

8th March 1946

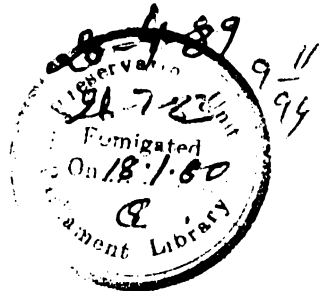
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

Official Report

Volume III, 1946

(28th February to 14th March, 1946)

FIRST SESSION OF THE SIXTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1946



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Friday, 8th March, 1946

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Mr. G. V. Mavalankar) in the Chair.

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(a) ORAL ANSWERS

RESIGNATION OF COL. MISS RANGA RAO

771. ***Mr. Manu Subedar:** (a) Has the attention of the War Secretary been drawn to the All-India Women's Conference resolution passed at Hyderabad (Sind) regarding the subject WACIs?

(b) Have Government received this resolution, and have they replied to it?

(c) What were the reasons for the resignation of Col. Miss Ranga Rao?

(d) Have Government seen the reports of interviews by her in the press?

(e) Has any official reply been vouchsafed, and what is the correct information on this subject?

Mr. P. Mason: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. Government have received the resolution and a reply has already been sent.

(c) and (e). The reasons for the resignation of Miss Ranga Rao have already been explained in my reply to part (a) of Starred question No. 196, asked by Mr. Ayyangar, on the 12th February 1946, and also in her interview in the press.

(d) Yes, Sir. Government have seen an account of an interview given by Miss Ranga Rao to a representative of the Associated Press of India which appeared in the *Statesman* of the 17th September, 1945, and other Indian papers.

Mr. Manu Subedar: In view of the great agitation in the minds of the public over the causes of Miss Ranga Rao's resignation, why have Government not published the letter of resignation in which the causes have been given?

Mr. P. Mason: I have replied in the House giving the reasons. She has herself stated the reasons and it seemed unnecessary to discuss the matter further.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Is there any reason why the terms in which the resignation was given and the causes as they were given in Miss Ranga Rao's own words, should not be known to the public and, if there is no such reason, will the Honourable Member place a copy of that resignation in the Library of the House?

Mr. P. Mason: Yes, Sir. I will place it in the Library of the House.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May we know if the Honourable Member is prepared to have any independent inquiry regarding the fact whether racial discrimination was shown or not and what was the cause of these resignations?

Mr. P. Mason: Yes; I have explained before that we have considered the matter and held what might be described as a departmental inquiry into this matter and the whole question was gone into; and the shortage of Indians in the officer ranks was one of the main reasons for the decision to disband the corps.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: What is the reason for not having an inquiry into the allegations that have been made and a number of other allegations also? Has not the Honourable Member written to me that he would send an A. P. I. agent to make an investigation into the matter and report to him?

Mr. P. Mason: There are two parts of that question. (a) I do not think that there is really any value to be obtained from a public inquiry which would take up the time of officers who are hardworked in view of the decision that has been taken to disband the corps. (b) With regard to the reply to my friend in which I said we would ask the A. P. I. if they would care to have an interview with Lady Carlisle, they replied that they did not wish to do so, and as I have explained the matter very fully to the House it has had a good deal of publicity, all that has been answered.

Mr. Manu Subedar: May I know why Government are not permitting the All-India Women's Conference, if they are so willing, to hold this inquiry and will they give full official co-operation if the All-India Women's Organisation institute such an inquiry?

Mr. P. Mason: No. We would not. The women of this corps have work to do and they are very busy. We are disbanding them steadily and that will mean that those who remain will have increasingly a good deal of work to do, and an inquiry of this nature would take a lot of their time. I cannot see that there is any need.

Mr. Manu Subedar: May I know why Government are permitting allegations of the gravest character, of outrages by British officers on these women to go unchallenged and uninquired into and why they will permit the assumption in the public mind through burking an inquiry as my Honourable friend is doing?

Mr. P. Mason: Why we permit these allegations to be made is because we believe in the freedom of the press. Why an inquiry is not made is, as I have explained, because I cannot see that it will serve any useful purpose. As for saying that we are allowing these things to go unchallenged, I have challenged them in this House a number of times and made a very full statement.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Why not permit the women sufferers to come forward in an open and public inquiry and see what they have to say? Why not let them face those who have assaulted them and who have taken advantage of their superior position?

Mr. P. Mason: Will the Honourable Member kindly repeat his question?

Mr. Manu Subedar: Why should Government not hold a public inquiry and permit these women who have suffered these outrages at the hands of persons who held superior authority to have their say and why should Government merely content themselves with challenging these allegations here in this House?

Mr. P. Mason: I am unable to know of any case in which a person has been treated in this way. As I explained the other day, two reports of rape have been made and both proved on investigation to be unfounded.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Who made this investigation? Were the women concerned permitted to say what they had to say? Were they before this particular investigator in the company of people who would protect them against victimisation?

Mr. President: The Honourable Member will put one question at a time.

Mr. P. Mason: Yes; it was a court-martial.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: In view of the fact that this question has aroused deep interest among the members of this House, will the Honourable Member consider the desirability of appointing a committee of Lady Members of this House to submit a report to us for our guidance, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Ammu Swaminadhan?

Mr. P. Mason: No. I have already said that I do not think an inquiry would serve any useful purpose, and it would take up the time of members of the corps and it would stir up a great deal of trouble, which I do not think is necessary in view of the decision to disband the corps.

Mr. President: Next question.

WOMEN'S AUXILIARY CORPS (INDIA)

772. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the War Secretary please state the total number of WACIs whose salary comes partly or wholly from the Indian Treasury, and how many of these are Indians, Anglo-Indians and non-Indians?

(b) What is the total number of officers of WACIs and how many of them are Indians, Anglo-Indians and non-Indians?

(c) How many WACIs have been demobilised, how many are going to be demobilised, and how many of these would be Indian, Anglo-Indians and non-Indians?

(d) Is recruitment of the WACIs still going on, and is there any training exhibition in connection with new entrants?

Mr. P. Mason: (a) The incidence of the expenditure on the salaries of members of the W. A. C. (I) is the same as that of the unit or formation in which they are employed. To work out the actual figures asked for in this part of the question would involve an amount of time and labour which would not be worth the result.

(b) The total number of W. A. C. (I) officers on the 1st January 1946, was 1,008, of whom 152 were Indians, 196 Anglo-Indians and 660 non-Indians.

(c) 603 members of the W. A. C. (I) had been demobilised by the 1st January 1946, leaving 10,575 persons still in the Corps. Of these 4,229 are Indians, 4,152 Anglo-Indians and 2,194 are non-Indians. I regret that no figures are available showing the nationalities of those already demobilized.

(d) As regards the first part, recruitment was stopped on the 1st January; as regards the second part the answer is in the negative.

Mr. Manu Subedar: May I know why in the process of demobilisation Indians and Anglo-Indians are preferred and why non-Indians are not demobilised first?

Mr. P. Mason: That is not a fact.

Mr. Manu Subedar: In view of the fact that so many Indians and Anglo-Indians have been demobilised and 2,000 non-Indians are still in this corps, will my Honourable friend now tell this House whether Government will demobilise the non-Indians first before sending on the streets persons who have rendered good service to Government?

Mr. P. Mason: No; demobilisation does not proceed on a racial basis at all. It proceeds on the grounds of groups which are based on length of service and age.

Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan: May I ask the War Secretary how many among the Senior Controllers and Senior Commanders are Indians and how many are Anglo-Indians—among the senior officers?

Mr. P. Mason: I should require notice of that. I have answered it also.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: How many posts of officers who have resigned—I mean Indians such as Miss Ranga Rao, Mrs. Srinivasan and others—have been filled up by Indians or Europeans?

Mr. P. Mason: The numbers are not much. There were 5. I do not know who has filled the posts which they held.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Have not more Indian officers resigned?

Mr. P. Mason: If you look at the statement which I made on the last occasion, you will find full answers to that.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Is it not a fact that some of them have subsequently resigned?

Mr. P. Mason: Subsequent to what?

Mr. Manu Subedar: Subsequent to that answer.

Mr. P. Mason: Not so far as I am aware.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Is it a fact that not one of these posts of officers who have resigned has been filled up by Indians?

Mr. P. Mason: I am afraid I cannot tell you who is holding those appointments now.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: When will you disband the whole of this corps?

Mr. P. Mason: I have repeatedly answered that question. It is hoped to completely disband this corps early in 1947.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Is there any provision for resettlement or rehabilitation of the W. A. C. (I).

Mr. P. Mason: I gave a very long answer to that on the last occasion.

Sardar Mangal Singh: May I know whether the Indian and non-Indian members of the W. A. C. (I) were getting the same treatment?

Mr. P. Mason: Yes, they do.

Mr. Manu Subedar: May I know why European women are still being retained in this service at the cost of this country while Indian women are being demobilised?

Mr. P. Mason: That, Sir, does not arise out of the question on the paper.

SMUGGLING OF PRECIOUS METALS AND GOODS OUT OF INDIA

773. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) What special measures were taken by the Honourable the Finance Member to prevent smuggling of precious metals and goods, of which the export is either prohibited or controlled, through the land frontiers in India towards the west and by means of countrycraft from the western coast to the Middle East, and how many cases were detected?

(b) What steps have Government taken to prevent smuggling of precious metals and goods, of which the export is either prohibited or controlled, along the land frontiers of India to the east (into Burma and China) by land routes, and how many cases have they detected?

(c) Have Government got hold of big parties engaged in unauthorised exports of cloth from India, or have they only succeeded in tracing a few petty cases and petty parties?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: (a) and (b). I regret that it is not possible to specify within the compass of this reply all the measures adopted by Government to deal with the danger, of export smuggling nor obviously, be in the public interest to do so. It is not possible to give detailed results more particularly since the Hon'ble Member has not limited his enquiry either in respect of time or space. In general, however, the position is as follows.

At points of exit from British India by land, sea and air, Customs or other staffs are posted for traffic regulation as required; these include certain land customs lines for the regulation of traffic between British India and neighbouring foreign possessions or Indian States. Such regulation provides for the checking of goods of which the export is either prohibited or controlled. Ever since the introduction of control Government has been taking constant measures to make such regulation effective including re-distribution and reinforcement of staffs where necessary, such measures being where possible co-ordinated with 'Service' security arrangements. This applies equally to the Eastern frontier where, however, until recently the danger has been by air rather than over the land routes. Rewards admissible to members of the staff responsible for successful detection of offences are on a scale calculated to encourage keenness.

(c) Government have not succeeded in tracing any such big parties, but, if the Honourable Member has any evidence to suggest that such big parties are engaged in this traffic, I should be very grateful if he would give it to me in confidence. Many cases have however, been detected and the offenders have been dealt with.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Is it a fact that an airman was found taking gold from Calcutta, that he was tried and let off, because the evidence was not satisfactory?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: I do not know. I will have to make inquiries.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: May I know if cloth worth crores of rupees was exported from the Jamnagar port. If so, may I ask the Honourable Member what action the Government of India have taken against the Government of India officials who were posted at that port to control smuggling?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: I must ask for notice.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Have the Government now taken any measures to prevent smuggling of gold in India and what is the position with regard to the smuggling going on in the North-East frontier of India?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: I do not understand what the Honourable Member means by smuggling of gold in India.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Hitherto precious metals and goods were being smuggled out of this country and all sorts of means were employed at various ports and land frontiers—countrycraft, Arabs, Iraqi Jews and others were found dabbling in this nefarious traffic to the disadvantage of the country. My whole suggestion is whether at the Portuguese Ports, the Indian State ports and generally as regards countrycraft and the land frontiers the Government have strengthened their hands in order to prevent things leaking out of this country, which should not leak out, at least so far as gold is concerned.

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: We have a preventive staff which, I believe, is adequate in all places, and I do not think there has been any change in the situation since the imposition of the import duty on bullion.

Mr. Manu Subedar: With regard to cloth, may I put one question. The supply of cloth to Bengal has disappeared in thin air. The Honourable the Commerce Member has repeatedly mentioned that he has actually given Bengal more than Bengal's quota. Have the Government been able to trace by any special agency, instead of mere rewards, the systematic smuggling of cloth out of India which must exist on the borders of Bengal?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: That is hardly a matter for the Customs staff. There is no customs frontier between Bengal and other parts of British India.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will the Honourable Member tell this House whose duty it is to prevent the taking away of thin, fine cloth which this country needs very badly across the Eastern Frontier of India?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: I agree that that is a matter for the customs staff but I have no reason to believe that the Customs staff are not doing all that is necessary. If the Honourable Member has any detailed information, perhaps he will give it to me in confidence?

Mr. Manu Subedar: Why has not a special C. I. D. organisation been set up for tracing cloth which is disappearing from the Eastern borders of India?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: The Government have no reason to believe that the disappearance is on such a scale as to warrant the appointment of a special staff.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Another member of Government told a different story.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Is it not a fact that the Madras staff for this purpose is undermanned and they are not able to prevent smuggling to any extent?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: I do not think so. I will make inquiries.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Has not the Honourable Member received any representations from the Madras Department that the staff there ought to be increased and brought into line with the other provinces?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: I must ask for notice.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Is it not a fact that detective officers were murdered in Madras? What steps are Government taking to prevent that?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: That also is news to me. I will find out.

PROPAGANDA THROUGH AND SUBSIDY TO NEWSPAPERS

774. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Has the attention of the Honourable Member for Information and Arts been drawn to the leading editorial of the *Dawn* newspaper, dated the 25th January, 1946, and does he propose to indicate as to how many papers are receiving subsidy, grant or subscription, and of what amount, from the revenues of the Government of India through the Department of Information and Arts or any other Department of Government?

(b) How many papers are receiving money through advertisements given by the Information and Arts Department of the Government of India or by other Departments excepting advertisements relating to business, such as supply, disposal, tenders &c.?

(c) In what kind of views or policies are Government still interested in instilling into the public mind through newspaper propaganda?

(d) What steps have Government taken to stop all expenditure of this nature?

The Honourable Sir Akbar Hydari: (a) Yes. Apart from the subscriptions paid by the various Departments of the Government of India for the purchase of copies of newspapers for their own use no subsidy or grant is given to any newspaper out of the revenues of the Government of India.

(b) The number of newspapers who receive such advertisements varies between 300 and 350.

(c) Government's publicity is factual and informative.

(d) Does not arise.

Mr. Manu Subedar: With regard to (b), will the Honourable Member give us an idea of the amount spent per month on these advertisements in 300 to 350 newspapers?

The Honourable Sir Akbar Hydari: The Honourable Member has misunderstood my reply. There is a list of 300 to 350 newspapers out of which a certain number of newspapers are chosen, according to whether the publicity has to be all-India publicity or only regional publicity. For example the House will remember that during the cloth crisis there was a good deal of advertisement in most newspapers about cloth control. There were advertisements in regard to the arrival of consumer goods and in a very few days Government are embarking on an All-India campaign of publicity in regard to food. It is for these purposes that these advertisements are issued.

Mr. Manu Subedar: In view of the feeling that is in the public mind and which has been frequently expressed in this House itself on previous occasions that Government expenditure on this purpose was very high and very extravagant, will the Honourable Member consider a scheme by which this expense can be kept down?

The Honourable Sir Akbar Hydari: This is being done on entirely commercial lines. We get a certain rebate from the newspapers because of the two months or three months publicity, but I will certainly consider any suggestions which the Honourable Member might make to me as to how the expenditure on advertisements can be reduced.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: May I know when the name of this Department was changed and who metamorphosed it into the Department of Information and Arts and why?

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May I know if any foreign periodicals are receiving any substantial amount from this Government?

The Honourable Sir Akbar Hydari: Not that I am aware of.

775. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the War Secretary please state if it is a fact that complaints have been made with regard to discrimination against the Indian members of the WACIs, and whether Government have noticed in the press complaints of the rudeness of the Army personnel to the Indian members of the WACIs?

(b) What is Government's policy with regard to the future of this service?

(c) Do Government propose to give an undertaking that only Indians (including Anglo-Indians) will be taken in this service in future, and that no European will be recruited?

Mr. P. Mason: (a) Yes, Sir. Two cases of rudeness were reported, both of which were investigated.

(b) It has been decided to disband the Corps. All recruiting has been stopped.

(c) Does not arise.

Diwan Chaman Lall: May I ask whether he has any reply to the first part of the question?

Mr. P. Mason: I have replied to that.

Diwan Chaman Lall: My Honourable friend has replied to the second part of the question. Is there any reply regarding the first part of the question?

Mr. P. Mason: Yes, Sir. Complaints of that nature have been mostly not from the members of the Corps itself. I could answer it in detail but it will take some time. I do not know whether I am expected to do that.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member can answer it in detail.

Mr. P. Mason: I think this question of discrimination arises from a very simple fact, one which I rather deplore and which, I am sure, other Honourable Members of the House deplore, but it is a fact, that until quite recently it was exceptional for an Indian girl to earn her own living and to be trained for that purpose and to have experience of the earning of her own living, whereas among the European and Anglo-Indian community it is exceptional for a girl not to expect her to earn her own living. Therefore, when this corps was formed, a vast majority of those who had previous experience of this kind of life, that is, business life, and of earning their own living, were either Europeans or Anglo-Indians and for that reason the great majority—admittedly—of the officers are either Europeans or Anglo-Indians.

Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan: May I ask whether the Honourable the War Secretary has read the article written by the Chief Commander Anne Collins under the caption "Eight months with the W. A. C. Is." which runs thus:

"This second ideal will not be easy of achievement, as, to speak to the average Indian women of responsibility and of service to India is to appeal to conception at present unknown to her."

I want to know from the War Secretary whether he has read this article and whether he thinks that she is correct in making that remark?

Mr. P. Mason: I have seen that article. It is an expression of personal opinion. And if I am asked to express an opinion, I would say that I do not agree with it and I am very sorry that it was said.

Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan: Why do you consider this a personal opinion, when it is the Chief Commander of the W. A. C. Is. who has made this report and it must have been published? What steps the War Secretary has taken to contradict such a report?

Mr. P. Mason: Actually, this lady is not a member of the W. A. C. Is. but of the A. T. S. The rank of Chief Commander sounds rather more important than it is. It is equivalent to Lieutenant-Colonel and this article is an expression of her personal opinion.

Diwan Chaman Lal: Does my Honourable friend consider a person like that fit to hold the post she is holding?

Mr. P. Mason: Well, Sir, I very much regret that she did write this particular article, but every one should be entitled to express a personal opinion.

Mr. M. Asaf Ali: As a large number of questions are being asked in the House and a large number of complaints have been made by the public on this subject, will it not be proper for the War Secretary to place the case of the W. A. C. Is. before the Defence Consultative Committee and let them decide whether an inquiry should be made. Let the whole situation be explained to them and then they can come to a definite conclusion instead of having questions and answers in this House every day.

Mr. P. Mason: I think that is an excellent suggestion. I may say that I very much regret that I have not been able to make a statement of that nature to the House because this is the first occasion on which this question has been reached for oral answer and I should welcome that proposal.

Mr. Manu Subedar: I have heard that Government propose to reconstitute these W. A. C. Is. some time in the future. If that is so, may I know why Government will not consider the claims of those who have rendered good service to them and recruit after some time some new persons to this service, or will they give an undertaking that if and when this service is re-constituted, the Indian and Anglo-Indian women who were concerned with this service will be given preference?

Mr. P. Mason: As I explained before, owing to the social conditions to which I have just referred and which are rapidly changing, the great majority of the officers are at present either Europeans or Anglo-Indians, and in my opinion and I think in that of Government, it will be preferable to have a corps in which all hope an equal start. Therefore we decided to disband it now and at some future time, when these social conditions have changed to some extent, to start it again. But that will be a decision for the future Government to take and I think it would be very wrong indeed for me, to give any assurance as to what they will do.

Mr. Manu Subedar: In case the future Government has not got the control of the Defence, will this Government, whose spokesman is my Honourable friend, convey such an assurance to these unfortunate women who are being thrown out of work?

Mr. P. Mason: That, Sir, depends on an assumption which I do not think is worth considering.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: May I ask whether there is any question of re-constituting this corps?

Mr. P. Mason: Not at present, Sir. It may possibly be re-constituted in 15, 20, 25, 30 or 35 years.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Who first started the idea of re-constituting this corps?

Mr. P. Mason: My friends over there.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Is it the Government's intention to reconstitute this corps?

Mr. P. Mason: No, Sir. What I said was that possibly some time in the future the future Government may wish to re-constitute it.

Diwan Chaman Lal: What are the social conditions my Honourable friend is referring to?

Mr. P. Mason: The Honourable Member wishes me to repeat the remarks I made a few minutes ago. I was trying to explain that the education of Indian women has not in the past usually been directed to their earning their own living and the number of Indian women who have actually earned their living has in the past been small. Their number is now increasing and the part they are taking in public life is, I am glad to say, increasing steadily.

Diwan Chaman Lall: May I ask whether he has had any difficulty in getting the number of recruits for this particular job that he wanted?

Mr. P. Mason: Very great difficulty, indeed.

Diwan Chaman Lall: Is the difficulty due to the racial discrimination that exists?

Mr. P. Mason: I do not think so.

RETURN OF REQUISITIONED PROPERTY

776. *Mr. O. P. Lawson: (a) Will the War Secretary be pleased to inform the House whether he has any further and more detailed information to give in continuation of that already given in his answer to question No. 49 asked on the 7th February, 1946, regarding the return of the requisitioned property to its original owners?

(b) Is he now in a position to indicate any progress made in respect of the following categories: (i) Housing accommodation, (ii) Office accommodation, and (iii) Storage accommodation?

(c) Does the War Secretary propose to inform the House what steps have been taken to release hotel accommodation to the general public?

(d) What proportion of hotel accommodation previously reserved for Service personnel has now been released for civilian booking?

Mr. P. Mason: (a) Details up to 31st December 1945 are now available and they show that the percentage of buildings derequisitioned up to that date had increased to approximately 10 per cent.

The distribution by commands is:

Northern Command 24.5 per cent.

Central Command 9.3 per cent.

Eastern Command 9.5 per cent.

Southern Command 7.2 per cent.

These figures exclude cases in which parts of buildings have been released.

(b) Information according to categories of buildings is being obtained and will be available at the end of March 1946.

(c) The general instructions which have been issued requiring the utmost importance to be attached to derequisitioning apply also to hotel accommodation.

(d) Approximately 43 per cent.

Mr. O. P. Lawson: Can the War Secretary—I am sorry to ask this question without notice—give even rough figures of what this requisitioning is costing?

Mr. P. Mason: I am afraid I cannot give them without notice.

Mr. Manu Subedar: In view of the fact that my Honourable friend gave the figure as 5½ lakhs a month which is the cost in Bombay City alone,—he gave us figures last time when I asked for them, up to 31st December,—is he in a position to give us something more today, with regard to Bombay City, as far as 10th March?

Mr. P. Mason: The last figures I gave were up to the end of November and these figures are up to the end of December. As I explained before, I think, one of the main causes which is holding up the pace of derequisitioning is shortage of officers.

Mr. Manu Subedar: In view of the fact that in Bombay City alone this Government is spending at the rate of 70 lakhs a year on this requisitioning business, and from which we may infer that in the rest of the country they may be spending 3 to 4 crores, may I know when the Government intend to prune down, in the interest of economy needed, to meet deficit budget of this year, and will the military authorities co-operate in this respect?

Mr. P. Mason: I am not quite sure what my Honourable friend means by pruning down.

Mr. Manu Subedar: I mean you should derequisition houses so as to save money and also give back to the civil population the conveniences which were forcibly withdrawn from them.

Mr. P. Mason: We are very anxious indeed to derequisition all these properties. A certain progress has been made. But it is extremely difficult, because it is a technical matter. It frequently happens that a building has been changed possibly into officers' mess or barracks or in some cases into a welfare centre and things of that kind. All these mean that it is difficult to get the building back to its original condition or decide whether the owner should be paid what compensation, if any. This is technical business. We are doing all we can. As I said we are held up for lack of officers. One of the things we have done recently is to hand over the remaining business in our Northern Command, where it is much simpler, to the Lands and Cantonment Department. That has released a certain number of officers who are doing that work in that area and they will go to Bombay and Calcutta and they will do the work there with greater speed. Another thing which we have done is to delegate increased powers to Commands. They were previously only able to dispose of cases involving less than one lakh of rupees. They can now dispose by themselves of cases involving less than five lakhs. In the same way, there has been further decentralisation to Districts or Areas, and to Sub-Areas and that will take effect from 1st April. I think that should result in very considerable speeding up.

Mr. Manu Subedar: I am much obliged to my Honourable friend, but may I ask in view of the fact that practically all Americans will have gone by the end of this month and that a certain amount of the British army is also reported to have left from here, will he not consider whether those who are at present occupying important and strategic urban areas could not be moved into the premises made available by these British and American demobilisation and thus give back to the civil population the conveniences which have been taken away from them during the war?

Mr. P. Mason: Most certainly.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: In view of the fact that the percentage quoted by the Honourable Member for the Southern Command, namely 7.2 per cent., is much lower than that for other commands, will the Honourable Member issue immediate instructions to the military authorities of the Southern Command to derequisition properties as quickly as possible, especially in Poona and Bombay?

Mr. P. Mason: I have already done so, Sir.

Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: Is the Honourable Member aware that some properties which were requisitioned for war purposes have been retained for some other new purposes?

Mr. P. Mason: I should be very glad if the Honourable Member will give me information on that point.

