

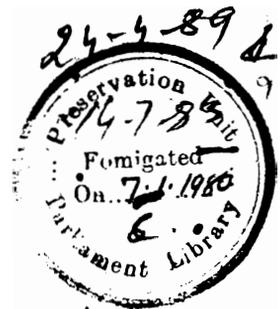
20th February 1945

THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES
Official Report

Volume I, 1945

(8th February to 23rd February, 1945)

TWENTY-SECOND SESSION
OF THE
FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
1945



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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Deputy President :

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Committee on Petitions :

Mr. AKHIL CHANDRA DATTA, M.L.A. (*Chairman*).

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

Sardar SANT SINGH, M.L.A.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 20th February, 1945.

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

MEMBER SWORN:

Sir Kenneth Grant Mitchell, C.I.E., I.S.E., M.L.A. (Government of India : Nominated Official).

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(a) ORAL ANSWERS

INSTANCES OF GALLANTRY IN DOCKS AT BOMBAY EXPLOSIONS

†369. *Mr. E. L. C Gwilt: (a) Will the Honourable Member for War Transport be pleased to say whether Government's attention has been drawn to the many instances of gallantry performed in the Bombay Docks on April 14th, 1944, the date of the explosions?

(b) Have any specific recommendations been made to Government that such acts be recognised by the award of medals or decorations? If so, do Government propose taking any action in the matter?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Yes.

(b) The Honourable Member is referred to the *Gazettes of India (Extraordinary)* of the 6th and 9th February, 1945.

TEXTILE MILLS CLOSED DOWN FOR SHORTAGE OF COAL.

370. *Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state:

(a) whether certain textile mills had to be closed down in December, 1944, or January, 1945, for shortage of coal;

(b) if so, where and how many mills and workers were affected and how; and

(c) the causes which led to coal shortage and whether the same have been remedied?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) Yes.

(b) A statement giving the necessary information is laid on the table.

(c) The closure of textile mills during December 1944 and January 1945 was considered desirable in order to augment their coal stocks which had become depleted owing to increased consumption during the recent spells of intense cold. Having regard to other essential requirements, an improvement in stocks could not be achieved by supplying additional coal for this specific purpose, as apart from the normal quota of the textile mills. Coal supplies to the mills during (December) 1944 and January 1945 were actually higher than in the preceding months.

Statement showing details of Mills closed down for want of Coal during December 1944 and January 1945

S. No.	Names of Mills	Bombay Mill owner's List dated 31st August 1943			Date of close-down	Date of re-starting
		Spindles	Looms	Average Number of hands employed		
<i>Ahmedabad Panel Area</i>						
1.	All Mills in Ahmedabad City (75 Mills)	17,94,283	43,315	76,039	9-1-1945	15-1-1945 (9th & 14th were closed due to holidays)

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

S. No.	Names of Mills	Bombay Mill owner's List dated 31st August 1943			Date of close- down	Date of restart- ing
		Spindles	Looms	Average Number of hands- employed		
<i>Ahmedabad Panel Area—contd.</i>						
2.	New Shorrock Spinning & Mfg. Co. Ltd., Nadiad	45,504	862	1,853	9-12-44 31-12-44 25-1-45	10-1-44 5-11-45 27-1-45
3.	Gopal Mills Co. Ltd., broach	22,980	652	1,240	17-12-44	Not known (period of close down 12 days in Decem- ber and 11 days in Jan'y. 1945.
<i>Baroda Panel Area</i>						
4.	Baroda Spinning and Weaving Mills, Baroda	30,000	660	2,100	4-1-45	10-1-45
5.	Bharat Vijaya Mills, Kalol	12,376	320	695	20-12-44	9-1-45
6.	Chotalal Mills, Kalol	18,056	456	960	20-12-44	25-12-44
7.	New Chhotalal Mills, Kadi	19,056	418	896	21-12-44	Not known
8.	Shree Yamuna Mills, Baroda	23,640	608	1,077	4-1-45	10-1-45
9.	Shree Jagdish Mills, Baroda	20,320	407	973	4-1-45	10-1-45
10.	Shree Sayaji Mills Co. Ltd., Baroda	23,756	602	1,150	4-1-45	10-1-45
<i>Bengal Panel Area</i>						
11.	Gaya Cotton and Jute Mills, Gaya	19,540	596	1,520	11-1-45	19-1-45
12.	Shree Radhakrishna Cotton Mills, Howrah	41,964	564	1,570	20-12-44	Not known
<i>Bombay Panel Area</i>						
13.	Broach Fine Counts Mills, Broach	28,864	542	940	30-12-44 12-1-45	8-1-45 Not known
14.	Khandesh Spinning and Weaving Mills, Jalgaon	22,040	464	1,123	21-10-44	2-12-44
15.	Maharana Mills, Ltd., Porbandar	23,356	546	1,525	27-12-44	16-1-45
16.	Surat Cotton Spinning and Weav- ing Mills, Surat	21,764	392	917	26-12-44	Not known
17.	Model Mills Nagpur Ltd., Nagpur	52,408	950	2,690	18-12-44 23-12-44 30-12-44 6-1-45 14-1-45	18-12-44 28-12-44 1-1-45 8-1-45 22-1-45
18.	Jam Shri Rangitsinghji Mills, Sholapur	20,820	511	1,617		
19.	Laxmi Cotton Manufacturing Mills, Sholapur	44,172	1,321	3,709		
20.	Narsingji Mills, Sholapur	54,408	1,170	3,209	27-11-44 28-12-44	3-12-44 2-1-45
21.	Sholapur Spinning and Wvg. Mills, Sh lapu	1,05,296	2,234	8,898		
22.	Vishnu Cotton Mills, Sholapur	44,600	1,457	3,540		
<i>Delhi Panel Area</i>						
23.	Mahabir Cotton Spg. and Mfg. Co., Delhi	10,976	148	876	1-12-44 14-12-44 29-12-44 2-1-45	4-12-44 21-12-44 Not known do.
<i>Central India and Rajputana Panel Area</i>						
24.	Mahalaxmi Mills, Beawar	13,728	416	857	30-12-44	1-1-45
25.	Maharaja Shri Umaid Mills, Pali	17,136	414	1,256	21-12-44	28-12-44
26.	Binod Mills, Ujjain	51,236	1,340	3,237	18-12-44	Not known

S. No.	Names of Mills.	Bombay Mill owner's List dated 31st August 1943			Date of close- down	Date of restart- ing
		Spindles	Looms	Average Number of hands- employed		
<i>Central India and Rajputana Panel Area—contd.</i>						
27.	Hukumchand Mills, Ltd., Indore .	43,732	1,493	3,505		
28.	Indore Malwa United Mills Ltd., Indore	49,220	1,420	3,876	} 30-12-44	8-1-45
29.	Kalyanmal Mills Ltd., Indore .	36,412	1,144	2,837		
30.	Nandlal Bhandari Mills Ltd., Indore	28,008	771	1,844		
31.	Rai Bahadur Kanhaiyalal Bhan- dari Mills, Ltd. Indore	16,084	351	1,032		
32.	Rajkumar Mills Ltd., Indore . .	19,728	701	1,687		
33.	Swadeshi Cotton and Flour Mills, Ltd., Indore	15,332	362	1,010		
<i>United Provinces of Agra & Oudh</i>						
34.	Intra Spinning and Weaving Mills, Agra	13,920	Nil	508	} 12-12-44 28-12-44 6-12-44 1-12-44 25-12-44	18-12-44 30-12-44 11-12-44 Not known Not known
35.	Ramchand Spinning Mills, Hathras	20,354	167	778		
36.	R. G. Cotton Mills, Lucknow . .	16,856	308	1,289		
Total for 110 Mills		28,41,925	68,082	1,42,833		

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know the total number of mills which closed down?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Mills were closed during short periods. The total number is 36.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know if in view of the increased supply, the situation has improved and the mills have resumed working?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Most of them have resumed work. They were closed only for a short period. One of the reasons why some of the mills were closed was that the Textile Board thought it desirable that instead of living from hand to mouth they should be closed for a short period so that stocks may be built up and work may go on regularly later on.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know whether the employment of women has made any difference in the supply, whether more supplies of coal are coming in as a result thereof?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Most certainly.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member aware that one of the results of this temporary closure of mills has been a shortage of 25 million yards of cotton textiles in the month of January alone?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I have seen it so reported in the newspapers, but I have not got exact information.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it intended so to speed up supplies of coal to these mills that they may overtake this deficit, that is to say, they may be in a position to supply 25 million yards in addition to their normal output in future?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Whenever the transport position and the coal stocks warrant, that course which is intended to increase the supplies will be adopted.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Will the Government consider the advisability of taking over the administration in their own hands, if it is found that any of these textile factories close down not in the interest of the country?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The reason for closing down is said to be lack of coal supply for which the Government are responsible.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Is the Honourable Member satisfied that the closing of mills was only due to shortage of coal and not for any other reason, such as, to make more profits?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I have no reason to believe that the mills closed down for any reason other than lack of coal supply.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Has the Honourable Member examined it?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: That question should be addressed to the Honourable Member in charge of Industries and Civil Supplies.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I know whether the Government of India will take the mines under their control with a view to increase the production of coal?

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

POSITION *re* OUTPUT OF COAL

371. *Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state whether the matter of output of coal has recently been examined?

(b) Is it true that many factories are constantly closed down owing to want of coal?

(c) Is it true that the coal position has not improved in spite of the employment of women in coal mines?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) The matter of the output of coal is under constant examination.

(b) Government have, off and on, received complaints of closure of factories due to failure of coal supplies. Whenever such cases are brought to Government's notice, immediate action is taken for the purpose of providing such relief as is possible.

(c) No. The coal position is gradually improving and the employment of women underground in the mines has had a great deal to do with it.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I have some figures about this matter? How it was like and how it has improved?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: If the Honourable Member will put down a question, I shall give him the percentages, if not the actual amounts.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: With regard to part (c), may I know if the Government have called for a report on the subject?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Every week I am getting report of the actual coal produced and the amount distributed.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: Is it in relation to the employment of women underground?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I have got complete details of it.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Has the output of coal increased by the employment of women?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: It is impossible to say exactly, but I am assured that if the employment of women is discontinued, the drop will be 20 per cent.

Sir Henry Richardson: With reference to part (b), I understood the Honourable Member's reply was, 'No'. May I ask the Honourable Member if he is aware that despite the exemplary co-operation of the Indian Jute Mill Association with the Government, some mills in that Association have only worked for five weeks out of the past seven months owing to lack of coal supply?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The answer to part (b) was not in the negative. I said that Government have off and on received complaints of closure of factories due to failure of coal supplies and that whenever such cases are brought to Government's notice, immediate action is taken for the purpose of providing such relief as is possible. It is true that in the case of jute mills, there have been complaints that the total amount allotted has not been received, but that is also a matter of constant examination.

Sir Henry Richardson: Is the Honourable Member aware that there is a feeling among the Association that they do not get a square deal from the Government in this matter?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: That feeling is shared by many other industries.

Mr. G. W. Tyson: With reference to part (c), may I know if the Government will take steps to make it clear that the employment of women in coal mines is entirely voluntary and not compulsory in any sense?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I think there is no doubt that all those who know anything of the question know that there is no compulsion at all. It is purely voluntary. What is intended to be done is to put a prohibition on such voluntary employment.

