in earth, that five-thousand-million yards of cloth distributed in thousands of people is being sold without some loophole somewhere, I, for one, cannot believe it. At the same time, if my Honourable friend would again turn over his old pages of inductive logic, he will find that it is a most dangerous thing to come to a conclusion on one isolated fact. That isolated fact may be an exception, may be an abuse of authority, and I would be very glad, as I have said before, if such matters are brought to my notice. Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall from Bhagalpur drew my attention to one such case six months ago and I took immediate action, and I do appeal once again to Members that if I can get that co-operation from every section of the House, and if Members would write to us of cases where there is a likelihood or suspicion of abuse, I can assure you that we will take prompt steps in the matter.

As regards dyers and printers of my Honourable friend, Mr. Yusuf Abdulla Haroon, I think he knows where the fault lies and I know where the fault lies. . . .

Prof. N. G. Ranga: So it is mutual understanding!

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Mystery!

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: As I have said before, I am aware of the difficulties of the present situation. We are trying our level best to overcome those difficulties, we are trying to struggle with the situation, and as I have said if a man can get two morsels more and it is within my power to give, I will certainly do it. But, Sir, unfortunately, I have not got it. . . .

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): You have now spoken for about 35 minutes.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I will finish in two minutes, Sir.

Mr. Sri Prakasa (Allahabad and Jhansi Divisions: Non-Muhammadian Rural): No supply of minutes!

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): But he is spinning a yarn!

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: There are two points more. A suggestion has been made about rationing. Sir, with too many sartorial habits and designs as is sometimes reflected in our own surroundings, it is extraordinarily difficult to come to a conclusion on a general formula as to what should be the sartorial rationing. But all I can say is that I am looking into this matter and I can assure you, Sir, that if something is possible I will try to do it.

So far as punishment is concerned, I entirely agree. We will very soon have the need of strengthening the hands of law in certain areas in order to weed out the hoarders and black-marketeers of cloth. I can assure you that we will very soon be looking into the question of what we can do in this matter.

There is one point more. I hope you also realize that we have been trying to get as much import of fine yarn as possible and we are trying to encourage the production of cottage industries in handlooms. As soon as the Handloom Board is constituted—a letter has gone to the Provinces for the names of representatives—we will do our best in the matter.

I am sorry I had to condense all the points but if my Honourable friends want to know our point of view on a very vast question like this, I have to

beg your indulgence that I have to be so inordinately long. I have to deal with a few more points which I hope to do when I next get a chance to speak on this subject.

Mr. K. G. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): My Honourable friend in his usual eloquence referred to the political and economic history of the past half a century which has got to explain the peculiar situation that at the present moment obtains in Bengal. In the course of his speech, the Honourable Member instanced the case of his own native town which was deservedly famous for its handloom products and which, unfortunately, has dwindled for want of adequate support. Sir, if I were to refer to one kind of textile article which made my native place famous, I would have to go back to the economic and political history of a few centuries. But Sir, there is no time for that, nor, as far as I can see, the past history, either of the economics or politics of this country, is at all relevant to the consideration of this question. We are concerned with the circumstances that have led to this unfortunate position.

Sir, my Honourable friend did not, unfortunately, refer to some of the general points which I take it would be welcome to the House for the purpose of understanding the situation.

The present production in the country if every yard of it were available for consumption within the country by the civilian population, **3 P.M.** would not be adequate. That is an admission which I think was made by the Honourable Member in reply to a question some time ago in this House.

The next fact that is important to remember is that in spite of this position, we have to find 900 million yards for Defence Services even during this year, and 600 million yards for export abroad. Now my Honourable friend omitted to mention the nature of our obligation in regard to the export market, but before I come to that I would like to say a word with regard to the Defence Services requirements. When I talk about the requirements of the Defence Services it must be made clear to the House that the requirements of certain semi-military organisations, or organisations that owe their origin to the war in very many ways, are cutting into the civilian quota. Their demands and needs are not being met at the present moment from the Defence Services allocation. Take the case of the Red Cross, the hospitals, then the A.R.P. organizations and things of that character. All of them take their quota from the civilian allotment.

Then, Sir, coming to the export market. On previous occasions erroneous impressions were sought to be created in the House as regards the nature and extent of our commitments in this regard. We were told at one time that the industry wants the export market to be maintained for their benefit. Later we were told that it is not so much in the interest of the industry as that of the export traders in seeing the export market maintained. Thereafter we had a statement, which is rather illuminating, from the Honourable Member to the following effect:

"All foreign countries do not state their requirements to the Government of India as regards their quota. But quotas are determined in accordance with global planning scheme which is discussed with His Majesty's Government and subsequently considered by the Combined Production and Resources Board at Washington. The types of goods licensed for export against quota are controlled by the Government of India in the light of supply position in the country."

So that what this country is to have for the purpose of meeting the internal requirements is ultimately determined at Washington. And what is it that the Government of India does in this matter? "The types of goods licensed for export are controlled by the Government of India" after the quotas are fixed at Washington. This at least shows that the political and economic history of this country at the present moment is very relevant to the consideration of this issue.

Another factor bearing on that point is the preference given for instance to the jute mill industry in the matter of coal supplies. It is a fact that the cotton mills had to go idle to a certain extent in Bengal, and to a larger extent

[Mr. K. C. Neogy.]

perhaps in some other parts of the country, for want of adequate supplies of coal, and it has been admitted authoritatively that during December the country has lost 25 million yards of textile production for this reason alone, and in January, 23 and odd million yards, in all over 48 million yards have been lost to the country in two months because of coal shortage; and all the while coal which was not originally intended for the jute mill industry was being diverted by the help of Defence of India Rules and Orders for the benefit of the jute industry. That also is an admitted fact, admitted on the floor of this House by the Honourable the Supply Member a few days ago. That also is a point bearing on the present-day political and economic history of this country.

In a reply which my Honourable friend gave to my question the other day, he said all this shortage of production has to be borne by the civilian consumer in India and that the present quotas for export are not going to be affected by this shortage. Of course he said that the matter would be taken up for consideration in the future for seeing as to whether the future quotas for export could be reduced.

The Honourable Sir M. Azisul Huque: On a point of explanation. I hope my friend would understand what I stated that in fixing the next export quota this would be considered. With regard to the future.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Yes; I know, so far as our present troubles are concerned, they would have to be borne with fortitude, and we will have to live in the hope that those who determine our destinies in Washington will have the good sense to allow a reduction being made in the export quotas in the next allotment. That is all that my Honourable friend's interruption amounts to.

Then I come to a few small points which my Honourable friend made and in regard to which he is not wholly accurate. My Honourable friend made the point that not much of fine yarn is being exported. Now, Sir, whether it is fine yarn or cloth made out of fine yarn that is exported, does not make much difference.

The Honourable Sir M. Azisul Huque: No!

Mr. K. C. Neogy: My friend had better wait till I give him the fact I have in mind. This is what I find in the *Indian Textile Journal* for January 1945 on page 252. This is a speech made by Mr. Thackersey, Chairman of the Textile Control Board in Bombay, at a meeting of that Board on Thursday, 25th January. He says:

"The Export Committee have further recommended that the quota of fine cloth of 40s warp and over at present exported out of India, should be substantially reduced."

My Honourable friend tried to make out there is no considerable export of fine yarn and by his recent interruption tried to make out that much of fine cloth also was not being exported. I will leave my Honourable friend to read that particular extract which I have placed before the House and tell us as to whether he is correct in his assumption.