INDIANS IN HIGHER RANKS IN ARMY

†777. ***Shri Mohan Lal Saksena:** (a) What steps is the War Secretary taking to appoint Indians to the higher ranks in the Army?

(b) How many Generals, Brigadiers, full Colonels, Lieut.-Colonels are there in the Army, and how many of them are Indians?

(c) Has His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief considered giving accelerated promotion to Indians? If not, how is the demand for Indian officers in the highest levels going to be met, when further British recruitment to the Indian Army is going to be stopped according to the statement of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief?

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

Mr. P. Mason: (a) Indian officers are being given equal consideration with British officers for appointments appropriate to their seniority and ability.

(b) The number of Generals, Brigadiers, Colonels and Lieut.-Colonels in the Indian Army are as follows:

	Total	Indians
Major Generals	63	..
Brigadiers	120	4
Colonel	214	23
Lieut.-Colonels	1,868	240

NOTE.—These figures include substantive temporary acting ranks.

(c) No, Sir, no orders have been given for accelerated promotion. Recruitment starts at the bottom, not at the top. While the existing British officers are wasting out, Indian officers will continue to rise to higher positions as they gain the requisite seniority and experience.

COINS AND CURRENCY NOTES

778. *Shri Sri Prakasa: Will the Honourable the Finance Member please give:

(a) a list of the various types of coins current in the country and recognised by Government and the exact metallic contents of each;

(b) the denominations of the various currency notes that are still legal tender; and

(c) the amount of one-rupee currency notes in circulation at the present time, and state if Government are withdrawing these from circulation?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: (a) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

(b) Re. 1, Rs. 2, Rs. 2½, Rs. 5, Rs. 10, Rs. 20, Rs. 50, and Rs. 100.

(c) One-rupee currency notes issued in 1917, in circulation on 31st December 1945, amounted to Rs. 31,62,894. This does not include Government of India one-rupee notes issued under the Currency Ordinance, dated the 24th July 1940, which are deemed to be rupee coins and not currency notes.

The answer to the second part of the question is in the negative.

Statement

The following coins of the Government of India are current in this country:

Rupee and Half-rupee.—In quaternary alloy, consisting of 50 per cent. Silver, 40 per cent. Copper, 5 per cent. Nickel and 5 per cent. Zinc.

Quarter-rupee.—In Standard Silver alloy (11 parts Silver and 1 part Copper) and also in quaternary alloy as stated above.

Two-anna, One-anna and Half-anna.—In Nickel-brass alloy consisting of 79 per cent. Copper, 1 per cent. Nickel and 20 per cent. Zinc issued during the war period, also in Cupro-nickel alloy of 75 per cent. Copper and 25 per cent. Nickel.

Single Pice.—In Bronze alloy consisting of 97 per cent. Copper, 2½ per cent. Zinc and 1½ per cent. Tin, with a central hole. The pre-war type of Single Pice in Bronze alloy of 95½ per cent. Copper, 3 per cent. Tin and 1½ per cent. Zinc, without the central hole is also a current coin.

Half pice and Pie.—In Bronze alloy of the pre-war type.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: How many such currency notes which are treated as rupee coins are in circulation?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: The figures on 1st March 1946 were 72,67,92,000.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: How many rupee coins are in circulation besides currency notes?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: 89 crores, 14 lakhs 92 thousand.

Sri E. Venkatasubba Reddiar: Is it not a fact that these rupee notes get soiled quickly and that when such soiled notes are tendered at the treasury, they refused to exchange them or pay for them in coins?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: They do not have such a long life as some other notes, but I do not think they get soiled particularly easily, if they are taken care of.

Mr. Manu Subedar: These one rupee notes were introduced owing to shortage of silver, and in view of the fact that the Government have reduced the silver content of the rupee, will the Government consider the advisability of withdrawing these rupee notes and introduce rupee coins?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: I am sorry I cannot answer that off hand.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: According to the Currency Commission Report, the total number of rupee coins which were in circulation in 1927 were 450 crores. May I take it from the Honourable Member that the rupee coins have dwindled down?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: I should have to make enquiries.

CLASSIFICATION OF I. N. A. PRISONERS

779. ***Shri Sri Prakasa:** Will the War Secretary please state:

(a) the names of the jails in which I.N.A. men sentenced by courts of law, are imprisoned;

(b) the classifications that are given to them; and

(c) the number of prisoners under each classification?

Mr. P. Mason: (a), (b) and (c). The men who were sentenced to terms of imprisonment were dismissed from the army and are thereafter treated as ordinary convicted criminal prisoners. Such men normally spend their terms of imprisonment in jails in their own provinces where they are governed by the rules regarding classification, etc., which are laid down in the Provincial Jails Manuals.

Shri Sri Prakasa: With reference to part (b), what is the answer?

Mr. P. Mason: I do not know the classification.

Shri Sri Prakasa: In view of the fact that many such persons are put in 'C' class, while they really deserve a higher classification will the Honourable Member kindly issue instructions that they should be put in 'B' class?

Mr. P. Mason: No, Sir. I have said that I will obtain information and place it on the table. I certainly would not issue instructions to provincial jail authorities as classification does not lie within my province.

Shri Sri Prakasa: In view of the fact that jail authorities have nothing to do with the classification and that they only follow orders given to them, will the Honourable Member kindly take steps to see that proper classification is given to these persons?

Mr. P. Mason: I have no reason to suppose that proper classification is not given to them.

Shri Sri Prakasa: In view of the fact that I have reason to think that they are not given proper classification, will the Honourable Member kindly make sure that they are properly classified?

Mr. P. Mason: It is a matter for provincial authorities.

Khan Abdul Ghani Khan: Is it not a fact that the magistrate who awards the sentence recommends the class in which the prisoner is to be put?

Mr. P. Mason: These are not convicted by magistrates.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: The Honourable Member evidently does not know that it is the duty of the magistrate

Mr. President: Order, order, the Honourable Member has not heard the War Secretary's reply. He said that these are not convicted by magistrates.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Then who tries them?

Mr. P. Mason: Courts Martial.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Then, is it not the duty of the Courts Martial to look into the classification of prisoners convicted by them and may I suggest

Mr. President: The Honourable Member should put a question.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable Member consult the Home Member and the Home Department on this question of classification and see that justice is done to these people?

Mr. P. Mason: I have consulted them.

Mr. President: Perhaps one answer has been missed. He said it is a matter for the Provincial Governments.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable Member at least now consult the Home Department and the Provincial Governments and then ascertain whether or not it is duty of the Court Martial, or whatever court it may be, to classify these people and not for the Provincial Governments in their discretion?

Mr. P. Mason: Certainly not, because I know it is not the duty of the Court-Martial.

Shri Sri Prakasa: But whose duty is it? Does the Honourable Member send all these names to the Provincial Governments and ask them to classify them according to the whims of these Governments?

Mr. P. Mason: Yes, Sir; they are classified by the Provincial Governments according to their own Jail Rules.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Are there any similar rules for classification in the Delhi Province or in the centrally administered areas?

Mr. P. Mason: I do not know.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is it not the duty of this Government to see that these people who were in their empoly only the other day are not improperly classified by the Provincial Governments?

Mr. P. Mason: I have no reason to suppose that they are.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: In answering these questions about the classification of these people, is it not the duty of the Honourable Member to get information which is ready at hand in the Delhi Province?

Mr. P. Mason: I have already said that I will get the information.

Sri V. Gangaraju: Is the Honourable Member aware of the basis for this classification?

Mr. P. Mason: I do not know.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Will the Honourable Member find out what the basis of the classification is and how these people are treated, so that real justice can be done and all avoidable hardship eliminated?

Mr. P. Mason: It is a matter for the Provincial Governments, as I have said before, and my understanding is that it is in accordance with the past circumstances in life of the person concerned, which the provinces are in a better position to judge than I am.

Shri Sri Prakasa: But is the Honourable Member aware that the Provincial Governments are not taking into consideration just those things which the Honourable Member has now mentioned? And in view of that fact, will the Honourable Member kindly impress on the Provincial Governments the extreme desirability of taking all these factors into consideration?

Mr. P. Mason: No, Sir; and yes, Sir.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable Member at least now consider.

Mr. President: Order, order; next question.

SENTENCE ON SHYAMLAL PANDE AND AVADHBEHARI RAI OF I. N. A.

780. *Shri Sri Prakasa: Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

(a) if two I.N.A. men, Shyamlal Pande and Avadhbehari Rai by name, were confined till lately under sentence of life imprisonment in the Benares Central Prison;

(b) if these men were kept in solitary imprisonment and fetters all the time and given only 'C' class treatment;

(c) if they have been recently transferred from Benares, if so, where; and

(d) the charges for which they were sentenced?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: (a) Two convicted enemy agents named Shyamlal Pande and Avadheshwar Rai were confined in the Benares Central Prison up to the last week of December 1945.

(b) It is correct that they were in 'C' class. It is not correct that they were kept all the time in solitary imprisonment and fetters, but I understand that the jail authorities found it necessary at one time, for disciplinary reasons to award them separate confinement with imposition of bar fetters for a brief period, under Section 46 of the Prisons Act.

(c) They have been transferred to the Agra Central Prison.

(d) They were convicted under Section 3 of the Enemy Agents Ordinance and Section 121A of the Indian Penal Code.

Shri Sri Prakasa: With reference to part (b) will the Honourable Member take it from me that they were actually in solitary imprisonment all the time; that they had fetters all the time; that these fetters had cut into their flesh, and that they were in great agony? And will the Honourable Member kindly ask the prison authorities to give him correct information? And will he also kindly see that such hardship is no more undergone by these prisoners?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: Sir, like the War Secretary in answering the previous question, I must disclaim authority over the Provincial Government in a matter of this sort. But if the Honourable Member will give me the grounds for his belief that the information that I have just given is incorrect, I will certainly pass them on to the Provincial Government.

Shri Sri Prakasa: In view of the fact that the Honourable Member is so helpless about Provincial Governments, will the Honourable Member see to it that he keeps all his prisoners himself so that we may have a chance to bring to his attention the conditions under which they live? And so far as the grounds are concerned, will the Honourable Member take it from me that I have the evidence of persons who have been released from the Benares Central Jail, to support what I have said?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: That question covers rather a lot of ground, or rather, two lots of ground. As regards the latter part I think it is covered by what I have already said, that if the Honourable Member will give me the basis of his information I will pass it on to the Provincial Government. But the first part of it is a matter which raises a rather big question of policy and I cannot deal with that in answer to a supplementary question.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Will the Honourable Member kindly state if these two persons today are in fetters and in solitary confinement or not, in the Agra Central Prison?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I rather hesitate to answer my Honourable friend because when I answer him he contradicts me. But according to the information which I have, they are certainly not in fetters, and I think I should deduce from the information I have received that they are not in separate confinement.

Diwan Chaman Lal: May I know if it is a fact that these two gentlemen and others similarly placed are prisoners of the Central Government? How

does the question then arise of these prisoners being made a charge on Provincial Governments?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: No, Sir; I think they were committed to jails which are not under the Central Government.

Diwan Chaman Lal: Is it a fact that they were tried by Court-Martial and, if so, whether they are prisoners of the Central Government? How does it then arise that they are made a charge on the Provincial Governments?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I do not think they were tried by Court Martial; but I have given my friends all the information that I have received, which I received only at a late moment, and I must ask for notice if they want any more details.

Shri Sri Prakasa: May I know if they are still in the "C" class?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I think so, Sir, but there again I should hesitate to run the risk of contradiction by the Honourable Member.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Will the Honourable Member kindly ask the authorities to put them in the "B" class because of their education and status which entitle them to that class even under the rules of the Provincial Government, which the Provincial Government themselves do not care to follow?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: If the Honourable Member will give the grounds for his information, I will certainly pass them on.

Shri Sri Prakasa: This is the ground.

Mr. President: Order, order; next question.

PUNISHMENTS TO ENEMY AGENTS

781. *Shri Sri Prakasa: Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

(a) the number of alleged enemy agents who have been caught and tried in India during the course of the last World War;

(b) the manner and placé in which the various trials took place;

(c) the punishment meted out to them; and

(d) if any were hanged; if so, where, and how their bodies were disposed of?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: (a) 42.

(b) The trials were held in accordance with the provisions of the Enemy Agents Ordinance at Madras, Delhi and Calcutta.

(c) 27 were sentenced to death; one to 5 years' rigorous imprisonment and 14 were acquitted; of the 27 death sentences, 14 were commuted to transportation for life.

(d) 13 were hanged—10 in Madras and 3 in Delhi. In all except one case, the executions and details of the charges against the convicts were announced in press communiques at the time. The bodies of those hanged in Madras were buried in the public burial ground at Otery, Madras. Of the three persons hanged in Delhi the body of one was claimed by his relatives and was handed over to them for burial; the bodies of the other two were not claimed and were cremated through the Seva Samiti at the expense of Government.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Were facilities given to these persons to defend themselves?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: Yes, Sir, they certainly were.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is it not a fact that the trials were held in secret?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I think that is so.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is it not a fact that the bodies of two of these unfortunate people, who were hanged,—one Mr. Nair and another Mr. Thevar,—were buried in the jail grounds in Madras?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: That is not my information, Sir. My information is that the bodies of those hanged in Madras were buried in the public burial ground at Otery.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: But did Government take any steps to see that their relatives were given a chance to pay their last respects to the bodies of these people?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I must ask for notice of that.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Were they allowed lawyers to defend them?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: Yes, Sir.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is it not a fact that these lawyers were not freely chosen by these prisoners but were deputed by Government?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I think, according to my recollection, that the choice of lawyers for persons tried under that Ordinance was limited.

Shri Sri Prakasa: In view of the fact that custom in the case of some of these prisoners required cremation and not burial, may I know why the bodies of all were buried and not cremated?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I shall require notice of that question.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Are any records of those trials kept, and, if so, when will the Government publish them?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I presume the proceedings were recorded in the usual way. I cannot undertake an answer to the second part of the question, viz., whether the proceedings will at any time be published.

Diwan Chaman Lall: May I ask my Honourable friend as to what the case was in which no communique was issued?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I cannot say. I have not got that information before me at the moment.

Diwan Chaman Lall: Is it not a fact that till now no communique has been issued? Nobody knows who that man was.

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I think that is a fact.

Diwan Chaman Lall: Will my Honourable friend make an enquiry into this matter and let the House know full details regarding this case?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I will see what the case was and why no communique was issued.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May I know if the cases are reviewed from time to time by the Central Government or the Provincial Government?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: The cases or the punishments?

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: If they are sentenced, their cases come up for review and they are given remissions and so on. I want to know whether these cases come for review to the Central Government or the Provincial Government so far as punishments are concerned?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I should require notice. I think the Provincial Government, but I am not sure.

Shri Sri Prakasa: May I know if the Honourable Member was really serious when he asked for notice as regards the custom that prevails in the country because of which many people are actually cremated after death? Are we to give him notice to enquire whether this is a custom or not?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I do not understand what the Honourable Member wants to know.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member has perhaps not understood the reply given by the Honourable Sir John Thorne. He does not want notice to enquire as to what custom prevails, but wants notice for collecting details with regard to what particular bodies were cremated or buried. Is that so?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: Yes, Sir, and why, if the custom to which the dead man subscribed was not observed—the reasons for that.

DETENTION OF SGT. SATYARANJAN BAKSHI

782. *Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state:

(a) the latest report of Sjt. Satyaranjan Bakshi's health as given by the Bengal Government;

(b) whether the Central Government will have any objection if the Government of Bengal release him on grounds of health or otherwise;

(c) whether any instructions were given by the Central Government to the Provincial Government at the time when the prisoner was handed over to the latter; if so, what; and

(d) whether the grounds on which the prisoner was arrested are still in existence?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: (a) As Mr. Satyaranjan Bakshi is no longer a prisoner of the Central Government no reports of his health are received and I have no information of his present state of health.

(b) and (c) No.

(d) This is a matter for the Government of Bengal.

Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: Will the Honourable Member be pleased to state whether or not the detention of this gentleman is in continuation of the original arrest by the Central Government?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: It was not the same detention. The authority ordering the detention is different.

Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: Was he arrested by the Central Government or by the Provincial Government?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I am not quite sure under whose orders he was originally arrested, but he was at one time under detention by order of the Central Government.

Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: Was he ever released after that detention by the Central Government?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: He was sent back to Bengal where, I understand, the Bengal Government for reasons of their own, issued a fresh order of detention.

Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: What was the legal position of the original order by which the Central Government took him into custody? And may I know if the original order of detention, which was issued by the Central Government, is alive or is that spent up?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: That order is spent.

Shri Sri Prakasa: May I know if Mr. Bakshi was regarded as a Central subject when he was in the United Provinces, and has suddenly become a provincial subject when he is transferred to Bengal, and, if so, what were the circumstances in which he was sent from the United Provinces to Bengal, and under whose orders?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: Could I have that sentence split up into parts?

Shri Sri Prakasa: Could not the Honourable Member do it himself?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: My memory is not good enough to enable me to perform the dissection.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Is it not a fact that he was under the Central Government when he was in the United Provinces and that he became a prisoner of the Bengal Government when he was transferred to Bengal?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I am not sure when he was in the United Provinces, but he was at one stage—at an early stage—a prisoner of the Central Government, and he is now a prisoner of the Bengal Government. prisoner?

Shri Sri Prakasa: I want to know the circumstances in which he became a prisoner of the Bengal Government after having been a prisoner of the Central Government, and why did the Central Government transfer him to the Bengal Government as its prisoner?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: He ceased to be a prisoner of the Central Government because for the purposes of the Central Government it was no longer necessary to continue the order of detention. He became a prisoner of the Bengal Government because for their own purposes the Bengal Government desired to detain him and he was transferred to Bengal for that purpose.

Shri Sri Prakasa: May I take it that there was interregnum between his being a prisoner of the Central Government and his being a prisoner of the Bengal Government, and where was he in this interregnum?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: There was no interregnum.

Sri R. Venkatasubba Reddiar: Did the Central Government release him at any time?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: No.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Did the Central Government issue orders to the Provincial Government to re-arrest him?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: No, Sir.

Mr. Debendra Lal Khan: Did the Provincial Government requisition his arrest at any time, originally, or subsequently?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I could not follow the question, Sir.

Shri Sri Prakasa: The question is: "Did the Provincial Government ask the Central Government to transfer him to Bengal as the latter's prisoner?"

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: That should be addressed to the Provincial Government.

Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: The question of my Honourable friend is this: Was he at any time requisitioned for the purposes of arrest by the Bengal Government?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I do not understand the term 'requisition' and I do not understand the term 'arrest'. The Provincial Government said that they wished to detain him. He was not freshly arrested. He was transferred to Bengal and I assume that the moment the order of the Central Government expired, the Bengal Government enforced their order.

Shri Sri Prakasa: But did the Central Government inform the Provincial Government that they had no cause for keeping Mr. Bakshi any more in detention, and is it that they then suddenly discovered that he was wanted by the Bengal Government? I should like to know the procedure that was adopted in this case. It seems the Government has been cruel in this case.

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: The Central Government informed the Bengal Government that for their own purposes they did not propose to detain him further whereupon the Bengal Government announced their intention of detaining him.

Mr. Debendra Lal Khan: May I ask what that purpose is?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: Which purpose? The Provincial purpose?

Shri Sri Prakasa: No, the Central purpose.

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I must ask for notice.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Was it legally necessary for the Central Government to send this information to the Bengal Government?

Mr. President: That is a matter of opinion.

Shri Sri Prakasa: I want to know whether it was right. There is a valuable life involved in this case. He is seriously ill and we want his release. The Honourable Member simply hands over a person to another province.....

Mr. President: That will be a matter of argument. Next question.

RETRENCHMENT *vis a vis* SHORTAGE IN MUSLIM QUOTA IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES

783. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member please state whether it is a fact that Government have issued orders for the classification of temporary staff of the offices of the Central Government into three categories for purposes of their retention in Government service? If so, what criterion has been laid down for giving effect to their orders and what safeguards have been provided to guard against the indiscriminate classification of persons in category 'C'?

(b) Have Government issued instructions that at the time of retrenchment the shortage in the Muslim quota in the offices should be made up? If so, what measures do Government propose to take to find out that their orders have been given effect to by the various authorities concerned?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: (a) and (b). A copy of the instructions issued by Government in this matter (Home Department Office Memorandum No. 31/18/45-Ests. (S), dated the 2nd October, 1945) is placed on the table of the House. The instructions provide, first, that temporary employees shall be so discharged that the composition of the retained temporary staff is in accordance with the communal ratios prescribed for recruitment; and, secondly, that within each community men will be discharged according to three categories of fitness combined with seniority. It follows that a man in the top category of fitness will be retained in preference to a man in the second category even though the latter has more temporary service. But no member of a recognised minority community can be discharged even if he is in the lowest category of fitness if his retrenchment would leave his community with less than the prescribed ratio of representation.

Government do not consider it necessary to prescribe special measures to ensure that these instructions are observed.

No. 31/18/45-Ests. (S)

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

HOME DEPARTMENT

New Delhi, the 2nd October 1945

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT:—Application of rules regarding communal representation to the discharge of temporary Government servants

The Home Department have had under examination the steps necessary to ensure that the retrenchment of temporary staff consequent on the cessation of hostilities does not adversely affect the representation of minority communities and it has been decided that the following procedure shall be followed:—

(a) Temporary employees shall be so discharged that the composition of the retained temporary staff is in accordance with the communal ratio prescribed for recruitment or as near thereto as possible, including the provisions that any deficiency in "other minorities" is made up by Muslims and that any deficiency in "Scheduled Castes" is treated as belonging to unreserved vacancies.

(b) Within each community recognized for the purpose of the rules regarding communal representation, viz., Hindus, Scheduled Castes, Muslims and Other Minority Communities, temporary employees will be discharged in the reverse order of seniority as determined by date of appointment.

(c) In accordance with paragraph 1(2) of the Home Department Office Memorandum No. 70/49/45-Ests., dated the 7th July 1945, temporary employees should be classified as—

- (1) outstanding and for whom every effort should be made to find a permanent post;
- (2) definitely fit for permanent appointment if a vacancy exists; and
- (3) the rest

For the purposes of retrenchment, all persons in class (1) should be considered as senior to all those in class (2) and all in class (2) as senior to all in class (3).

2. These orders will not apply to the posts or services in the list appended to Home Department Office Memorandum, No. 14/9/37-Ests. (S), dated the 28th May 1940, recruitment to which is exempt from the rules relating to communal representation, or to any posts or services so exempted subsequently.

3. These orders will remain in force until further notice.

P. V. R. RAO,

Deputy Secretary to the Government of India.

To

All Departments of the Government of India; Political Department; Secretaries to the Governor-General (Public), (Reforms) and (Personal); Secretary, Executive Council; Registrar, Federal Court; Crown Finance Department; Military Secretary to His Excellency the Viceroy; Director, Intelligence Bureau and the Federal Public Service Commission.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: In view of the fact that the Honourable Member gave in his reply to my question the other day that the representation of Muslims in the Central Services falls below the minimum quota, namely that it is 20.6 per cent., will he now issue instructions to the heads of all Departments under him not to retrench Muslims wherever they fall short of this quota?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I said in the reply which my friend quotes, that I was considering steps to ensure that this representation should be properly observed, and that is a matter which is now under consideration.

(b) WRITTEN ANSWERS

MUSLIMS IN INDIAN AUDIT DEPARTMENTS

784. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state the total number of gazetted officers and Accountants (permanent and temporary, separately) employed in the Indian Audit Departments, and the number of Muslims holding these posts?

(b) Are Government aware that in the Accountants' cadre at least one third of the posts are reserved for the minority communities? If so, how many Muslims who have qualified themselves in the departmental examination for Accountants have been permanently promoted as Accountants each year for the last ten years?

Mr. B. O. A. Cook: (a) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

(b) No. Appointments to the cadre of Accountants are made by departmental promotion and no reservation is made for minority communities. The rules regarding the reservation of posts for minority communities do not apply in the case of departmental promotions.

Statement showing the total number of Gazetted Officers and Accountants (Permanent and Temporary, separately) in the Indian Audit Department and the Number holding these posts

	Permanent		Temporary	
	Total No. of posts	No. of Muslims	Total No. of posts	No. of Muslims
1. Indian Audit and Accounts Service officers.	143	24	71	18
2. Assistant Accounts officers .	113	10
3. Accountants .	556	29	172	16

REVERSION OF MUSLIM ASSISTANT ACCOUNT OFFICER

785. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state whether it is a fact that the only Muslim Assistant Accounts Officer under the Accountant General, Posts and Telegraphs, has been reverted to his former post and replaced by a Hindu officer?

(b) Was any inquiry instituted against the Muslim Assistant Accounts Officer?

(c) Was the request of the said Muslim officer for a copy of the report of the enquiring officer refused? If so, why?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: (a) Yes; the Muslim officer who was officiating as an Assistant Accounts Officer was reverted to his permanent post of Superintendent, as his work as an Assistant Accounts Officer was found to be unsatisfactory. The next senior man who happened to be a Hindu, was promoted to officiate as Assistant Accounts Officer in his place.

(b) The officer was asked to reply to certain adverse comments on his work, which were communicated to him in writing, and it was not until after consideration of his written reply that it was decided that he was unfit, for the time being, for promotion as an Assistant Accounts Officer. No enquiry was held, the fact being as just stated.

(c) As already stated in part (b) above the adverse comments of the reporting officer were communicated to him in writing.