Mr. G. W. Tyson: In view of the fact that there has been a good deal of misapprehension about it abroad, will the Government take steps in their Publicity Department to make the position clear?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I am aware that there has been some misunderstanding abroad over this question and I think we have taken every possible step to clear that misunderstanding, including an answer by the Secretary of State himself given in the House of Commons.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Government of India are aware that the wages of the Indian miners are the lowest in India compared to the wages in other industries and whether the Government are aware that compulsion is exercised in the matter of employment of women on account of starvation to which miners are subjected to and whether compulsion by starvation does not come under the category of compulsory employment?

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

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know if women are allowed to work underground in mines in U. K. or in U. S. A.?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: So far as U. K. is concerned, I know they are not allowed. I am not aware whether they are allowed or not in U. S. A.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Not even voluntarily?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: No.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: Sir, arising out of the question put by the Honourable Member, Mr. Tyson, is it not a fact that women who were working on the surface were refused employment until they agreed to work underground in the mines?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I have no information at my disposal to warrant such a suggestion.

INDUSTRIAL PLANTS RECEIVED ON LEND-LEASE

372. ***Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad:** (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to state how many industrial plants he received on lend-lease system?

(b) Whom were these plants given by Government?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) 23.

(b) A statement giving details of distribution is placed on the table.

Statement of Industrial Plants imported from U. S. A. on Lease-Lend.

S. No.	Description of the Plant	No.	Govern- ment 4(a)	To whom distributed
				Private Industrial concerns 4(b)
1.	Biscuit making Plant . . .	One	..	Patiala Biscuit Co.
2.	Saw Mill Plant . . .	One	..	Bombay Burma Trading Corpora- tion Ltd., (on behalf of Govern- ment).
3.	Plant for the manufacture of Aero Tyre .	One	..	Firestone Bubber Co folo (on behalf of Government).
4.	Portable Steam Circular Saw Mills	.. (12) E- Twenty in-C's Branch	..	1. M/s. B. C. Khan & Co., Shilong, Assam. 2. M/s. H. Sen & Co., Shillong, Assam. 3. M/s. Himatsingha Timber Ltd., Calcutta. 4. M/s. Tara Chand, Abid Ram, Hyderabad (Dn.). 5. M/s. Naganathan Co., Madras. 6. M/s. H. I. Pathak, Singhbhum, Sona, Bihar. 7. M/s. A. K. Kader Kutty, Kohi- noor Sawmills, Malabar. 8. Mr. Ganga Dhar Bhuyan, Gola- ghat. Assam

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: On what basis are these plants distributed?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: It depends on the plant, it depends on the purpose for which it is required—whether it is immediately required for war purposes—and it depends upon which organisation is prepared to take it up to immediately produce what is required for war purposes.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Is the Honourable Member aware that there is a great deal of dissatisfaction among the provinces because they were not consulted and places were chosen where they are not wanted and places were neglected where they were badly needed?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I am not aware of any complaint from any of the Provincial Governments on the subject.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Did the Honourable Member consult the Provincial Governments in this matter?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: With reference to the largest number of these factories—saw mills—every Provincial Government and State Government was consulted before the allocation was made; and the Conservators of Forests in those places were invited to give their views on the suitability of the plants being located in certain areas.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: What about chemical fertilisers?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: No fertiliser plant has been given by Government. One biscuit making plant has been given, and I take it that it has been given to the most appropriate firm that can work it. As a matter of fact it has been given to the Patiala Biscuit Company in the Patiala State.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Is it a fact that it is located in an Indian State with the object of avoiding income-tax and it has been given to persons who know nothing about biscuit making?

(No reply was given.)

Mr. Manu Subedar: On what financial basis are these lease-lend plants given to private firms?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: On the basis, I take it, that the private companies pay the entire cost of it.

PACIFIC CHARTER

373. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Foreign Secretary please state:

(a) whether Government have received the copy of the Pacific Charter recently prepared by the International Conference of the Institute of the Pacific Relations held at Hot Springs, United States of America; and

(b) whether Government propose to endorse the same and request His Majesty's Government also to declare their adherence to its principles?

Sir Olaf Caroe: (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Will Government make an effort to get a copy of the report?

Sir Olaf Caroe: I think it is not for Government to ask an academic society to send a report. If the society wishes to send it they will no doubt do so.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Did the Honourable Member consider this an academic society about eighteen months ago? Since when has he changed his opinion?

Sir Olaf Caroe: I have always regarded it as a learned and academic society. I never had any other opinion.

POSITION *re* FERTILIZER INDUSTRY

374. *Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state:

(a) the latest position with regard to the setting up of a Fertilizer Industry in India;

(b) whether the plant for the same has been obtained from abroad, if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Fertilizer Commission Report will be published; and

(d) the decisions of Government on the above report?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a), (b), and (d). The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the Press Note, dated the 20th January, 1945, which has been published on the subject.

(c) The Fertiliser Mission's report has already been published and is on sale.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Is there any truth in the statement which I saw that Government intend to purchase a plant belonging to the Imperial Chemical Industries, a plant which they purchased from Germany and which has been condemned because it is not giving any satisfaction?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I also have seen that statement. To put it very mildly, it is a terminological inexactitude.

REPORT OF BRITISH MISSION OF COAL EXPERTS

375. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the report of the British Mission of Coal experts which has been published in the Indian Press on the 12th January, 1945;

(b) whether or not it is a fact that "old and inferior" quality of coal lifting machinery has been supplied to this country as is alleged in the case of United Kingdom;

(c) whether the Honourable Member made enquiries after the above report was published; and

(d) if the machinery is really "old and inferior" as is alleged, what action Government has taken to remedy the position?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) Yes.

(b), (c) and (d). The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the answer given in this House on the 8th February, 1945 to parts (d) and (e) of question No. 27.

PAUCITY OF SIKHS IN HIGHER POSTS OF RAILWAYS

376. *Sardar Mangal Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state the percentages of Anglo-Indians, Parsees, Indian Christians and Sikhs in the gazetted and higher posts of the different systems of Railways in India?

(b) What steps do Government propose to make up the deficiency in the share of the Sikhs? If none, why?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The Honourable Member will find the percentages, by communities, of gazetted officers and of subordinates on scales of pay rising to Rs. 250 per mensem and over (if on old scales of pay) Rs. 200 per mensem and over (if on new scales of pay) in Appendix C-IV to the latest Indian Railways Administration Report, Volume II, a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

(b) I would refer the Honourable Member to my reply to parts (d) and (e) of Starred Question No. 119, asked by Sardar Sant Singh on the 12th November, 1943. The percentage referred to in reply to part (d) of the Question applies equally to vacancies in the subordinate Railway services.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Do Government consider that in the case of a locally recruited service Government should suitably amend the rules so as to give due share to the Sikhs?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: On a population basis I understand the Sikhs are entitled to 1.56 per cent., and the railways have actually recruited 2.1, 2.2, 2.2 and 2.1 in the last four years.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I know what steps Government propose to take to reduce the proportion of Sikhs to their proper level?

(No reply was given.)

PAUCITY OF SIKHS IN HIGHER POSTS OF SUPPLY DEPARTMENT.

377. *Sardar Mangal Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state the percentages of Anglo-Indians, Parsees, Indian Christians and Sikhs in the gazetted and higher posts in his Department?

(b) What steps do Government contemplate to make up the deficiency in the share of the Sikhs? If none, why?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) On 31st January 1945, the percentages were as follows:

Anglo-Indians—3.28 per cent.
Parsees—1.64 per cent.
Indian Christians—2.05 per cent.
Sikhs—2.32 per cent.

These figures do not include Ordnance Factories, information regarding which is being collected and will be placed on the table of the House as soon as available. The percentages for Ordnance Factories on the 1st November, 1944 were, however, as shown below:

Anglo-Indians—3.04 per cent.
Parsees—Nil.
Indian Christians—1.44 per cent.
Sikhs—48 per cent.

(b) Attention of the Honourable Member is drawn to the reply given to part (c) of starred question No. 107 answered on the 6th November, 1944.

Sardar Mangal Singh: In the percentage of 9.13 reserved for the smaller minorities, the Sikhs out of these smaller minorities

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member cannot make a speech he can only ask a question.

Sardar Mangal Singh: I am asking whether the attention of the Honourable Member has been drawn to this fact that out of the total population of the four

smaller minorities the Sikhs number more than half and the number of posts that they get is very much less. Will Government consider making up that deficiency?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That is a matter of argument.

PAUCITY OF SIKHS IN HIGHER POSTS OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

378. *Sardar Mangal Singh: (a) Will the Foreign Secretary please state the percentages of Anglo-Indians, Parsees, Indian Christians and Sikhs in the gazetted and higher posts in all sections of his Department?

(b) What steps do Government contemplate to make up the deficiency in the share of the Sikhs? If none, why?

Sir Olaf Caroe: (a)

Anglo-Indians—35 per cent.

Parsees—Nil.

Indian Christians—6 per cent.

Sikhs—Nil.

(b) These appointments are made by selection, the best available candidate in the Department being chosen, irrespective of the community to which he belongs. A Sikh, who was holding one of these appointments, retired from service in 1944. For the reason given, no question of making up deficiency arises.

PAUCITY OF SIKHS IN HIGHER POSTS OF POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT

379. *Sardar Mangal Singh: (a) Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state the percentages of Anglo-Indians, Parsees, Indian Christians and Sikhs in the gazetted and higher posts in the Departments of Posts and Telegraphs?

(b) What steps do Government contemplate to make up the deficiency in the share of Sikhs?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: (a) I lay on the table a statement giving the information asked for.

(b) There is no special reservation fixed for Sikhs. The question, therefore, does not arise.

Statement showing percentages of Anglo-Indians, Parsees, Indian Christians, and Sikhs in the gazetted (including higher administrative and executive posts) posts in the Posts and Telegraphs Department on the 1st January, 1945.

Total number of officers on 1st January, 1945	No. of Anglo-Indians (including domiciled Europeans)	No. of Indian Christians	No. of Parsees	No. of Sikhs
	<i>Permanent</i>			
478	126	14	8	6
Percentage	26·4 per cent	2·9 per cent	1·7 per cent	1·3 per cent (correct to one decimal place).
	<i>Temporary</i>			
283	73	12	Nil	5
Percentage	25·8 per cent	4·2 per cent	..	1·8 per cent (correct to one decimal place).

PROFITS OF POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT

380. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: Will the Secretary for Posts and Air be pleased to state the actual profit of the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department during the years 1941, 1942, 1943, and 1944, separately, and what was the profit separately from the (i) Post Office (ii) Telegraph, and (iii) Telephone?

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

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: The accounts of the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department, like all Government accounts, are kept for financial years beginning on the 1st of April of each calendar year and ending on the 31st of March of the succeeding calendar year. Figures for calendar years, as asked for, are therefore not available. I lay on the table a statement showing the figures for the financial years 1940-41, 1941-42, 1942-43 and 1943-44. The figures given indicate the surplus or deficit of revenue over expenditure.

Statement showing surplus or deficit of revenue over expenditure in each branch of the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department during the past four years.

[Surplus (+) or deficit (-).]