The Honourable Sir M. Azisul Huque: Yes, I am correct.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Now, Sir, another serious inaccuracy into which the Honourable Member had fallen was in regard to the pre-war *per capita* consumption of cotton textiles. This is a very important point, because all his theories, all his calculations are based upon the pre-war *per capita* consumption. Now, Sir, I have in my hand the report of the Fact Finding Committee dated February 1942. It is Dr. Thomas's report. If my Honourable friend were to refer to page 291 of this report, Appendix XXI, he will find that in the year 1938-39 the *per capita* consumption was 15.4 yards; and it was not a singular thing. If my Honourable friend were to go into the figures for several other previous years, he would find that 15 was reached or

exceeded in several years. That much for my Honourable friend's calculations of the pre-war consumption rate per head.

I do not want to take up more time of the House, because the time allotted to this Party is getting very short. I want to know from my Honourable friend whether, apart from devising a new scheme and leaving it to be administered by the Provinces, the Textile Commissioner, Mr. Vellodi, in whom, I believe, there is general confidence in the country, will have any actual supervisory authority over provincial distribution agencies. That is a point which was raised by my Honourable friend Sir V. Chandavarkar, and that is a very important point. I should like to say this on behalf of this side of the House that whatever scheme Government may adopt, the Central control over it should be real and not illusory. I do not want to say anything hard about our Provincial Ministers, but the general impression is that if you were to leave things entirely to them, having regard to our past experience, the situation may be very seriously mismanaged. That much I am bound to say. Beyond that I am not prepared to go.

My Honourable friend said that war means sacrifice, and in this instance the sacrifice that was wanted of the people was that instead of having fine cloth they should be satisfied with coarse cloth. There could be no greater travesty of the present situation, when, as reported in the papers, women folk have committed suicide for their inability to clothe themselves. My Honourable friend certainly does not intend to say that it is because of the fastidiousness of the people that they have to come to this pass.

The Honourable Sir M. Asiful Huque: I was not saying that at all. I made it quite clear that I was aware of the shortage position in regard to coarser yarns but I was merely arguing about the shortage of fine cloth.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: As to what my Honourable friend is going to do about increasing the supplies, I am not going to repeat what my Honourable friend Sir Vithal Chandavarkar has said on this point. I have here in my hand a letter, which was not intended to be used in this House in connection with this debate, written by a very well known mill-owner. This is what he says:

"This serious situation is the direct result of a considerable number of spindles being diverted to Government orders and Defence requirements in addition to the stoppage caused to a number of mills through shortage of coal and fuel supplies."

This mill produced very large quantities of yarn. So far as these Coimbatore mills are concerned, they are happy in this that they do not have to depend on coal supplies as they have hydro-electric power made available to them from Pykhara.

Now look at the difficulties which these people have to encounter. The writer says that "it is possible to work the factories for longer hours and thus increase production and make a reasonable quantity of yarn available for handloom consumption. But there seems to be no encouragement"—I address these remarks to the Honourable the Finance Member, who luckily for us is present just now—"to work longer hours, because the Income-tax Department allows a statutory depreciation of 10 per cent. for single shift and only 15 per cent. for double shift on machinery irrespective of the number of hours worked and that too on the basis of the original cost, which has no relation to the replacement cost". The House will thus realise that we have more than one Department of the Government to be held responsible for the *impasse* in which we find ourselves.

Some Honourable Members: The question be now put.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The question is: "That the question be now put".

The motion was adopted.

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

"That the demand under the head 'Department of Industries and Civil Supplies' be reduced by Rs. 100."

The Assembly divided:

AYES—53

Abdul Basith Choudhury, Dewan.
 Abdul Ghani, Maulvi Muhammad.
 Abdul Qaiyum, Mr.
 Abdullah, Mr. H. M.
 Ahsan, Mr. Muhammad.
 Ayyangar, Mr. M. Ananthasayanam.
 Banerjee, Dr. P. N.
 Chattopadhyaya, Mr. Amarendra Nath.
 Chettiar, Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam.
 Chetty, Mr. Sami Venkatachalam.
 Choudhury, Mr. Muhammad Hussain.
 Chunder, Mr. N. O.
 Daga, Seth Sheodass.
 Dam, Mr. Ananga Mohan.
 Das, Mr. B.
 Desai, Mr. Bhulabhai J.
 Deshmukh, Mr. Govind V.
 Desak Sait, Mr. H. A. Sathar H.
 Fazli-Haq Piracha, Khan Bahadur Shaikh.
 Gauri Shankar Singh, Mr.
 Ghiasuddin, Mr. M.
 Habibur Rahman, Dr.
 Hans Raj, Raizada.
 Hegde, Sri K. B. Jinaraja.
 Hoemani, Mr. S. K.
 Ismail Khan, Hajee Chowdhury Muhammad.
 Joshi, Mr. N. M.
 Krishnamachari, Mr. T. T.
 Lahiri Chaudhury, Mr. D. K.
 Lakkhighand, Mr. Rajmal.
 Lalehand Navairai, Mr.
 Liaquat Ali Khan, Nawabsada Muhammad.
 Mangal Singh, Sardar.
 Manu Subedar, Mr.
 Mehr Shah, Nawab Sahibsada Sir Sayad Muhammad.
 Misra, Pandit Shambhudayal.
 Naidu, Mr. G. Rangiah.
 Nairang, Syed Ghulam Bhik.
 Nauman, Mr. Muhammad.
 Neogy, Mr. K. C.
 Pande, Mr. Badri Dutt.
 Raghubir Narain Singh, Chondhri.
 Ram Narayan Singh, Mr.
 Ramayan Prasad, Mr.
 Ranga, Prof. N. G.
 Ray, Mrs. Renuka.
 Raza Ali, Sir Syed.
 Reddiar, Mr. K. Sitarama.
 Satyanarayana Moorty, Mr. A.
 Sham Lal, Lala.
 Siddique Ali Khan, Nawab.
 Sinha, Mr. Satya Narayan.
 Sri Prakasa, Mr.
 Srivastava, Mr. Hari Sharan Prasad.
 Subbarayan, Shrinati K. Radha Bai.
 Yamin Khan, Sir Muhammad.
 Yusuf Abdoola Haroon, Seth.
 Zafar Ali Khan, Maulana.

NOES—45

Ahmad Nawaz Khan, Major Nawab Sir.
 Ambedkar, The Honourable Dr. B. R.
 Azizul Huque, The Honourable Sir M.
 Benthall, The Honourable Sir Edward.
 Bewoor, Sir Gurunath.
 Caroe, Sir Olaf.
 Chandavarkar, Sir Vithal N.
 Chapman-Mortimer, Mr. T.
 Chatterjee, Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C.
 Daga, Seth Sunder Lal.
 Dalal, Dr. Sir Ratanji Dinshaw.
 Dalal, The Honourable Sir Ardeshir.
 Dalpat Singh, Sardar Bahadur Captain.
 Ghumnavi, Sir Abdul Halim.
 Gwilt, Mr. E. L. O.
 Habibur Rahman, Khan Bahadur Sheikh.
 Haider, Khan Bahadur Shamsuddin.
 Imam, Mr. Saiyid Haider.
 Inskip, Mr. A. C.
 Ismail Alikhan, Kunwer Hajee.
 Jawahar Singh, Sardar Bahadur Sardar Sir.
 Jehangir, Sir Cowasjee.
 Kamaluddin Ahmad, Shams-ul-Ulema.
 Khare, The Honourable Dr. N. B.
 Krishnamoorthy, Mr. E. S. A.
 Kushal Pal Singh, Raja Bahadur.
 Lawson, Mr. C. P.
 Muazzam Sahib Bahadur, Mr. Muhammad.
 Mudie, The Honourable Sir Francis.
 Piere Lal Kureel, Mr.
 Raisman, The Honourable Sir Jeremy.
 Richardson, Sir Henry.
 Roy, The Honourable Sir Asoka.
 Shahban, Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad.
 Sheehy, Sir John.
 Spence, Sir George.
 Srivastava, The Honourable Sir Jwalá Prasad.
 Stokes, Mr. H. G.
 Sultan Ahmed, The Honourable Sir.
 Sundaresan, Mr. N.
 Thakur Singh, Capt.
 Trivedi, Mr. C. M.
 Tyson, Mr. G. W.
 Tyson, Mr. J. D.
 Vellodi, Mr. M. K.