BRITISH W. A. C. (I)s IN INDIA

786. *Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: With reference to his previous answer on the subject, will the War Secretary please state:

(a) the justification for keeping a thousand or more British WACIs in India for more than six months after the cessation of hostilities;

(b) whether the duties now performed by them cannot equally efficiently be discharged by men who have been or will shortly be thrown out of employment in the various Government offices as being surplus to requirements; and, if not, in what respects the WACIs are indispensable; and

(c) whether he proposes to take early steps to send out of this country all British WACIs, if possible before the 1st of April this year, in view of the serious food situation in the country, if not, why not?

Mr. P. Mason: (a) and (c). The Honourable Member seems to be under some misapprehension. All members of the WAC(I) were recruited in India, and the European members are either domiciled in this country or are the wives or daughters of officers serving in India. They cannot therefore be sent out of the country unless they wish to go.

(b) As already announced, the Corps is to be disbanded over a period of about a year, which is the minimum time in which men can be fitted into the large number of appointments held. This process will reduce the number of men to be discharged.

LOW PAY OF INDIAN SOLDIERS

787. *Mr. P. B. Gole: (a) Will the War Secretary be pleased to state whether Government are aware that amongst the troops fighting in Africa for the Allies, it was the Indian soldier who got the lowest pay?

(b) Are Government aware that the Indian soldier proved his valour and earned laurels on the battle fields of Africa?

(c) Has any attempt been made to compensate the Indian soldier for the lowest pay he was given?

(d) Is the Honourable Member aware that there is great discontent in the Indian Army fighting outside India owing to the marked difference in pay and other treatment?

Mr. P. Mason: (a) (c) and (d). As I have explained before, the rates of pay of soldiers of various countries are based on the cost of living and other factors in those countries. For the reason the American soldier gets higher pay than the British soldier, who in his turn, gets higher rates than the Indian soldier. To attempt to equate these rates of pay would effect the whole economic structure of the country and create demands in every Branch of Government service which would be impossible to meet.

(b) Yes, Sir.

CIVIL SECTIONS OF I. N. A.

788. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state:

(a) how many of the civil sections of the I.N.A. are kept in Government Camps;

(b) where are they, and what numbers of them are kept in such camps;

(c) what allowances, diet and clothing are given to them;

(d) against how many of them legal proceedings are taken or are pending; and

(e) why the rest of them are not released immediately; and how soon Government expect to release them?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: (a) At present there are 34 civilian members of the Indian National Army in detention in India.

(b) Three are awaiting release at Jhingergacha and 31 are in hospitals in Calcutta.

(c) The same allowances, diet and clothing as are given to military personnel held pending interrogation, discharge, dismissal or release are provided for the civilians.

(d) None.

(e) The three civilians held at Jhingergacha are being released in a very few days. The remaining 31 will be released as soon as medical authorities advise they are fit to leave hospital.

EXCISE DUTY ON BETEL-NUT

789. *Shri D. P. Karmarkar: Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the news under the heading "Condemnation of the betelnut tax: meetings and hartals" at page 3 of the *Samyukta Karnatak* of the 10th February, 1946, and the news under the heading "Excise Duty on Betelnut: plea for removal" in the *Madras Mail* of the 22nd January, 1946;

(b) whether it is a fact that numerous meetings were held and hartals observed in all betelnut growing areas on the 31st January, 1946, as a protest against the continued imposition of the betelnut excise tax;

(c) whether the growers of betelnuts are, in most of the areas themselves, rendering it ready for marketing, and whether as a matter of fact that excise tax is being paid by the betelnut gardeners themselves;

(d) whether it is a fact that, owing to betelnut being given low priority on the Railways, there has been no adequate movement of betelnut with consequent loss to the betelnut gardeners;

(e) whether it is a fact that there has been a fall in the prices of betelnut as compared with the prices prevalent when the excise tax was first imposed; if so, how much; and

(f) what Government propose to do to alleviate the sufferings of the betelnut gardeners?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) Most growers are also curers. In the latter capacity they may, if they so desire, clear their produce themselves on payment of duty and may then include the duty in their sale price. Otherwise, if they so prefer, they may sell their produce to a licenced wholesale dealer who has a bonded warehouse, in which case the duty need not be paid until the goods are cleared from the warehouse.

(d) Representations have been received to this effect.

(e) After the introduction of the excise, wholesale prices increased but subsequently prices have declined,—particularly since V-J day, in view of the prospect of a revival of imports from abroad. They are, however still more than double prewar prices.

(f) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to paragraph 51 of my Honourable friend's Budget Speech.

WOMEN'S CORPS ATTACHED TO GENERAL HEADQUARTERS AND OTHER ARMY SERVICES

790. *Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Will the War Secretary please state:

(a) the names of the various auxiliary or other services attached to the General Headquarters or other Army services in India, such as the WACI or WVS or ATS, etc., etc. whether recruited in India or out of India, who are paid from Indian revenues;

(b) the total number of each of the above services;

(c) the total amount spent on each of the above services during the war, and the total amount budgetted for during 1945-1946;

(d) whether the passages and other expenses of these persons are borne out of the Indian revenues; and

(e) how many of these persons, employed in the ATS, WVS, WACI, etc., who are of non-Indian domicile and who got married since their arrival in India, are continuing in the same service, and whether their marriage has not affected their efficiency in the discharge of their duties?

Mr. P. Mason: (a) and (b). In order to make the matter clear, and as there is much misconception on this subject, I include all Women's Services, and not only those who are connected with the Army. The Services in question are as follows:

(i) WRNS. This is a purely British Service. Of those members of this Service who came to India, all but 26 came to work with the Royal Navy and were in no way a charge on Indian revenues. The only exception is that 26 WRNS officers were seconded for periods ranging from 5 to 13 months to the Royal Indian Navy to assist in forming and training the WRINS which is the Naval Branch of the WAC(I).

(ii) A.T.S. This is a British Army Service, which was started in 1938. Members of the A.T.S. came to India as normal reinforcements, the auxiliaries replacing British other ranks and the officers, who are all staff or technically trained, replacing British officers, as there were not enough WAC(I)s to fill available vacancies. A small number of A.T.S. officers, who were trained instructors, were also lent to the W.A.C.(I) to assist in the training of W.A.C.(I) officers and auxiliaries; the number of officers so lent never exceeded 23 and the maximum number of A.T.S. officers and auxiliaries in India at any one time was 51 and 121 respectively.

(iii) WAAF. This is the British Women's Air Service and all those who came to India were brought for work with the Royal Air Force. The greatest number who were ever in India was 500.

(iv) WAC(I). This is the Indian Service and is intended to assist all three Services—Navy, Army and Air Force. All the personnel of this corps were recruited in India. The strength of the Corps on 1st January, 1946, was 10,575.

(v) WVS(I). This is a voluntary Service which exists in a similar form in all countries of the Commonwealth. It was intended to provide a means of assisting the war effort for those women who, because of family or other ties, could not take up whole-time service in the WAC(I). The service provided by this organisation has taken many forms of which the principal are work in canteens, the despatch of parcels on behalf of members of the Services, the visiting of hospitals and the organising of entertainments for the troops. The members of the WVS(I) are not paid. Grants made by Government were about Rs. 27,440 as a contribution towards expenses. It was found, however, that the activities of this organisation which have proved most popular with the troops, could be greatly assisted if co-ordinated by a small number of whole-time workers, and therefore 84 whole-time workers were brought from the U.K. These workers have not received any salary but have been paid an allowance from Government to cover their expenses which has varied between Rs. 180 and Rs. 275 p. m.

The incidence of cost in the cases of A.T.S., W.A.C.(I), and W.V.S. depends on the unit with which the person in question is serving and is divided between the Government of India and HMG in the same way as other Defence expenditure.

(c) The total amount spent on all the Women's Services during the war is not available, but the amount spent on the WAC(I) who are by far the most numerous, is approximately Rs. 339 lakhs to end of 1944-45. The provision in 1945-46 on this account is estimated at Rs. 191 lakhs. Of these amounts the shares representing India's liability are approximately Rs. 187 lakhs and Rs. 115 lakhs respectively. In the case of other Women's services, the numbers and consequently the expenditure are comparatively small.

(d) All expenditure of this nature brought to account in India is the 'Joint' liability of both Governments.

(e) Since, as I have explained, all members of the W.A.C.(I) were recruited in India, the question of their marriage since their arrival in India does not arise.

One member of the A.T.S. and two of the W.V.S. who married since their arrival in India are still in service. Since the numbers are so small, I feel that any comparison of their efficiency before and after marriage would be invidious.

EXTENSIONS TO SUPERANNUATED PERSONNEL

791. *Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

(a) if it is a fact that according to the rules extensions of service beyond the age of 55 should not ordinarily be granted;

(b) if it is a fact that various Departments are granting such extensions in violation of that rule;

(c) if he proposes to issue a direction that all such cases should be referred to the Federal Public Service Commission before any extension is granted and only in very exceptional cases should such a thing be done;

(d) if Government are aware that persons like Sir Richard Tottenham and Sir Allan Lloyd have continued in the Government of India Secretariat beyond the age of 55; if so, when it is proposed to retire them, and whether there are any more in the same category in the Government of India Secretariat and attached offices; and

(e) whether the rule is intended to apply only to the ministerial staff or to the superior and gazetted staff also?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: (a) The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the replies given by me on the 1st February to questions No. 414 and 426. 55 is however not the age of superannuation in all cases.

(b) No extensions have been granted in violation of the rule or where they were not in the interests of good administration.

(c) Government already have this under consideration.

(d) Attention is invited to the statement placed on the table on the 21st February, in reply to question No. 413 Sir Richard Tottenham does not reach the age of superannuation until 1949. Sir Alan Lloyd was re-employed after retirement because of the acute shortage of officers.

(e) Fundamental Rule 56 which governs the grant of extensions of service applies to ministerial staff as well as superior and gazetted staff, but it is not necessary to retire ministerial servants until they attain the age of 60 if they continue to be efficient.

NATIONALITY OF MEMBERS OF W. A. C. (I)

792. *Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: With reference to answer to part (a) of starred question No. 321 regarding nationalities of the members of the W.A.C. (I) asked on the 18th February, 1946 will the War Secretary please state as to what nationality the three "Others" who are shown as Senior Commanders belong, how much they are paid, and whether it was not possible to obtain Indian or British officers in their places? Does he propose to take immediate steps to replace them as well as other non-Indian personnel till such time as the corps is disbanded?

Mr. P. Mason: The three Senior Commanders whose nationality is shown as "Others" are one Anglo-Burman, one Anglo-Persian and one Armenian. These three officers are holding staff appointments and draw Rs. 380 per month pay of rank *plus* Rs. 100 per month staff pay.

It is not the policy of the Corps to discriminate against women of any race who are British subjects.

ACQUISITION OF CRUISERS ON BEHALF OF INDIA

793. *Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: With reference to the reported acquisition of three cruisers on behalf of India, will the War Secretary please state:

(a) the price paid for the same and from whom they were acquired;

(b) the age of these cruisers, and if they are thoroughly modern, and also the additional cost, if any, of converting them to modern cruisers; and

(c) the total strength of the personnel employed in these cruisers and how many of them are Indians at present and when the personnel will be entirely Indian?

Mr. P. Mason: (a) It is hoped to obtain three cruisers from the Royal Navy but His Majesty's Government have not yet signified their final agreement to make them available. I should explain that there is a good deal of competition for them. The sale price will be negotiated with His Majesty's Government, and will depend upon their age, original cost of construction, present condition of modernisation, re-fits, etc.

(b) This question cannot be answered as it is not known definitely which vessels, if any, can be made available. It is, however, proposed to acquire cruisers with modern equipment, and with a residual life of at least 12 years.

(c) The average complement of a cruiser of the type envisaged is 30 officers and 800 men. If cruisers are acquired, it is anticipated that all ratings and 50 per cent. of the officers will be Indian. Personnel are not specially earmarked for particular vessels, and replacement of British Officers by Indian officers will take place progressively throughout the Service. The time taken to complete this process cannot be forecast at present.

CONVERSION OF NATIONAL WAR FRONT INTO FIELD PUBLICITY ORGANISATION

794. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable Member for Information and Arts be good enough to state:

(a) Whether the former National War Front (N.W.F.) has been converted into the present Field Publicity Organisation (F.P.O.);

- (b) When this F.P.O. was started, and when the N.W.F. was closed;
- (c) The legislative sanction for the establishment of the F.P.O., and whether any sanction of the Assembly was obtained for the expenditure on the F.P.O.; if not, under what authority public money has been spent on it;
- (d) How much has been so far spent and proposed to be spent in 1946-47;
- (e) How many of the officers formerly employed by the N.W.F. are now in the employ of the F.P.O.; and
- (f) The specific role it is playing to solve the food crisis?

The Honourable Sir Akbar Hydari: (a) Yes.

(b) The Field Publicity Organisation was started on the 1st June, 1945, at the Centre and in the Provinces except in the United Provinces and Madras where it came into existence from 1st July, 1945, and 10th July, 1945, respectively.

The National War Front was closed from the 31st May, 1945, at the Centre and the Provinces except in the United Provinces and Madras where it ceased to exist as from the 30th June and 9th July, 1945, respectively.

(c) The National War Front grant was shown in the 1945-46 Budget and the intention to replace National War Front by Field Publicity Organisation was announced to the Assembly in the last Budget Session.

(d) Estimated expenditure during 1945-46 is Rs. 30,57,100. Budget provision during 1946-47 is Rs. 51,38,400.

(e) Three.

(f) The Field Publicity Organisation is trying to keep the rural population informed of the measures that are being taken to meet the crisis; it is aiming at creating opinion against the hoarding of and profiteering in grain; and is also stressing the necessity of austerity and the sharing of the shortage in food.

COOPERATIVE RELATIONS OF FIELD PUBLICITY ORGANIZATION WITH OTHER BODIES

795. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable Member for Information and Arts be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Field Publicity Organisation is intended mainly to provide employment to demobilized people and to help them settle down in their villages;

(b) whether it has, as yet established any cooperative relations with the existing Kisan and handloom weavers congress organisations, the All-India Spinners Association, the village Industries Association and the Federation of Rural People's Associations in order to aid them in their efforts to serve the rural masses of India;

(c) if not, will it offer its cooperation and services to all such organisations as are catering to the needs of rural masses; and

(d) whether it will place its resources at the disposal of adult education movements such as the Rural Library and Anti-Illiteracy Organisations?

The Honourable Sir Akbar Hydari: (a) No, Sir.

(b) Its aim is to act in co-operation with all such organisations as are willing to lend a helping hand; and those mentioned by the Honourable Member must be counted among them.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Certainly; it will try to assist any constructive nation building activity.

INDIAN AND FOREIGN LIQUOR SHOPS IN DELHI PROVINCE

796. *Shri Mohan Lal Saxena: Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian Foreign liquor shops in the Delhi Province before the 3rd September, 1939;

(b) the number of these shops now;

(c) the cause of increase or decrease, if any, in the number of these liquor shops;

(d) the Government policy underlying the opening of new shops; and

(e) whether there is any fixed date on which licences for liquor (Indian and Foreign) are issued by the Delhi Government, if so, whether there have been any instances in which licences have been issued after the fixed date or during the course of a year, and why?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: (a) 20.

(b) 20.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The number of shops in any locality or the opening of new shops is determined by the requirements of that locality.

(e) A licence may be given from any date up to the 31st March following. The latter part of the question does not arise.

NEW LIQUOR SHOPS IN DELHI

797. *Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether any representations have been made by the public of different localities of Delhi requesting unanimously that no liquor shops should be opened in their localities; if so, what action has been taken on their representations;

(b) whether the Delhi Government is contemplating the issue of licences for opening liquor shops in such areas from which the above representations have been made;

(c) if it is a fact that Government propose to increase the number of liquor shops in Delhi; if so, why; and

(d) whether Government are aware that in the United Provinces there are local non-official Licensing Boards, in consultation with which licences for new shops are issued, if so, whether Government propose to consider the desirability of setting up similar Boards for Delhi?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: (a), (b) and (c). Representations have been received but they have expressed the view of only some, not all, of the local residents. The Government do not propose to increase the number of liquor shops in Delhi at present. The number, however, of shops licensed at any time will depend on the demand of *bona fide* consumers.

(d) An Excise Advisory Committee including non-officials already exists in Delhi, and it is generally consulted before licences for opening of new shops are issued. The question of enlarging this body and constituting it on the lines of the U. P. Licensing Board is now under consideration.

TREATMENT OF CIVIL MEMBERS OF AZAD HIND MOVEMENT IN BRITISH JAILS IN EUROPE

798. *Shri Satya Narayan Sinha: (a) Has the attention of the Honourable the Home Member been drawn to the report in the *Hindustan Times*, dated February 17, that the civilian members of the Azad Hind movement are rotting in several British Camps in Europe and that many of them are kept separately in dark cells in a civil jail in Germany?

(b) Does he propose to give the House detailed information about them?

(c) Is it a fact that at the Cramwich Camp in England some of the POWs are reported to have committed suicide on account of cruel treatment meted out to them by the police officials?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: (a) I have seen the report.

(b) Enquiries are being made and full information will be furnished later.

(c) No.

RELEASE OF COLONELS BHONSLE, LOGANADHAN AND OTHER I. N. A. MEN

799. *Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Will the War Secretary please state:

(a) if his attention has been drawn to reports in the press about the illness of Colonel Bhonsle, Colonel Loganadhan and others of the I.N.A. detained in various places in India or elsewhere;

(b) if he will make a statement regarding their health as soon as possible, and whether their ill-health is due to want of proper food and other amenities and when he proposes to get them released;

(c) if his attention has been drawn to reports about the bad treatment of I.N.A. personnel still in Europe, by officers who have been put in charge and whether he proposes to order an inquiry to be made into such allegations; and

(d) the amount of money spent on keeping these men and officers of the I.N.A. in detention in India and elsewhere and whether in the interests of economy of expenditure, he proposes to order their release as expeditiously as possible?

Mr. P. Mason: (a) and (b). As I have stated more than once, the medical treatment accorded in hospitals to members of the Indian Army is not affected in any way by the fact that they joined the I.N.A.

Lt.-Col. Bhonsle was admitted to the I.M.H. in Cantonments on the 15th of last month, suffering from diarrhoea. He is now well on the way to recovery and should be discharged from hospital shortly.

Lt.-Col. Loganadhan was admitted to the I.M.H. in Delhi on the 27th of November last, suffering from a Gastric ulcer. His illness is one of long standing, possibly aggravated by want of proper food for the last few years. In neither case can the illness be ascribed to conditions which have prevailed since the fall of Japan.

(c) This part of the question presumably relates to civilian members of the I.N.A. and should have been addressed to the Honourable the Home Member.

(d) As regards the first part, I would invite the attention of the Honourable Member to my reply on the 7th February to question No. 76. For the rest, the cases of these men are being disposed of as rapidly as possible consistent with justice.

PRIVATE OWNERSHIP OF ALL-INDIA RADIO

800. *Maharajkumar Dr. Sir Vijaya Ananda: Will the Honourable Member for Information and Arts be pleased to state if they are contemplating to remove the All-India Radio from the purview of the Central Government and make it over to private ownership? If so, why?

The Honourable Sir Akbar Hydari: As the Honourable Member is aware broadcasting is at present a constitutional responsibility of the Central Government. There is no plan at present before Government envisaging any change in that position but the question of setting up a semi autonomous corporation is under consideration.

**PERMISSION TO MAJOR GEORGE MANUAL LEE, MEDICAL OFFICER OF I. N. A.
TO RETURN TO THAILAND**

801. *Seth Govind Das: Will the Honourable Home Member please state:

(a) whether it is a fact that one Major George Manual Lee, Medical Officer of the Indian National Army, who was released from the Red Fort on February 7, last, has been refused permission by the Government of India to return to Thailand, where he was domiciled for the last fifteen years;

(b) whether it is a fact that this gentleman was also selected by the Congress Medical Mission which was going to Malaya but could not accompany the Mission because of Government orders;

(c) whether it is also a fact that his family, his wife who is a Siamese lady and his two children, are in Siam in destitute condition and that Government have refused to give any maintenance allowance; and

(d) whether they propose to consider the advisability of granting permission to this gentleman to return to Thailand and to his family in Siam?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: (a) Dr. George Muller Lee has not been refused by the Government of India permission to return to Siam.

(b) Government have received no application for the inclusion of this gentleman in the Congress Medical Mission to Malaya but they have decided not to agree to the inclusion in that Mission of members of the Indian National Army, since the local administration is likely to take exception to their entry into Malaya and this would tend to delay the visit of the Mission.

(c) I have no information about Dr. Lee's family in Siam.

(d) Government have no objection to his return to Siam.

DEMAND FOR WITHDRAWAL OF PRESS RESTRICTIONS

802. *Seth Govind Das: Will the Honourable the Home Member kindly state:

(a) whether the Government of India are aware of the demand of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference that press restrictions in this country should be withdrawn; and

(b) in view of the changed political conditions resulting from the end of the war, whether Government propose to consider an early withdrawal of these restrictions?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: (a) Yes.

(b) Government have already withdrawn all restrictions which were necessitated by the war. Government have received and are considering a recent recommendation of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference that they should appoint a committee to review enactments affecting the Press and to recommend their repeal amendment or alteration.

NEW CEMENT FACTORIES

803. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable Member for Planning and Development please state:

(a) what new cement factories have now been sanctioned, giving their names and localities;

(b) whether the production of cement after these new factories begin working will be sufficient to meet the requirements of the country, or whether Government contemplate sanctioning more of such factories, or whether Government propose to ask these factories to increase their production; and

(c) by what time these factories will begin working, and how long will it take to get the necessary plants to this country?

The Honourable Sir Akbar Hydari: (a) I refer the Honourable Member to my reply to Starred Question No. 616, asked by Mr. Manu Subedar, on the 4th March, 1946.

(b) As at present advised: yes. If, however, their production is not found sufficient, action to increase the total cement production in the country will be taken by measures considered most appropriate at the time.

(c) We expect that the factories will be able to obtain the machinery required within two years and will be in full production in about three years.

DISPOSAL OF WAR SURPLUSES

804. *Sri V. C. Vellingiri Gounder: (a) Will the War Secretary be pleased to state the arrangements so far made to dispose of the war surplus materials, such as food, machinery, medicine, hospital equipments, dairy farms, vegetable farms and buildings?

(b) What is the nature of arrangements made by the Civil Department for purchasing from the Military Department of the Government of India and from the American Military Department?

(c) what are the arrangements so far concluded, in what areas and in what items of surpluses?

(d) What are the surpluses so far disposed off, and the places where they were disposed off?

(e) As regards the disposal of the military buildings, which of them will be kept permanently to be handed over to the Civil Department, and which are to be demolished?

(f) In places where lands are taken up for permanent occupation by the military, do Government propose to compensate the land-holders by grant of suitable lands in exchange, if available, in the neighbourhood?

(g) In case of lands being given back to the owners, do Government propose to see that those lands are made fit for cultivation as before?

Mr. P. Mason: (a) (i) *Food*.—Any surpluses of indigenous food stuffs that occur from time to time are reported by the Q.M.G. to the Food Department for disposal.

Surpluses of imported food stuffs are in the first instance reported by the Q.M.G. to the War Office under whose arrangements they were originally procured. The War Office will then utilise these surpluses as far as possible to meet the requirements of all theatres notably S.E.A.C. and any balance which the War Office cannot utilise will be reported by the Q.M.G. to the Food Department for disposal.

Any part of this balance which the Food Department is unable to dispose of will be reported through the War Office to the Ministry of Food for disposal.

(ii) *Machinery, medicine and hospital equipment*.—A Directorate-General of Disposals has been created with headquarters at New Delhi; Regional Commissioners at Lahore, Cawnpore, Bombay and Karachi. Surpluses of all categories of stores are being reported to the Director-General, Disposals, who is acting in accordance with the policy laid down by the Disposals Board.

(iii) *Lands and buildings (including dairy and vegetable farms)*.—Requisitioned lands and buildings surplus to service requirements will ordinarily be returned to their original owners. Acquired property which has become surplus including dairy and vegetable farms will be offered first to Departments of the Central Government, Provincial Governments and States and if not required by them will then be disposed of to private bodies or individuals. The disposal agency is the Directorate General of Lands Hirings and Disposals and its local representatives.

(b) and (c). A list showing the categories of stores likely to be declared surplus by the Defence Services was circulated to all Provincial Governments and States with a request to prepare lists of their requirements. Catalogues of actual surpluses reported including surpluses taken over from the American Foreign Liquidation Commission are under preparation and will also be circulated shortly to all concerned. The order of priority to be observed is:

- (i) Departments of Central Government;
- (ii) Provincial Governments;
- (iii) State Governments;
- (iv) Semi-Government institutions; Public Utilities;
- (v) Public Bodies; and
- (vi) General Public.

Further, attention is invited to the proceedings of the Policy Committee relating to disposals of which a meeting was held on the 20th October 1945—a copy* of the proceedings is placed on the table. In the same way, lists of

*Not printed in these debates. A copy has been placed in the Library of the House.—*Ed. of D.*

immovable property declared surplus or likely to be surplus to service requirements are circulated to Provincial Governments and States. Provincial Governments have appointed liaison officers who maintain touch with the local Lands & Hirings & Disposals staff and give notice of any property in which a Provincial Government is interested.

(d) A statement showing broad categories of surplus stores disposed of, together with their disposal values, up to 31st January 1946 is placed on the table.