Year	Post Office	Telegraphs	Telephones	Radio	Total
1940-41 .	(+) 43,52,802	(+) 37,44,883	(+) 42,29,307	(+) 1,53,333	(+) 1,24,80,325
1941-42 .	(+) 1,41,12,960	(+) 1,10,42,759	(+) 88,02,260	(+) 1,04,898	(+) 3,40,62,877
1942-43 .	(+) 2,92,53,248	(+) 83,24,081	(+) 76,95,376	(-) 1,03,487	(+) 4,51,69,218 0
1943-44 .	(+) 4,02,93,359	(+) 2,29,16,594	(+) 2,68,66,456 (A)	(+) 1,80,601 (A)	(+) 9,02,57,010

(A) Includes surplus of the Telephone Systems taken over from the Licensed Telephone Companies at Bombay, Calcutta and Madras.

DEPUTATIONS, ETC., FROM POSTAL CONFERENCES AND UNIONS

381. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: Will the Secretary for Posts and Air be pleased to state if he has received deputations and petitions or a copy of any presidential address of any Postal and R. M. S. Conferences from the Unions during the period 1943-44 with regard to revision of scales of pay, war allowance, house-rent allowance, outstation allowance, platform attendance and record office duties, casual leave, newly recruited temporary staff and transfer of R. M. S. 'C' Division to B. and A. Circle? If the answer to each of the points enumerated be in the affirmative, would the Honourable Member place on the table of the House his decisions about the respective items?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: Government have received various petitions and some presidential addresses and the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs has received numerous deputations about most of the matters mentioned by the Honourable Member. Suitable action has been or is being taken with regard to the matters represented but it would involve an undue amount of time and labour to collect all the information asked for in the latter part of the question.

RESOLUTIONS OF ALL-INDIA POSTAL AND R. M. S. CONFERENCE, BOMBAY

382. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: Will the Secretary for Posts and Air be pleased to state if he has received the resolutions passed by the 19th Session of the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Conference held in Bombay on the 25th and 26th December last under the Presidentship of the Honourable Raja Bahadur Gobindalal Motilal Shibal? If so, will the Honourable Member be pleased to state if he has considered the matters and come to any decision? If so, what is the decision?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: The reply to the first part is in the affirmative. The resolutions are under the consideration of Government.

WITHDRAWAL OF A SET OF (HOWRAH-JHARSUGUDA) R. M. S. SECTION

383. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Secretary for Posts and Air be pleased to state if it is a fact that the sixth set of C7 (Howrah-Jharsuguda) R. M. S. Section has been withdrawn? If the answer be in the affirmative, will the Honourable Member please state the reasons therefor?

(b) Is the Honourable Member aware of the difficulties and inconveniences created by this step to the staff concerned? If so, what steps have been taken to redress their grievances?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: (a) The fact is as stated. The sixth set is not justified under the prescribed departmental standard.

(b) No representation to that effect has been received, but the Director-General has been asked to look into the matter.

DENIAL OF USE OF RETIRING ROOMS AT OOTACAMUND RAILWAY STATION TO THE PUBLIC

384. *Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde: Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if it is a fact:

(a) that the Coaching Guide of the South Indian Railway mentions Ootacamund as one of the stations at which retiring rooms are available to the public;

(b) that from April to September, 1944, public were not allowed the use of the rooms and that their allotment was controlled by the General Manager at Trichinopoly;

(c) that during the said period they were entirely allotted to officers on leave for days together;

(d) that the officers have got a rest house at Lovedale luxuriously equipped with all modern conveniences; and

(e) that passengers changing over from or to the Mysore bus and having to spend the night at Ooty have been put to great inconvenience thereby?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) These rooms were allotted to various officers for short periods.

(d) There is an officer's Rest House at Lovedale which is furnished.

(e) Government are not aware of any complaints.

Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde: Will the Honourable Member issue an order that the retiring rooms at Ootacamund should not be used for any other purpose, and that they should be made available to the travelling public?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No, Sir. It is necessary for these officers, especially in the present conditions under which they are working, to have rest and there is not sufficient accommodation in the Railway Rest House there. It is desirable to provide accommodation in order that they do not make longer journeys and thereby fill the trains, and therefore I think the present arrangement is desirable in the general interest.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: At the expense of the public.

Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde: Does the Honourable Member think that these retiring rooms are not necessary for the travelling public?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: It is desirable, I quite agree.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Will the Honourable Member consider the desirability of renting out a separate bungalow for the use of railway officers and allowing the retiring rooms to be used by passengers?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: It is a question of getting materials.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: The Honourable Member has not followed my question. I am asking for renting out a separate bungalow. The Railways have plenty of money for that.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I will look into that.

Sir F. E. James: My Honourable friend is possibly not aware of the circumstances. Is he aware of the fact that Ootacamund at the present moment is extraordinarily overcrowded, that although there are hotels there is seldom accommodation available in them, and that, in point of fact, the travelling public are put to some inconvenience, particularly when they are catching connections to Mysore by bus? Will the Honourable Member therefore look into the matter?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I have said that I will look into the matter. I was a little surprised to hear from my Honourable friend that there were plenty of bungalows available which the railways could take up, but, as I have said, I will look into it.

OMISSION TO INVITE REPRESENTATIVE OF "INDIAN RAILWAY MAGAZINE" OF MADRAS TO A RAILWAY PRESS CONFERENCE

***385. Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if he is aware—

(i) that the "*Indian Railway Magazine*" of Madras is the organ of the Madras Railways Users' Federation, a registered body;

(ii) that it has been in existence for the last twenty years;

(iii) that its avowed object is to ameliorate the grievances of the travelling public; and

(iv) that the General Manager of the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway recently held a Press Conference to discuss matters of importance to the public and that the said Journal was not invited to the Conference?

(b) what are the reasons for the omission?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) (i) to (iii). Government have no information.

(iv) The reply is in the affirmative.

(b) The omission was inadvertent and has since been rectified.

PROMOTION OF INSPECTORS OF WORKS ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

386. *Mr. H. M. Abdullah: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state the principles governing the promotion of Inspectors of Works on the North Western Railway from Grade I to Grade II and from Grade II to Grade III?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The posts of Inspectors of Works, Grades II and III (old scales) corresponding to Class III, Grades III, IV and V of the new scales, have been declared as selection posts, promotions to which are made in accordance with rules 6 to 9 of Appendix II-A to the State Railway Establishment Code, Volume I, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

DIRECTOR OF PAPER

387. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state the principles governing the promotion of Inspectors of Works on Director of Paper appointed by Government?

(b) Why did Government import a Controller instead of appointing an Indian with knowledge of paper manufacture and trade?

(c) When did he come to this country?

(d) What are the functions and powers of the Director of Paper?

(e) Since the conference with Sir Akbar Hydari in Bombay, how many new licences were given to private importers and how much paper has been imported by private parties?

(f) Have Government any information as to the number of orders pending?

(g) Is it a fact that Government are themselves importing for Government use very large quantities (if so, what are those quantities?) and that the normal sources of supply of private importers are taken up by Government?

(h) How do Government propose to ease the paper situation if the ability of the importers to add to the available supply is intercepted in this manner?

(i) How many paper mills and which of them were closed and for how many days on account of (i) lack of raw materials, and (ii) shortage of coal?

(j) What steps have Government taken to ensure that paper mills get a continued supply of coal in preference to other enterprises?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a), (b) and (c). Mr. D. G. Currie, who was appointed as Director of Paper with effect from 29th December, 1944, joined the Supply Department as a Deputy Director of Paper on 30th June, 1944. Prior to joining the Supply Department he was serving as a Major in the Army. He came to India in July 1942. He is an experienced Paper Technician and was employed with Messrs. Wiggins Teape & Co. (1919), London, who have numerous paper mills in the United Kingdom. After five years of training in all departments of the paper mills of this Firm, Mr. Currie was appointed to act as Manager of their Export Department in London in 1939. His pay as Director of Paper has been fixed at Rs. 1,680 per mensem. Mr. Currie was not deliberately imported for appointment to this post; in fact, at the time of his appointment as Director, he was already employed in the Supply Department and Supply Department were satisfied that

he possessed the necessary technical training and experience for appointment as Director of Paper.

(d) The Director of Paper advises and assists the Supply Department in all matters relating to paper production, import and, distribution. He is responsible for the allocation of orders on paper mills and for the exercise of powers vested in him under the Paper Control (Production) Order, 1944.

(e) During the shipping period July-December 1944, and January-June 1945 (so far) 1,305 licenses were issued and the quantity licensed amounts to 14,995 tons in round figures. The actual imports of paper (excluding newsprint and boards) through commercial channels during the period July-October 1944 were approximately 2,603 tons. The actual imports of all kinds of paper other than newsprint through commercial channels during the period July-December 1944 amounted to 4,912 tons.

(f) No.

(g) Government decided to import in 1944 about 20,000 tons of paper not in replacement of imports through commercial channels but through Government agency. A part of the importation has been admitted to L/L.

(h) Does not arise in view of my reply to the previous part.

(i) A statement giving the necessary information in regard to paper mills closed during the recent months is laid on the table of the house.

(j) The special requirements of paper mills are duly considered at the time of the monthly allocation of coal and every effort is made to ensure a continuous supply of coal to each mill according to its quota.

Statement

Name of the Mill	Period of closure	Average monthly production	Reasons
		Tons.	
1. Jaswant Straw Board Mill.	Dec. 1944—16 days Jan. 1945—31 days. Feb. 1945—12 days.	300	Lack of raw material [†] (<i>Bhoosa</i> .)
2. Andhra Paper Mill	Dec. 1944—8 days . . .	150	Lack of raw material [†] (Waste paper.)
3. Gujrat	Nov. 1944—18 days Dec. 1944—31 days. Jan. 1945—10 days.	100	Shortage of coal.
4. Straw Products, Bhopal	Nov. 1944—6 days Dec. 1944—5 days.	.	Shortage of coal.
5. Standard Board Mills	Nov. 1944—4 days Dec. 1944—3 days.	.	Shortage of coal.
6. Shree Gopal	Nov. 1944—5 days Dec. 1944—9 days.	..	Shortage of coal.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Has the Hydari Mission been entrusted with the question of looking into the methods of increasing paper supply to India, and is paper one of the topics on which we read in the newspapers that the Hydari Mission has come to a decision?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: No decision has been arrived at yet by the Hydari Mission, but I think that paper supply is one of the things which the Hydari Mission will look into.

Mr. Hoosinbhoy A. Lalljee: May I know whether the Director of Paper has been appointed permanently or temporarily?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: It is a war appointment and therefore necessarily temporary.

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

FACTORY FOR PRODUCTION OF STABILISED BLEACHING POWDER

388. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state:

(a) whether the Government of India had entrusted to the Alkali and Chemical Corporation of India the work of erecting a factory for the production of stabilised bleaching powder;

(b) whether the Patent for the manufacture of stabilised bleaching powder was provided by the Imperial Chemical Industries, London;

(e) Whilst stabilised bleaching powder with a 30 per cent. available chlorine powder was supplied by the factory belonging to the Alkali and Chemical Corporation of India adjoining the plant erected on behalf of Government;

(d) whether the factory did not get on to a production basis for a year after the period stipulated in the Government's contract with the Alkali and Chemical Corporation of India;

(e) whether the material ultimately produced was not up to the standard;

(f) whether the Inspection Staff who were entrusted with trial runs of the factory before it could be taken over by Government, were not satisfied with the quality and quantity of the out-turn; and

(g) whether ultimately the factory was taken over by Government and put on a "care and maintenance basis" though the working of it is still being entrusted to the Alkali and Chemical Corporation of India?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) Yes.