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 89.—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The next Demand is 39.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman (Finance Member): Sir, I move:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 12,62,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1946, in respect of 'Geological Survey'."

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

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 12,62,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1946, in respect of Geological Survey."

Government Policy re Mineral Resources of India

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Sir, I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Geological Survey' be reduced by Rs. 100."

As indicated in the notice, my desire is to discuss Government's policy with regard to the mineral resources of India. But, having regard to the hour I should like my Honourable friend to have as much time as possible for making a statement, which we all desire. I have already indicated to him the various points which I would have liked to deal with had I the time to make a speech on this occasion. As it is more important that we should have a statement from him than that I should make a speech, I should very much appreciate it if my Honourable friend could make an informative statement.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Cut motion moved.

"That the demand under the head 'Geological Survey' be reduced by Rs. 100."

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member): Mr. Deputy President, I am indeed very glad that Mr. Neogy should have thought of such a cut motion as the one he has moved, because the cut motion gives Government the opportunity to explain its mineral policy which it had not got so far. There is so much ignorance and so much misunderstanding about the matter that I think it is in the interest of everybody that so important a matter as the mineral policy of the Government of India should be explained fully to the House. Sir, I regret, and I have no doubt that there are other Members of the House who will share that feeling that owing to the exigencies of the time-table, Mr. Neogy did not have the opportunity of making a verbal statement explaining the points he wanted to make. I quite appreciate, and indeed I am very grateful to him for having cut short his speech and gave his time to enable me to make a statement.

Sir, this is a matter in which I think it is better to be very candid and say that the Government of India so far had really no mineral policy. It may be a ground for complaint. But it need not be a ground for surprise. The responsibility for the absence of a mineral policy has been sought to be placed in certain quarters at the door of the Geological Survey of India. I am sure that that is a wrong charge; and I propose to devote the first few minutes that I have in order to dispel such an impression.

I think it will be admitted that the mineral policy of any government is necessarily dependent upon the industrial policy of that government. Minerals necessarily play a great part in the industrial development of the country and if the country has no industrial policy, obviously there cannot be a mineral policy at all. This House is aware that until the Government of India decided to have as its aim and object the reconstruction of the economic and industrial life of this country in the post-war period Government in this country played very small part in the industrialisation of the country.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: What a pity!

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Whether it is a matter for pity or whether it is a matter of anger is not for the moment my concern. All that I am trying to show is that if there has been no mineral policy, the fault is not of the Geological Survey of India. The fault lay with the Government of the day; the fault perhaps lay with the Legislature and, it may be, with other organisations which were interested in the economic and industrial life of the country.

The second reason why the Geological Survey did not play the part that geological surveys in other parts of the world do play is largely due to the fact that this is one of the departments which has always been under-staffed. I would like to tell the House a little history with regard to the staffing and the provision of the technical personnel of the Geological Survey of India. In 1920 sanction was obtained for an increase in the superior gazetted staff of the Geological Survey. Unfortunately there was much difficulty in getting a trained personnel that it took practically nine years to fill the required number. The pity of the matter was that as soon as this number was filled, the Legislature in 1931 carried a motion for economy and almost all

[Dr. B. R. Ambedkar.]

these men who were recruited had to be axed. I point that out in order to show that if the Geological Survey Department did not play its part in the mineral policy of the Government of India, the legislature to some extent is responsible for that result.

In the limited time that I have, I do not wish to dwell more on the past. I wish to speak about the future. I am glad to say that the Government of India has now accepted the need for a definite mineral policy. That is largely due to the fact that the Government of India has taken a decision to have a drive in favour of bringing about the industrialisation of the country. The mineral policy of the Government of India has been set out in section 14 of the second report on Reconstruction and Planning. I have no time to read section 14 or even to give the gist of that paragraph. I have no doubt that the Members of the Legislature who are interested in the matter will look up section 14 and see for themselves what exactly that policy is.

To summarise the matter briefly, the mineral policy of the Government of India and the action which the Government of India propose to take in furtherance of that policy falls into two parts: in the first place, we propose to reconstitute the Geological Survey of India in order to make it a more potent instrument for the furtherance of our policy. Accordingly, a detailed scheme of expansion of the survey has been drawn up and administratively approved. The new branches of the Geological Survey which we propose to set up will deal with engineering geology, industrial utilisation of minerals, central mineral development, geophysical work, oil development. It will include the establishment of a natural history museum, and a publicity section in order to keep the public informed of what is being done.

The second part of our mineral policy consists of legislation, which the Government of India propose to initiate for the purpose of establishing control over minerals. In defining the limits of legislative control over the minerals, we propose to take into consideration the following circumstances. One, the importance of the mineral from the defence point of view on all India mineral development; two, the technical nature of the mineral; three, the purposes for which the mineral is used; four, the value of the mineral or of the products into the making of which the mineral enters. Our legislative provisions will fall into two classes, or rather divide the minerals into two classes: those which will be subjected to general control: and under general control we propose to confine ourselves to the granting of prospecting and mining leases, the terms and conditions of such licenses and termination thereof. Then there will be other minerals, which will be selected for more detailed control. The number of such minerals which are suggested for more detailed control are about 28. I do not propose to detail them here. The detailed control will include besides the power to grant licenses, the power to control the method of mining, of processing, of grading, of standardising, to direct improvement of mining and procuring methods, and also the power to initiate research for increased utilisation and for other necessary purposes.

I have stated as briefly as I can within the time available to me the general policy which the Government of India propose to adopt in regard to minerals.

I propose now to turn to some of the specific points of which Mr. Neogy had given notice to me. The first point to which he has referred was the export of minerals. I would like to assure the House that in the contemplated legislation there will undoubtedly be provisions for dealing with the export of minerals outside India. The question really is whether we can completely stop the export of our minerals. The answer to that question must necessarily depend upon another question, namely, shall we be able to import those minerals in which India is deficient if we completely stop the export of our own minerals? As Honourable Members are aware, India is in fact deficient in such important minerals as oil, copper, lead, zinc, tin and

sulphur. Consequently the question of export has to be considered in the light of the effect it may produce on our ability to import things of which we have a deficiency. The course which appears safest to the Government of India is to regulate the export of those minerals of which we are in short supply and which are necessary for the industrial development of the country, and secondly to see that our minerals are not exported in a raw condition but that we establish in our own country such industries as will enable us to process the raw material before it is exported to other countries. Another point to which Mr. Neogy has drawn my attention is with regard to the oil concessions. As Mr. Neogy knows, and as I believe other Members of the House know, there exists at present a moratorium on oil concession—moratorium on the granting of mining and prospecting licenses. That moratorium was introduced mainly because the Government of India did not desire that various oil companies should dissipate or engage for their own prospecting purposes technical personnel which is so deficient in its supply in this country. That moratorium will last till the war and some time thereafter. Now, Sir, so far as the question of granting licenses is concerned, the matter, since the passing of the Government of India Act, is in the hands of the Provincial Governments; but the Provincial Governments have been so far following the rules that the Government of India have made under the 1919 Act under which this was a matter for the Central Government to deal with. Under these Rules there is already in operation the policy of what is called 'closed door' against non-British subjects. The rules framed by the Government of India lay down that a company before it can obtain such a license must show that it is a company which is Indian in its personnel or that the majority of the members of the Board are British subjects. I do not know whether Mr. Neogy had in mind the further question, namely, the distinction between Indian subjects and British subjects. I have no time to enter into that. All I can say is that this is a matter which is closely connected with another important matter, namely, the provisions contained in sections 111 to 118, of the Government of India Act and which is being debated in the House on a separate Resolution. With regard to the question of coal, that again, as I said, will have its place in our new legislation. As my friend will understand, it is rather a difficult question. It covers matters such as mining, grading, marketing and utilisation of inferior coal. It will require a good deal of co-operation of the owners of mines and all those who are in the trade in order that our legislation may be fruitful. I may assure the House that we propose to take the matter up as part of our post-war policy.