(e) It is not possible to give an answer in detail. Ordinarily no military building will be demolished for which a purchaser can be found. There may be cases where demolition is necessary if the site is required for a public purpose or if there is no purchaser forthcoming and the material has to be broken up and sold as salvage.

(f) The normal procedure is to pay compensation in cash. There is no provision in the Defence of India Act and Rules for paying compensation by exchange of land. Such provision does exist in the Land Acquisition Act and in certain circumstances would be relevant if lands were acquired under that Act. It is for the acquiring officer to decide whether this procedure should be adopted, subject to the sanction of the Provincial Government.

(g) The general policy is to return land to the owners in the state in which it was at the time of taking over. This however is not done when the labour and expense involved do not justify the adoption of this course. In such cases the land is either acquired or compensation is paid to cover the costs of damage.

Statement showing disposals of Surplus Stores by Main Categories of Stores up to 31st January 1946

Main Category of Stores	Value of Disposals Rs.
Clothing & Textiles	3,02,81,917
Leather & Leather Goods	3,96,477
Tentage & Connected Stores	91,038
Machinery & Plant	6,40,993
Metals	17,84,117
Vehicles & Spares. AFVs.	4,78,906
Transportation Stores.	2,92,816
Building Material, Furniture & Misc. Engineering Stores	3,41,670
Communication Stores	36,975
Scientific Instruments other than Aircraft Instruments	19,376
Antigas Stores ARP & Firefighting Equipment	5,78,124
Arms and Ammunition	1,638
Medical and Veterinary Stores	2,99,445
Acids and Chemicals	5,21,754
Paints, Varnishes and Enamels	1,87,623
Petroleum Oil and Lubricants	8,10,064
Other Foodstuffs	10,54,809
Livestock and Dairies, Farms	29,41,799
Containers	4,75,223
Aero Stores	4,87,693
Naval Craft and Parts	2,93,962
Amenity Stores	557
Other Miscellaneous Stores	3,78,039
Total	4,33,95,015

LAND COLONISATION SCHEMES IN PROVINCES

805. *Sri V. G. Vellingiri Gounder: (a) Will the War Secretary be pleased to state the number of Land Colonisation Schemes in the several Provinces so far formulated, the extent of each area, and the number of demobilised persons proposed to be settled in each area?

(b) What is the nature of work so far undertaken to make these areas fit for early occupation and cultivation?

(c) What is the area of an economic unit of land to be given to these persons in the case of dry garden and wet lands?

(d) What is the nature of initial help, Government propose to give them?

(e) In allotting lands for the demobilised men, do Government propose to see that the existing facilities of the landholders in the villages are not interfered with?

(f) What is the amount of expenditure so far incurred in starting the colonisation schemes?

(g) Will Government be pleased to consider the employment of demobilised men for work in the new irrigation schemes?

(h) What other forms of employment do Government propose to give to the demobilised men?

Mr. P. Mason: (a) The only Provinces which have so far formulated schemes are Madras, C. P. and Sind; but schemes are being worked out in Bengal, Orissa and U. P. and they are under consideration in the remaining five Provinces.

The schemes so far formulated are shown in the statement which I lay on the table:

(b) In Madras the land is being cleared of bush and scrub in at least two areas. It is also being cleared in the Sind area, but work has not yet started in the C. P. area.

(c) The unit proposed in each case is as follows:—

Madras:—5 acres wet land or 10 acres dry land, or a mixture of the two, e.g., two acres of wet with 6 acres of dry land.

C. P.—10 to 12 acres including 5 acres wet.

Sind.—32 acres irrigated.

In each case the object is to give a colonist an economic holding and no more, i.e., sufficient to maintain him and his family on a reasonable standard of living.

(d) The Provincial Governments have been informed that they may expect the following assistance from the Central Government for schemes which prove acceptable to them:

(i) A contribution not to exceed one-third of the cost of a scheme subject to an over-all maximum of Rs. 500 per ex-serviceman settled under the scheme.

(ii) A contribution of 60 per cent. of the recurring cost of any training that may be given to colonists in the principles and practice of co-operative and collective farm management.

(iii) A contribution to the cost of training any additional co-operative staff required.

The Central Government will also be prepared to consider making a grant-in-aid for a period of years sufficient to meet half the overhead charges of any supervisory staff required by a colony.

The initial help proposed to be given by Provincial Governments varies in each case but it is likely to amount to at least Rs. 1,000 per colonist.

(e) This is a matter which primarily concerns Provincial Governments, but the Central Government will not be prepared to give financial assistance to any scheme which involves any unnecessary interference with the rights of

existing landholders, or, where interference is necessary, which does not provide full compensation for disturbance.

(f) Information is not available with the Central Government, but can be obtained, if desired, from the Governments concerned. So far Madras, and Sind are the only Governments likely to have spent anything material.

(g) The provincial post-war plans provide for the employment of demobilized men for work in new irrigation schemes.

(h) This part of the question should have been addressed to the Honourable the Labour Member who is responsible for resettlement of discharged war workers. It may however be mentioned that a number of vacancies have been reserved in the various branches of Government Service for candidates with 'war service'.

Statement

Provinces	Area to be colonised	No. of demobilised persons to be settled
	Acres	
Madras (a)	3200	400
" (b)	8800	910 (including 470 ex-servicemen)
" (c)	400	50
C. P.	3562	150
Sind	12000	350 *

EXCISE DUTY ON TOBACCO

806. *Sri V. C. Vellingiri Gounder: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state the amount of duty collected from tobacco in each Province?

(b) What is the classification made in the several types of tobacco and the rate of duty on each of the classes in the beginning and in subsequent years?

(c) In levying the duty, what consideration was given to the fact that land has been taxed already and the landholder has to pay additional tax on land?

(d) Are Government aware that tobacco growing is a costly business which is exhausting the land of its fertility?

(e) Do Government propose to guarantee a fixed minimum price for tobacco to prevent loss to the cultivator?

(f) Do Government propose to see that the tax is collected only from the tobacco dealer and not from the cultivator, when he is compelled to keep the crop on hand due to low prices?

(g) Owing to a fall in prices of tobacco, will Government consider the advisability of reducing the rate of tax on the tobacco locally consumed?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: (a) and (b). Statements are laid on the table of the House.

(c) The amount of land revenue paid on land on which tobacco is produced has no relevance to the excise, which is a tax on consumption.

(d) Government are aware that if tobacco is grown on the same land year after year, there is a tendency for it to deteriorate. They are, therefore, discouraging such a practice and have recommended a suitable rotation of crops.

(e) No Sir, especially when the cultivation of food crops is so essential.

(f) The Central Excise Rules already provide that, whether the curer sells his produce immediately after curing or retains it for subsequent sale in the

hope of better prices, he can sell it to a wholesale dealer without payment of duty and the duty will be realised from the wholesale dealer.

(g) Tobacco grown for the personal consumption of the grower and members of his household is already exempted from excise. Wholesale prices of tobacco have no relevance to the rate of the excise which, as already explained, is a tax on consumption.

*Gross receipts from excise duty on Tobacco during 1943-44, 1944-45 and 1945-46
(April—December)*

Provinces	1943-44	1944-45	1945-46 (April—December)
	R.000	R.000	R.000
India General	5,82	7,79	4,78
Baluchistan	63	1,45	32
Coorg
Madras	1,65,49	2,86,29	3,21,83
Bombay	1,01,89	1,58,58	1,17,43
Bengal	4,62,27	8,51,30	2,14,03
United Provinces	40,78	98,81	1,74,54
Punjab	24,42	60,51	46,67
Bihar	54,23	1,16,98	1,99,96
C. P. & Berar	82,55	1,02,37	61,53
Assam	1,55	61	55
N. W. F. P.	10,32	18,46	11,92
Orissa	6,27	10,71	6,79
Sind	9,04	14,40	11,05
Total	9,65,26	17,28,26	11,71,40

Note.—Figures for 1944-45 are provisional.

Excise duty on tobacco in 1943

Unmanufactured

	Per lb. Rs. A.
I.—VIRGINIA TOBACCO—	
A.—Flue-cured—	
(I) If intended for manufacture into—	
(a) Cigarettes—	
(i) Containing more than 20 per cent. weight of imported tobacco	1 12
(ii) Containing 20 per cent. or less than 20 per cent. weight of imported tobacco	1 4
(iii) Containing no imported tobacco	0 8
(b) Biris	0 6
(c) Cheroots	0 2
2. If intended for any other purpose	1 12
B.—Air-cured	0 6

II.—COUNTRY TOBACCO—

	Per lb. Rs. A.
(1) If intended for manufacture into—	
(a) Cigarettes	0 6
(b) Biris	0 6
(c) Cigars or cheroots	0 2
(d) Hookah tobacco	0 1
(e) Snuff	0 6
(2) If intended for sale as chewing tobacco, whether manufactured or merely cured	0 1
(3) If intended for any other purpose	0 6

III.—STALKS, STEMS AND OTHER REFUSE OF TOBACCO—

(1) If intended for use in the preparation of any form of manufactured tobacco	0 1
(2) If intended to be used for agricultural purposes	Nil

PART II.

Manufactured

	Per hundred Rs. A.
Cigars and cheroots of which the value—	
(i) Exceeds Rs. 30 a hundred	6 0
(ii) Exceeds Rs. 25 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 30 a hundred	5 0
(iii) Exceeds Rs. 20 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 25 a hundred	4 0
(iv) Exceeds Rs. 15 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 20 a hundred	3 0
(v) Exceeds Rs. 10 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 15 a hundred	2 0
(vi) Exceeds Rs. 5 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 10 a hundred	1 0
(vii) Exceeds Rs. 2-8-0 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 5 a hundred	0 8
(viii) Exceeds Rs. 1-4-0 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 2-8-0 a hundred	0 4
(ix) Exceeds Rs. 10 but does not exceed Rs. 1-4-0 a hundred	0 2

Excise duty on tobacco in 1944.

I.—Unmanufactured tobacco—

(1) If flue cured and intended for—	
(a) Manufacture into cigarettes containing—	Per lb. Rs. A.
(i) More than 20 per cent. weight of imported tobacco	3 8
(ii) 20 per cent. or less than 20 per cent. weight of imported tobacco	2 8
(iii) No imported tobacco	1 0
(b) Any purpose other than the manufacture of cigarettes or of the products enumerated in (3) (a) and (3) (b)	3 8
(2) If other than flue cured and intended for—	
(a) Manufacture into cigarettes	0 9
(b) Any purpose other than the manufacture of cigarettes or of the products enumerated in (3) (a) and (3) (b)	0 9
(3) Whether flue-cured or not, if intended for—	
(a) Manufacture into—	
(i) Biris	0 9
(ii) Snuff	0 9
(iii) Cigars and Cheroots	0 3
(iv) Hookah tobacco	0 3
(b) Sale as chewing tobacco, whether manufactured or merely cured	0 3
(c) Agricultural purposes	Nil.
(4) Stalks, stems and other refuse of tobacco intended for use in the preparation of any form of manufactured tobacco	0 1

II. Manufactured tobacco—

Cigars and cheroots of which the value—

Per hundred

	Rs. A.
(i) Exceeds Rs. 30 a hundred	12 0
(ii) Exceeds Rs. 25 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 30 a hundred	10 0
(iii) Exceeds Rs. 20 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 25 a hundred	8 0
(iv) Exceeds Rs. 15 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 20 a hundred	6 0
(v) Exceeds Rs. 10 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 15 a hundred	4 0
(vi) Exceeds Rs. 5 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 10 a hundred	2 0
(vii) Exceeds Rs. 2-8-0 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 5 a hundred	1 0
(viii) Exceeds Rs. 1-4-0 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 2-8-0 a hundred	0 8
(ix) Exceeds annas 12 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 1-4-0 a hundred	0 4

Excise duty on tobacco in 1945.

I. Unmanufactured tobacco—

(1) If flue-cured and intended for—

Per lb.

(a) Manufactured into cigarettes containing—

Rs. A.

(i) More than 60 per cent. weight of imported tobacco	7 8
(ii) More than 40 per cent. but not more than 60 per cent. weight of imported tobacco	5 0
(iii) More than 20 per cent. but not more than 40 per cent. weight of imported tobacco	3 8
(iv) 20 per cent. or less than 20 per cent. weight of imported tobacco	2 8
(v) No imported tobacco	1 0
(b) Any purpose other than the manufacture of cigarettes or of the products enumerated in (3) (a) and (3) (b)	7 8

(2) If other than flue-cured and intended for—

(a) Manufacture into cigarettes

0 9

(b) Any purpose other than the manufacture of cigarettes or of the products enumerated in (3) (a) and (3) (b)

0 9

(3) Whether flue-cured or not, if intended for—

(a) Manufacture into—

(i) Biris	0 9
(ii) Snuff	0 9
(iii) Cigars and cheroots	0 3
(iv) Hookah tobacco	0 3

(b) Sale as chewing tobacco, whether manufactured or merely cured

0 3

(c) Agricultural purposes

Nil.

(4) Stalks, and other refuse of tobacco intended for use in the preparation of any form of manufactured tobacco

0 1

II. Manufactured tobacco—

Cigars and cheroots of which the value—

Per hundred

Rs. A.

(i) Exceeds Rs. 30 a hundred	12 0
(ii) Exceeds Rs. 25 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 30 a hundred	10 0
(iii) Exceeds Rs. 20 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 25 a hundred	8 0
(iv) Exceeds Rs. 15 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 20 a hundred	6 0
(v) Exceeds Rs. 10 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 15 a hundred	4 0
(vi) Exceeds Rs. 5 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 10 a hundred	2 0
(vii) Exceeds Rs. 2-8-0 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 5 a hundred	1 0
(viii) Exceeds Rs. 1-4-0 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 2-8-0 a hundred	0 8
(ix) Exceeds annas 12 a hundred but does not exceed Rs. 1/4/— a hundred	0 4

INDIA'S MEMBERSHIP TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

307. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state what the International organisations are of which India is a member, giving a complete list of names together with the amounts of subscription payable by India?

Mr. B. C. A. Cook: A statement is being prepared and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

EMPLOYMENT FOR RETRENCHED PERSONS

75. Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable the Home Member please state, having regard to the desirability of providing employment to as many as possible of the young men who are being thrown out of employment as a result of the end of war and the consequent retrenchment of expenditure, whether Government will consider the advisability of taking the same action as they did in 1922-23 and 1932-33, by insisting upon the retirement of such of their officers and ministerial staff as have rendered, say, 25 years' service or more?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: Action was taken in 1923 and 1931 in consequence of retrenchment in permanent establishments. There is no proposal to make a reduction in permanent posts at present. It is not the policy of Government to insist on the retirement of such of their officers and staff in permanent service as have rendered 25 years' service unless they have reached the prescribed age of superannuation. It would not be in the interests of the administration to retire compulsorily senior experienced and efficient permanent officers in order to make room for temporary staff who may be thrown out of employment by a reduction in temporary posts.

RULES FOR CORRECTION OF BIRTH DATES OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT SERVANTS IN OFFICIAL RECORDS

76. Seth Sukhdev: Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether any rules exist for the correction of birth dates of the Central Government servants in the official records, if so, what the procedure is, and what documents are required in support of the claim for the alteration of birth date records; and

(b) if no rules exist, whether Government propose to frame some rules to enable the correction of genuine mistake in birth dates in official records, if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: (a) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to Article 62(1) (b), Civil Account Code, and the Notes thereunder, of which a copy is attached for reference. The date of birth as entered in the official records can subsequently be altered only under the orders of the Department of the Government of India or the Head of the Central Department concerned. Except where the date of birth has been wrongly recorded by a clerical error, a claim for alteration must be supported by satisfactory documentary evidence such as the matriculation or equivalent certificate, and a duly attested extract of the birth register or the baptismal certificate in original. A satisfactory explanation of the circumstances in which the wrong age came to be recorded and a statement of any previous attempts to have the record amended may also be required. The date of birth once entered in the official records is however ordinarily treated as final and is not altered except for strong reasons.

(b) Does not arise.

Extract of Article 62 (1) (b), Civil Account Code.

(b) The date of birth, of appointment to present post, and of promotion to present pay of each person, as well as the number and date of the orders creating the post as it now stands should be clearly entered in the appropriate columns of the statement; the date of birth by Christian era should be given, and if the exact date is not known, the approximate date or year should be stated. This date can be altered, except in the case of a clerical error, only under the orders of the local Government.

Note 1.—The Departments of the Government of India exercise the powers of a local Government for the purpose of this Article

Note 2.—A local Government may delegate this power, in the case of non-gazetted Government servants, to Heads of Departments and Commissioners of Divisions.

DANGER OF DICTATION OF POLICIES BY NEWSPAPER COMBINES.

77. Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer: Will the Honourable Home Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the warning issued by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at Allahabad on the 16th February, 1946, against big combines starting chains of papers and dictating policies detrimental to the interests of the country; and

(b) whether Government propose to examine Section 5 of Act XXV of 1867 in connection with this danger?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: (a) I have seen a newspaper's report of the speech.

(b) Government will be prepared to examine the law if developments render it necessary.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**HARDSHIPS OF MEMBERS OF AZAD HIND FAUJ IN RANGOON CENTRAL JAIL**

Shri Satya Narayan Sinha: (a) Has the attention of the Secretary for Commonwealth Relations been drawn to the A.P.I. message, published in newspapers that more than one thousand members of the Azad Hind Fauj lodged in the Rangoon Central Jail will resort to hunger strike from March 4th, unless their grievances are redressed within that date and that Mr. Amianath Bose, Secretary, Indian National Army Relief Committee, Bengal, has received copies of the five letters sent to the authorities in India, by Captain B. P. Rao of the Azad Hind Fauj, now in the Rangoon Central Jail, narrating in detail the main grievances of these prisoners in Burma?

(b) Is it a fact that irrespective of their ranks they are put to fatigues at the jetties, stores and in the streets of Rangoon and are made to do menial as well as hard labour and, as a remuneration, given I. T. Rations and Shelter in the Jail?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: (a) and (b). Government have seen the message in the Press and they have obtained a report from their Representative in Burma. About 1,000 civilian I.N.A. detenus contemplated hunger strike from the 4th March. All their grievances relating to unrestricted correspondence, interviews and other amenities have, however, been met and they are now satisfied. No hunger strike is now contemplated. The Government of India's Representative visited the jail on the 5th March and found the detenus satisfied. Their main grievance is delay in repatriation. Repatriation is now awaiting the first available military shipping and the detenus have been informed of this. About 20 of the detenus who claim Burma domicile have been released.

After the reoccupation of Burma, this I.N.A. personnel as prisoners of war was made to do fatigue in the Rangoon Dock; but this practice was stopped in August last. Since then, the detenus have done no fatigue at jetties, stores, streets or elsewhere, nor are they being made to do menial work or hard labour. Their rations are also satisfactory.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: How long do Government expect to take before these people are all repatriated to India, and when they are brought here, what is the intention of the Government? Do they want to detain them here or do they want to let them go freely in the country?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: I stated in reply to the adjournment motion the day before that preparations are now complete for their repatriation to begin any day after today. I cannot give any more definite date. I need hardly add that we are most anxious to ensure that this repatriation is expedited. On their arrival here, they will of course be released and they will be at liberty to go wherever they like.

Sardar Mangal Singh: The Honourable Member said that these I.N.A. prisoners are required to do fatigue work in certain places but not now. Are they required to do fatigue work in other places?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: The clear import of the information we have had is that they are not being subjected to this sort of treatment in the jail. They are now in ordinary confinement.

Mr. President: Next question.

RESTRICTIONS ON LAWYERS DEFENDING I.N.A. MEN IN SINGAPORE

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Will the Secretary for Communications Relations be pleased to state:

- (a) if Government are aware that the lawyers sent from India by Government to Singapore to defend the members of the I.N.A., who are being prosecuted there are not allowed to defend persons accused of offences other than collaboration with the enemy;
- (b) the instructions given to the lawyer sent from India by Government;
- (c) if Government are aware that the lawyers are not having any work now at Singapore; and
- (d) if Government intend immediately to arrange for all Indians I mean I. N. A. prisoners being defended by the lawyers sent from India?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: (a) The lawyers sent from India have now been allowed to defend Indians charged not only with the offence of collaboration with the enemy but also with all offences arising out of a collaborationist background.

(b) I hope the Honourable Member will appreciate that it may not be in the interest of the accused Indians to disclose the instructions which Government gave these lawyers.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Necessary action has already been taken.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Did not the Honourable Member receive information from the Lawyers that were sent that they were without work for about a fortnight?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: There was a very minor hitch. But the matter is now settled to the entire satisfaction of everyone, and I hope the Honourable member would avoid further public discussion of it because any public discussion would not be in the interest of our countrymen.

Diwan Chaman Lall: Why not?

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Let it go. I will ask another question. I would like to know whether any other trial of I.N.A. people has commenced and how long the entire trial is expected to take for whom the Indian lawyers have been sent from here?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: Adjournments have had to be taken because the lawyers have had to prepare their cases. They had to go through their briefs. It is not possible at this stage to give any idea of the time that the trials

would take but everything is now ready for such of the trials to begin as would really be undertaken.

Babu Ram Narayan Singh: What is the number of I.N.A. people confined in the Singapore Jail.

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: The last time that we had information on that point the position was that only about five were in confinement for collaboration, and there were about eighteen to twenty for specific offences but some of them were on bail.

Babu Ram Narayan Singh: Are they all to be tried?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: As I have said before, we are making every endeavour to persuade the British Military Administration not to proceed against those who have been accused of collaboration only with the enemy, but so far as we can make out now, the trials of those who have been accused of specific offences, such as extortion and torture, would continue.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Is it not a fact that so far as I.N.A. trials are concerned, persons charged of brutality were alone proceeded against and why were not similar instructions given to that Government also?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: I believe, Sir, I have stated on more than one occasion that exactly similar requests were made to the British Military Administration.

Mr. President: Next Question.

CERTAIN A.P.A. MESSAGE FROM LONDON SUGGESTING SCALING DOWN OF INDIA'S STERLING BALANCES

Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Has the Honourable the Finance Member ascertained the authenticity of the A.P.A. message from London, dated the 25th February, 1946, in which British officials were alleged to have declared that the sterling balances were frozen in London in the interests of British and world economy, that proposals should be made to India for the settlement of the sterling debt corresponding to the manner in which the Lease-Lend debt was settled by the United States of America and that, if the American loan did not come off, India would have to wait for two hundred years to receive repayment of the sterling debt?

(b) Who were these officials, and to what Department of His Majesty's Government did they belong?

(c) What authority had these people to make the kind of statements, which they are reported to have made?

(d) Has His Majesty's Government been apprised of the strong feeling in India against scaling down and in favour of an early repayment?

(e) Is he in a position to make any statement on this subject, conveying the views of His Majesty's Government?

The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands: (a) to (e). I have ascertained that, as I expected, the issue of the A.P.A. message referred to was not only not authorised by, but was not even known to His Majesty's Government. There is no question of this statement being official propaganda as was suggested by my Honourable friend in his earlier question.

In spite of enquiries it has not been possible to establish the identity of the individual who is reported to have given the interview, but His Majesty's Government are satisfied that no official having responsibility in these matters would have made such a statement.

Mr. Manu Subedar: In view of the fact that two messages have come down today putting various words in the mouth of Mr. Taft and Mr. Clayton from America and in view of the fact that these messages, adverse to India's interests, are sending the jitters down our spine frequently and several times

in the course of a week, will not the Honourable Member and the Government of India endeavour to get from His Majesty's Government a straightforward short statement on this subject, so that the whole question may, be put beyond any doubt?

The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands: The Government of India have no responsibility in this matter and it is a little hard for me to have to answer for these messages emanating from America in relation to Senator Taft and Mr. Clayton. As to the last part, I have nothing to add to what I have said in the past.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will Government take steps to see that their statement that so far as India is concerned, she is determined to prevent any scaling down of the sterling debts, is given wide publicity in America through their agents there?

The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands: I think it is up to the correspondents in this country, if they so wish, to give the necessary publicity. We have nothing to do with America.

Prof N. G. Ranga: The Government of India have got their publicity department there attached to their Agent. Will it not be possible for the Government to see that their Agent gives due publicity to this most important matter there?

The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands: I do not think the Americans are unaware of the feelings in this country regarding this matter.

Mr. Manu Subedar: My question was, in order to put an end to the frequent messages coming from irresponsible sources, which neither the Government of India nor His Majesty's Government can help, will not the Honourable Member endeavour to induce His Majesty's Government to make a short statement on this subject, which will be final and authoritative, so that we may not have these frequent disturbances of public feeling in India?

The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands: As I have already explained, I have left no stone unturned to acquaint His Majesty's Government with the strong feeling in this country and particularly the feeling in this House. I have already told them two or three times and if need be I shall say it again.

Mr. Manu Subedar: What I was requesting was whether His Majesty's Government could not make an authoritative statement which will once for all eliminate all these unauthorised statements. Will they not make an authoritative statement on this subject saying that they will not come to India with any proposal for scaling down of the sterling balances?

The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands: I cannot answer for His Majesty's Government. All I can do is to represent the feeling that has been expressed in this House and in the country.

MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT

DISTURBANCES IN DELHI ON THE VICTORY PARADE DAY

Mr. President: I have received notices of three adjournment motions practically on the same subject, though worded differently. The first in point of time is from Prof. Ranga and Mr. Gangaraju relating to:

"The persistence of Government in proceeding with their Victory Parade celebrations in Delhi on the 7th instant despite the hartal declared against these celebrations by the Congress, the Muslim League and the Tramway Workers and others which incensed the people of Delhi, leading to widespread and spontaneous disturbances; firing by the police and military, inflicting death and injuries on so many people on the Victory Parade Day."