(b) Details of the process, which is an I. C. I. secret process, were made available by that firm to the Alkali and Chemical Corporation of India Ltd.

(c) Yes.

(d) Whilst the contract called for erection of the plant with all reasonable despatch no definite date of completion was laid down.

(e) Whilst stabilised bleaching powder with a 30 per cent. available chlorine content as produced in the U. K. was originally stipulated, it was later decided on account of climatic and raw material difficulties to accept material with a 22 per cent. available chlorine content.

(f) and (g). The factory was taken over by Government acting on the recommendations of the Inspection Staff who carried out the trial runs. The factory has been placed on a care and maintenance basis for the time being because military stocks of stabilised bleaching powder are adequate.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: What was the total cost of this factory to Government?

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

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask the Honourable Member if he is assured by technicians that 22 per cent. chlorine in stabilized bleaching powder is effective as an antidote against mustard gas?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The technicians who have to advise me are the inspection staff of the War Department and they do not share that view.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Are Government satisfied with its working?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: It is not working, Sir.

SELECTED CANDIDATES ON WAITING PANELS OF BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY

389. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state:

(a) whether the tested, medically fit and selected candidates of waiting panels formed in May, 1943, by the Bengal Nagpur Railway will be offered posts by the Railway Board when vacancies occur as the Bengal Nagpur Railway has since been taken over by the State;

(b) whether it is a fact that some of the candidates of the Engineering panels of the Bengal Nagpur Railway have been in the waiting panel since May, 1943, and that they are now age-barred for competing, if not provided with posts for which they were selected; and

(c) how many candidates there were in the Bengal Nagpur Railway waiting panel for Assistant Engineers' post when the Railway was taken over by the State and how many of the selected candidates have been offered posts after September, 1944?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) No. From the date the Bengal Nagpur Railway was taken over by the State, all future appointments will be made in accordance with State Railway Regulations.

(b) Yes.

(c) Nine; none of them has been offered an appointment after September 1944.

FINANCIAL CONCESSIONS TO COAL CONCERNS

390. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Has the attention of the Honourable the Supply Member been drawn to a press report stating that, at a recent meeting of the Coal Control Board in Calcutta, certain concessions in respect of Excess Profits Tax payable by coal concerns as also certain revised rates of production bonus payable to them were announced? if so, will the Honourable Member be pleased to make a comprehensive statement explaining in full the various financial concessions that have been or are proposed to be granted to coal concerns?

(b) Is it a fact that the Indian Mining Association in a memorandum submitted to the Honourable Member on the 10th December, 1944, stated that they did not want to press for any extension of Excess Profits Tax concession to the interests represented by the Association?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) I do not know which particular press report the Honourable Member is referring to but a statement on the subject he mentions was made at a recent meeting of the Coal Control Board.

As for the comprehensive statement the Honourable Member desires, it seems unnecessary to restate here the financial concessions enumerated in my reply to part (d) of the Honourable Member's question No. 17 in this House on the 1st November, 1944. The only further concession Government have sanctioned is the grant to Collieries of an additional bonus on total production for each of the six monthly target periods, viz., October 1944 to March 1945, April 1945 to September 1945, and October 1945 to March 1946, calculated as follows:

(i) When the output of coal from a colliery undertaking exceeds 110 per cent. of the target fixed for the six months, the colliery undertaking shall be given an additional bonus on total production at 5 per cent of the price of coal: and

(ii) When the output exceeds 120 per cent. of the target the additional bonus will be payable at $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the price of coal.

The bonus will be free from E. P. T. but will be subject to income-tax and super-tax. Total payments of bonus under this scheme will be restricted to a maximum of Rs. 2 lakhs per annum for any single colliery undertaking. As an alternative to applying for a bonus under the above scheme, and provided their production has been maintained at a level satisfactory to the Coal Commissioner collieries can apply under Section 26 (3) of the E. P. T. Act., for the grant of an allowance, in computing the profits of the chargeable accounting period or periods of which the target period forms a part, as would be equivalent to giving a minimum standard profit at the rate of Rs. 72,000 a year in respect of that half yearly target period.

All colliery undertakings will be entitled to choose one or the other of the two alternatives for any particular half yearly period, but no colliery undertakings can claim benefit under both these schemes simultaneously.

(b) The Indian Mining Association did not send me a Memorandum but its Chairman sent an advance copy of the speech he was to make at a meeting at Dhanbad on the 10th December, 1944. The following is the relevant extract from this speech:

"If Government likes to encourage the good producers by E.P.T. concessions and output bonuses possibly so much the better though we do not ask for them. Let Government make sure however that quality is not lost sight of in their anxiety for quantity."

The Honourable Member will see that he has not got the intention of the Association quite correctly.

DISTRIBUTION OF COAL WAGONS

391. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to make a statement explaining in detail the broad principles on which distribution of coal wagons is at present made?

(b) Is a regular list of priorities maintained in this connection, and wagons supplied in accordance therewith, as was the practice approximately up to the time when the Coal Control Order was enforced? If any such list is at present followed, in what respects, if any, does it differ from the list that was followed prior to the promulgation of the Coal Control Order? What positions do the following consumers now enjoy in the matter of priority of supply of Railway wagons for coal, and how do these positions compare with those occupied by them under the priority list maintained before the enforcement of the Coal Control Order:—

- (i) Soft coke for domestic consumption;
- (ii) Rice Mills, Oil Mills and Flour Mills;
- (iii) Provincial quotas other than those mentioned above; and
- (iv) Cotton Mills?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) The distribution of coal wagons is made having regard to the day to day availability of wagons in the coalfields, the order of priority for various industries, the monthly allocation and the daily target of despatches for each industry, demands of unforeseen urgency, and the operating conditions prevailing from day to day on the different routes and sections of the Railways.

(b) A regular list of priorities is maintained, and the present list does not differ materially from the list followed prior to the promulgation of the Coal Control Order. The position on the list of the consumers named is as follows:

- (i) Soft coke for domestic consumption—10th on the list.
- (ii) Rice Mills, Flour Mills—10th on the list.
- (iii) Oil Mills, Provincial quotas other than those mentioned above—10th on the list.
- (iv) Cotton Mills—8th on the list.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With regard to the order in which these priorities have been fixed, has there been any material change with respect to them in regard to the consumers mentioned in the question?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: There has been no change.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Do I understand, so far as the priorities are concerned, that they are of no practical value in view of the other factors which the Honourable Member has mentioned and which determine the day to day allotment of the wagons?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: No, Sir. They are of the very highest importance because priorities are not worked out in the sense that the first is served fully before the second is reached.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Even subject to these decisions in regard to priorities, is there any distinction made between one province and another in the distribution of these priorities?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: No, Sir.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Isn't it a fact that complaints have been made by interests affected by the working of these priorities that they are being departed from most arbitrarily in the day to day working of the system?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The priority principle is not departed from in the sense that an industry of a higher class gets more than the allocation or even gets full allocation before the next industry is looked into. What happens is that, say in the case of Railways, if the allocation has been made and owing to conditions of transport and other reasons

the railways are unable to get what they want, diversions are made from other industries, first to railways, to enable them to run. It is that that is causing complaints in the case of some industries but that I venture to think is inevitable owing to transport difficulties and the coal position.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Who inquires into these?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: First the Deputy Controller, Coal, Khan Bahadur Farrukh and then the Government of India.

NOTICES SERVED ON COLLIERIES TO DELIVER COAL TO SPECIALLY FAVOURED INDUSTRIES

392. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) With reference to the statement made by the Honourable the Supply Member in reply to my starred question No. 18 on the 1st November, 1944, explaining the methods of distribution of coal to different industries, will he be pleased to state whether it is not a fact that notices under the Defence of India Rules have, during the last few months, been served in several instances on collieries on the authority of the Deputy Coal Commissioner (Distribution) for the purpose of forcing them to deliver coal to specially favoured parties such as Jute Mills, Paper Mills etc., in supersession of the normal approved process of allotment under which other industries were entitled to the said supplies?

(b) Does the Honourable Member propose to give a detailed explanation of the circumstances in which action under the Defence of India Rules was taken in all these cases, indicating particularly the industries for whose benefit these special orders were served, and the reasons why the normal claims of other industries were thus superseded?

(c) What responsibility, if any, do Government accept for ensuring due payment of the value of coal the supply of which is thus diverted and forced under the Defence of India Rules?

(d) Have complaints been received about the delay in payment of bills for coal thus supplied under the special orders of the Deputy Coal Commissioner (Distribution) to Government and non-Government concerns? If so, with what result?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) Yes, though my interpretation of "specially favoured parties" is probably different from the Honourable Member's. The directions in question have had to be issued so as to ensure that the requirements of certain essential consumers, including the Railways and the Defence Services amongst others, are met. In the absence of such directions, a Colliery may consign coal to consumers of its choice and essential consumers may go short in consequence.

(b) I regret that it is not possible to give a detailed explanation in each case. As I have said, the guiding principle generally is that certain demands *must* be met.

(c) Before any orders are issued, complete arrangements are made with the consumer for ensuring that payment is made for the coal supplies. The transactions are between the colliery and the consumer and Government accept no responsibility for ensuring that due payment is made, though they will always be prepared to lend their good offices in settling any disputes that may arise. I may add, however, that, so far, no complaints about the non-payment of bills have been received.

(d) Some complaints have been received and the reasons for delays in payment are generally either the failure on the part of the supplying collieries to furnish complete documents or the comparative remoteness of the accepting authorities. All such complaints have been promptly dealt with.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: May I request my Honourable friend to reconsider his attitude with regard to part (b) of the question and at least indicate the industries for whose benefit these special orders were made.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I think, Sir, there were three industries, if I might speak from recollection. One was the Jute Mills Association, the other the Paper Mills Association and the third, I forget, Sir. The reasons are obvious. The Jute Mills Association has rationalised its industry as my Honourable friend just now said and its demand is of a very limited amount. If the jute mills industry does not get the coal the result will be that the Government will be unable to keep its promise of a guarantee of minimum price of raw jute which it has undertaken. Jute will become excessive, the selling pressure will be such that the prices will topple down, and it is in the interests of the jute producer and the essential economy of Bengal and the jute mills production must be kept up.

The paper position is so acute that it is one of the industries where, as far as possible, essential coal supplies must be given.

I am unable to recollect the third.

These are the three cases where such a diversion has had to be made.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I am much obliged. But would the Honourable Member care to tell the House which industries were prejudicially affected by the diversion of these wagons?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Sir, that is a very difficult question. What happens is that a diversion is made at a particular period and later on the industry which has not got the supplies is given its quota. If I can find more information on that subject I shall try and furnish it.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it a fact that in the months of December and January last, almost all the wagons supplied to the Jute Mills Association were made available under these notifications.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Probably, Sir, but still the complaint of the Jute Mills is that they did not get the quota which was allocated to them.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: How is it that the present system requires the application of the Defence of India Rules to such an extent for the benefit of one particular industry?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: As I said, the position of the jute industry requires that certain coal should be allocated and the colliery owners were allocating it elsewhere, and the acuteness of the position necessitated the applying of these rules for the time being. It is not a permanent order by any means.