I have said in a general way in the short time that is available to me what the policy of the Government of India is. I would say only this in conclusion—that an all-pervasive and dynamic mineral policy would depend upon three circumstances. It would depend upon the industrial drive in the country. If there is industrialization, this country will undoubtedly have to undertake a more vigorous mineral policy than it has done in the past. Whether our mineral policy will be successful and will be used for the benefit of the many will also depend upon two other considerations, namely, the constitutional position, the distribution of authority between the Provinces and the Centre and the role the State is allowed to play in this matter. I believe I have said enough to enable the House to appreciate what the Government of India proposes to do in regard to a mineral policy for this country.

An Honourable Member: I move that the question be now put.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The question is that the question be now put.

(Several Honourable Members: "No, no.")

I take it that the opinion of the House generally is that this motion should not be put.

An Honourable Member: You can adjourn the discussion.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait (West Coast and Nilgiris: Muhammadan): Under the arrangement that has been arrived at and that has been circulated.

[Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait.]

the time allotted to the Nationalist Party is over. It is a sort of guillotine. Now, the other Party must come in. It is not for the House now to express an opinion on it.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The position now is this that this cut motion cannot be put to the House.

DEMAND NO. 26—FOOD DEPARTMENT—contd.

Supervision and Control of Work in Provinces—contd

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): As regards Mr. Dam's motion on Saturday, I find that the position is that a closure motion was moved. It was accepted by the Chair but it was not put.

An Honourable Member: It was not accepted by the Chair.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): I find from the proceedings that it was accepted by the Chair. He was about to put it. He started putting the closure motion. In fact he said—The question is . . . It was 5 o'clock at this stage. The position now is that the closure motion has to be put before the House.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Don't waste time.

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

"That the question be now put."

The motion was adopted.

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

"That the demand under the head 'Food Department' be reduced by Rs. 100."

The Assembly divided:

AYES—57

Abdul Basith Choudhury, Dewan.
Abdul Ghani, Maulvi Muhammad.
Abdul Qaiyum, Mr.
Abdullah, Mr. H. M.
Ahsan, Mr. Muhammad.
Ayyangar, Mr. M. Ananthasayanam.
Banerjee, Dr. P. N.
Chattopadhyaya, Mr. Amarendra Nath.
Chettiar, Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam.
Chetty, Mr. Sami Vencatachalam.
Choudhury, Mr. Muhammad Hussain.
Chunder, Mr. N. C.
Daga, Seth Sheodass.
Dam, Mr. Ananga Mohan.
Das, Mr. B.
Desai, Mr. Bhulabhai J.
Deahmukh, Mr. Govind V.
Essak Sait, Mr. H. A. Sathar H.
Fazl-i-Haq Piracha, Khan Bahadur Shaikh.
Gauri Shankar Singh, Mr.
Ghiasuddin, Mr. M.
Habibar Rahman, Dr.
Hans Raj, Raizada.
Hegde, Sri K. B. Jinaraja.
Hosmani, Mr. S. K.
Ismail Khan, Hajee Chowdhury Muhammad.
Joshi, Mr. N. M.
Krishnamachari, Mr. T. T.
Lahiri Chaudhury, Mr. D. K.

Lakhichand, Mr. Rajmal.
Lalchand Navalrai, Mr.
Liequat Ali Khan, Nawabzada Muhammad.
Mangal Singh, Sardar.
Manu Subedar, Mr.
Mehr Shah, Nawab Sahibzada Sir Sayad Muhammad.
Miera, Pandit Shambhudayal.
Naidu, Mr. G. Rangiah.
Nairang, Syed Ghulam Bhik.
Nauman, Mr. Muhammad.
Neogy, Mr. K. G.
Pande, Mr. Badri Dutt.
Raghubir Narain Singh, Choudhri.
Ram Narayan Singh, Mr.
Ramayan Prasad, Mr.
Ranga, Prof. N. G.
Raza Ali, Sir Syed.
Reddiar, Mr. K. Sitarama.
Satyanarayana Moorthy, Mr. A.
Sham Lal, Lala.
Siddique Ali Khan, Nawab.
Sinha, Mr. Satya Narayan.
Sri Prakasa, Mr.
Srivastava, Mr. Har? Sharan Prasad.
Subbarayan, Shrimati K. Radha Bai.
Yamin Khan, Sir Muhammad.
Yusuf Abdoola Haroon, Seth.
Zafar Ali Khan, Maulana.

NOES—43

Ahmad Nawas Khan, Major Nawab Sir.
 Ambedkar, The Honourable Dr. B. R.
 Azizul Huque, The Honourable Sir M.
 Benthall, The Honourable Sir Edward.
 Bewoor, Sir Guranath.
 Caroe, Sir Olaf.
 Chapman-Mortimer, Mr. T.
 Chatterjee, Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C.
 Daga, Seth Sunder Lall.
 Dalal, Dr. Sir Ratanji Dinshaw.
 Dalal, The Honourable Sir Ardeshir.
 Dalpat Singh, Sardar Bahadur Captain.
 Ghuznavi, Sir Abdul Halim.
 Gwilt, Mr. E. L. C.
 Habibur Rahman, Khan Bahadur Sheikh.
 Haidar, Khan Bahadur Shamsuddin.
 Imam, Mr. Saiyid Haidar.
 Inskip, Mr. A. C.
 Ismael Alikhan, Kunwer Hajee.
 James, Sir F. E.
 Jawahar Singh, Sardar Bahadur Sardar Sir.
 Kamaluddin Ahmad, Shams-ul-Ulema.

Krishnamoorthy, Mr. E. S. A.
 Kushal Pal Singh, Raja Bahadur.
 Lawson, Mr. C. P.
 Maazzam Sahib Bahadur, Mr. Muhammad.
 Mudie, The Honourable Sir Francis.
 Piare Lall Kureel, Mr.
 Raizman, The Honourable Sir Jeremy.
 Richardson, Sir Henry.
 Roy, The Honourable Sir Asoka.
 Shahban, Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir
 Muhammad.
 Sheehy, Sir John.
 Spence, Sir George.
 Srivastava, The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad.
 Stokes, Mr. H. G.
 Sultan Ahmed, The Honourable Sir.
 Sundaresan, Mr. N.
 Thakur Singh, Capt.
 Trivedi, Mr. C. M.
 Tyson, Mr. G. W.
 Tyson, Mr. J. D.
 Vellodi, Mr. M. K.

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND NO. 15—HOME DEPARTMENT.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raizman: Sir, I move:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 8,81,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1946, in respect of 'Home Department'."

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

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 23,93,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1946, in respect of 'Home Department'."