Mr. M. Asaf Ali (Delhi: General): Sir, I am afraid there seems to be a misunderstanding on the part of my friend Prof. Ranga. The Congress declared no hartal.

Mr. President: Was a hartal declared by the Muslim League?

Haji Abdus Sattar Haji Ishaq Seth (West Coast and Nilgiris: Muhammadan):

I do not think, Sir.

Mr. President: So that also is a misstatement in this motion. I do not want to hear the Honourable Member on this motion. Looking at the wording and the substance of the motion, it will not be admissible, because the point of emphasis is "the persistence of Government in proceeding with their Victory Parade celebrations." This matter has been going on for a long time and there is no urgency about that persistence any longer.

SHOOTING OF CITIZENS AND USE OF TEAR GAS AND LATHI CHARGES BY THE POLICE
IN DELHI ON THE VICTORY PARADE DAY

Mr. President: The next motion is by Mr. Siddique Ali Khan regarding:

"the shooting of innocent citizens and the use of tear gas and lathi charge against them by the Police yesterday in Delhi."

This motion *prima facie* appears to be in order.

The other one by Pandit Govind Malaviya practically relates to the same subject. The motion reads:

"The deaths and injuries to person and property caused in Delhi yesterday due to police and military firings and to mob-frenzy during the public disorders resulting from the peoples' resentment against the Government's persistence in their Victory Week Celebrations in the teeth of public opposition and the Government's failure to take steps to put out the fire in the Town Hall and other places by rushing to those spots fire brigades from New Delhi where in the official world, parades, bands, illuminations, fire works and other gaiety proceeded undisturbed while Delhi literally burned."

It seems to me to be a piece of literature also? The adjournment motions that are tabled should not be argumentative and in the form of a speech, but that is a different matter. This motion raises practically the same subject as the adjournment motion by Mr. Siddique Ali Khan. I should like to know what the Honourable the Home Member has to say about the admissibility of this motion. Before he does so, I may make a suggestion for the consideration of the House *viz.*, whether this subject could not be more appropriately discussed on the cut motions that are now coming on the discussion of the Budget.

Nawab Siddique Ali Khan (Central Provinces and Berar: Muhammadan): The urgency and importance of this motion requires that it should be taken up today.

Mr. President: I said therefore that I was merely making a suggestion that the House will be getting an opportunity during the cut motions which will continue from today, but it is for the Honourable Members to accept or not to accept this suggestion. The only point I had in mind was that two hours' time allotted for the discussion of cut motions will be taken up.....

An Honourable Member: Only one hour.

Mr. President: That is the point I wished to remind Honourable Members, that they will get ample opportunity of discussing the matter on the cut motions; but it is only a suggestion. I do not mean to rule it out on that ground; that is not my point.

Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): May I point out that the debate on this motion may take two hours and the other parties have not been given such a long time and that they may have other subjects to discuss on their cut motions—matters which can only be taken during the budget time? Therefore it will not be possible to bring this matter up on cut motions, except perhaps on a general discussion during the Finance Bill which will be very difficult and it may not be fair to Government to be made the target of attack only on this particular issue of this local administration.

Mr. President: My idea was to save time; that is all.

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: (Home Member): I am not quite certain which adjournment motion you are now considering.

Mr. President: Nawab Siddique Ali Khan's adjournment motion.

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I cannot urge anything on the specific ground on which you have asked me to speak, namely, the admissibility of the motion. I can only say—and I quite understand that it is not strictly relevant to the question that you have put to me—to the House generally what I have said to the Honourable Member and his friends, that in my opinion no good can be done and harm may be done by the discussion today of a motion expressed in these terms. I have not received yet any full information of yesterday's happenings. I have received a few minutes ago, while I was in this House, an account of the movements of the District Magistrate covering a number of incidents. It will take some time clearly to get a conspectus of various happenings from eye-witnesses in various parts of the city—the incidents cover a considerable area and it will be quite impossible for me to give any full information this afternoon; and I shall therefore be very much handicapped in dealing with the insinuation made in this motion that innocent persons were shot. That, I quite recognise, is not strictly relevant to the question you have put me, but I would again ask the Honourable Member to consider whether it is not likely to do harm to the cause which we all have at heart, namely, the restoration of order in Delhi, if this motion be discussed this afternoon. I understand that things are quiet now in Delhi, shops are open, traffic is moving; and I should have hoped that we would all desire that nothing should be said or done in the course of today which might revive the animosities which were evident yesterday.

Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan: Sir, what I understand from some people who said they were eye-witnesses is that they said they saw some two boys were shot near the red fort, where there was no demonstration of any kind, and they were shot like rabbits by the military. We do not know if the Honourable Member will make an inquiry; the Delhi Administration is not situated so far away that information cannot be had: if the Honourable Member wants, the D. C. can easily come and explain to him orally. He need not get the information in writing and he can get this information verified whether people were shot. I think it will do good to find out the facts now. Instead of a persecution which may start later on, it may have a healthy effect on those irresponsible people who resort to shooting people when there was no necessity, and if these facts are borne out later on, and if my honourable friend the Home Member is convinced that these things did take place, then I think he will see to it that these things do not recur. If this matter is postponed, probably we will find that matters may become *res judicata* in many cases. Or it may become *sub-judice*—they may go to court and say the matter is pending there. If we wait till the Finance Bill, probably everything will be finished by then—the people would have been hauled up and sentenced.

Mr. President: That is an argument against the suggestion. I am not concerned with the merits. I would like to know the views of the Honourable Member who has given notice of the adjournment motion—his views about what the Honourable the Home Member has said.

Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: With reference to what he said, I am sorry to say that myself and the members of my party do not agree with those views—it is only a matter of opinion. The Honourable Member has said that he will not be in a position to know the facts by this evening. I do not think he can say that, because the local officials are so close here—he can get all the information. I have got all the information before me. But as you say that the merits of the case are not to be considered now, I do not wish to say anything about it. What I want to prove is that there was not sufficient police *bundobast*: if the authorities had taken proper precautions to check this sort of looting and hooliganism, they would have surely succeeded. I wish to assure my honourable friend that nothing will be said here which may add to the animosity which is prevailing here. I have nothing more to add. The matter is very urgent and of public importance and I request you to admit the motion.

Mr. President: As regards the question of propriety or otherwise on the merits or even on the other consideration which the Honourable Home Member has mentioned, that is a matter for the House to consider and not for the Chair to

[Mr. President]

come to any conclusions as regards the merits this way or that way. It appears then that the motion has to be taken up today. That seems to be the wish of the member who has tabled the motion and of his party. (*Honourable Members on the Muslim League Benches: Yes, yes.*) I will admit the motion.....

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall (Leader of the House): Sir, I am not quite clear whether you have left it to the House, as you yourself said; I am not quite clear whether in this case 25 members are in favour of the motion being taken up this afternoon. Would you, Sir, ask if he has the necessary support?

Diwan Chaman Lall (West Punjab: Non-Muhammadan): That point only arises if anybody objects. Do I take it that my honourable friend is objecting?

Mr. President: That is what he does: he need not say the words "I object" but that is the substance of what he said. I have to request members who are in favour of leave being granted to rise in their places.

(More than twenty-five members rose.)

Obviously more than twenty-five members are in favour of leave being given. So the motion is admitted. As regards the time of the discussion, I do not think less than two hours will be required for this. I need make no suggestion. Otherwise I would have suggested what was passing in my mind with a view to save time: this can be taken up at 4 and can end at 5 if possible. It seems it is no use making that suggestion as the matter could not be finished in one hour.

Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan: If the matter finishes before 6, then the House may sit till 6 and give the unattached members as much time as is necessary out of the question hour.

Mr. M. Asaf Ali: I cannot speak, as I was shouting a lot yesterday. Immediately after the motion had been moved by Mr. Siddique Ali Khan, I would ask the Honourable the Home Member to make a statement straightaway and I think it will economise time. There may not be more than one or two speeches and we can finish the whole thing by five o'clock.

Haji Abdus Sattar Haji Ishaq Seth: If the House adjourns, then you cannot sit.

Mr. President: Whatever it is, I was considering whether it could be started at 5 o'clock. I feel a difficulty about the rule. It says it shall be taken up at 4. It means that you can take it up earlier by consent. I doubt whether you can take it up later.

Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): The adjournment motion can be formally moved at 4 and then we can go back to other business.

Mr. President: I do not think that can be done. What I would propose is this. If the adjournment motion is taken up at 4, it may be discussed. If it is finished before 6, whatever time is left may be utilised for the cut motion.

Shri Sarat Chandra Bose (Calcutta: Non-Muhammadan Urban): That raises a novel question. If the House decides to adjourn, can the House decide, after half a second, to sit again?

Mr. President: The Members are talking from a practical point of view. I am merely stating from a theoretical point of view. I do not know whether the adjournment motion will be accepted or rejected. If it is accepted, the House will adjourn. If the motion is talked out without any conclusion, the House could sit.

Mr. M. Asaf Ali: It is possible to get over the difficulty if the Standing Order is suspended for the day. Whatever the other side might say, it is always open to the Chair to suspend the Standing Order any time. The unattached members can get time in that way.

Mr. President: Paragraph 51 provides that the motion shall be taken up at 4 o'clock or, if the President with the consent of the Member of the Government concerned so directs, at any earlier hour at which the business of the day may terminate. The Honourable Member's suggestion is that this Standing Order be suspended for the day.

Diwan Chaman Lal: It is the usual course, if the House is agreed, that the motion may be taken up at a later hour than the hour fixed by the Standing Order. It will be suspended for the day and you can fix the time.

Mr. President: I will have to satisfy myself that the Standing Order can be suspended like that, with the unanimous consent of the House.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy (Law Member): Unless the Standing Order itself gives the power to the President to suspend the Standing Order, it is doubtful if you can suspend any particular Standing Order. There is no provision made in this Standing Order itself for suspension.

Mr. President: That is what I want to find out. I am not sure whether it can be suspended by the President, even with the unanimous consent of the House. I will require some time to be satisfied about this.

Sir George Spence (Secretary, Legislative Department): I would draw your attention to Standing Order 38 on page 154. The relevant portion occurs on top of page 155. This is in support of the Law Member's point that unless there is specific provision in the Standing Order, there is no general power in the President to suspend the Standing Order.

Mr. President: The matter requires consideration. I have to be satisfied whether under the Rules or Standing Orders or previous precedents there is power to suspend the Standing Order like that. If I am satisfied that it can be suspended, then of course I will put the proposal before the House. That is a different matter. For the present we may decide that the adjournment motion will be taken at 4 and the time lost to any party may be made up by a *pro rata* reduction in the time allotted to all. That is the only other alternative, instead of a slice being taken from the time allotted to unattached members today. However, that will be a matter which we shall decide later on.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy: There is provision for suspension of some Standing Orders by the President. If you look at the index, you will find a reference to suspension of Standing Orders. There are several Standing Orders in which specific provision is made for their suspension. For instance.....

Mr. President: Instead of taking this up now, let us take it up if necessary at 2-30, so that, I also may have time to consider the point. I want to make one point clear to the members. There are various provisions which authorise the President to suspend the Standing Orders. The question will still be whether this House, apart from the President, can by its own vote suspend any Standing Order for a particular period or day. That will be a different question from the question of the President's power. If that also is impossible, then of course matters stand differently. That question has to be examined. I am merely giving the lines of examination and not coming to any conclusion.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths (Assam: European): May I make one submission, Sir? If the power to fix the time for the adjournment motion depends upon the unanimous consent of the House, that consent will not be forthcoming from this Party.

Mr. President: That will also be helpful in considering the matter.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: It may save time.

GENERAL BUDGET—LIST OF DEMANDS SECOND STAGE

Mr. President: The House will now discuss the Demands for Grants. I understand that the time-table agreed by all the Parties and Unattached Members in regard to the moving of Cut Motions has been circulated to Honourable Members.

[Mr. President]

As regards the time-limit for speeches, I suggest that, as usual, the mover of cut motions will have twenty minutes, and the Government Members replying will have twenty minutes or even more, if necessary. Other speakers will be limited to fifteen minutes.

I take it that this will suit Honourable Members.

Mr. Leslie Gwilt (Bombay: European): Sir, may I draw your attention to the fact that the time now is 20 minutes to 1 and that the European Group has lost 40 minutes of its time under this programme?

Mr. President: That is inevitable, I am afraid; but it should be a matter for adjustment between the Parties. The time lost may be *pro rata* adjusted by the Parties. Any more discussion on the time will mean further loss of time.

DEMAND NO. 46—PUBLIC HEALTH

The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands (Finance Member): Sir, I move:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 42,98,000 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, 1947, in respect of 'Public Health'."

Mr. President: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 42,98,000 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, 1947, in respect of 'Public Health'."

The first cut motion may now be moved by Mr. Griffiths, but I might just mention that today is Friday and the House will adjourn in two minutes' time.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths (Assam: European): In that case, I suggest that I should merely formally move the motion and make my speech after Lunch.

Mr. President: Yes; the Honourable Member can do so.

Improvement in Public Health with reference to Bhoire Report

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: Sir, I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Public Health' be reduced by Rs. 100."

With your permission, Sir, I will speak after Lunch.

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

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Quarter Past Two of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Mr. G. V. Mavalankar) in the Chair.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: Sir, our object in moving this Cut Motion is not to advocate any particular theory, nor yet to allot praise or blame for the achievements and the shortcomings of the past. We are concerned only with one thing. We are concerned to arouse interest throughout the country in this particular subject of public health, and especially to try to focus attention upon the somewhat voluminous report which has been prepared by a Committee under the chairmanship of Sir Joseph Bhoire. It has always seemed to me that the most difficult of all problems in this country is the problem of priorities. The needs of the people are so many, so urgent and so vital, and yet the resources with which we have to fulfill those needs are so slender both in respect of money and in regard to man power. It follows that there are many things which ought to be considered essential, which nevertheless have to remain undone. So at every turn one is beset by the problem, I might almost call it the nightmare, of priorities; in other words, the problem of having to determine which of various essential things must be left undone for the time being. Education, agriculture, and public health, these are three obvious matters which compete for our attention and for their share of the available money. In one mood, one thinks of education. One says, education must have precedence over everything, for one rightly argues that if the spirit of man is not unfolded by education there is no hope of any forward movement, any real advance in any other sphere is

impossible. Again, one tours throughout the country, one is overwhelmed with a sense of the poverty of the crops and one reflects upon the fact that the yield of rice per acre is lower in this country than in almost any other rice growing country in the world. At such a time, one says that agriculture must have priority, for until we increase the wealth of the land by increasing the agricultural produce, there can be no progress in any other field. Then, at another time, one reflects upon public health and inevitably one begins to think that attention must be concentrated, before everything else on improving the health of the people. For one can argue rightly that as long as people are in bad health, they cannot possibly contribute to advancement in any other direction, that as long as children have their health undermined by malaria, they cannot possibly apply their mind to their studies with effect. It seems therefore not unreasonable to say that health must have the first priority. Education, agriculture, public health—each has its own special claim to be considered the first priority. It seems to me that one of the most urgent things for Government to do is to get down more systematically to this question of priorities. The time has come when we ought to take all the main outlines of various schemes that have been prepared, put them all together and decide on some order of allocation of funds between them,—unless and until this is done, all our post-war plans will remain meaningless. In all these three great spheres, education, agriculture, public health, we now have a blue print. In agriculture, we have the Linlithgow Report, a great report, a report such that even if one half of its major recommendations had been implemented, India today would not be in her present parlous state. In the sphere of education, we have the Sargent Report, a report which is direct, to the point and practical and which focuses attention at once upon what is to be done. Now, in the sphere of public health, we have the report of Sir Joseph Bore and his committee. The report itself is somewhat prolix and not altogether attractively written, but in spite of that, it is compact, filled with valuable suggestions and proposals upon which India's future development in the sphere of public health can be soundly based. I do hope, however, that the Information and Broadcasting Department will at once get busy and see that a readable summary is prepared and presented in such a form that he who runs may read. As regards the present form, it takes a very determined man to pore in the small hours of the morning, through these somewhat depressing volumes. I do trust that we shall soon see in their place a well written, attractively presented summary which will enable the man in the street to understand what has been recommended by this committee. If we are to understand the recommendations of the committee, we need to judge them against the background of the present state of health in India, the facts regarding this are unfortunately too well known to my Honourable friends. But there are three sets of figures in this report which throw out in sharp relief the unsatisfactory condition of public health in this country. First, you have on page 8 a survey of the figures of expectation of life. I learn from those figures, that a child born in Britain can expect to live 58 years; while a child born in America can expect to live for 59 years, a child born in Japan can expect to live for 44 years, but the expectation of life for a child born in British India is only 27 years. Passing on from that to the next table, the figures of infantile mortality tell an equally depressing tale. Those figures show for Britain, 58, for America, 54, for Japan, 10 and for India, 162 as the infant mortality figure. It is important to try to keep a balanced view of these figures. It would not be altogether fair to compare conditions in a tropical or sub-tropical country with those in the West. It is therefore important to remember—while still recognising how bad the situation is here—that the figures in India are roughly comparable with those in Ceylon, the Federated Malay States and Egypt. That does not mean that we need not bother about them. The comparison has to be borne in mind, but the main point is that there is an appalling wastage of life in this country today. When you turn to cholera and small pox, those comparatively easily preventable diseases, you still have 200,000 deaths per year. To examine the matter from another angle if you turn to page 13 of the survey, you see the figures showing the number of

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 medical practitioners per head of the population in various countries in the world. You will find for example that in British India, there is one doctor for every 6,300 people, whereas in my country, there is one doctor for every 1,000 people. I cannot dwell more on this aspect of the matter. I have said enough to show the urgency of this problem.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar (Madras Ceded Districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Who is responsible for this state of affairs?

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: If my friends spend their time in saying how badly the British have done and if we spend it saying how well the British have done, we shall not advance public health much. Let us forget politics, and talk about health. The present appalling state of affairs, does not by any means indicate that nothing has been done up to now. Take, for example, a few of the matters which I have mentioned. Take small-pox. In the last forty years the mortality from this disease has been reduced from 40 per 100,000 to 25 per 100,000. If you take cholera, it is not a mean achievement that the annual deaths from this disease have dropped steadily from 444,000 fifty years ago to 147,000 today. Even that is far too high—there is no reason why there should be any deaths at all from cholera if we got down to business of eradicating it. But at any rate a good deal has been done, enough to show that the problem is not hopeless. There are many aspects of the proposals contained in this report; I can only deal with two or three of them. The most important proposal is that which plans the setting up of certain medical and nursing facilities. There are two plans, a long-term one which is estimated to take about 40 years for its full implementation and a short-term one to carry over about ten years. When I first read these papers very late at night, I rather misread them; I took the details of the long-term plan and I thought for a moment that this was intended to be achieved in ten years and I experienced great satisfaction as I realised the grandeur of that plan. The essence of the plan is something like this. In every district there is to be a medical organisation and a public health organisation, at three levels. At the centre there is to be a district health centre. This is to have a hospital with 2,500 beds and all the appropriate scientific laboratories. And then the district is to be divided up into secondary units, each of about the size of a subdivision or tahsil, and in each of these there is to be a hospital with 650 beds. Again each secondary unit is to be divided up into primary units, each catering for from 10 to 20 thousand people; and in each of these units there is to be a hospital with 75 beds, six medical officers and six public health nurses, besides the nursing staff. When I compared that proposal with what exists today—and I was still labouring under the misconception that this was the short-term plan—I felt that it was little short of miraculous. Then I realised that they were plans which were to be achieved in 40 years; and then I saw too that the short-term plan, which was on about a quarter of the scale of the long-term plan, was itself going to cost very much more money than we can be certain that we can raise. And indeed it seems to me that it is not worth thinking very much at the moment in terms of the long-term plan. I doubt myself whether planning 40 years ahead means anything in a world which is changing so fast these days. It is better to think only of the short-term plan.

In the short-term plan the primary unit, which is the focal point of all the work will have to deal with 40 thousand people and not with 20 thousand; and instead of a large hospital it is to have only two maternity and two emergency beds; though by the end of ten-year period there is also to be a hospital with 30 beds for every two units, which means, roughly speaking, 30 beds to every *thana* jurisdiction. When you come to the secondary units, each is to have a hospital with 250 beds, rising before the end of the ten-year period to 500 beds; and again in the short-term plan there is to be no district health centre.

When I saw all this I was very much disappointed. Then I began to think again and I began to compare what we should get even under the short-term

plan with what we have today; and I began to realise that it would at least be a very great step forward. I noticed for example, that in the primary unit, roughly a *thana* jurisdiction, we are to have two medical officers, four public health nurses, one nurse attached to the dispensary, four midwives, four trained *dais*, and so on. And I looked back to my own days in districts and sub-divisions and thought with what joy and gratitude we should have welcomed even that modest equipment for dealing with the problems of health in the *mofussil*. And so I feel that if this report can be put into practice, whatever its short-comings may be, it does take us a very definite step forward. Apart from anything else, it proceeds on the plan of combining curative and preventive functions in the same organisation, a plan which I believe most modern thinkers regard as of extreme importance.

The second important point in the report is the method by which medical practitioners are to be made available. There were two possibilities to be considered. The Committee could have plumped for private practitioners or it could have put down its weight in the scales in favour of a State medical service. The Committee has decided that the right way of dealing with the problem is to make medical attendance free and to base that attendance upon salaried State medical services. It is possible, under their proposals, that the private practitioner may almost disappear from the *mofussil*. I must say that I am bound to regard that proposal as right. I do not like it; I have an instinctive dislike of the cold, impersonality of a State service. At the same time I do believe that in the conditions of India, and particularly in the conditions of the *mofussil*, you will not make medical facilities available to the public except through some such method as that of a State medical service. The truth is that the *mofussil* does not attract practitioners of the right calibre in large enough numbers. There is no reason why it should; it is a dreary enough life in all conscience for a professional man to go and bury himself in the backwoods, living perhaps in a place where he has hardly any others of his own intellectual class. It is not an easy thing to ask a professional man to do, and I am quite certain, therefore, that the Committee are right in saying that the only way to get these people to the spot is by starting a large-scale State service and staffing all these different grades of hospitals with them.

Continuing with the problem of organisation, I am now not going to talk about the higher levels of organisation, the Central and Provincial Health Boards and the like, because they are largely bound up with constitutional matters; I want to talk about the districts. It is proposed to have three types of medical authority in the district,—the District Health Board, the District Health Officer and the District Health Council. We need not bother about the District Health Council because it is an entirely technical body. But the District Health Board is going to be the chief authority in the district for all medical and health matters. It is to consist of elected members,—some elected directly and some elected indirectly,—together with the Collector. Let me say straightaway that I disagree profoundly as regards the composition of that Board. I do not believe that a popularly elected board is the right way to secure the efficient running of medical and public health services. Popular control there must be, but that control is in the sphere of policy; and it seems to me that the right place for popular control to be exercised in regard to these matters is through the Provincial Ministers in the Provincial Governments. When we come to the executive sphere I frankly do not believe that any popularly run body can deliver the goods. I think I can say without offence that the experience many of us have of district boards has not been particularly encouraging in this respect. I would favour a District Health Board of an altogether different kind, consisting of the Collector, the Civil Surgeon and two or three non-official advisers; and I believe that a body of that kind would get very much more done than a purely democratic body of the kind suggested. I know there are great objections to handing over power to officials instead of leaving it in the hands of democratically run bodies. But I want to suggest to my Honourable friends that these objections

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will become very much less when India is completely self-governing, when in the last resort the Provincial Government—their own Government—has the control of policy in all these matters. Once that control is in the hands of the people of the country it does not seem to me to be at all necessary that in the executive sphere in districts, these popular bodies should be brought in.