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

GRANT OF PENSION TO CERTAIN WORKERS OF CORDITE FACTORY, ARAVANKADU

393. *Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde: Will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to state:

(a) how many men there are in the Cordite Factory, Aravankadu, who have put in over twenty-five years' service and have not joined the Provident Fund recently introduced;

(b) if it is a fact that they have submitted memorials praying that they may be granted a pension;

(c) if it is a fact that the last Annual Conference of the Labour Union unanimously adopted a resolution requesting the grant of pension at the rate of half average pay for such men;

(d) if it is a fact that by his S. I. No. 143, dated the 18th January, 1942, the Superintendent of the Factory agreed to the grant of a monthly pension not exceeding Rs. 25, for such men; and

(e) whether Government propose to consider the grant of pension at the rate of half average pay for such workers?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The information is being collected and will be laid on the table when ready.

DISCRIMINATION AS REGARDS ALLOWANCES OF SUPERVISORS AND CHARGEMEN IN CORDITE FACTORY, ARAVANKADU

394. *Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde: Will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to state:

(a) if it is a fact—

(i) that the various kinds of allowances are given to the Anglo-Indian Supervisors and Chargemen in the Cordite Factory, Aravankadu; and

(ii) that the said allowances are given to the Indian Supervisors also; if not, why not;

(b) the starting salary and annual increments given to the Indian and Anglo-Indian Supervisors and Chargemen in the Cordite Factory, Aravankadu; and

(c) if he is aware of the feeling of resentment among the workers on account of the discrimination and, if so, whether he proposes to remove the same?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The information is being collected and will be laid on the table when ready.

INADEQUACY OF QUARTERS FOR WORKERS IN CORDITE FACTORY, ARAVANKADU

395. *Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde: Will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many workers in the Cordite Factory, Aravankadu, are not provided with quarters and that they come to work from their homes, several miles away in some cases;

(b) whether it is a fact that if a worker is taken suddenly ill or is unable to come to his work owing to unforeseen circumstances without being able to obtain prior permission, his increment is stopped;

(c) whether it is a fact that communications to rural areas in Nilgiris is difficult and poor workers are not able to arrange for sending advance intimation in all cases; and

(d) whether Government propose to take necessary steps to see that absence without permission is not punished by such penalties?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The information is being collected and will be laid on the table when ready.

INADEQUATE SUPPLY OF SOFT COKE FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION IN CALCUTTA

396. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to refer to his reply to my starred question No. 24, on the 8th February, 1945, regarding the requirements of soft coke for domestic consumption in Calcutta, and state the sources of the various estimates referred to by him which place the present daily requirements as 45 to 50 wagons? Has any enquiry been made at the instance of the Central Government into the adequacy or otherwise of the present supplies having regard particularly to the enormously increased population of Calcutta due to war conditions?

(b) Is the Honourable Member aware of the acute difficulties felt for the last few months by the civil population of Calcutta due to shortage of supply of soft coke for domestic consumption, and has any action been taken to remove these difficulties?

(c) What is the machinery for distribution of soft coke for domestic consumption in Calcutta at present, and what was the corresponding machinery in the year 1943?

(d) With reference to his reply to part (f) of the above question, is it the policy of the Central Government not to consult the Provincial Governments concerned, or even to inform them before reductions in the quotas of soft coke for domestic consumption are made? Have representations been received from the different Provincial Governments regarding the adequacy or otherwise of the supply of soft coke during the past few months? If so, to what effect and with what result?

(e) With reference to his reply to part (g) of the above question, is it the case that there is a dearth of second-class coal for manufacturing soft coke?

What are the different factors, apart from the available supply of wagons, that go to determine the quantity of available soft coke? Have Government under contemplation any step for the purpose of the removal of such impediments as may stand in the way of larger supplies of soft coke being obtained, apart from the question of wagon allotment?

(f) With reference to his reply to part (h) of the above question, will the Honourable Member explain what he means by the "requisite degree of priority"? What is the priority actually given to wagon supply for soft coke for domestic consumption in relation to other consuming interests?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) The estimates referred to were made during 1944 by the Director of Civil Supplies, Government of Bengal, and by the Deputy Coal Commissioner (Distribution). No detailed or formal enquiry has been made at the instance of the Central Government.

(b) I am not aware that the difficulties experienced by the civil population with regard to soft coke have been greater than those experienced by consumers of coal generally. As stated in the reply to the Honourable Member's question No. 24 on the 8th February, 1945, there has latterly been an improvement in the soft coke supplies made. Apart from the soft coke supplied by rail, domestic requirements in Calcutta have been met also by the use of soft coke available from the Oriental Gas Company and of firewood, charcoal and gas.

(c) Wagons of soft coke are consigned to the Director of Civil Supplies, Calcutta, and to depot holders recommended by him. There has been no change in this matter since 1943. Distribution to individual consumers has always been the responsibility of the Provincial Government.

(d) The Deputy Coal Commissioner (Distribution) is in almost daily touch with Provincial Governments as regards their requirements, and keeps the Central Government informed. These requirements are considered each month by the Central Government along with other requirements at the time of making monthly allocations of coal. A representation from the Bengal Government was received by the Deputy Coal Commissioner (Distribution), and this has resulted in the improvement of soft coke supplies to Calcutta which was referred to in the reply to part (b) of the Honourable Member's question No. 24 on the 8th February, 1945.

(e) Up to the end of December, 1944, there was a dearth of second class coal for the manufacture of soft coke. The quantity of coal available for this purpose is determined by the total availability of the different grades of coal and coal allocations made by the Central Government to the various classes of consumers. From February, 1945, the position as regards availability has improved, and some portion of the coal normally utilized for the manufacture of soft coke but hitherto required for more essential purposes, has become available for increasing the manufacture of soft coke. Restrictions placed on certain collieries producing grade II coal have now been removed, and they have been permitted to manufacture soft coke. It is anticipated that from now onwards and up to the end of May 1945, at least, the only limiting factor in the supply of soft coke will be transport.

(f) I invite attention to the reply given to part (b) of the Honourable Member's question No. 391 earlier today.

Mr. K. O. Neogy: Is it not a fact that in the year 1943 although the allotments of soft coke were being made theoretically to the Directorate of Civil Supplies, the distributing authority made himself responsible for seeing that the actual coal wagons reached the depot holders individually? And is it not a fact that there has been some departure in regard to this matter with the result that the distributing authority at the present moment does not keep himself informed as regards the actual supplies of wagons to the depot holders and that even though the supply is admittedly short at the present moment, even the short supply is not reaching the actual consumers because of the lack of supervision on the part of the distributing authority?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: My information is that there has been no change in this matter since 1943. Probably what

the Honourable Member refers to is an arrangement which existed before 1943. I shall look into the question and see how it can be reconciled with the present arrangement, whereby the Provincial Governments have the main responsibility.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Will the Honourable Member please state whether the Government have got any machinery to determine the quality of coal required by particular industries, so that there may be economical consumption of coal?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Yes, Sir: the Government have got the machinery and it is a constant care of the Government to allocate particular grades of coal to particular industries.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Is it a fact that there has been a complaint recently that the Railways are consuming a better quality of coal where they might as well use inferior quality?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: On the other hand, the complaint of the Railways has been that they are getting inferior quality and a quality of coal which they cannot consume.

COMPLAINTS RE FIXATION OF INADEQUATE QUOTAS OF COAL WAGONS FOR CERTAIN INDUSTRIES

397. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) With reference to the reply to my starred question No. 25 on the 8th February, 1945, will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to state whether the figures of coal allocations to individual industries which he has declined to disclose, have been made available to different organisations of commerce and industry in India, or are they meant to be kept a State secret?

(b) Have representations been received regarding the injustice done to different industries by the initial fixation of inadequate quotas of coal wagons for them and subsequent reduction therein? If so, in respect of which industries have such complaints been received, and with what result?

(c) With reference to the answer to part (d) of the above question, will the Honourable Member indicate the industries in respect of which there has been any reduction in the basic quotas in recent months? In this connection, will the Honourable Member answer the following part of the above question to which no answer has been supplied:—

“What has been the effect of such reduction on the industries concerned”?

(d) What are the reasons for any reduction in the quotas for certain industries in the year 1944, having regard to the improvement in the coal output as compared with the previous year?

(e) Is the “relative essentiality of the consumer concerned” (referred to in the answer to parts (b) and (c) of the above question) judged by the coal Commissioner or his subordinates afresh every month before the monthly coal allocations are made, or has such “relative essentiality” of an industry as a whole been determined once for all by Government for the guidance of the coal Commissioner? Has the Honourable Member satisfied himself that the procedure referred to by him does not lend itself to favouritism?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) Figures of total monthly allocations to the various classes of consumers are communicated to the authorities concerned with the detailed sub-allocation for each class. These authorities are mostly Departments or officers of Government, but in a few cases the sub-allocation is made by a body representing the industry as a whole.

(b) Representations about the inadequacy of the initial quota fixed and cuts subsequently made therein have been received from practically every class of consumer. I regret it is not possible to give details within the time available, but such ameliorative action as is justified and possible is taken.

(c) I do not think it will be helpful to compare recent allocations with the basic quotas as the latter, which were fixed over 15 months ago, have become somewhat unreal. The attempt latterly has been to meet essential demands to the maximum extent possible and I can say that, by and large, there has been a definite improvement in allocations during the last four months.

The effect on the various industries of the cuts imposed on the basic quotas has varied, depending on the location of the units of an industry, the extent of rationalization if any that has been possible, the season and several other factors. Some individual concerns may have had to close down temporarily or to curtail production, but this is inevitable in the midst of a general shortage of coal and the inescapableness of certain demands.

(d) The slight increase in raisings in 1944 has been off-set by greatly increased demands from certain key consumers such as Railways. But as already stated, there has been a definite improvement in allocations in the closing months of 1944.

(e) The relative essentiality of the various classes of consumers is determined each month by Government and not by the Coal Commissioner. The second part of the question does not arise.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With regard to the answer to part (e) of the question, what is the meaning of the word "Government": which particular officer is charged with the responsibility in regard to this matter?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The allocations are determined by a Committee of Secretaries at a meeting at which the Secretary of the Supply Department presides. These recommendations come before a Committee of the Executive Council, called the War Resources Committee of Council consisting of about six or seven members and the proposals are either approved or modified by them.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is this procedure gone through every month?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Yes, Sir: every month.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Having regard to the complaints that admittedly exist in regard to this matter, what steps does the Honourable Member propose to take for the purpose of removing the misapprehensions that might remain in the minds of the interests affected? Does he propose to consult organisations of industries and trade such as the Chambers of Commerce with regard to this matter?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The organisations of the industries constantly approach the Government with their representations. The Chambers of Commerce have made representations. I take it that the fact that the allocations are not left to the individual discretion of any officer but that the Committee of Council itself looks into them will be sufficient guarantee that all steps possible are being taken to see that all interests concerned are fairly treated.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Does the Honourable Member propose to have a sort of conference with the representatives of the interests concerned, if possible to discuss this matter round the table, apart from these interests making representations and the Honourable Member giving replies to those representations?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: If I might be permitted to refer to a personal matter, it was only in December last that the Committee of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce passed a resolution thanking me and the officers who are working with me for the care with which the coal distribution is being made. If my Honourable friend is correct and there is apprehension still, I shall consider the suggestion that he has just made.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Is there not any danger that the persons who come to the conference will be the only persons benefitted by it and the other persons will be left out?