Paucity of Scheduled Castes in Government of India Services

Mr. Piare Lall Kureel (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I move:

"That the demand under the head 'Home Department' be reduced by Rs. 100."

My object in moving this motion is to raise the question of the under representation of the scheduled castes in services under Government of

4 P.M.

India. I am really grieved to say that the representation of the scheduled castes in Government services is notoriously inadequate, specially in the superior services. It is almost negligible. Any man who takes the little trouble of examining the communal composition of these services will have not the least doubt that the scheduled castes have been rigorously excluded from these services. In spite of the various attempts that have been made from time to time on the floor of this House to secure a due representation of the scheduled castes in Government services, to our greatest disappointment, we find that Government have not moved in this matter at all.

The question of the entry into the public services is a very important one, so far as the minorities are concerned. To the scheduled classes it is a vital question, a question of life and death. It is only in Government services that they can find a career for themselves. Trade and industry are the monopoly of the caste Hindus; Trade and Industry as opening for a career, are all blocked for the members of the scheduled castes. They cannot themselves start trade and industry for want of capital, and in fact they have no chance of success in trade and industry.

Sir, it is extremely painful to speak of the indifferent attitude of the Government in the past. The Government by their Resolution of 1934 assured the Depressed Classes that they would not be deprived of fair opportunities of appointment. Let me read out the words of the resolution itself.

"In order to secure fair representation of the depressed classes duly qualified members of those classes may be nominated to public services, even though recruitment to those services is made by competition."

[Mr. Piare Lall Kureel.]

What a beautiful and flattering statement! Sir, I have got a very serious grievance against the Government. During the period between 1934 and 1943 not a single member of the scheduled castes was appointed to any responsible post under Government of India. Sir, my intention in speaking about the indifferent attitude of the Government in the past is to make the wrong-headed Government realise the blunders that they had been committing in the past. I wish that in future they should not repeat these blunders.

An Honourable Member: Why are you always supporting Government?

Mr. Piare Lall Kureel: I will let you know later.

Sir, the indifferent, hostile and unjust attitude of the Government is mainly responsible for the paucity of the scheduled castes in Government services. Let me take the recent measures adopted by Government to secure the representation of the Scheduled Castes in Government services. I will refer to the Home Department Resolution of August 1943. According to that Resolution a percentage of 8½ was fixed for the members of the scheduled castes in all central and subordinate services. In spite of this Resolution no special measures were adopted by Government to secure due representation of the scheduled castes. If I refer to the past I will show that the scheduled castes have always been treated in a very indifferent manner. I will take only one specific case. In the year 1941 a vacancy was reserved in the Indian Civil Service for a member of the scheduled castes. It was advertised in the papers. I put a question in the Assembly the other day and the answer that I got from the Home Member was that seven candidates appeared in that competitive examination and one of them had qualified. I was told that he did not qualify in the *viva-voce* but qualified only in the written tests. Sir, I have with me a chart published by the Public Services Commission. It shows the results of the competitive examination for the I. C. S. in 1941. On page 21 it is stated that under rule 24 of the rules for the examination the Federal Public Service Commission fixed as the minimum 585 qualifying marks for the written examination and 100 marks for the *viva-voce*. This candidate secured the 163rd position out of 428 candidates who appeared in the examination. He not only qualified in the written tests but also qualified in the *viva-voce*. In the written tests, while the minimum marks for qualifying in the I. C. S. are 585, he secured 607 and in the *viva-voce* he secured 100 marks; but he was not appointed.

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

Really it is a matter of great regret that the only Scheduled caste candidate who qualified for the I. C. S. in this examination was not taken. In this connection I should like to make two points clear. The first is that if no opportunity is afforded there will never be a beginning. There is no school for education in political and administrative matters where people should first go and qualify themselves in the abstract before they are put in charge of a district for administrative purposes. If people are sufficiently advanced and if they are educated in a general way they can safely be entrusted with the duties of administration. Administrative efficiency is really the result of experience and practice; and if you give no opportunity to the scheduled caste people there will never be a beginning. The second point is that the scheduled castes have taken to education very late and it will be long before they are in a position to compete with members of other communities with any reasonable amount of success. In India by reason of social habits and training for centuries certain communities like the Hindus and the Muslims had acquired the genius of passing examinations, and if the Government are going to depend only on results of competitive examinations I think they will perpetuate the monopoly of the communities like the Hindus and Muslims, to the exclusion of various minorities who cannot compete with major communities.

Sir, with regard to the Resolution of 1940, no directions were issued, no special attempts were made by the Government to secure due representation.

In spite of the Resolution, referred to above, we find that scheduled castes are not fairly represented in Government services. I will put before the House the meagre representation that has been given to them in various services.

I will first take up the Indian Civil Service. The total strength of the Indian Civil Service on the 1st of January 1944 was 1073, and out of this only one post is held by a member of the scheduled caste. It is said that this one scheduled caste man, who is in the I. C. S., was nominated in the year 1944. This candidate, in fact, was nominated during the years 1940-1942 from England while a student there. He was sent for training in Dehra Dun, and when he passed the Probationary Course he was nominated again in 1944. Sir, you can fool all people for some time, some people for all time but you cannot fool all people for all time. Does the Honourable Member want to show that this candidate was nominated in 1944? The other day when I put a question in this House, the Honourable Member replied that this man had been nominated in the year 1944. It was only to whitewash the sins that they have committed in the name of justice and fairplay.

In the Indian Police and Indian Medical Service the representation of scheduled castes is absolutely nil.

Now, let me take some of the local offices. I will first take up the Directorate-General, Indian Medical Service. Out of 29 Gazetted posts, there is not a single post held by a member of the scheduled caste. If we come to non-gazetted officers, we find that out of the total of 304, there are only four members of the scheduled caste.

Now I come to the office of the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs. Non-gazetted staff:

Chief Superintendents—there is not a single member of the scheduled caste;
Superintendents—One.

This gentleman has put in 29 years service. He has been officiating as Superintendent for the last three years. There is no adverse remark against him, and yet he has not been confirmed. This shows how our people are unjustly treated in government offices.

Accountant Superintendents—Nil.

Stenographers—Nil.

Accountants—Nil.

Assistants—Nil.

I come to the II Division clerks where no specialized knowledge is needed; only matrics can be taken. Out of 103, only one 2nd division clerk is a member of the scheduled caste. In III Division Clerks, out of 92 there are four members of the scheduled caste.

Draftsmen—Nil.

Tracers—Nil.

Building Overseers—Nil.

Assistant Secretaries—Nil.

Sorting Inspector—Nil.

Motor Driver—Nil.

Carpenter—Nil.

Engineering Supervisor—Nil.

Then I come to the gazetted staff. Out of the total strength of 46 there is not a single member of the scheduled caste. Even in the inferior staff we find that there is not a single member belonging to my community. And, Sir, here is a statement made by the Director-General, P. & T.:

"The Government's recruitment policy has been implemented and the returns of fresh recruitment during the year show that out of the 2,924 new recruits appointed during the year 877 were Muslims."

It comes to 4.9 per cent, above the prescribed representation for this community, whereas out of 2,924 only 47 were scheduled castes. These figures are a matter of great concern to the scheduled castes.

[Mr. Piare Lall Kureel.]

Now I come to the office of the Chief Controller of Supply Accounts, New Delhi. One gazetted post is held by a member of the scheduled caste.

Superintendents—Nil out of a total of 6.

Assistant Superintendents—Nil out of 4.

Clerks—Nil out of 36.

Office of the Controller of Supply Accounts, New Delhi:—

Gazetted Officers—Nil out of a total of 18.

Superintendents—Nil out of 57.