I have to pass over many of the points that have been raised in the report because it is impossible to deal with them in the time allotted. There are two vital problems which I must mention in passing and with regard to which I think the Committee has done a very real service. I am thinking firstly of the problem of nutrition. Here the Committee has drawn attention to the possibility of meeting the needs of people by increasing supplies of fish, milk and food yeast. I invite the particular attention of the House to the relevant chapter. Likewise I commend to its attention the chapter on health services for school children. The only thing about which I have time left to speak is finance. The Committee were puzzled as to where to start and as to how much they were to say the country could afford to spend. Their first method of approach was to examine the national income in this country, in Britain and the U. S. A., and then to take the medical expenditure of Britain and the U. S. A., and to say that India ought to be able to afford medical and public health expenditure on a proportionate scale. Taking these figures they found that in Britain Rs. 54 per head and in America Rs. 51 per head is spent on these matters; so they came to the conclusion that India should, if necessary, spend something between Rs. 2/5 and Rs. 3/3 per head. That sort of approach does not seem to me to mean very much. For one thing the proportion of the national income which does or could find its way into the coffers of the State varies very much from country to country. And apart from that, conditions in tropical and sub-tropical countries may be such as to require a larger proportion of expenditure on public health matters than is required in the West. It seems to me that you cannot approach this problem by itself. You cannot say,—could we afford to spend on public health the 360 crores of capital expenditure suggested here? Or could we afford the 60 crores annual expenditure which will arise at the end of the first five years? Or could we afford the 120 crores which will arise at the end of the first ten years? Questions of that kind do not seem to me to mean anything. There must be co-ordination and integration; Government must take the various schemes,—education, agriculture, public health and the like, and all the different development schemes and make an integrated plan,—after that we shall be in a position to say what we can or cannot afford on any particular form of improvement. In one sense of course, it is true to say that we cannot afford not to spend this money. The health of the people is too important for us to afford not to spend it. But that does not alter the fact that the money has to be found; and you cannot go about the business of pronouncing an intelligent view on this plan until there is this integration. Frankly, I am surprised that Government have not gone down before this to the business of allocating the proportionate expenditure on different schemes. The time has come when this must be done—and if it is not done all these schemes will stop just where they are. Apart from that I make one other suggestion. It is that instead of contenting ourselves with grandiose schemes which we hope to achieve in ten, twenty, thirty or forty years, it would perhaps be more practical if we went in for a succession of targets, if we defined a certain target down now to be achieved in two years another which would be achieved in the following two years, and so on so that at every stage, between now and the full implementation of these plans we could see if we were falling behind or not. I believe this kind of fixation of a short term plan would be very much more real and very much more practicable than a long term and grandiose plan. In saying this I am not minimising the value of the excellent work done by this Committee. They have given us a blue-print; they have laid the foundations on which we can build. But we can only build on these foundations if we approach these matters in a spirit of crusade. You will not get

improvement in the health of India from Secretariat files. There is only one place from which the drive the dynamic impulse can come, and that is from you and from me. Let us resolve firmly to embark on a crusade to improve the wealth of India. But remember, a crusade does not mean living up in the clouds; it means coming down to earth and working out the details, and implementing those details in practice.

My last plea is this: Let us take this report in all seriousness. Let Government take this report more seriously than other reports in the past have been taken. Let us begin in this House by every single Member reading and studying it so that in the full light of knowledge we can bring pressure on Government up to the utmost possible financial limits to get this plan translated from theory into practice.

Mr. President: Cut motion moved:

"That the demand under the head 'Public Health' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Before I call upon any Member to address the House I have to inform the House of a little new device which I have proposed. I have set up a bell here and instead of my getting up in the middle of a speech and reminding the Honourable Member of his time limit, I shall be ringing the bell about two minutes before the time limit, so that the Honourable Members may not be interfered in their speeches, and I may not have to stand up and interfere them.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: May I suggest something which might be even an improvement on that. In the Bengal Assembly they have a green light and a red light. One of the lights is flicked on to give an indication to the Member who is speaking that his time is almost up.

Mr. President: The arrangement may have to be improved. Something of that type will be considered if necessary.

Shri Sri Prakasa (Benares and Gorakhpur Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): **Mr. President, Sir.** On behalf of my Party I rise to support the motion so ably and so eloquently moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. Griffiths. I should like to congratulate him for being in possession of such a very receptive brain for he seems to have been able to digest the four volumes of the Report in the short space of two or three days that was all that was given to us. The size of the Report so frightened me that I thought I would wait for some time before I would begin, and it was only this morning that I looked into it because I found that the European Group was moving a cut and I was very much interested in the subject.

What we need most is to have a practical view of things. We—I fear the Government and ourselves—are all becoming too theoretical. We produce very good reports; we have very good ideals; we have fine aspirations, but the difficulty is that we always come against stone-wall of practical needs and practical limitations, and then sorrowfully find that all our ideals, all our schemes and all our dreams go to pieces. What I fear is that this Report too, like other reports, is more idealistic than realistic from the little that I have been able to judge of its contents. There is no doubt, as Mr. Griffiths has said, that the health of our people is very bad, that there is a great deal of malnutrition, of disease, and of premature decay and death. I feel that the best thing that we can do is to have a system of doctors and instructors moving about from village to village and bringing instruction, practical and helpful, to the door of the villager.

As my Honourable friend, Mr. Griffiths, has said, the tendency to enhance the importance of a town is very great. I have heard it said that while 95 per cent. of our population lives in villages, 95 per cent. of our doctors live in towns. In those circumstances it is indeed difficult, if not impossible, for our villagers to have any medical relief at all. Therefore I suggest that means must be devised whereby persons who are in a position to know these things, should be constantly moving about and bringing useful information to the door of the villager. We are essentially a domestic people and even the educated amongst

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us are very hesitant in going to hospitals for instance. We think that there is something *infra dig* in being sent to a hospital, and we fear that our neighbours will think that we cannot take care of our dear ones when we send them to a hospital. We like everything to be done in the home. There is no doubt that there are trained nurses in hospitals, there are trained doctors, and various facilities are available day and night there that are not available at home; but you cannot help the psychology of the people, and you must legislate in accordance with the inner desire of the people themselves.

We are a domestic people. We like to live and die in our own home; we like our own people to look after us when we are ill. They may not be trained, but certainly they have love and affection which make up for their lack of trained knowledge. In such circumstances I think that Government would be well advised if they could make arrangements for an army of trained persons moving about in the country bringing information and instruction to the doors of our village folk. We should have, so to say, mobile columns. Then alone from the ideal we shall get down to the real. Whatever proposals we make, must be in keeping with our means. It is no use thinking of having very large hospitals and very large residential places when we are not in a position even to have decent huts and small dispensaries.

Not only should these doctors, whom I envisage going about from village to village, not only should they bring medicine with them, but also education. We really need proper education. Our people are conservative but they are intelligent; and if once they are told what is the right thing and they grasp the right thing, they do the right thing. It may take some time for them to understand things but when they understand it they stick to it. I therefore think that if those doctors and instructors would go about from place to place and tell people what exactly to do and what not to do, they will soon be able to produce smiling fields and happy homesteads in the countryside.

Because of various social customs and also for lack of proper knowledge, there are too many children in India. It is time that people were instructed and told that it is wrong to have more children than one can take care of. It is not impossible that proper instruction along those lines could be given. The Bhoré report itself has taken cognizance of that fact. It is no use being prudish on that matter. Prudery may have its place in social life; but it can be taken to extremes. For instance, we have the system of early marriages. Now proper education can help more in eliminating early marriages than even penal legislation. Penal legislation is important and necessary, but education is even more necessary; and if people are taught that certain customs are really bad and that they should be done away with, I think that in time people will learn to do the right thing and to abolish those customs that are really bad and that have become cankers in the body politic. When there are more children than one can take care of, a large number is bound to die. We may sorrow for their death, but it is something that we cannot help.

We have also to teach people how to live. We can tell them how within their means they can live in a manner which would bring health and comfort. We can tell them how to build their little houses. We can tell them how to clean their village streets. We can tell them where they should stock the cow-dung which creates so much squalor in the village. We can tell them various other things, and when there is a sympathetic doctor giving such advice, he is bound to be listened to with respect and with affection by those for whom the instruction is meant.

We can tell the humble people how they should grow vegetables for instance. I am not a medical man, but I think one of the chief causes why there is so much of disease in the countryside is that the people there do not get fresh vegetables. Green vegetables are a necessary part of the food of the human being. It is a long time since I read such things, but if I recollect aright what I read many

years ago, the human anatomy needs fresh vegetables for health. In the village they only have wheat and barley and pulses and what passes as vegetables are potatoes, which are really not fresh vegetables and what we know in the United Provinces as *kohra*, the English equivalent of which I do not know, but which also is a sort of vegetable that is kept for years. It is in no sense a fresh vegetable. These are the only two types of vegetables—potatoes and *kohra* that our village folks get. In other words they get no fresh vegetables at all. While so much care is taken

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (East Central Punjab : Muhammadan): I believe in vegetables but I believe more in mutton!

Shri Sri Prakasa: I have prospered without mutton for 55 years and so I am no supporter of mutton.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh (Bombay City : Non-Muhammadan Urban): But mutton is produced by vegetables. It is a tabloid form of vegetables!

Shri Sri Prakasa: . . . while so much care is taken about the milk supply in towns, nothing is done in the villages. In Delhi, when I go out for my morning walks, I see inspectors stopping men with milk cans on their bicycles and examining the milk. But in the village where one would expect plentiful supply of fresh milk, there is no milk at all. So, if we have sufficient milk for our children in the villages and vegetables for adults in addition to and even in substitution for, the grains that they eat, they would have much better health.

Then there is the problem of clothes. They really need more clothes because I have no doubt that the very premature decay of the people in the country-side is due to lack of proper clothing in the winter. They have to depend on their own internal heat in order to keep themselves warm on cold days and nights. If they had clothes they would keep much better health. Persons who have warm blankets to sleep in at nights cannot realize what it is to have to sleep huddled up through a cold night without practically anything on the body and then to stretch their limbs only when the sun is up. They shrivel up very quickly. In the village, and I speak from personal experience, a man really is as old as he feels. Most of them do not know their ages. So long as they are strong they feel quite young. If you ask a young person of 18 or 20 in the village when he is strong and healthy

Mr. President: Time limit!

Shri Sri Prakasa: . . . if you ask a man like that about his age, he will tell you he is only 10 years. But when he begins to shrivel up at 30, he says he is 40. Every year he gets 10 years older. If you ask him when he is 30, he will say he is 40: if you ask him a year later he will say that he is 50: and when he becomes 50 he tells you that he is 100. Each year they get 10 years older. This is because he lacks clothes. Therefore, whatever proposals we make, they must be in keeping with the economic condition of the people, and I think if we approach this problem in a spirit of sympathy and understanding we can put forward proposals that would not be idealistic but in keeping with conditions of real life and that would do good to the State and the people alike.

The Honourable Sir Akbar Hydari (Member for Information and Broadcasting and Planning and Development): I rise to speak in my capacity as Planning and Development Member. I won't take very much of the time of the House. But there is one very important point which Mr. Griffiths, in moving the motion, has made, and I am very glad that he has made it because it gives me an opportunity of explaining the present position. He said that we must now have an integrated plan. We must be able to say that we will give so much to Health, so much to Education, so much to Agriculture, both in respect of Central schemes as well as on Provincial schemes. I am glad to say that we are now on the point of being able to take decisions in regard to this matter. Our difficulty so far has been that these plans have not been ready and we did not

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know what each of them was going to cost over whatever period of time the planners had set themselves.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Have a healthy voice! We cannot catch you!

The Honourable Sir Akbar Hydari: We also wanted to know what Provincial plans in the matter were. I am glad to say that most of the Provinces have now submitted their five-year plan. Some of them are provisional and some of them are final. Anyhow, we have now the Bhore Report, we have the Kharegat Report, and various other reports, and very shortly Government will take decisions as to the amount of money which should be allocated to each subject during the next five-year period.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Which Government; the present Government or the Government that is to come?

The Honourable Sir Akbar Hydari: The Government of the day.

Shri Sri Prakasa: And of the night.

The Honourable Sir Akbar Hydari: Now you have asked what is the machinery we have for coming to these decisions whatever the Government may be at the time.

We have got a Development Board presided over by the Secretary of Planning of which the Secretaries of the other Departments concerned are members. The problems are put to them and then these are put for orders to a small committee of the Executive Council, which is the Co-ordination Committee of Council. I hope Mr. Griffiths will be satisfied with my assurance that very shortly we will be in a position to come to the public and say "for the next 5 years Agriculture is going to have so much, Education so much, Health so much, etc., etc."

Just a word about targets. I entirely agree with Mr. Griffiths that it is no good at this stage working to a target of 40 or 20 years. I would much rather have shorter targets as part of a bigger one and that is the reason why in all these sanctions a five year period is being taken. You go step by step.

As regards the other point raised namely whether the Information Department could produce a condensed copy of the Bhore Report in a readable form, I have consulted my friend, the Health Secretary and he wants us to do that, and we will be very glad to produce one as soon as it is possible to do so. It is a very big report and requires rather careful handling. A certain amount of time will therefore be taken to do it.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Sir, I agree with the Leader of the European Group that it is a very voluminous report and that it is difficult for any Member of this Assembly to go through it in the available time. I have tried my best and I cannot say that I have been able to go through it as I should have liked to do. However, there is one thing about the report which must strike all of us, those who are in the country, whether Indians or Europeans. It is usually said that India is a great country of contrasts. You will find the same with regard to this report. This report is an ideal report. So far as health is concerned I must say that it is almost an encyclopædia. However, my complaint against the report is that it has lost touch with the practical facts in this country. As an ideal report to which to look to it may work but if you want to translate it into practice, I am afraid the report, as it is, is not going to be of much use.

Let me give you a concrete example. The report talks of Basic Doctors and having four or five thousand doctors per year, so that the percentage of the patients per doctor might come up to what it is in other countries. That is the ideal position which the report aims at. But what is the actual state of affairs. There are utmost about six medical colleges in the country and the difficulties of admission for medical studies are so great that the number of students who

cannot get admission is very considerable compared to those who get admission. Even students who are graduates would like to be doctors but there are no facilities in this country for their becoming doctors. That is the state of affairs. You would like to have good pharmacists and there are no teaching institutions where pharmacy could be taught. In the same way as I find it with regard to doctors you will find it with regard to other things as well. I think it is no good having very good plans and trying to start right at the top of the pyramid. What you should do really is to start at the base. It will not be of any use following this report and having a Board of Health at the Centre and a Board of Health in each Province. I am sure it would take very long for this facade of workers to come into the field and it is not going to solve the practical health problems in India. You will have to go about it in a practical way and start right at the bottom. From that point of view the suggestion made by Mr. Griffiths is very useful. You cannot start with a huge population like this. You will have to start with a smaller unit and start in as many small units as possible and then gradually build up from the smaller units to bigger units. It is the only way to do it in this country.

With regard to the writing of these reports I have a few things to say, and I hope they will be taken in the right spirit by the people concerned. I also had the good fortune to read something about the Educational Report, being interested in education. It seems to me that writing of these reports means an enormous expenditure of time and money and at the end of the period when you actually look at the reports you really do not find anything very much more in them than what we have known for years and years. Take the Education Report. I was told that it took six years to write and yet at the end of that, if you go through the report you feel that it is a thing for which no specialist need have been engaged and practically all that is there in the report is almost common knowledge amongst the educationists. Similarly, with regard to this report on health, you will find that many of the things which have been written in it are absolutely common knowledge to those who were concerned with the report.

There is another objection with regard to these reports. Experts, special and highly paid experts and imported experts are brought over here and in their expert knowledge in an expert way they say "Have the whole report or do not have any: the whole of it or nothing". That is a thing which I in my ignorance have never been able to understand. What I am going to say in this connection might be useful to our Planning Member also, who happens to be here and listening. Have 80,000 teachers or do not have any teachers at all. The whole scheme goes through or no part of it. I am very glad that Sir John Sargent has just come in. If that is the attitude of these experts, then I say that it is merely going round and round in a circle, whether you call it vicious circle or anything else. I am sure in a practical way it will lead to nothing whether it is in the Education Department or in the Department of Health. I think that that kind of attitude will not do for a poor country like India. You have to start piecemeal, in parts, in a small way and gradually build up. That seems to me to be the only way of going about it in this country. Another point about the problems in India is this: we try, or at least the experts seem to try to isolate problems when the problems are interconnected. How can you separate the problem of food from that of health or that of health from that of food, or that of food and health from that of agriculture? I really do not understand it, and yet I find there are three different departments with absolutely no co-ordination between them, so far as I can see. We get reports on food, we get reports on education and we get reports on agriculture and yet there not being any co-ordination between the three departments, we seem to be standing still, in spite of all talk of progress. All that we get is academical reports. That is a position which has to be altered. If the new Government comes in and we have a voice in it, I dare say that

[Dr. G. V. Deshmukh.]

attempts may be made in that direction. But even if the present Government continues, I think it is up to it to see that something is done. Take the question of food and famine. We have had a number of days discussion here, about so much more acreage, so much food added, and yet there is a famine and you read in the reports of 7 million acres being brought under cultivation and the surplus has been 50,000 tons only. But in spite of all this experience, it is amazing that this Government will not change its methods, nor its mentality; and instead of increasing acreage if they had taken a lesson from other countries and tried to produce more food per acre and increase the production of each acre, I think all these years need not have been wasted and today we would not be whining for food and going to other countries. Take the case of fisheries. They will go in a groove. I suppose that is the difficulty of all Departments and Governments; but whereas I find that Governments responsible to the public, in other countries, where the public has something to do with their own Governments, they are forced to change their grooves, over here not having the pressure of public opinion, they will continue in their old grooves and yet come forward here and expect to be complimented by us for the enormous work they have done, which has produced really and substantially nothing. Fisheries is one of the things where government might have extended their energies. I do not say that the whole of the food problem would have been solved, but it is not a new idea either. Many nations are trying to have their food problems solved by means of fisheries; even a nation like Japan. It has been a question of international importance. But I find that this Government has done absolutely nothing in that line. By way of increasing protective foods, has done absolutely nothing. Every now and then they say we are short of cereals by so much and therefore there is the dread of famine and let us go and send deputations all over and see what we can get. In my opinion that is not the way.

I do not want to take up more of the time. I say this report may be ideal; it may be encyclopaedic and it may even be a standard book of reference to which we might go to consult. But if we want something practical to be done in this country, I hope there will be co-ordination between health, food and education departments and that this obstinate policy of the experts—"Take the whole thing; otherwise do not have anything to do with my report"—will go and the experts shown their proper position: that in this country you cannot ask for 200 or 300 crores of rupees, even by spreading it over thirty or forty years. After all you have to cut your coat according to the cloth. This is what the country can afford; and yet I do not think that even in this poor condition our country is in, we cannot improve matters. With regard to public health we can improve matters to a very great extent provided proper attention is given to it. All these years in the Provincial Governments, it has been a joke with medical men to see the amount of money that is meant for public health. Mr. Griffiths has given some figures about three rupees and five rupees. I think the figures for public health in this country comes to about three annas . . .

Mr. S. H. Y. Oulnam (Secretary, Health Department): Five annas.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: I will accept that. It is a very great deal, isn't it? After all said and done, we talk about malaria and such obviously preventable things. As I quoted the other day it means one and a half million men dying per year; and the economic loss comes to about 200 crores; and with all that we do not do anything but these huge reports of experts which in the opinion of ignorant practical men mean nothing. I therefore request that the question will be looked at in its proper light and that something really practical will be done, and that stress will be laid more on the practical side than on the theoretical and academic side and that we will be able to achieve within our means something. I am of the opinion that within our limited means we can achieve a very great deal.

Sri V. C. Vellingri Gounder (Salem and Coimbatore *cum* North Arcot: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, in supporting this cut motion I want to say a few words. When we say public health, it means how to get rid of ill-health—one of the evils mentioned in the Honourable Finance Member's budget speech. Ill-health is very much to be found among the population in the villages, and to some extent in the towns also. This ill-health can be attributed to many causes, not only owing to the want of medicine but in not doing a lot of preventive work. That work is now undertaken by the authorities. In the district there is a health officer, and in municipal areas there is a municipal health officer. The district is a very wide area and there is only one officer with one or two other lesser officers under him. They are not in a position to study local conditions throughout their area with a view to doing preventive work. After an epidemic has started and taken a toll of a large number of people, the health officer writes his report in the usual way and goes to work after so much damage has been done to the population. Even afterwards they are not in a position to supply sufficient medicine or efficient medical help in proper time. The sanitation of villages which is now under the Health Department is also very much neglected; and for every small ailment the villager has to go to the town; and when he goes there his financial conditions will not permit him to get proper medicine and attention and he has to succumb to the disease. Very rarely we find a medical man is available in the villages; and within certain limits it is impossible to expect any medical aid. The rural medical practitioners are given a certain limited sphere of work with a limited stock of medicines given by Government. That is not the proper method at all. There were several medicines in former times given by local physicians who were practising the ayurvedic or unani systems of medicine; but after the advent of this costly allopathic system, all those are rapidly going out even in towns; and it is impossible for those practitioners of indigenous medicine to make a living out of them and those cheap medicines are becoming more and more scarce and the villagers are put to a considerable difficulty. In the municipal areas and in the village areas, it is to be very much regretted that no effective steps are taken to prevent contagious diseases. It is our experience in the municipal areas that the larger a municipality grows the greater is the ill-health and insanitation prevailing there and also five or six miles around the municipal areas. There is also the difficulty of the medical officer attending to them. The medical officer in the municipal areas should be made responsible for a radius of five miles or so around big municipal areas and they should be made to realise that prevention is more important than cure. For this, pure water should be made available. Now, open spaces in the villages especially are very scarce. To a question in this House today whether the waste lands in a village, which are no man's land would be allotted to ex-service men or whether proper facilities will be given if villagers are deprived of the advantages of the open space of land the reply was that it is the concern of the Provincial Government to give them adequate compensation. What I was aiming at was not the question of compensation at all. It is important that adequate open spaces should be left untouched in the villages, so that the villagers may have a certain amount of open recreation ground for the purpose of improving the health of the villagers. In these control days, the health of the people has been very much damaged on account of the food that has been supplied in the villages. The skimmed milk, powders, and foreign vitamin foods and products which are supplied are unsuitable to the health of the people where there is scarcity of milk and cause ill-health. Also, the Health Officers are not properly acquainted with local conditions. They are ignorant in the ordinary work of sanitation. They do not know how to adjust themselves to the proper requirements of the village conditions and even in towns any amount of money is wasted in doing some type design works and other things. After spending so much money they come to know that these are not suitable to the local conditions and in the municipal towns, this is a scandal. The larger a municipality grows, the more insanitary it becomes.

[Sri V. C. Vellingiri Gounder]

The Health Department should train and send such officers who will study the local conditions and know how to do things properly and also cheaply. At present, owing to this, a large amount of money is being wasted. This sort of thing should be prevented. With these words, I close my remarks.

Sardar Sampuran Singh (West Punjab: Sikh): The question of public health is very important in this country because we are just at the stage of A, B, C, and in this direction yet we have to travel a long distance before we become abreast of the other nations of the world. This deficiency does not affect only one aspect of human life, namely, health but this is a question which affects us all round. For example, we have so far not been able to tackle the problem of malaria effectively and the result is not only that we are losing millions of lives every year but thousands of miles of very fertile land in submountaneous area are lying barren simply because we cannot make them habitable. If we start from Saharanpur and go to the other end of the Himalayas, we see very large areas of beautiful land which would grow anything but on account of malaria nobody lives there and consequently it is not cultivated and we are deprived of millions of maunds of wheat and other foodgrains. If we had only cultivated these lands, perhaps we would not be suffering on account of shortage of food today. It is too true that this problem of public health is very much connected with our economics as well, but it is not necessary that we should have very expensive doctors. I think considering the poor economics of the land we should accustom our physicians and surgeons to behave in such a way as not to expect very high salaries and fees from the people of this country. I would make one suggestion. In all hospitals at central places we should have honorary surgeons and physicians as they have in Europe and only house surgeons and physicians who work under those renowned doctors should mainly run these institutions and these people should not be very highly paid; if we have such hospitals spread all over the country with experts only at the top I think we will be able to do greater service to mankind at much cheaper rates. With these remarks, I support the motion of Mr. Griffiths.

Mr. Leslie Gwilt: Sir, I propose to be very brief. Unfortunately I have not the mental capacity to enable me to absorb something like a thousand pages of a fairly closely typed report in 72 hours as has my brilliant colleague Mr. Griffiths. I have therefore only been able cursorily to glance through this report and I want to speak particularly on the subject of tuberculosis and in so far as tuberculosis occurs in industry; I should like to make one suggestion in regard to the prevention or rather retarding of it. I am sure that any Member of this House who employs labour has had the experience of the difficulty in finding a sanatorium to which he can send any member of his staff found to be suffering from tuberculosis, and the tragedy of it is that when a man so suffering subsequently applies to the doctor for examination, usually the disease has got so much of a hold on him that the treatment is all the more difficult. I would suggest, therefore, that Government should consider legislation to enforce factories employing more than 300 workers to instal an X-Ray screen. That is not an X-Ray photographic equipment, but it is a piece of medical equipment simple to use which will show whether or not a man is suffering from primary tuberculosis. I think I am correct in saying that. If not, I hope my Honourable friend Dr. Deshmukh will put me right. I would suggest that the staff be screened every six months. By that process, if there is a suspicion of tuberculosis in a man's lungs, it will be shown and the treatment that he can then be given would probably have the effect of arresting the progress of that disease and may well save his life. I realise that the natural corollary of that is that a doctor must be employed, and I feel that a factory which employs 300 workers should, at any rate, employ a part-time doctor. That is the suggestion I have to make. So far as I could see, it was not made in the Bore Committee report. I feel it is a matter of

urgency and I submit that it should be considered by Government. Before I resume my seat I should like that the question be now put.

Mr. S. H. Y. Oulsnam: Sir, I think it is many years since any public health matter has occupied the time of this House. I think that is partly because in former years the subject itself did not attract the same attention as other more attractive matters. Partly for that reason and partly because when the Reforms of 1921 and 1937 were introduced the legislative and executive functions in the field of health were transferred to the Provinces. The idea then grew that the Central Government was hardly concerned with the health of the country, and that attitude was, I think, reflected in the proceedings of this House. That idea, I may say, no longer prevails. It is now recognised, and certainly recognised by the Health Department, that the Centre, although it may have no legislative powers and it may have no executive power, it cannot be indifferent to the state of public health of the country, that it must take an active part in the solution of health problems and that it can promote the solution of health problems even within the constitutional limitations. I say 'within the constitutional limitations', because there is no intention of interfering with the provincial authority.