(No answer was given.)

SCHEDULED CASTES' CLERKS OF SUBORDINATE OFFICES APPOINTED IN RAILWAY BOARD

398. ***Mr. Piare Lal Kureel:** (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state whether the Railway Board has sent a circular letter to all General Managers, asking them to forward the names of Scheduled Castes Clerks serving in various subordinate offices for employment in the Railway Board as routine clerks and typists?

(b) If the answer to part (a) above be in the affirmative what is their total number, and to which provinces do they belong, and have they been appointed in the Railway Board or not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Five General Managers were addressed.

(b) Three names were received but information regarding the Provinces to which they belong is not readily available. All the three have been offered appointments in the Railway Board's Office and their acceptance of these offers is awaited.

Mr. Piare Lal Kureel: Is it a fact that the names of Scheduled castes clerks employed in subordinate offices are not being forwarded by their immediate superior officers?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I am not aware of that. The General Managers have been asked specially to look into it.

Mr. Piare Lal Kureel: Is it a fact that the name of one, Mr. Mangal Prasad Khatik, has been recommended by the General Manager and if so, will the Honourable Member state whether he has been appointed or not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: My information is that those who have been recommended have been accepted.

MONEY FROM BENGAL AND NORTH-WESTERN AND ROHILKUND KUMAON RAILWAYS REQUIRED UNDER ORDINANCE NO. 57 OF 1942

399. *Mr. Satya Narayan Sinha: Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state if he has received the money from the Bengal and North-Western and Rohilkund Kumaon Railway Companies, as required by Ordinance No. 57 of 1942? If not, does the Honourable Member propose to advise the House as to how it is proposed to honour the pledge given to the employees before taking them over under the State service?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The amounts payable by the Liquidators of the late B. & N. W. and R. & K. Railway Companies under Ordinance No. 67 of 1942 are under negotiation between the Secretary of State and the said Liquidators. The latter part of the question does not arise.

SCALES OF PAY OF EMPLOYEES OF OUDH AND TIRHUT RAILWAY

400. *Mr. Satya Narayan Sinha: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state whether any improvement has been made by Government in the scales of pay of the employees of the Oudh and Tirhut Railway? If not, why could this not at least be brought in level with the scales existing on other State Railways?

(b) How many administrative posts exist on the Oudh and Tirhut Railway, and how many of these are held by Indians? If the reply be that none of these are held by an Indian, what are Government doing to select capable Indian Officers of this Railway for these posts?

(c) Is it a fact that due to increase of work on this Railway posts of Deputies are being created in all Departments? If so, do Government propose to select some of the capable Indian Officers of this Railway for some of these posts with a view to keeping pace with other State Railways so far as Indianisation of services is concerned?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) I would refer the Honourable Member to my reply to his Starred Question No. 29 asked on the 8th February, 1945.

(b) Seven; one of which is at present held by an Indian. The latter part of the question does not arise.

(c) The necessity for providing Deputies' posts in certain departments is under examination and the claims of all officers eligible for promotion to administrative rank will receive due consideration, if and when the posts are created.

Mr. Badri Dutt Pande: In view of the fact that there has been a strike for four days among the menial staff due to shortage of pay what steps have the Government taken to ameliorate the lot of this menial staff, so that there may be no further strikes?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: As I have said, there has been a revision which comes into force on the 1st April.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: May I know whether the Government have received any report from the same railway about sudden transfers, inadequate salary and harrassment by the officers?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No, Sir; that does not arise out of this question.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: May I know, with reference to part (c), who makes the recommendations and whether the Railway Board examines those and approves of those appointments or what is the method followed?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Yes; to the best of my knowledge, that is so.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: It is on your approval that these appointments are made on the O. & T. Railway?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Yes; that is so.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Officers, or the subordinates as well?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Officers.

DELAYS BY RAILWAYS IN SETTLEMENT OF CLAIMS OF TRADING PUBLIC

401. *Mr. Satya Narayan Sinha: Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if he is aware of the grievances of the trading public so far as settlement of compensation claims and refunds are concerned? The delay being considerable, what steps are being taken to expedite matters on all Railways specially on the Oudh and Tirhut Railway?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The question of expediting as far as possible the settlement of claims for compensation or refund both from the trading public and others is already receiving the active attention of Railways and of the Railway Board. Railways have already expanded their Claims Organisations considerably and the O. & T. Railway recently instituted a special 'drive' which has already shown improved results.

OVERCROWDING IN TRAINS

402. *Mr. Satya Narayan Sinha: Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if he is aware of overcrowding in trains at present? Is he also aware that overcrowding in upper classes becomes worse on account of Railway employees occupying the same in large numbers? Do Government propose to instruct Railway administrations to take steps to reduce overcrowding and, as a special relief to the travelling public, to provide extra carriage for their employees in each train?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I am aware that overcrowding exists in trains. All steps possible in the present war conditions have already been taken to mitigate overcrowding. The accommodation utilised by railway employees represents a very small proportion of the total upper class accommodation on trains, and the provision of separate carriages for them would not be justified. Moreover, practically all trains already run with the maximum stock possible consistent with the haulage capacity of locomotives, speed of trains and lengths of sidings at stations.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: May I know whether the Honourable Member is aware that railway employees are mostly those who try to overcrowd the first and second class compartments?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No; I have just said that it is definitely not a fact.

Lt.Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee: Will the Honourable Member for Railways consider the possibility of restricting or decreasing the number of passes granted to railway officers?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That has already been considered.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is any effort being made to ascertain what effect has been produced by way of reducing this overcrowding by all possible steps that are being taken, according to the Honourable Member, by Government to reduce overcrowding? Has any effort been made to see what results are being achieved by all these possible steps?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Yes; as the Honourable Member knows, we have carried out a very extensive publicity campaign, but unfortunately it has been infructuous.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: What is the result of this campaign?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: As I say, it has been infructuous.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Why do you not ask those who sell the tickets not to sell tickets in excess of accommodation which you have?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: As public carriers, we have to try and carry the people.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

REMEDY TO RAILWAY SERVANTS AGAINST INFRINGEMENT OF RULES BY SUBORDINATE RAILWAY OFFICERS

10. Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state the nature of remedy provided to Railway Servants against the infringement of rules by subordinate Railway officers, and if no remedy is provided, the reasons therefor?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The rights of appeal against the imposition of penalties, available to railway servants, are detailed in Chapter XVII of the State Railway Establishment Code, Volume I, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXAMINATIONS PRESCRIBED FOR ESTABLISHMENT CLERKS (RAILWAYS)

11. Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state the qualifications and examinations prescribed for the Establishment clerks in the offices of Railway Board, Railway Administrations and Divisional Superintendents?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The general qualification prescribed for the clerks referred to is a pass in the Matriculation Examination of a recognized university or an equivalent examination. The clerks in the ministerial service of the Government of India including the Railway Board, have, in addition, ordinarily to pass the requisite Federal Public Service Commission's examination. Government have prescribed no additional special qualifications or examinations for establishment clerks, but under the note to rule 5 of the Rules for the Recruitment and Training of Subordinate Staff, contained in Appendix II to the State Railway Establishment Code, Volume I, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House, a General Manager is authorised to adopt the selection-cum-examination method at his discretion.

MEMORANDA FROM REPRESENTATIVES OF MINING INTERESTS OF BENGAL AND BIHAR AT DHANBAD CONFERENCE

12. Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to lay on the table copies of the different memoranda received by him from the representatives of mining interests of Bengal and Bihar at a Conference held at Dhanbad on the 10th December, 1944, indicating the views or decisions of the Government on the points raised therein?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: A copy each of (1) the Joint Memorandum submitted by the Indian Mining Federation and Indian Colliery Owners' Association, (2) the Memorandum submitted by the Indian Collieries' Union and (3) the speech delivered by the Chairman of the Indian Mining Association, at a conference held at Dhanbad on the 10th December 1944 are laid on the table.

Action has been taken on the following points:

(1) *Delays in the receipt of plant and machinery on order.*—The gravity of the coal position in this country is fully appreciated in the U. K. and the supply position is definitely improving.

(2) *E. P. T. should not be levied on coal.*—Government are not prepared to accept this proposition, but they have since sanctioned the grant of additional E. P. T. free bonus on total production. As an alternative to applying for the

bonus under the above scheme, provided production has been maintained at least at the level of the previous accounting period; collieries can apply for the grant of an allowance under section 26(3) of the E. P. T. act, equivalent to giving a minimum standard profit at the rate of Rs. 72,000 a year, instead of Rs. 36,000 in respect of a particular half-yearly target period.

(3) *Provincial Cesses should be allowed as Expenditure in determining profits.*—It is not possible to agree to a relaxation of the provision under which Provincial Cesses cannot be taken as expenses in determining profits in assessing Income-tax and E. P. T.

(4) *Target figures for purposes of bonus have been fixed too high.*—This is not correct. Targets have been fixed after taking into account factors such as raisings for the six to nine months preceding March 1944, the latest raising figures available about March 1944, the capacity of the mine, etc. The orders provide, for downward revision when special justification exists.

(5) *Representation on the Coal Control Board is defective.*—Government consider that the existing three Associations adequately represent the views of the entire coal trade.

(6) *Control over the recruitment of Labour should be relaxed.*—Experience has shown that the Controlled Area Scheme and the Labour Recruitment Control Order, in spite of difficulties in enforcing them, have helped to improve the supply of labour for collieries. It has therefore, been decided to retain these orders.

(7) *Delay in the payment of bills for coal supplied.*—The Railway Board have issued instructions that the payment of bills on account of coal supplied should be made within a fortnight of the receipt of the bills. If cases of delay in payment by other consumers are brought to the notice of Government, necessary action will be taken.

(8) *Distribution of foodstuffs through private pools.*—Government have carefully considered the question and have arrived at the conclusion that the pool system is the best method of controlling prices and also the most convenient way of ensuring supplies to the collieries. The remaining points raised are still under consideration. It is not possible to indicate Government's views therein in advance of final decisions.

Joint Memorandum submitted to the Honourable Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, K.C.S.I., Supply Member, Government of India, by the Indian Colliery Owners' Association and the Indian Mining Federation.

The 10th December, 1944.

Sir,

I extend a hearty welcome to you on your visit to the coalfield on behalf of the Indian Colliery Owners' Association and Indian Mining Federation which embrace in their fold practically the entire body of the Indian Mine Owners, big and small working all grades and qualities of coal and contributing about 40 per cent. to the total production of coal in this country. This is practically your first visit on the momentous mission of grappling with a problem which appears to have baffled so far all attempts at improvement in the production of coal, which is a prime necessity at any time and specially so at the present moment to assist war efforts. I am sure by this time, with your intimate association with the coal trade for the last few months, you have a clear appreciation of the problems confronting us and hampering production so lamentably. I may state at once that the problem of distribution has to a large extent been solved to the satisfaction of both producers and consumers. I wish I could say the same about production, but unfortunately in spite of the creation of a number of authorities all aiming at the same purpose, the objective has not been attained due perhaps to causes beyond their control. The main problem may be summed up under three heads, viz., the non-availability of the requisite machinery and plants shortage of labour and taxation.