Assistant Superintendents—Nil out of 46.

Clerks—there are 2 out of 470 clerks.

Office of the Controller of Supply Accounts, Bombay—

Gazetted Officers—Nil out of 12.

Superintendents—Nil out of 32.

Assistant Superintendents—Nil out of 23.

Clerks—Only two are members of scheduled caste out of 274.

Office of the Controller of Supply Accounts, Calcutta—

Gazetted Officers—Nil.

Superintendents—Nil.

Assistant Superintendents—Nil.

Clerks—There are 8 clerks out of 495 who belong to the scheduled caste community.

Coming to other offices, I find the same state of affairs. In the Department of External Affairs I find that out of 17 gazetted posts there is not a single one held by a member of the scheduled caste. Out of 178 non-gazetted posts, only four have gone to my community.

Similar is the case in the departments of Planning and Developments, Food, Supply, and so on. The representation of the scheduled castes is absolutely nil. Only a few posts of clerks have been given to them. There is only one gazetted post occupied by a member of the scheduled caste in the Food Department.

Now I come to the Railway Service. Here is the latest Report—1943-44—of the Railway Board on Indian Railways. If you turn to page 27, you will find that the scheduled castes are sufficiently represented, but if you turn to page 28 you will find that in the State-managed Railways 57 appointments were made to the Superior Railway Service by direct recruitment and none was appointed from the scheduled caste community.

Engineering Department—none.

Accounts—none.

Transportation—none.

Commercial—none.

Mechanical Engineering—none.

Other departments—none.

No member of the scheduled castes was taken by direct recruitment.

By promotion—14 officers were promoted from the lower gazetted service to the superior service during the year. Not a single man was promoted from the scheduled castes.

Now I come to the Company-managed Railways. I find only one member of the scheduled castes in the Engineering Department by direct recruitment, and I do not find any scheduled caste member in the Departments of Administration, Accounts, Transportation, Commercial, Mechanical, Stores, and other departments. Fifteen officers were promoted from lower ranks to the superior service. No scheduled caste man was promoted.

Sir, it will be clear from the figures on page 30: "Statement showing gazetted officers both superior and lower on State and Company-managed Railways."

State-managed Railways—I will show the progress in their representation from 1984 to 1944. In 1984, I find that in none of the Railways any member of the scheduled caste was appointed as gazetted officer. In 1948 I find the same position. In 1944, I find the same. There is not a single member of the scheduled caste appointed on a gazetted post on any of the State-managed railways.

I come to the Company-managed Railways. I find only one member of the scheduled caste appointed in the year 1944.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has one minute more.

Mr. Piare Lal Kureel: If you see the percentage you will find that whereas the Hindus have been given 35.60 per cent. representation in State-managed Railways, the depressed class percentage is "nil". In the Company-managed Railways the percentage of the Hindus is 39.91 and that of the scheduled castes per month. Out of 8,654, only 17 posts are held by the scheduled castes.

0-21.

Now I come to the inferior services in the scale of pay rising up to Rs. 250 per month. Out of 8,654 only 17 posts are held by the scheduled castes.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Mr. Piare Lal Kureel: I will only point out that we have not been sufficiently represented. There are several reasons for this paucity. One is that the recruitment of scheduled castes is entrusted to the Hindus and Muslims and sometimes to the members of the European community. The latter know nothing about the scheduled castes while the Hindus and Muslims are prejudiced against them. They are all Anti-Scheduled caste.

I want to ask a question from the Government. You are treating us indifferently merely because our people fought on the side of Lord Clive in the Battle of Plassey which laid the foundation of British Empire in India. You are treating us shabbily merely because our people inflicted a crushing defeat on the Marhattas in the battle of Koregaon; merely because we helped you during the Great War 1914, merely because we have offered and are offering unconditional support in the present war.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member must conclude his speech.

Mr. Piare Lal Kureel: Now that the time is up. I would only request that a special officer of the Scheduled Castes be appointed to look after the interests of the scheduled castes. A scheduled caste must also be appointed on the Federal Public Service Commission.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member must now conclude.

Cut motion moved:

"That the demand under the head 'Home Department' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I rise to support this cut motion. I feel, Sir, that the speech of my Honourable friend, Mr. Kureel, has convinced the House that this Government deserves the censure which he proposes to pass for its neglecting the problem of the recruitment of scheduled caste persons to the Government services. Sir, it is not enough that the Government of India should issue a resolution and say that 8 or 10 per cent. of the posts are reserved for members of the scheduled castes. Experience has shown that a sufficient number of people do not become available for the posts thrown open. Therefore Government must take steps to see that sufficient recruits will come forth.

(At this stage Sardar Sant Singh tried to interrupt the speaker.)

I would like my Honourable friend, Sardar Sant Singh, not to disturb me in my speech. He wastes the time of the House in talking about the Sikh community and he has no sympathy for men belonging to the Scheduled Castes.

If the Government has to recruit 10 persons for a particular Department or ten persons for the Indian Civil Service, then they must take steps to see that at least 20/25 candidates will be available. Government has to spend money and make arrangements for the education and training of the scheduled castes in order that Government may get a sufficient number of people to man their services

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

from that community. It is not that the Government of India does not spend money in training persons whom they want. It is spending crores of rupees for training skilled men and for training women doctors for their services. I want the Government of India to tell us whether they have a plan by which they would educate and train scheduled caste persons in order that they might get representation in the public services. They should have done it long ago. The Government of India is engaged in making plans for post-war reconstruction and it is ready to spend thousands of crores of rupees. They should have a plan to uplift the scheduled caste persons. I would suggest that if Government spent a thousand crores in 25 years for the education of these depressed classes, they would attain equality with the other communities of India. Our suspicion is that the Government of India benefits by maintaining this problem of the scheduled castes and thereby they are able to tell the world that in India there is a problem of the scheduled castes and India does not deserve freedom.

If the Government wish to free themselves from this suspicion, let them make a big plan for spending money and teaching and educating and training the scheduled caste people so that the untouchability of the scheduled castes would be wiped out and economically they would be raised to the level of the other classes. I hope the Government of India will make a plan for this purpose. If they do not, then they deserve the censure of this House.

Mr. Hoosainbhoy A. Laljee (Bombay Central Division: Muhammadan Rural): I rise to support the motion moved by my Honourable friend. We have seriously to consider the backward classes because we feel that that has been the cause of poverty in this country, and it is fair that first of all we must bring up those who are left behind for no fault of their own. It is also a fact that so far as business men are concerned, they are, I admit to our certain shame, not at all fair in the employment of these people, and other backward people.

But I must tell my friend Mr. Kureel that when he shouted out the name of Lord Clive none of my friends Europeans here will get up and say that they had a single scheduled caste in their employ, not one even as a *patawallah*. This is a fact which he ought to remember when he goes to attack other communities and making a great virtue for the things his community has done for them.

So far as Government is concerned, they have no doubt been showing all sorts of sympathy but it is not the kind of sympathy that is needed. It is that kind of sympathy, as my friend Mr. Joshi has pointed out, which they must get and that is by definite kind of planning. It is also the duty of the business and industrial communities to help them to come up. It is no fault of theirs if they have been backward. If the money is to be spent for the education and well being of people, I think the first bounden duty of everyone including Government who is taxing all of us and of those who are making money and have made money is to set apart a certain amount to help these and other backward people to rise up in their status, and thus raise the standard of living of our people.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: We are entirely in sympathy with the object of this motion. The only reason which the Home Member can give in reply is that sufficient candidates are not forthcoming, sufficient number with the necessary qualifications. If sufficient number of candidates are not forthcoming, the fault is ours. I would support Mr. Joshi's suggestion that special efforts should be made. Some of us have been working among Harijans and in my own experience we know that few of them cross the matriculation. They may not be quite up to the mark in scholastic matters but in such things as electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, etc., I have found them much more proficient than other communities. May I know if Government have taken any steps to develop their skill in these directions, and to bring them up? It is not necessary for a person to get 85 per cent. in English to do things in life. If you insist upon an adequate standard of English, it will take many years for these people

to attain proficiency in a foreign language. There are several professions in which people can command a great deal of respect, earn a good deal of money, and raise their standard of life without proficiency in scholastic education. I would suggest that their skill in mechanical and electrical engineering and such other things, for which they are eminently fitted, should be encouraged.