Well, Sir, this Committee was appointed by Government to make a survey of the present conditions and to make suggestions for the future development. The survey is contained in Volume I of the report and I hope that at least that volume will be read by every Member of this House. The Committee calls it a dark picture. One might call it a tragic picture. Anyone who reads this volume will say that something must be done. Not something in a small way, as my Honourable friend from Bombay suggests, but something in a large way; not 5 annas a head.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Start things in a small way and then go up to a bigger way.

Mr. S. H. Y. Oulsnam: I agree with that suggestion, but at least the target must be a large one. Even in so-called normal years 1,50,000 people die of cholera and 60,000 die of small-pox. Both the diseases can and should be controlled, even if they cannot be eliminated. In some places one child in three dies before it completes the first year of life. Surely, these are conditions in which something must be done. The Famine Commission pointed out that a community which is weakened in mind and body by disease cannot be a prosperous community. This Committee has also pointed out similar obvious facts and I think the House will agree that considerable improvement in the health conditions and health services is essential to any economic advance. Of course, Government knew these facts which have for many years been reported in official reports but which have not attracted the public attention which they should have done. That is why the Government appointed this Committee. It is a representative Committee consisting of laymen as well as of representatives of the medical profession and of non-officials as well as officials. It also included representative Members of this House and of the Upper House and of professional Associations and the Indian Medical Council.

I should like to take this opportunity of making public acknowledgment of the great public service which has been done by the members of this Committee in carrying out this work. Sir Joseph Bhore gave to the work of the Committee many months of his time without remuneration and I am aware that he did it at considerable personal loss; so did also many of the non-official members of the Committee. The majority of the members were non-officials and many of them were busy men and the work on the Committee necessarily involved personal sacrifice. I must acknowledge also the conscientious and thorough manner in which the Committee has discharged its task. One might have wished that it had been received earlier and I must say that the late receipt of the report has been a great handicap to us in framing our plans. But

[Mr. S. H. Y. Oulsnam]

taking into account the extraordinary wide field and very heavy task which was entrusted to the Committee, I do not think we have cause for complaint.

I think the House will not expect me at this early stage, within a few days of its publication, to announce any decision of Government on the recommendations. The first thing we have to do is to consult the Provincial Governments, whose responsibility it is to prepare the plans and whose responsibility it will be to execute them. That we intend to do. Copies of the report have been sent to them and we intend to call a Conference in April in order that we may be able to arrive at agreed conclusions at as early a date as possible. Government will certainly take note of all the suggestions made by the Honourable Members, many of which, in my opinion, are valuable and they will also bring these suggestions to the notice of Provincial Governments. I hope the Honourable Mover will see his way to withdraw his motion.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: The discussion has served the purpose I have in mind. I beg leave to withdraw the amendment.

Mr. President: Honourable Members will note that the cut motion was tabled "to raise discussion on the measures to be adopted to improve public health with particular reference to the Bhore Report". The discussion has already been raised, and a negative vote is not going to nullify the discussion that has already taken place. Of course, I need not urge anything in favour of or against the motion. That is the only point I wish to invite Honourable Members' attention to. Leave has been asked for to withdraw the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House that the Honourable Member should be given leave to withdraw the motion?

Some Honourable Members: No, no.

Mr. President: The question is.

"That the demand under the head 'Public Health' be reduced by Rs. 100."
The motion was negatived.

Mr. President: Before we proceed to the next cut motion, I am requested to inform Honourable Members that the meeting of the Defence Consultative Committee which was fixed for 5 P.M. today will in view of today's adjournment motion, now be held as soon as the House rises. The meeting will take place in Committee Room No. 50.

As regards the other point about the difficulty due to strike in the Press, the Honourable the Deputy President had made a statement making a little alteration in what I suggested formerly, on account of subsequent circumstances disclosed. I have to make one further suggestion in view of the continuance of those difficulties. In view of the time taken up today and also one hour on account of the adjournment motion, I am informed by the Chief Whip of the Congress Party that all Parties in the House are agreed—of course he said on the authority of the Whips of all other Parties—that on the 11th, when the House meets, the question hour will be suspended. This is for the purpose of regaining the hour that may be lost now. Twenty minutes of that will be allotted to the European Group, in view of the loss of time which they suffered this morning and forty minutes will be allotted to the unattached Members, in view of the loss of time now. After this, I want to make one more suggestion. As the question list for the 11th has already been printed that may be treated as the question list for the 12th. That will obviate certain difficulties of having the question list of 20th to be prepared. There will be further advantage that instead of the printed question list of the 11th going in as unstarred questions, these questions may be put on the 12th and the list for the subsequent dates for which there is difficulty of printing may go as unstarred. If the House unanimously agrees to this proposal, it will be adopted.

Some Honourable Members: We all agree.

Mr. President: Then the question list for 11th will be treated as the question list for 12th. The question hour for the 11th stands suspended. The questions for the 12th will be treated as unstarred.

Haji Abdus Sattar Haji Ishaq Seth (West Coast and Nilgiris: Muhammadan): There was also the suggestion that all short notice questions for these days of cut motions, should not be taken up on these days but should be taken up subsequently.

Mr. President: If the parties agree that may be arranged.

Haji Abdus Sattar Haji Ishaq Seth: It was suggested to the Chair by the Chief Whip of the Congress party.

Shri Satya Narayan Sinha (Darbhanga *cum* Saran: Non-Muhammadan): This may be done, Sir. The short notice questions may stand over till the voting on demands are over.

Mr. President: This means that the notice for short questions must be accepted for later dates. If the Government agree, I have no objection.

DEMAND No. 11—EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands: Sir, I move:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,55,000 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, 1947, in respect of 'Executive Council'."

Mr. President: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,55,000 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, 1947, in respect of 'Executive Council'."

Delay in Derequisitioning of Property and in Settling Claims

Mr. C. P. Lawson (Bengal: European): Sir, I move:

"That the demand under the head 'Executive Council' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Sir, it will come as no surprise, I fear, to the Honourable the War Secretary, that we are putting in this cut, but he may not be completely aware that there are very much two sides to this cut and we are moving it not merely because we ourselves have complaints and indeed inconveniences, although those complaints and inconveniences are considerable. We also put in this cut because a problem is before us, which if we are not careful is going to cost us a great deal of money. Sir, the waste of public money with which we are at the moment confronted is one which this House is certainly entitled to consider. The problem, as I see it, is two fold. First of all we, particularly, my community, are very short of accommodation and I will make a reference in a minute which will give the House some idea of the extent to which our particular property has been requisitioned. The second necessity is to save the money which is gradually falling away down the drain. The problem itself is made clear in section 11 of the Explanatory Memorandum of the budget estimates of the Defence services and perhaps I could quote a very brief portion of that as possibly some Honourable Members may not be carrying it in their mind, although I am certain they will all have read it.

"During the course of the war large areas of land were requisitioned any many buildings requisitioned or hired for the use of the services. It may be necessary to acquire some of these for the continued use of the services, but in the great majority of cases it is the intention of Government to restore the lands and buildings to their owners. When the property is in the condition in which it was at the time of requisitioning no difficulty arises. In a very large number of cases, however, there has been either improvement or deterioration."

The sections go on to say that of course improvements will have to be paid for on the one side while deterioration will have to be paid for on the other.

[Mr. C. P. Lawson]

Now, Sir, let me deal first of all with the inconvenience that particularly my community is suffering from the present situation. It is almost exactly two years ago that I had certain remarks to make in this House on this particular subject. It was then that I quoted just exactly how far we were suffering from requisitioning; and perhaps I may read just a very short extract from the account of the debates of that day. I was speaking about residential accommodation in the part of Calcutta in which I live, and I said—

"Any reliance upon finding further accommodation of this type would therefore be entirely misplaced. Taking, for example, the Alipore, watgunge, Hastings area as a large representative residential area, the number of houses so far requisitioned is 80 and the number remaining in the occupation of civilians, Government officers, Supply Department officers, etc., is 106."

That will show you the extent to which even residential accommodation was requisitioned. Now I am willing to believe that the figures recently given to us by the War Secretary have possibly been exceeded in the case of residential property; that is to say, although he has so far been unable to let us know the separate figures for derequisitioning of the various types of accommodation, I will assume that something more than a total of 10 per cent. of the residential accommodation has been returned. But even so, with the very large quantity of houses that have been taken over that is still extremely small. I would also like to point out that while the War Secretary made it clear in a recent reply to a question that it was expected to return all requisitioned property to their owners by the end of 1946, the rate of progress that has obviously been made in the direction of derequisitioning is far slower than that. For instance, a month ago the figure of 24.1 per cent. of derequisitioned property was given for the Northern Command. This has increased only in one month by 1.4 per cent. The Southern Command which had derequisitioned a month ago only 5.7 per cent. of the requisitioned property has in the next month derequisitioned less than 2 per cent. more. A slight calculation assures me that at that rate the complete derequisitioning of property will not take place by the end of 1946, nor even by the end of 1947. So we have every reason to be rather worried about the situation, and particularly about the money that is being wasted. I am personally in constant touch with people of my community living in the mofussil who come down to the big centres like Calcutta and Bombay and who require hotel accommodation when they get there. It is extremely difficult for them to get such accommodation, and when they do it is only for a short period after which they have got to get out. When they get out, where they can go no one seems to know. I should like also to mention that the only reason that we in Calcutta were able to manage, with the enormous number of houses that were requisitioned, was that over 50 per cent. of our community were called up under the National Service (European British Subjects) Act. In fact our male community was reduced by rather more than 50 per cent. If that had not happened we could not possibly have lived in the accommodation that was left to us. Now these men are coming back being demobilised—very slowly demobilised but still they are being demobilised—and when they come back there is nowhere for them to stay. I need only quote the case of Delhi as an instance of what is happening in a somewhat worse degree in Calcutta and I believe also to some extent in Bombay. Delhi hotels we all know about. Sometimes we are called up here to carry out our various legislative duties. Then Government want to see us. If by any chance although Government do not wish to see us we want to see Government, no arrangements of any sort are made and any application to a somewhat disobliging person known as the Estate Officer usually results in something the equivalent of a short and sharp negative monosyllable. I was speaking only the other day to a gentleman in a state of great indignation, having been moved from one of the principal hotels of New Delhi because certain high personalities who sit in another place in this building were coming to Delhi. He said he did not think it was fair that he should be moved

and he certainly adopted at the time very strong democratic principles. In all fairness I had to point out to him that the Highnesses who had replaced him had their houses taken by the authorities and these houses were still in the possession of the authorities. When one looks round at all the private houses still in the hands of the authorities in Delhi alone one wonders whether the G. H. Q. will ever become any less. I believe that the betting at the moment is against it. I asked the War Secretary this morning whether he could give me even a rough idea of what all this requisitioning was costing. In a sense I am rather glad he was not able to, although I am a little surprised because I would have thought that the shocking waste that is undoubtedly being incurred would have imprinted itself upon his memory in the shape of figures. Whatever that figure may be, I am willing to bet it is a pretty big figure, and that kind of wastage is the most serious kind of wastage because it is totally unproductive. If the minute the services moved out from a requisitioned piece of property, the rent to the landlord stopped, there would have been a howl that would have been heard all the way to Delhi from Bombay and Calcutta. The fact of the matter is that the landlord goes on getting money for that property whether it is occupied or unoccupied and there is no necessity for him to go and look for a tenant. He just sits down and collects his rent. He knows that in the end it will be necessary for the Government to put that property into the state in which it was when it was requisitioned, and so he does not bother and the property falls further and further into disrepair and the loss of the public funds becomes greater and greater. That means that the property that we need so badly lies vacant with no one to occupy it. The rent which should be paid by a tenant to the landlord is paid by the Government, and presumably the whole thing comes out of our pocket in due course.

I do not wish to be purely destructive or purely critical. I think that it is the duty of this House to consider the problem which I admit is a problem not entirely avoidable. The thing is what can we do? We know that these properties were taken on very quickly at a time of great danger and of great emergency, and most of us had a rough idea that there would be some wigs on the green when this property started going back. What can we do? In the first place, I would like to throw in a suggestion,—I do not know how practicable it is—that the reoccupation of these various requisitioned premises should not be delayed while an argument occurs as to what the Government should or should not pay in the way of repairs. Surely it would be possible to get a rough idea of the state of the property and to wait for the settlement until afterwards. I would also suggest, Sir, that the Requisitioning Boards, which helped the Government so much when requisitioning was started, might be reconstituted in some other form to meet this enormous shortage of valuers which is obviously causing the Government so much trouble now. I am sure there would be reliable elements who could and would assist the Government in the settling of these matters. One other thing I will say, Sir, before I sit down, and that is that from the Government's point of view it would be better to lose a little on the settlement than to go on throwing money down the drain by hanging on to empty requisitioned property and paying away enormous sums every month. Sir, I move.

Mr. President: Cut motion moved:

"That the demand under the head 'Executive Council' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Mr. Manu Subedar (Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau: Indian Commerce): Sir, I find myself very happy to be in company with and to be able to support wholeheartedly the motion moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. Lawson. Until this morning I was somewhat happy at the assurance which the Honourable the War Secretary had given us that derequisitioning was proceeding, will proceed faster and everything will be all right. But in the last two hours I have received a first hand communication from my friends—both Indian

[Mr. Manu Subedar]
businessmen and English businessmen—in the Standing Quartering Board of Bombay who are pointing out that instead of derequisitioning what is today happening is that the R. A. F. are actually coming in and asking for more accommodation both for office and for residential purposes. In other words, instead of improving, the position is getting worse. So far as the military authorities are concerned, I have no hesitation in saying that Bombay has been the worst sufferer in this respect, and while I have every sympathy with the grievances of the community to which my Honourable friend, Mr. Lawson, belongs, I plead for business houses and for residential houses. I have never been able to understand why the Military

Mr. President: Order, order. It is four of the Clock now, and the adjournment motion will be taken up.

Mr. Manu Subedar: I will resume my speech on Monday.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT

SHOOTING OF CITIZENS AND USE OF TEAR GAS AND LATHI CHARGES BY THE POLICE
IN DELHI ON THE VICTORY PARADE DAY.

Nawab Siddique Ali Khan (Central Provinces and Berar: Muhammadan): Sir, I beg to move:

“That the Assembly do now adjourn.”

It was suggested in the morning that the admission of this adjournment motion will add to the animosity between the officials and the public. Sir, I may say plainly that the object of my Party in asking me to table the adjournment motion was to prove that the Government was entirely responsible for the unfortunate happenings yesterday in Delhi, and, secondly, our object now is that in future no such incident should take place.

Mr. President, I may say at the outset that my Party strongly condemns hooliganism, rowdyism, looting of shops and burning of houses. My Party is deadily opposed to such heinous things which took place yesterday in Delhi. There are two questions before us: The first one is what was the cause of yesterday's disturbances, and the second question is whether the measures which were taken by the police and the Local Authorities were justifiable or not. The first question is simple, and does not need any elaborate arguments to give a reply. The House is aware that the detention and the trial of I.N.A. personnel, the strike, of naval ratings, and the recent happenings at Karachi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras infuriated the people to boycott the victory celebrations. The two political parties in this House—the Congress and the Muslim League—decided in their party meetings to boycott the victory celebrations, and the two political parties in Delhi Province—Muslim League and the Congress—passed resolutions to the same effect. They had not asked the people to observe *hartal* but the resentment amongst the traders was so strong that they, of their own accord, closed their shops yesterday, and there was complete *hartal*. I hope the Honourable Members of this House are aware that about two days back the city fathers of Delhi Municipality wanted to move a Resolution in the Municipal Committee meeting, but it was disallowed by the Deputy Commissioner. The resolution was also to the effect that the Municipal Committee should not spend a single pie from its funds on illuminations and other things connected with the Victory celebrations. Sir, it is unthinkable that in these circumstances, Government should have thought it desirable to celebrate Victory, when the people were against it and they had expressed their resentment from the platform and through the press. They said that we do not want to waste Rs. 10 lakhs on the Victory celebrations when starvation and hunger is at our doors. They decided not to take any part in the celebrations. The Government, as usual, treated our appeals and resolutions with contempt. Sir, can it be said that the Government was not aware of the feelings of the people

In this country? Surely, after having been 200 years in this country, they cannot say that they are not aware of the temperaments of the people of India. If they say that, I must say that they do not deserve to occupy those Treasury Benches for a minute.

Sir, let us see what precautions were taken to put a stop to any untoward incident. What steps were taken to protect the lives and property of innocent people who suffered to a great extent yesterday. It is clear from the report published in the "*Hindustan Times*" that the police came on the scene after some hours. Had the policemen and the officers and the District Magistrate gone to sleep in their houses especially when they knew that there was danger and a likelihood of a disturbance in Delhi in view of the resolutions and the feelings of the people of Delhi? Sir, it is also mentioned in the report published in the "*Hindustan Times*" that twenty-five girls were answering their Matriculation examination papers in the Town Hall and there was no police. It is also published here that the Town Hall building was burning and there was no fire engine to extinguish the fire.

The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands (Finance Member): Why?

Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: Because all the officials were busy in the Victory parade.

The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands: They burnt it!

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar (Madras Ceded Districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): The Railway Clearing Accounts Office was razed to the ground.

Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: It is clear that the police arrangements were insufficient and they should have taken proper precautions to stop, this, but they were elsewhere as I have just said.

The two or three occurrences which have been narrated to me by two responsible gentlemen—Mr. Chaman Lall and Mr. Sharma—who are members of the press gallery, and some other gentlemen who were on the scene of occurrence show that shooting was indiscriminate. It is published in the newspapers that two young boys, one aged 17 and the other boy aged 18 were standing in the Park near the Red Fort. The younger boy had a bag in his hand. Probably he had returned from the market and both of them were standing in the park to witness the 'tamasha'. But what happened? These two young heroes got two Victoria Crosses on Victory Day. What I mean, Sir, is that the chests of these two young heroes were pierced with two fatal bullets and they died on the spot. (*Cries of "Shame, Shame", from the Congress Benches*). Afterwards the people there took out these two dead bodies in a procession. When they neared Kuchai Bali Maran and Chandni Chowk, the District Magistrate of Delhi, as it is said in the "*Hindustan Times*", who was present at the time ordered, the use of tear gas and ordered lathi charge to be made on the peaceful processionists who were taking the dead bodies to Fatehpuri Mosque for funeral prayers.

Sir, I wish to censure the Government for indiscriminate shooting, the unnecessary use of tear gas, and the lathi charge on innocent people.

Sir, Victory Day ended in the irreparable loss of six precious lives and serious injuries to fourteen people.

[At this stage Mr. President vacated the Chair, which was then occupied by Mr. Deputy President (Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan).]

Sir, our Victory Day will be quite different from the Victory Day of yesterday. Our Victory Day, God willing, will be that glorious day when our masters will leave the shores of my country. (*Congress Benches: Hear, hear!*).

Mr. Deputy President: Motion moved:

"That the Assembly do now Adjourn."

Pandit Balkrishna Sharma (Cities of the United Provinces: Non-Muhammadan Urban): It is not without a full sense of responsibility that on behalf

[Pandit Balkrishna Sharma]

of my Party I rise to support the motion for adjournment moved by my Honourable friend, Siddique Ali Khan Sahab, so ably and with such restraint. Sir, I am one of those in this House who have been dealing with crowds. For the last quarter of a century I have been in the habit of moving, controlling and dealing with sometimes unruly and disorderly and some times plaint crowds. This mass upsurge which we are witnessing today is a great revolutionary contribution which the Indian National Congress and its great leader, Mahatma Gandhi, have made to the political life of this country. A disarmed nation, groaning under the yoke of foreign domination, could not find any way out of this situation, with the result that some of those young men to whom constitutionalism did not appeal during those days took to the life of bomb and pistol. Lord Morley in one of his despatches to the then Viceroy of India said: "The bomb has failed in Russia, it will fail in India also." But Lord Morley had forgotten that the bomb or the philosophy of the bomb does not end where it begins, that the philosophy of the bomb develops and develops into a mass action and when the mass action comes even the mightiest of empires have to totter down. As I said it was the revolutionary imagination of my great leader Mahatma Gandhi which gave us a weapon of public demonstration and a weapon of non-violence to fight with the organised violence of the British Empire and since then my people have taken to this mass demonstration, both Hindus and Muslims together. For the last 25 years I have been dealing with these political crowds and I believe for an equal number of years the Government also have been dealing with them. The question today is, have the Government learnt any lesson? Have they forgotten their old lesson? I am pained to say that they have done neither. Neither have they forgotten the old lesson of coming out with force nor have they learnt the new lesson of sometimes at least to give in to the popular wish. The question is, if the Government have not learnt the new lesson, should we, the representatives of the people, not condemn the Government when they use force in an indiscriminate manner, even though our own men sometimes may be guilty of stray unorganised violence. That is the question and I am quite clear on that point, that we the representatives of the people, both Hindus and Muslims, cannot leave our men in the lurch. We have to be with them, we are with them and we shall continue to be with them till we have created a situation when with their help we are able to establish our own selves on the benches opposite.

The question was very easy to solve. Both the Muslim League and the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee had decided in favour of the boycott of the Victory celebrations. The Government knew that in Old Delhi feelings were running very high. The Government also knew that people did not like the sort of Victory celebrations that were going to be imposed upon them at a cost of about ten lakhs of rupees. The nation did not like it and yet the Government went on with those preparations. The Government did not hesitate to beflag the whole city, to erect arches and gates and to put on bulbs all over for lighting purposes. All that was I dare say against the wishes of the people. Now the question is, could they not give up this celebration at least in Old Delhi. Knowing full well that the people did not like it, could they not have passed an order that in Old Delhi there will be no Victory celebrations and that they will be confined only to the area of New Delhi? If that had been done I say that these six precious lives would not have been lost nor those ten or more, some of them very seriously injured. It can be said that perhaps had the Government done so, the Government might as well have taken a step which was not in consonance with their dignity, that it would be *infra dig* on the part of the Government to do so. I daresay that it would have been nothing of the kind. On the contrary, the Government might have added a feather to their cap by yielding at least once in a lifetime to the popular wishes. I am bound to say that the Government did not act according to the best dictates of reason. Is there anything ethically or morally wrong in my countrymen, both

Hindus and Muslims, taking exception to the celebration of the Victory Day. They were perfectly justified in taking a stand against these celebrations.

Of course it is said that it is a victory of right over might, that it is a victory of democracy over Fascism. All these empty phrases do not in the least convince us. Democracy indeed, but where is democracy? That is the question which Burma, Java, French Indo-China and Egypt are asking. After having laid low the ghost of fascism, where is democracy in the world today, where is democracy in India and if there is no democracy, why these hypocritical observations about Victory celebrations. For the lifetime of me I cannot understand the rationale behind it. Therefore I say that my people were perfectly justified in taking exception to this sort of thing and they were perfectly justified in showing their resentment.

I now come to another point. The Deputy Leader of my Party, myself, Mr. Satyanarayan Sinha and Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena, all of us rushed to the scene yesterday and to our surprise we found that there was not a single policeman, except one who was standing for controlling the traffic. Traffic had totally disappeared from the streets of Old Delhi. The Clock Tower was burning. Some people were there doing some petty incendiarism. We dissuaded them and they obeyed us. The crowd was cleared, we extinguished the fire, though not with water, for there was no bucket nor water available at the time. The shops were closed and yet we did that much. Though from New Delhi we could reach that spot, remained there for two or three hours persuading the people, yet we did not find any policeman nor any other arrangement on the part of the authorities. Is it perchance any intention on the part of the authorities to allow our disorderliness appear as a cloak for maintaining their authority in this country longer? That question strikes us. I say so because I have experience of a similar character in my own city of Cawnpore. There on one occasion I informed the Dy. S. P. and the Superintendent of Police and the Collector and the District Magistrate that on a day a certain event was going to occur which might end in civil commotion and I pointed out to them definite spots where the trouble might occur. To my great surprise they did not take any action whatsoever. Was it not possible for them to take action, especially as I had pointed out to them even the places where trouble was likely to occur. They had their C.I.D. and their informers. But they did not do anything. Similarly, the Delhi authorities have handled the situation. I cannot understand for the life of me, when both the organisations had declared a boycott and when there was to be a *hartal*, why the authorities were so indifferent as not to send their men to the spot and try to nip the trouble in the bud. They did not do it; and why did they not do it? For the very simple reason that most of the police force was posted in New Delhi. We saw that every half a furlong policemen were posted on the roads of New Delhi. Actually the police force was depleted in Delhi: perhaps they did not have sufficient amount of police in the city, and then they did not care, with the result that when they came upon us with a thud, there we were—our men lost their lives. I have got here a list of those who have been injured and who are in hospital, and when I scanned the age of every one of them, I find that with one exception—a man named Sikandar Ali who is aged 35—all of them are young boys, hardly out of their teens:

Yad Ram who has been injured in the leg and is now lying in the hospital is only 18. Devakinandan is a boy of 13 years. Muhammad Zakir is 18 years of age. Then there is one dumb and mute Afghan who is 16 years. Dr. Salim a dentist who is 24 years of age. Mohammad Isak is 19 years. Ram Kishan is 21 years. Abdur Rashid is 17 years of age. Jalal is 20 years old. Gopichand is 18. Jabbar is 32 years. Munawar Ali is 16, and Muhammad Rafiq who is dead was 18 years, Prabhu is 20 years of age.