In the matter of procurement of machinery, both steam and electrical, the Government have failed so far to give any help worth the name in spite of the fact that a number of authorities have been placed on us to whom we have to approach at different stages entailing thereby only paper work, which materialises into nothing tangible. We do our best, and we doubt not the authorities do their best, but the key is not in the hands of either, essential machinery ordered as far back as 1942, has not yet been made available to the collieries perhaps because they are far down in the priority list in U. K. I understand also some boilers requisitioned in this country nearly a year ago have not been received in the coalfields yet. I need hardly point out that this state of affairs requires to be radically changed, if better out-put of coal is to be aimed at. Too many authorities dealing with the question of supply of machinery should be done away with if delay is to be avoided.

The next question, *viz.*, shortage of labour appears to me to be the crux of the whole problem. Time and again we have been assured that Government had already taken steps to put a stop to the diversion of colliery labour to other occupations in the contiguous areas to the coalfields, but with no appreciable result. Labour legislations, which are otherwise quite useful have unfortunately resulted in lower production. It appears anomalous, but none the less a fact, that the inducements to put in more work and produce more coal in the shape of free rations and cash compensatory allowances on attendance only has tended towards the very opposite result. I would like to suggest as a remedy to this state of affairs that the free rations and cash compensatory allowance should be linked to production. In this connexion I would further urge that the very vexed question of supply of foodstuff and consumer goods to our labour should be the direct responsibility of the Government, who ought to start controlled shops for the purpose in suitable areas throughout the coalfields. This will give the much needed relief to the colliery management to concentrate upon other problems of production. Further more the recent Government order for control of recruitment of colliery labour requires contractors to take out licenses from District Magistrates. I am of the opinion that such procedure will inevitably lead to very great delay in going through Law Courts, and what is worse it may lead to interference by the police at some stage or other, and in that case the whole business of recruitment will go utterly to pieces. I cannot too strongly impress upon you the necessity of annulling this order in its application to the collieries. I have to submit another question, which seriously interferes with the work of our Managers and staff, *viz.*, the labour welfare work carried on by so many different Authorities, we had, so far, to deal with the Mines Board of Health but recently measures appertaining to other welfare works although most of them within the purview of the Health Boards have been undertaken by the Labour Welfare Fund which has functions identical with those of the already existing Boards, *viz.*, the Health Board, the Water Board and partly the District Board. This overlapping and duplication lead not only to wastage of funds, but involve heavy work on our staff in attending upon so many different Authorities. The procedure serves no useful purpose but hampers our work quite seriously, I, therefore, suggest that the existing Boards should be absorbed by the Labour Welfare Fund and the colliery staff should be spared from attending upon too many Inspectors of different Departments. The same or similar statistical material has to be submitted to too many different Authorities. It will be an advantage to reduce this paper work as far as possible.

I now come to the next point of taxation which presses so heavily on the coal trade. You are aware, sir, that the coal Industry in the past suffered more from depression than most other industries, and consequently its economic vitality is so very low that it is unable to bear the burden of heavy taxation. In order to maintain production of coal it is essential to continue development of mines for which plant and machinery are constantly required. For more than a decade the coal Trade has passed through unprecedented depression and the prices paid during that period were so low that it was impossible for the collieries to undertake any development work. When the conditions became slightly better sometime after the war started it was felt that collieries would be able to finance the overdue developments, but the increase in the rate of income tax and imposition of the Excess Profits Tax have upset all our calculations. The exigencies of war call for extreme sacrifices, but at the same time an undertaking should be in a position to finance purchases of essential requirements as also to create a reserve to meet future developments, which it is not possible under the present heavy taxation. Besides, coal being a wasting asset, deserves to be treated on a different footing from other industries, and should be totally exempted from the operation of the Excess Profit Tax. It may also be mentioned here, Sir, that unlike other Industries the coal Industry has to pay Road Cess on profits. In this connection while I appreciate the step taken by your Government to encourage production by granting bonuses free of Excess Profit Tax, I regret to have to point out that the target figures of collieries have been so fixed as to preclude the vast majority of them from participating in the benefit offered.

Sir, I had the privilege of looking over the memorandum submitted to you by the Indian Mining Association through the courtesy of its Vice Chairman as he has stated. I agree with some points made in that memorandum, but I very much regret the depreciatory observations made regarding lower grade coal, which has been characterised as bad coal. It is natural that when there is a gap between supply and demand and the demand outstrips supply attempts are made everywhere to fill it up, and if this bad coal has come to serve that purpose and did a useful function of saving the serious situation created by lower production of better coal I do not see why this coal should be condemned and attempt should be made time and again to get rid of it. The memorandum states that this coal is suitable only for brick-burning and domestic soft coke, and ought to be confined to a specified figure, the correctness of which I do not admit. During the past few years this coal has proved its usefulness, even in respect of long distance traffics, and whenever there was general shortage of coal this coal greatly contributed to the successful continuance of various industries engaged in war productions enabling them to maintain their production. I cannot but too strongly advise the Government that they should now concentrate on obtaining more and more production of coal in general instead of allowing any line of demarcation to be drawn between superior and so called inferior coal.

With regard to one more suggestion made in the memorandum of I. M. A., *viz.*, the creation of a panel of experts, I do not propose to offer any definite opinion at present. Although there appears to be no necessity for any fresh organisation to be set up the proposed creation of a panel of expert should be a subject of thorough consideration, and should not be set up without taking all interests into consideration.

I thank you again, Sir, for the lively interest you have been taken in the amelioration of the coal industry.

Note presented by the Committee of the Indian Collieries Union, Katraigarh (Bihar) to the Honourable Supply Member, Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, K.C.S.I., on the 10th December, 1944, at Dhanbad.

The Committee of the Indian Collieries Union at the outset conveys its thanks to the Honourable Supply Member for meeting the Mineowners in general for the purpose of discussing with them the present critical condition of the Coal Industry with a view to solving its immediate problems. The Committee of the Union fully appreciates this step as it gives an opportunity to all sections of the coal trade irrespective of any Trade Organisation to represent their respective view-points on the subject. The Committee of the Union hopes that in future similar opportunities would be extended to all the Mineowners in general to meet the Honourable Member for discussing the cause and the cure of the chronic malady of the Indian Coal Industry.

The Committee of the Indian Collieries Union is fully conscious of the paramount importance of increased output of coal in the interest of the country, both industrial and economic, and equally realises that greater output of coal is an essential factor in the country's war efforts and as such needs to be boldly faced with all its actualities.

The Committee of the Union at the outset regrets to point out that in its opinion the measures and steps so far taken by the Central Government to increase the output of coal by introducing the present Coal Control Scheme were defective on many fundamental points thus defeating the very object for which the same was introduced. The Committee of the Union in this Memorandum would, as briefly as possible, express its considered views on some of the points and the Committee hopes that its suggestions would be carefully considered by the Honourable Member and necessary steps would be taken on the lines suggested by it with such modifications as would be found necessary.

(1) *Uncertain condition.*—The Committee of the Union would like to draw at the outset the Honourable Member's attention to the extremely uncertain condition in the coal industry so far as the small second class collieries are concerned. The Committee of the Union believes that for some years at least the output and potential capacities of the small second class collieries must be fully taken advantage of by the Government and should not be ignored. But, unfortunately, in the present Control Scheme there is a provision for closing down any Mine if and when it would be required. In spite of verbal assurances from the Honourable Member from time to time this condition has acted as a deterrent to the efforts of the small second class mineowners to increase their respective output by progressively developing their mines. The Committee of the Union therefore suggests that the first step to increase the output of coal is for the Government to make a definite and unambiguous statement clearly stating that they have no intention to close down any colliery until at least five years after the cessation of hostilities.

(2) *Labour condition.*—The Committee of the Union while appreciating the desire of the Government to improve the living conditions of the mining labour, would like to point out that the steps recently taken by the Government for the increased earnings of the mining labour and the extension of other facilities such as food supply, etc., without ensuring, at the same time, the corresponding obligation on the part of the mining labour for regular attendance and minimum per capita output, have to a great extent been responsible for the steady fall in output. The Committee of the Union therefore suggests that, in consultation with the representatives of the labour and other interested parties, a scheme may be formed which would not only ensure better wages and other facilities to the mining labour but would also at the same time ensure reasonable per capita output. The Committee suggests that this may be done by introducing a bonus system on sliding scale on corresponding per capita output.

(3) *Food supply.*—The Committee of the Union would like to draw the immediate attention of the Honourable Member to the present method of distribution of rice and other foodstuff in the coal-fields, specially in the Province of Bihar. In this connection the Committee of the Union would invite the Honourable Member's attention to the note presented by the Union on this subject to the Famine Commission, a copy of which was duly sent for information to the Supply Department (copy attached for ready reference). The Committee of the Union is definitely of opinion that the present method of distribution of rice and other foodgrains through private Pools of the Coal Trade Organisations is detrimental to the interest of the small Indian Collieries, which in the present condition can be of very considerable assistance to the Government in increasing the output of coal. The Committee of the Union, therefore, suggests that the administration and distribution of food supply to the mining labour be placed under the control of one central organisation of the Central Government so that each mineowner may have the right and liberty to draw his quota of rice and other foodgrains from such central organisation at controlled rates on actual weights. The Honourable Member is no doubt aware of the fact that at present mineowners are forced to purchase rice and other foodstuffs at rates much higher than the controlled rates from the two Pools. The persistent refusal of the Rationing Authority of Dhanbad to supply rice and other foodstuffs direct to the small mineowners jointly in full wagon loads on payment of cash against delivery on actual weights has not only been the source of irritation but has also created a considerable amount of discontent amongst them—thus reacting greatly on the output of coal.

(4) *Cess and Tax.*—The Committee of the Union would draw the Honourable Member's further attention to the fact that the various cesses and taxes and the Excess Profits Tax that are now imposed upon the Coal Industry are standing definitely in the way of greater output. Unlike other industries the Coal Industry have to pay a cess of a minimum of 6½ per cent. on profits besides a tonnage cess in Bihar as Road Cess. It is a common knowledge that on an average at the time of assessment of road cess and income-tax, approximately 15 per cent. to 25 per cent. of the bonafide revenue expenditures are disallowed in each case which sometimes comes to a total of 40 per cent. to 50 per cent. over the actual profits. The small mineowners are thus naturally reluctant to increase their output for fear of being obliged to find funds for paying cess and tax for so called profits which actually were never earned, besides the chances of paying Excess Profits Tax on such amount. In this connection the Committee of the Union would like to draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that so far as the small second class Collieries are concerned they have not in most cases the privilege of a fair amount of standard profits in their favour for the purpose of assessment of E. P. T. which the first class Collieries some cases have. The suicidal coal purchase policy in the past of the Railway Board which consumers the major portion of the output of small second class Collieries, were solely responsible for this position. The Committee of the Union have no hesitation in saying that had the Railway Board and the different Government Departments taken a long term view in the past, most of the mineowners who are now handicapped for want of sufficient development in their mines to increase their output, would have been in a better financial position and their mines would have been in a better condition to yield greater output. The Committee suggests that as coal is a wasting asset, it should not be subject to E. P. T. Assessment.