I would now refer to the 500 and odd people which the Government of India propose to send to America and other places specially for industrial purposes, manufacture of steel, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, etc. A press communique was issued only at the end of last month to this effect. May I know what steps Government have taken to see that some members of the scheduled castes have been recruited for this purpose? I would only suggest to the Government that the usual qualifications necessary, I mean scholastic qualifications, may be dispensed with in certain of these cases. Proficiency in engineering and some other subjects does not require proficiency in the English language. I would make a practical suggestion that they must take a large number of these people, who even if they have failed in the matriculation examination should be sent abroad for practical courses in industrial and technical subjects and in this, I am quite sure, because I say it with experience, they will be eminently successful: they are bound to do better than many other communities. A few lakhs have been set apart for the education of these people, I believe it is five lakhs. It is not even the proverbial drop in the ocean. I would suggest that large numbers of people must be educated by the Government, the age limits should be relaxed and they must be sent up for higher education in courses to which they are eminently suitable. If you follow these methods I have no doubt that in a few years time many of them will come up to standard. I say, Sir, that the country in general stands to gain by the progress of these people and in the interest of this great country I would suggest that more sympathetic and greater action, not mere words, must be taken by Government to encourage them in education as well as in industries. Sir, I support this motion.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I want to speak for only one minute. I want to say that when I heard Mr. Kureel's speech I felt that it was not only unjustified as far as we Muslims were concerned, but it was also really very ungrateful on his part to refer to the Muslims in the manner that he has done. The Mussalmans did every thing possible. My Honourable friend Dr. Ambedkar will bear witness to this, that the Muslims sided with him and supported all the claims which he had put at the Round Table Conference. Now, for Mr. Kureel to come up and mix up the Mussalmans along with the others and blame them, that was highly ungrateful on his part.

Several Honourable Members: The question be now put.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Government Member must have a chance to reply to the debate.

The Honourable Sir Francis Mudie (Home Member): Sir, the House will remember that in 1942 a similar cut motion was moved. It was not quite the same as Mr. Kureel's motion but similar. The motion in 1942 was to censure Government for not having reserved a certain percentage of posts in the Central and subordinate services for the scheduled castes. At that time the position was governed by the Resolution of 1934, which expressed the rather pious hope that it would be preferable "to ensure that duly qualified candidates from the Depressed Classes are not deprived of fair opportunities of appointment merely because they cannot succeed in open competition". The speeches in 1942 showed that the House was not satisfied with that position. There was only one speaker who was opposed to reservation for the scheduled castes. My predecessor Sir Reginald Maxwell expressed sympathy with the motion and promised to see what could be done. The matter was examined in the Home Department and in August 1943 another Resolution was issued, which reserved 8.178 per cent. of vacancies in the Central services.

[Sir Francis Mudie]

for members of the scheduled castes and even went further than that as it provided that "the Government of India proposed to consider the question of raising this percentage as soon as sufficient number of qualified candidates from these classes are found to be available". That is to say, as a result of the 1942 motion the Government took exactly the action that they were asked to take. I think the House will approve of what has been done.

Mr. Kureel's motion today is simply to call attention to the paucity of members of the scheduled castes in the services but that is exactly the basis of the action that is taken by the Home Department. Perhaps Mr. Kureel is afraid (he more or less said so) that the Home Department will leave it at that and do nothing more. As the House knows, the reports which are collected by the Home Department showing how the rules as regards communal representation are being worked are placed in the Library of this House. If the House thinks that the Home Department is not doing its duty in this matter, that the rules are not being observed as they should be, all that they have to do is to look into the reports. Mr. Kureel did not, unfortunately, adopt the tactics of Mr. Neogy. He did not give me his figures before he made his speech. The figures of my Honourable friend are not very relevant. For one thing, we know that there is under-representation. It was in order to improve that representation that the Home Department resolution has been issued. And for another, the resolution being dated August 1943 could not possibly have affected any statistics available to Mr. Kureel. The statistics he quoted are the statistics on which the Home Department action was taken, and you cannot censure Government for having taken the very action you wanted it to take. My case is not that the representation of the scheduled castes is adequate: my case is that the Home Department admit that it is inadequate and are doing all they can to improve the position. All that the Home Department can do is to issue instructions that should be followed by all Departments but the Home Department cannot say that the various Departments of Government are to remove all qualifications that are necessary for appointment thereto. We cannot, for instance, ask the Medical Department to appoint to the I. M. S. a man who is not qualified. All these communal reservations are subject to the condition that a sufficient number of qualified candidates come forward—not candidates who succeed at the competitive examination, but who are qualified. Sir, the real burden now lies on the shoulders of the leaders of the scheduled castes themselves,—I am going to have the last laugh Mr. Joshi—to produce their own candidates.

An Honourable Member: How should they produce?

The Honourable Sir Francis Mudie: There is a grant in this year's budget as there was in the last years's for scholarships. Education is fundamentally a provincial subject. The grant is not a very big sum, it is only a token of goodwill: the main function is of course performed by Provincial Governments.

I think the best test that can be applied to the *bona fides* of the Home Department of the Government of India in this matter is to see what they have done as regards the I.C.S. Mr. Kureel referred to one case in 1941. Mr. Kureel's view was that in that year a certain candidate should have been appointed. Well, I am aware of that case, though it happened before I took charge, I know roughly what the facts of the case were. It was sympathetically considered by the Home Department, but it was found impossible to appoint him.

As regards the I.C.S. there was a resolution which has not been referred to: that was in 1937. That resolution applied the principle of communal representation to the I.C.S. It provided that a candidate who had sat for the competitive examination could be nominated to the service. But there was a proviso specially inserted for the benefit of the scheduled castes. That proviso was that even if the candidate had not sat for the examination, he could be appointed to the I.C.S. if recommended by the Provincial Government. The

Government of India every year write down to Provincial Governments and ask for names. They have a Committee to examine the candidates and send up names to the Government of India. No one was appointed in spite of our Resolution till 1940, and even in 1940 Provincial Governments recommended no one. But one Government said: "There is a member of the scheduled caste reading for the Bar in London, try him." This was not provided for in our rule, but we went outside our rule; we wrote to the Secretary of State who put him before a Board, and on their recommendation the Federal Public Service Commission recommended him for nomination and he was appointed. That was in 1940. We went out of our way to get a member of the scheduled caste. In 1941 and 1942 we got no one. But we did the next best thing: we earmarked one war-vacancy in the I.C.S. to be filled after the war from scheduled castes.

Now, I come to Mr. Joshi. In 1943 there was a candidate who they said did not come up to the standard, but he might come in. So we anticipated even Mr. Joshi and sent him to the Probationers Training School in Dehra Dun. All the rest of the School had been selected for the I.C.S., and were on probation. The scheduled caste candidate had not been considered up to the standard, but he was sent up to be trained there. He was given probationary training as an I.C.S. officer on the understanding that if he passed the examination held for the probationers, we would take him in the I.C.S. Well, he passed and was taken in. He is now in Bengal. It might interest the House to know that he was one of the best riders at that school.