These are the men lying in hospital: they are all children or nearly so; and it cannot be said there was any organised attempt on the part of any one to bring about a situation which was a case of crowd psychology, as I call it. In my

[Pandit Balkrishna Sharma]

College days I happened to read something of psychology, and when I read the chapter on crowd psychology I learnt that it is a sort of *ideo-motor act* as the psychologists call it which is responsible for the behaviour of the crowd! an idea suddenly strikes and when that idea strikes the brain, the nerves begin to move in that direction and they happen to do something for which the crowd cannot hold themselves responsible. I think my crowd behaved absolutely in that irresponsible manner, and the responsibility for giving them this rein and for giving them an opportunity of behaving in this manner lies on the shoulders of the Government, because I know that had the police reached the spot in time all this trouble would have been avoided. Let us not forget that the feeling in the country is there, that a mass upsurge against the present authority is there, and that, however much we may quarrel among ourselves regarding Pakistan or Akhand Hindustan, all of us are united in one respect and it is that the present Government should quit India. On that we are all united. It is for this reason, as you will find from this list, that the blood of Hindus and of Muslims has flowed together, and, if more such occurrences take place in this country, then differences between the Hindus and Muslims will be cemented by this tie of blood. With these words, I support the motion.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa: Muhannadan): Sir, I do not want to take much time of the House on this motion. The Honourable Mover has described the reasons for the strained feelings that exist in this part of the country. I do not want again to introduce any heat in this debate or stir the injured sentiments of our countrymen in the conditions that we are today. I only want to say how this happened on a parade day, although the Government was displaying and demonstrating the most modern weapons of war that they had, yet they could not carry with them the prestige of a victorious nation, and they could not convince the Indian people that they could celebrate this Victory in any manner they liked. Of course the army's capacity to commit crimes might be greater, but their capacity to do good was very small. That is the unfortunate position which this Government ought to understand and realise. When the Government know, that the two organisations in this country, which are of importance, the League and the Congress, had definitely taken up the position that they could not be party to the Victory celebrations, Government officials should have thought that there was some chance of an outburst of feeling in some quarter or another, and necessary precautions should have been taken to avoid same. The Honourable Member speaking before me, from the United Provinces, has just described that there was no precaution whatever taken, there were no police force posted in those places which required particular care, those spots which were required to be illuminated, where Government wanted that the Victory celebrations should be the brightest—no possible care was taken to keep police watch there. Then you will notice that the class of people who were killed were more or less sight-seers and these men could not have been expected to have challenged authority or stopped a parade or their guns or for the matter of that could not make any demonstration which the authorities might have disliked: they were just boys and probably some of them were preaching to their own countrymen not to be a party to that sight and nothing more nothing less. I do not wish to repeat the names that have been given by the last speaker: I only want to say that from the report available to me from a doctor who had visited these boys in the hospital, I am told that they are all of a young age except one whose age has been quoted to be 30 and further that it was mostly bullets that were fired on—it was not cartridges carrying small shots. These bullets were probably the same as they are used in war. That is the unfortunate incident to which I want to draw attention. If we examine the list, we find that many of them did not belong to Delhi—they were people from Bihar and from Bengal and U.P. and other Provinces, which only proved that they did not go to that place with

any idea of creating disturbance, but they were just disturbed in their minds; as Pandit Balkrishna Sarma has said it was the psychological condition in which they were trying to demonstrate anti-Victory attitude and probably if there was proper precautions taken, and warnings had been given by air shooting, this incident would have been avoided. That shows the failure of the Government or probably there might have been a policy by certain officials to do what they thought would increase their prestige in demonstrating power. That is a position for which this Government requires to be condemned and they should understand their position that there was no occasion for opening of fire in this place. With these few words I support the motion.

Pandit Govind Malaviya (Allahabad and Jhansi Divisions: Non-Muhamadan Rural): Sir, the *Hindustan Times* of this morning opens out with yesterday's happenings in the city by saying:

"Delhi presented the sight of a bomb-shattered city after Thursday's happenings. Mass demonstrations against Victory celebrations, destruction of public property worth about 10 lakhs through large scale incendiarism, continuous use of tear gas and repeated firings by

the police and military, etc., etc."

That was the grim picture of things as they were. But those of us who happened to be in the city of Delhi yesterday and who moved from place to place to see how things were occurring and to try to see if we could in any way help, found that the actual state of affairs was worse and grimmer than even these lines convey. Sir, the trouble started some time in the morning. Some of us were there during the day. Others were there in the afternoon. Others stayed there till late in the evening and we did not come across, I am sorry to say, any organised or systematic attempt to meet the situation. It is not my object here to apportion blame for what has happened. That will probably come later. Possibly, the police and the authorities were not to blame. Possibly, they restrained themselves. Possibly, the mob, the crowds of people who were out, were not able to control themselves. Possibly there was mob frenzy and in that frenzy people did things which might not have been done or which ought not to have been done. Possibly, things were the other way. I am not prepared at this stage to apportion blame anyway. I am prepared to say that these are matters which we shall have to go into and leave for the future to decide upon. But, Sir, the one thing that was visible everywhere in Delhi yesterday was that the official world, the police world, the military world and those who are so loud in their protestations of their responsibility for law and order were almost not to be seen. I moved from place to place, saw whole buildings in flames, telegraph and telephone posts burning, light posts destroyed, and the big Town Hall ablaze, emitting flames of fire. The fire started some time at noon. I do not know how long the burning went on. I was there till half past 8 in the evening and it was still burning and the fire was increasing. There was not a policeman to do anything in the matter and we wondered what things had come to.

I know, Sir, that yesterday there were other things going on in other parts of Delhi. I know that all policemen, and the military and the officials were busy parading performing celebrating and holiday-making elsewhere, but they had a primary duty to perform and my regret is that they did not realise it. It is not merely that they were not present, I have it from very reliable authority—as a matter of fact I have here in my hands a statement from a friend who himself was there and who told the District Magistrate to provide them with a loud speaker in order to patrol and announce to the people to disperse. We know that the use of loud speakers is not permitted to the public in Delhi. Hence he asked the District Magistrate to give him the police loud speaker but the request was turned down. Again, before the situation became critical and before the Town Hall was set on fire, a request was made to the District Magistrate that responsible Congress leaders like Mr. Asaf Ali and others should be informed

[Pandit Govind Malaviya.]

and it pains me to have to say it, will the Honourable Members on the Government benches try to realise this, that the District Magistrate said that it was none of his business. I am making a very definite statement because I have got here in my hand in writing that the District Magistrate said that it was none of his business. I ask, where the responsibility for all this loss of life, injury to person and property should rest? We know that the opinions of responsible leaders and their viewpoints are flouted. Why did the Government which chooses to call itself the Government of India, staying in India among the Indian people, not take care to put its fingers on the pulse of the people's mind and to understand that the Victory celebrations which were being celebrated in Delhi were an outrage on the people of India! India is in no mood for these celebrations. India today is panting in anger, in resentment, in misery and starvation. Is it for the Government to goad such people, to provoke them and to create for them such outrageous situations? Is it for the Government to goad these people among whom there is still a spark of life left, to create trouble, to rise in opposition, I might go a step further and say to rise in revolt? Is this Government bent upon doing that? I submit that anybody who had gone to Delhi yesterday and seen that grim picture of the Town Hall and the Chandni Chowk burning and come back to New Delhi and seen the gaiety and the illuminations that were rampant, the fireworks that were shooting high in the sky, any man with a sense of decency and propriety and any sense of a right perspective of things would have felt it sickening. That is what this Government has been doing. I submit that it is the business of this Government to realise that the temper of the people of this country has changed. If you will not take account of that fact, step after step, day after day, you will be face to face with awkward situations. Do you want to encourage that? Can you sit on those benches with equanimity and see episodes like this taking place day after day in the country? There was firing in Bombay, in Calcutta. There was all that trouble in the Navy and what not. Will you not for God's sake take note of these facts, this chain of facts and try to grapple with the situation and to meet it in the only rational way in which you can—not by trying to suppress a little trouble here today or another little or big trouble there tomorrow, but by removing the root cause of these troubles and making such things impossible. Sir, it may be that there are other difficulties also. I am coming to a topic in which I shall not go in detail but I shall refer to it only in passing. It may be that there is a certain group, that there are some people or some interests who might desire to create trouble for us, for the Government, for our people. Why don't you remove the root causes of discontent, why don't you take care not to provide the occasion for popular irritation and resentment, thereby making it impossible for such people to create and foment troubles of that nature. Sir, the Congress did not want this strikes. The Congress did not want these troubles and yet there have been these troubles. Do you know why? First of all, because the Congress cannot possibly say to the people that there is any other honourable course for human beings than to rebel against the foreign domination. We cannot say it. No honourable man can say it. Secondly, there is naturally such an upsurge of resentment, so much of bitterness against this foreign domination; such utter desperation in the minds of the people that the least incitement, the least lead, you might call it a mislead, simply carries them off and regardless of the consequences, regardless of the danger of firings and of bullets, they stand up and say that they would rather perish than submit to things which this Government enforces upon them. That is the situation. I ask, is it not at all possible even now when you are so loud in your professions both here and in England that you want to make India independent and free and the British Cabinet's delegation is coming here with that object, is it not possible for the Government even now to try to act in a manner that the people may approve of, and that may remove this cause of daily irritations and troubles and may make it possible for those who are to

come and for those who are here, everyone of us in this country, to sit down peacefully round a table to see once yet again if it is possible that the matter of the struggle between India and England may be settled in peace and amity? Sir, these Victory Day celebrations in Delhi which were held in the teeth of public opposition have been the cause for all this trouble. I ask, what did the Government gain by it? There is such terrible poverty and hunger and there is such awful dissatisfaction and opposition going round everywhere and yet this Government persists in having these Victory celebrations and in keeping up pretences that the people are with it. I have here a Government *communiqué* in my hand from the Public Relations Directorate which purports to give a description of what happened. I read that among those persons who were at the Parade were so and so and so and so and the Members of the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly. Every one knows that no elected Member of this Assembly went anywhere near these celebrations. But, Government wants to give the impression that the country is with them in these Victory Parades. Is there any sense in that? Would it not be wiser for them to see that they go with the people? If the people did not want them, the Government should have dropped these celebrations and thereby gained public support.

There is one thing more to which I would like to refer. The Town Hall was ablaze yesterday. I went to the officials who were there and I asked them why the fires were not put down. Can you imagine what I was told? I was told that the Fire Brigade of the city had been destroyed and that the Fire Brigades which were lying idle in New Delhi were not available. I make that charge deliberately that the Town Hall, the meeting Hall of the City Fathers of Delhi, was allowed to burn from noon till night and the Fire Brigades of New Delhi would not be sent there to put down the fire. We had read that Nero was fiddling while Rome was burning but we saw the uncanny example of it actually happen here yesterday. New Delhi was revelling while Delhi, was burning only three miles away. Need anything more be said about it? I hope this Government will realise what it is doing and will make it impossible for such things to occur again. I, therefore, support this motion and hope it will open the eyes of the Government.

The Honourable Sir John Thorne (Home Member): Sir, I shall not spend much time in attempting to describe the incidents which made up the regrettable occurrences of yesterday. They have been described in the press and, I think, on the whole, that description is fairly accurate. I have done what I could to obtain from official sources a story of the events, but, as I stated my expectations this morning, it is too early to get yet a conspectus of a series of events that took place over a fairly considerable area. The main scene of the trouble was the Chandni Chowk. Various parts of the Chandni Chowk were affected at various times. There was trouble also at the Railway Station where an attempt was made at looting. There was a serious occurrence at the Queensway Fire Brigade Station which resulted in the destruction of fire engines which could otherwise have been used to put down the fires. There was trouble as far a field as Sabzi Mandi. There is some evidence of concerted organisation. The main evidence of that, I think, is in the starting of fires in the Chandni Chowk, the laying of road blocks to prevent people getting to the fires in order to put them out and the attack on the Fire Brigade Station in order to prevent the engines from going out. I am told that one engine in the earlier stages went from the Fire Brigade Station to the Chandni Chowk but it was turned back by road blocks and by stoning. It went again but it was turned back again. It was only in the third attempt that it succeeded in getting to the fire and saving some part of the Town Hall.

Now, Sir, I should remark at this stage on the use of troops. Actually, two companies of troops were called out at different times. One company stayed at the Railway Station and the other company patrolled the Chandni Chowk

[Sir John Thorne.]

I have no doubt of the salutary effect of their being on the spot, but they took no active part.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Were the British troops also called?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: One company was British and the other was Indian. They took no active part in the suppression of the disturbances and no shot was fired by them.

Now, Sir, I turn to the phrasing of the adjournment motion. It refers to the shooting of innocent citizens and the use of tear gas and lathi charge against them by the police in Delhi. Well, Sir, I will refer first to tear gas, or tear smoke as we call it, and lathis. It is a fact that tear smoke was used on a number of occasions—I think about a dozen. It was used to disperse crowds who were attempting to light fires, crowds attempting to make road blocks and people who were going up and down in a very disorderly condition. I cannot understand the Mover's grievance about the use of tear smoke. If firing is resorted to without tear smoke having been used, Government are bitterly assailed for not using more humane methods. Here is an instance where great restraint was shown. Tear smoke was used again and again and resort was had to firing only when it appeared that the crowd was so determined that tear smoke was not an effective deterrent. Lathis—I have listened in vain to the descriptions given by my Honourable friends, for any instance of the use of lathis and my information is that there was no beating up with lathis at all.

Now, Sir, I turn to the firing incidents. Firing was done by the police on three occasions. The first occasion was that one round was fired by a sub-inspector. I think actually under the orders of a magistrate, with a revolver. There was no casualty. Later in the day, a senior police officer who was attempting in the Chandni Chowk to prevent people surging up the *gullies* on either side from making road blocks and from keeping on with their work of arson, fired two shots.

An Honourable Member: Were they under the orders of a magistrate?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: The District Magistrate was with this officer when it happened.

An Honourable Member: But did he order the firing?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: Undoubtedly he ordered in a way. They were together. If the order was not explicit, it was implicit. Two shots were fired and one person was injured. Then, later when a determined attempt was made on the Reserve Bank, an attempt, to set fire to the Reserve Bank, the same police officer fired. I think, six rounds and four people were injured. So that was all the firing by the police. There was no firing by any police officer except the two that I have named, one sub-inspector who fired one shot with his revolver, the other a senior officer who on two occasions fired seven or eight rounds.

Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan (Meerut Division: Muhammadan Rural): With a revolver?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I think with a gun which he took from one of his men. The casualties admitted to hospitals are, I understand, 13 of whom twelve had bullet wounds and one a contused wound. Of these 13 persons, one died last night and one is seriously injured but may live. The remainder are not seriously injured. So far as we have succeeded in ascertaining, the total fatal casualties are three altogether. Of those, one may have been caused by police firing. When the firing occurred, nobody was killed on the spot, but it is possible, it is likely I think, that one of these three fatal casualties was the result of the controlled firing which I have described. There are two fatal casualties unaccounted for. There, I cannot fill in the gap with any certainty. As I said, we are too near the events for a clear picture to have been obtained and so far as I can make out there was an incident of which we, on the civil side, have not yet had any official account. There was an incident in which a Deputy Provost-Marshal, an officer of the military police, was attacked, I think in a car, and in self-defence he fired and two people were killed. But I wish

to make it quite clear, I am not in any way making any imputation against the firing that was done on that occasion. It will be made the subject of a court of enquiry and the result of that court of enquiry will no doubt be made known to us.

An Honourable Member: Has any policeman received any injury?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: Yes, Sir. Several received injuries. What I want to make clear is that there was no firing by troops under the orders of the civil authorities, and the only firing of which I have heard was this incident—that in self-defence an officer or perhaps more than one fired and, according to our information, two persons were killed. Now Sir, I am glad that today there have been no allegations of brutality on the part of the police. I was expecting to hear them, and I am very glad that none has been uttered.

In fact the charge as far as we can make out is not that the police behaved improperly but there were not enough police about. It is very difficult to please some people. If there are many police about, they complain of an intimidating show of force; if there are not enough police, they complain, that again is made the cause of complaint. From the impression I formed when I read the newspaper account this morning, and it is confirmed by what I have heard since, I have no doubt that the Delhi police behaved with very great restraint. It shows that not only were they in a state of excellent discipline, but that they are men of real courage, because it takes some courage to deal with dangerous crowds without losing your head. I maintain that Delhi should be genuinely proud of its police. There have been some imputations in one newspaper against honorary magistrates. I have the authority of the District Magistrate to say that those imputations are beyond doubt undeserved. The Honourary Magistrates, as was expected of them, gave up the best part of their day to the duties which they were asked to undertake and none of them showed the white feather in any way.

Now, Sir, what are the causes of this occurrence? Well, Sir, a great deal has been said about the strong indignation caused by the refusal of the Delhi authorities to refrain from taking part in the celebration of the Victory parade. I do not myself think that there is very much in that. I am afraid, if we look to other causes of this occurrence, we have to look back to six months. I think the seeds have been sown during the last six months. On all those occasions, whether it is in Delhi, whether it is in Karachi or Bombay or elsewhere whatever the immediate occasion is, the real cause of these disturbances is a state of turbulence which has been engendered by months of incitement to disorder and to contempt of authority.

Prof. N. G. Ranga (*Guntur cum Nellore: Non-Muhammadan Rural*): Why don't you quit India?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: My Honourable friend asks why don't we quit India? Because, nobody will take our place. That does not mean that Government are supine or that Government have abdicated their duties, and in this matter of public order, I wish to make it quite clear to the House and to the people outside that Government, and by that I mean the Central Government and the Provincial Governments, have, in an agreed policy, deliberately and of set purpose observed in these past months a policy of patience and restraint. The reasons for that are first in order to ensure that elections should be held with the greatest possible freedom of expression, and secondly in order to refrain from anything that would prejudice the permanent settlement of Indian difficulties to which we are looking forward. In that permanent settlement of India's difficulties, we who are responsible for public order believe that we have the greatest assurance that public order will be maintained and preserved and handed on from our generation to the next. If in the meanwhile we did not exercise the restraint that has been exercised—and the temptations have very often been strong—then the danger would be that in order to make quite certain of some immediate settlement of disturbance we should prejudice the policy

[Sir John Thorne.]

which in the long run, according to our belief, offers the greatest hope of peace and tranquillity in India.

Now, Sir, it is open to the House to pass this motion; it would be nothing new for Government to be censured on a case where I believe Government are not in any way open to censure. But it is open to the House to do it, and I do hope myself that that will not be done.

Mr. Deputy President: The Honourable Member's time is up.

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I will finish in one sentence. I hope that my Honourable friend will after this discussion and explanation withdraw the motion, because I am quite sure that if the motion is passed against Government, not only will it be a discouragement to many people who are responsible for public order and deeply interested in it, but it will be an encouragement to those forces which, as we perfectly know, are always on the look-out for an occasion to break the peace.

Mr. M. Asaf Ali (Delhi: General): Sir, my hoarseness today is due to my excessive desire to try and reach the ears of those who were surging about in the city yesterday and this morning. I have listened to the Honourable Member's speech with the closest attention. Before I come to deal with the main aspect of these happenings I should just like to ask him a question or two. While he was describing the occasions on which fire was opened by either a policeman or a military officer, he accounted for two killed by a military policeman and three killed

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: There were three killed altogether according to my information. One of these may have been killed as a result of police firing, some one wounded at the time who died later in hospital. The other two, according to our surmise, were caused by the incident of a military officer's firing.

Mr. M. Asaf Ali: So far as I could gather, the first shot was fired by a policeman with a revolver and there was no casualty. Then he fired two more rounds at another place and another four rounds later.

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: First a sub-inspector fired one round; later a senior officer fired two shots, and later—that was at the Reserve Bank—six shots.

Mr. M. Asaf Ali: Taking all these shots into account there were nine altogether but we find thirteen casualties lying now in the hospital, apart from the five or six who are dead. This means eighteen or nineteen casualties. That by itself, to my mind, is a case for investigation, to say the least of it. Somebody has made a blunder somewhere; either the Honourable Member has not been furnished with accurate information or those who were giving him all this information did not take these facts into consideration. Thirteen persons are actually lying in hospital at present, one of whom is seriously injured and five or six are reported to be dead. It naturally means nineteen rounds fired by someone somewhere; that is where my information comes in. What is being objected to today, quite apart from all that has been said here, is the use of fire-arms quite indiscriminately and without any justification by the Military police somewhere in front of the civil hospital or a place which used to be the civil hospital. Some of these fellows after having performed their duty the whole day long were rolling about on the maidan and the crowd that had been dispersed from the Reserve Bank was retreating. As they were retreating and reached a spot in front of the hospital it is reported—it is a matter for Government to investigate—that the military policemen got up, whether out of panic or anger or sheer callousness and brutality; they fired and these people were injured there. There would be some justification for the use of fire-arms against a crowd which, as they say, was trying to set fire to the Reserve Bank, if it could be

proved. But what is the justification, I ask, for this fire being opened in front of the civil hospital? It is this which has caused, to my mind, the greatest resentment. But apart from that, I do not wish to go into other details. As far as these happenings are concerned, they are far too near to us; we cannot possibly see the whole picture in its proper perspective. I do not wish to rake up things unnecessarily. I was in the city myself for about three hours yesterday; I was there from about 11 A.M. to 2 P.M. and again in the evening, and I know what has happened. You can take it from me, Sir, that I was amazed to find, when I went into the city that fires were burning and our excellent policemen were standing there. They could not put out the fires; they were not moving their little finger to do anything. In fact one of them—an officer, having recognised me came up to me somewhere near Dariba and said, "See, Sir, we are only just a few here and you see these crowds; will you please ask them to disperse?" I said, "But this is exactly what we are doing; we are asking them to go back to their homes. But what about these fires that are burning." There were various gates put up by the police or other authorities,—I have not the faintest idea as to who put up these triumphal arches,—made up of bamboos. Fire was set to them and they were burning; in fact they had been burnt down. This happened in at least six to eight places. The one thing that struck me as I was passing through the city was the absence of adequate police service—complete absence. I am fully aware of the fact that it is sometimes said 'if we bring the police to the scene, you say it will provoke; if we withdraw them: you say they are not there'. That is not the kind of thing to go on with. I know that the District Magistrate of Delhi only slightly, unfortunately because most of the time that he has been here I was elsewhere. I saw very little of him in the beginning, and I have had some slight chance of seeing him since, but it is my impression that the District Magistrate had better go elsewhere. He has become completely unsuitable as far as Delhi is concerned. I have not the slightest doubt about that in my mind. The one occasion on which I saw him, I found him rather a gentleman who is over-burdened with the sense of his own responsibility. Imagine a remark like this coming from him on one occasion: I was discussing with the Chief Commissioner in his presence certain details about the Congress Session which was proposed to be held in Delhi. I told him that certain facilities were absolutely necessary, for instance, trained volunteers etc. etc. Oh! I beg your pardon. It was in connection with elections. I said that parties would go about canvassing, which means having small processions, corner meetings, etc. etc. He turned to me and said. "But the roads are for public use; they are not intended for processions" little realizing that the roads are for the public, and it is the public that wants to take out processions. Who else would? This means definitely that the District Magistrate has got his own sense of duty and the sooner he goes elsewhere the better.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): What will he do elsewhere?

Mr. M. Asaf Ali: I am sorry that I have to say so.....

Mr. Deputy President: The Honourable Member has got two minutes more.

Mr. M. Asaf Ali: These two minutes will be more than enough for my purpose.

But I can assure him, Mr. Deputy President, that much of the trouble is due to the fact that the Deputy Commissioner of Delhi has been mishandling the situation the whole time. His behaviour in the Municipality, his behaviour otherwise, and the way he manages the show, is at the bottom of the whole thing.

But now, quite apart from these happenings,—I can say a great deal more about these things, but my time is very short,—I come back to the root cause once again. These are, Mr. Deputy President, but symptoms, you must find out the disease. Where is the disease? The disease has already been

[Mr. M. Asaf Ali.]

pointed out by previous speakers. The disease is deeper down, the disease is the impatience of the people with foreign rule. This is the disease; these happenings are only symptoms. I assure you, Mr. Deputy President, that it takes us all our energy to try and rein people in. We are failing, I tell you we are failing and I am not ashamed of saying so. Here were our people who would listen to us, who would do anything we wanted them to do, and yesterday as I passed through the city there were these crowds who would obey me any moment, but not yesterday. They felt hurt, they felt injured, there was something deep down in their hearts which I could not satisfy. I went on telling them 'go home'. They would surge back for a little while and as soon as we had cleared out, they would come back and I would hear whispers here and there 'yes, but what is all this going on; is it not indignity and insult to us?; here we are hungry, here we are starving and we see all this great *tamasha* going on; fires burning in old Delhi and fireworks going on in New Delhi'. Mr. Deputy President, these things are too obvious, too glaring to be overlooked as has been pointed out by the previous speakers so eloquently I endorse every word of what they have said, I also recognize what the Home Member has said today about the new attitude which the Government has tried to reflect. I recognize it to a certain extent, but if they wish to prove that the spirit is there then the sooner they take note of the fact that they have got to yield to common demands the better, the sooner they realize the fact that common feelings have got to be respected the better. They must bow before them. We must all bow before them. After all, this is the essence of democracy, if there is going to be a democratic India. If it is a democratic India to which power is going to be transferred, let us see to it that the coming events cast their shadows before. Here and now let them begin to act in a manner that the people may recognize that they respect their feelings.

Some Honourable Members: The question may now be put.

Mr. Deputy President: The question is:

"That the question may now be put."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Deputy President: The question is:

"That the Assembly do now adjourn."

The motion was adopted.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, the 11th March, 1946.