That is what we have done in the case of I.C.S., and it does open up considerable possibilities, but I do not know how far it can be developed, but there are possibilities. I would like to impress on the House that you cannot wave, a magic wand and make even engineers whom Mr. Chettiar seem to consider a low form of human life without any qualifications whatsoever. You must maintain your minimum qualifications. The Government of India will do all they can. As regards the I.C.S. which Mr. Kureel considers is the touchstone, I have shown that the Home Department has gone out of its way not only to select, but to train candidates from the scheduled classes. That is my case. I hope it will satisfy him, and that he will withdraw his motion.

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

"That the question be now put."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Piare Lal Kureel: In view of the assurance given by the Home Member I am willing to withdraw my cut motion, but I want a specific assurance from the Honourable the Home Member that special efforts will be made to . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member cannot make a speech. He can only ask for leave to withdraw.

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

DEMAND NO. 23.—DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Demand No. 23.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 23,93,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1946, in respect of 'Department of Labour'."

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

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 23,93,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1946, in respect of 'Department of Labour'."

Labour Policy of Government of India.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Sir, I move:

"That the demand under the head 'Department of Labour' be reduced by Rs. 1."

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

My object is to censure the Government of India for the wrong and inadequate policy which they follow for protecting Indian labour. Briefly stated, my charge against the Government of India is that they do not afford sufficient protection for the working classes in this country by taking prompt and adequate measures and when the Government take some action, the action they take is very small compared to the needs of the situation. Secondly, the action they take is taken after a good deal of delay when practically it becomes too late. On account of this, we are all dissatisfied and I hope that the House is dissatisfied with the policy which the Government of India is following.

In order to prove the charge which I propose to bring against the Government of India I shall only mention a few things. You know that on account of the coal muddle, which the Government of India have made, a large number of factories in this country are closed from time to time, and the workers working in some industries become unemployed; and so far the action taken by the government is very inadequate. In the first place, the Government of India was moved after a good deal of delay to take action and when the Government of India was moved, they satisfied themselves by framing some rules providing compensation and leaving it to the Provincial Governments to take action. I feel that the Government of India was very lethargic in this matter. In the first place, they should have made these rules much earlier and in the second place they should have issued an ordinance by which the rules they made were made applicable throughout the country. Then the Government of India is following a wrong policy as regards coal mines. We know that the whole country is suffering on account of lack of consumer goods. Workers are also suffering from this shortage of coal. I would like the Government of India to follow the right policy regarding coal mines. I would suggest to the Government of India that if they feel shortage of labour, the only way of getting sufficient number of working classes to go into mines—the best policy is to pay the miners well. In Great Britain the miner is the best paid working class man, and in India the Indian miner is the worst paid working class man. If the Government of India will change their policy and see that the Indian miner is paid well, I have no doubt that a sufficient number of people will come forth to work in the Indian mines. Secondly, I would like the Government of India to take the mining industry in their own hands at this time. If the country wants coal, then you cannot depend upon these capitalists to give you coal. The Government of India, instead of doing the right thing, *vis.*, taking over the mines in their hands, give bonuses to the capitalists in order that the capitalists should produce coal. Coal cannot be obtained by that method. The right method for the Government of India is to take over the mines in their hands, so that the working classes can get good conditions to work under. At present there are a large number of complaints from several collieries about harassment of the miners by the owners. The owner has no interest in larger production; it is the country which is interested in larger production of coal; the owner has interest in getting money; by whatever methods he gets it is no matter to him; he gets profits by increasing the price of his coal; he gets his money by various other methods; and therefore the Government should take over the Indian mines under their control.

Again, Sir, when the war started, the cost of living of the people began to go up; partly the policy of the Government of India was responsible for the rise in the cost of living. The Government of India did not take adequate steps to see that the working classes did not suffer on account of this rise. They should have, in my humble judgment, passed an ordinance that all the workers who work at least in organised industries should get dearness allowances, sufficient to compensate for the rise in prices. The Government of India did not do anything of the kind. They discussed this question in tripartite conferences; the Government of India appointed a committee to consider the question of the dearness allowance; that committee's report has not

even yet been published—much less action taken. This is the conduct of the Government of India regarding dearness allowance.

Then there are some questions regarding coal mining which I wanted to speak about, but I shall leave them to be discussed on a separate cut motion which our lady colleague is going to move after this cut motion is finished.

Then during this war, on account of the rise in the cost of living and the high prices, the compensation which workmen received on account of accidents has become very inadequate. In England soon after the war, the rates of compensation to be paid to workmen on account of accidents have been raised, but in India no such thing has been done. The compensation paid to workmen is not enough—both the periodical compensation paid as well as the lump sum compensation paid. I would like the Government of India to have examined this problem when they found that the rates of compensation in Great Britain were increased; and they should have taken steps to see that the rates of compensation paid to Indian workmen due to accidents should have been raised.

Again, Sir, after the war, the Government of India passed legislation called the National Service Technical Personnel Ordinance. Under that ordinance we all expected the workers and the employers would be equally treated, as they are equally treated in the English legislation; but under our legislation the employer is given freedom to dismiss workmen, while the workman is not able to leave his job. The workman under that ordinance is treated with discrimination. I had approached the Government of India several times asking them to remove this discrimination; but they have not done it; and therefore they deserve our censure. Then, in India, the wages are very low. It is an admitted fact and the Government of India also admit that the standard of living of the people of this country is very low. Therefore any one would expect that the Government of India would take steps to pass legislation for minimum wages. Unfortunately, the Government of India and the Provincial Governments are considering this question for a long time and although the legislation required for this purpose is a very simple one, the Government of India have not yet passed such legislation.

Then the Atlantic Charter and the various conferences have promised social security for the people of the world. I am not thinking of the people of the world, I am thinking of the people of India; and I would like the Government of India to take measures for establishing social security in this country. I know the Government of India have appointed a committee, first, to find facts; that committee is finding facts for a very long time—for over a year; I do not know when that committee is going to report and after that fact-finding committee reports, the Government of India propose to appoint another committee to make proposals for social security. I feel that the methods used by the Government of India are dilatory and the Government of India should take very vigorous steps to see that a scheme for social security is brought into existence and carried out. I am aware that the Government of India has published a report on health insurance. That report again came out after a long delay; and after the report is out the Government of India is taking time to consider the question. I would suggest to the Government of India to take very early action on that subject.

My last point is that the Government of India is following a wrong policy.

5 P.M. In the first place, I feel that the Government of India's actions do not show that they have enough sympathy. It pains me to say so when the Honourable the present Labour Member is in charge of that department. The actions of the Government of India show that they lack sympathy but I shall not deal with that. I wish to say this—that the Government of India is not even well equipped for this purpose. I would like to have an exclusive Labour Ministry to deal with labour questions and the Government of India should be adequately staffed. At present the staff of the Government

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

of India is not even adequate. I shall mention only a few posts which the Government of India should have got to deal with the various subjects. They have not got a factory expert or an industrial health expert. They have not got sufficient staff for their Labour Welfare Adviser. There is no expert on industrial housing, no expert on health insurance, no expert on unemployment and no expert for old age pensions. I would suggest to the Government of India that they should first become an exclusive Labour Ministry and secondly they should get themselves well equipped with staff to deal with all these problems. The Government of India have not done these and therefore I feel that they deserve the censure of this House.

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

"That the demand under the head 'Department of Labour' be reduced by Rs. 1."

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, the 13th March, 1945.