(5) *Difficulties about Machineries & Plants.*—The Committee of the Union would also draw the attention of the Honourable Member to the fact that although there has recently been some improvement in the matter of issuing permits for machineries and colliery plants, the mineowners are still suffering greatly for want of mining machineries. Permits are no doubt now issued quickly but prompt deliveries are not assured, as a result of which the raisings are greatly being affected. The Committee of the Union would suggest that extensive facilities for the purchase of machineries and colliery plants and stores be provided to the Collieries, specially to the small Collieries on easy instalment payment system out of the funds of the Production Cess. The monthly amount of instalment due from any Colliery may be realised out of the value of despatches to Loco and other Government Departments by mutual arrangement.

(6) *Monthly allotment of orders.*—The present system of intimating the Collieries at the fag end of each month, what each one of them should despatch against Loco and other Government requirements is certainly open to serious objection, as in many cases it dislocates the normal arrangement. The Committee of the Union suggests that each colliery should be informed of its quota for supply to Loco and other Government Departments at least 6 months ahead so that it might be in a position to know what it should commit to other consumers and war industries. The Committee also feels that a maximum not exceeding 60 per cent. should be fixed for each Colliery for such orders—separately for steam and slack coal for which orders for Loco and other Government requirements may be placed. It should not be left to the judgment of any individual officer to place orders as he likes to the extent of 100 per cent. of its output or more with one Colliery for Loco orders in any month and 25 per cent. or nil in other cases and varying the quantities from month to month.

(7) *Irregular payment.*—The Committee of the Union have to draw the Honourable Member's particular attention about the irregular payments against coal supply which has almost become a permanent feature at the present time. For want of adequate financial resources the small collieries in particular are constantly handicapped in their efforts to increase the output. It is to be greatly regretted that in this respect the different Railways and the Government Departments for which orders are now placed by the Deputy Coal Commissioner (Distribution) directly with the Collieries, are the principal parties who do not attach any importance to the fact that prompt payment of coal bills is an essential necessity. The Committee of the Union therefore suggests that a proper Ordinance be immediately issued by the Government that all coal bills should be paid by the different Railways, Government and Semi-Government Departments within a week or ten days from the receipt of the bills from the respective Collieries.

(8) *Responsibilities of the Colliery Managers.*—The Committee of the Union also respectfully draws the attention of the Honourable Member to the fact that unnecessary responsibilities and additional burdens that have now been imposed upon the Colliery Managers who are primarily responsible for increasing the output are adversely affecting the output of coal. As at present most of the Colliery Managers have very little time to concentrate their attention and energy on their actual work. They not only have to attend daily, at times almost every hour, a large number of Officers and also have to prepare a large number of returns; failing which they are made liable under various clauses of the Defence of India Act. Besides, the distribution of rice and other foodstuffs for which the mineowners have voluntarily offered their help to the Government have been made a weapon for making their Managers liable to stand their trial in the court of Session. The Committee of the Union has no hesitation to state that this position of the Colliery Managers has greatly complicated the situation and taken away much of their incentive to increase their respective output.

(9) *Representation of small Mineowners.*—The Committee of the Union understands that the Central Government is very shortly going to review the whole coal position with a view to replacing or modifying the existing Coal Control Scheme to suit the present situation. The Committee of the Union would therefore suggest for the serious consideration of the Government that in any of their future schemes the representatives of the Coal Industry on any proposed or existing Board should be drawn directly from all its different sections and groups as it is an undeniable fact that, in the Indian Coal Industry, interests of all—sections of the mineowners are not at all identical and in many instances, contradictory to each other. The inherent defect in the present scheme is that the small mineowners who are now actually delivering the goods are nowhere in the picture and their case is not only going by default but the Government is also deprived of the benefit of knowing their difficulties and their view-points. It must be admitted that the problems and conditions of small mines are widely different from those of the larger mines. Necessarily, the measures for increasing the output would not be identical and would therefore need special attention.

(10) *Other difficulties.*—The Committee of the Union would also draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that want of adequate transport facilities for the mining labour, adequate train services, efficient post and telephone services in the coal-fields are also hampering coal raisings to a great extent. Although these subjects are not being dealt with by the Department of Supply, the Committee of the Union hopes that the Honourable Member would use his influence to provide better facilities for transport of mining labour, better train services and post and telephone services in the coal-fields.

Chairman,
Indian Collieries Union.

KATRASGARH,

10th December, 1944.

Copy of the speech by Mr. Latimer of the Indian Mining Association.

Sir,

We are very glad to meet you here, in this centre of the Coal Industry. We are all aware that the position in regard to coal production is far from satisfactory and we believe you are particularly concerned not so much over the failure to increase total production, but over the great increase recently in the proportion raised of bad coal to good.

We are glad to think that your visit hereto meet us, and our mining engineers, indicates that a more direct method of handling the coal problem is to be adopted and I do not think that any confidence which Government may show in future in the ability of the organisation which I am representing itself to attend to the business of coal production in the best interests of the country will be misplaced.

Certain methods by which the technical skill and commercial experience of the Industry may be placed more directly at the disposal of Government, and by which we may displace the cumbersome machinery through which the Coal Commissioner, the Labour Department and the Supply Department at present endeavour to direct our activities, have been worked out by us and I wish to refer to them later.

In order to add weight to such recommendations as I have to make I may perhaps be permitted to point out that the Indian Mining Association represents 75 per cent. of the commercial coal raised in India.

If I may also say so I think that the confidence to which I have above referred, the confidence of the Government and the country in the ability of those whom I represent to raise as much coal as possible in the best interests of the war effort would not only be justified by the facts so far, but will be as important a factor in increasing coal production as the plant and machinery, and the Labour which are otherwise the vital, and the only vital factors.

Let me refer to Plant and Machinery. Enough Plant and Machinery to restore the production of good coal to adequate quantities is already on order, either privately or through the Coal Commissioner's bulk indent. Much of the privately ordered material has been on order for two or three years. The point I want to make is that in spite of much coming and going, the filling in of reams of forms, the machinery doesn't turn up, and without it, it is useless to look for the production of more good coal.

I feel that if the War Cabinet needs India to export her coal then it must see that her pleas for machinery from the U. K. are listened to.

One of the larger member firms of this Association, as you know, Sir, lent the services of their Chief Mining Engineer to Government who sent him to the U. K. to try and find out what was happening to India's orders for coal mining machinery. He has now returned and his information was that India's requirements were very far down on the priority list. In fact he said that it was only recently that No. 1 priority had been given to the Coal Industry in England but that this now ranks with the operational demands of the Armed Forces. He displayed considerable activity whilst in the U. K. and saw the India Office who are in touch with the London Coal Committee and the Joint Planning Committee of the U. K. and the U. S. A. who determine priority; he was unable to get matters changed and the fact remains that India still has no advice of any supplies coming forward and one is forced to the conclusion that the Indian Coal Industry is still where the 14th Army was—forgotten; or—in the words of H. E. the Viceroy when C.-in-C. in India, "We are at the end of the supply line".

That this is not merely idle speculation is borne out by the fact that the African Coal Industry has been able to increase its production from 17 million tons in 1938 to 22½ million tons in 1943. This is an increase of 5¼ million tons in production in 5 years and they acknowledge that this is largely due to receipt of machinery from abroad.

There is of course nothing new in all this since my Association has for many months now emphasised the importance of this problem, in fact, Sir, on the very first occasion when you granted my Committee an interview in Calcutta, the matter was brought to your notice and you yourself advised that you had sent several sharp cables to the India Office about these supplies.

I hope I shall be proved to be unduly pessimistic but, frankly, I fear that the machinery on order unless most drastic steps are taken will be too late to help step up the production and it seems the coal needed abroad for bunkers, locos and so forth in the fight against the Japanese will have to be supplied from other and more distant sources, indeed I greatly fear that unless we can—and speedily—make some impression upon the British Cabinet of the urgency of our needs, the machinery which we hoped to get will already have found its way to the Continent of Europe where the demand will inevitably be tremendous.

I put it to you, Sir, that as our efforts, those of the Coal Commissioner's organisation and even your own telegrams to the India Office, have not produced the desired result, the time has come for you to request H. E. the Viceroy to send a personal telegram to the Prime Minister apprising him of the situation.

I notice, Sir, that you will lead India's delegation to the Commonwealth Relations Conference to be held in London in February of next year. I view your impending visit as a fortunate coincidence since I feel sure that you who realise the need will do all you can to bring it home among the highest levels in the U. K.

What can be done is evident from the fact that the Director of Open Cut Mining has apparently been given a mandate to purchase suitable machinery for quarrying propositions to the extent of Rs. 3½ crores and I understand that he succeeded in America not only in producing the machinery but also the men to operate it. By comparison the machinery on order to increase the capacity of existing shafts, which are nearly all sunk to the better seams, including the bulk indent, does not exceed Rs. 1½ crores and must be an insignificant total of the whole on the Manufacturers' order books.

The reference to quarrying coal brings me to the question of quality. Since the introduction of the Colliery Control Order much attention has been given to the increasing of Grade III coal and it is a well known fact that this coal is not suitable for the majority of locomotives, factories, or for export and is mainly suitable for manufacture of soft coke and brick-burning. This need can be covered by raising approximately 120,000 tons per month. The present raisings figure for Grade III coal is, I understand, about 25,000 tons per month and this coal is being despatched to large manufacturing centres with lamentable results on industrial output.

You, Sir, are aware that many of the member firms of the Indian Mining Association are concerned in other industries and I can assure you that some of the rubbish which has been despatched to them as coal over the last six months and for which, incidentally they have been paying prices out of all relation to its value, is deplorable, more particularly as it has strengthened the legend that has been put about concerning the coal industry's unwillingness to co-operate unless bribed to do so.

To remedy this I would recommend that the rules drawn up for maintaining the quality of coal should be strictly enforced and that penalties should be imposed for despatch of coal inferior to the grade which is sold. I would suggest also that price ratios should be altered to that it is not equally profitable, or even more profitable, to raise the lowest type of coal than it is the good.

Apart from equipment the most important concern to the industry is labour (and by labour I mean a miner as opposed to the surface worker). Whilst it is to the credit of the Labour Department of the Government that they have drawn up orders for the "screening" and controlling of mining labour in certain areas the fact remains that they are still being frequently ignored by other employers of labour and the industry is still lamentably short of miners and skilled workers.

From what I have said so far you may have the impression that we are offering nothing but destructive criticism. I hope to disprove that. We on the non-official side are extremely anxious to increase production and my remarks are not intended merely to cavil; nevertheless I have one more criticism to make; we do feel that the present control administration is top-heavy and it is rapidly enveloping the Regional Controllers and Colliery Managers in a mass of paper work. We must all agree that this is undesirable and as an earnest of our intentions, we suggest, that a panel of experts from these two fields should be formed under the Chairmanship of the present Regional Controller and that the Welfare Commissioner should be co-opted to the panel as an authority on labour matters. Much detail with regard to the working of this panel, its actual size and composition, would have to be gone into between the Industry and your Department but I am sure it could be accomplished in a very short time providing the objective was clear and I would recommend the panel be given a slogan instead of terms of reference on the lines of "CUT OUT THE PAPER, GET OUT THE COAL", and that it be made as small and as little unwieldy as possible.

This panel should be available to give advice to individual collieries on the question of increasing their production wherever possible. It should be responsible for coal production but act under the general guidance of the Controller of Distribution to ensure that the

coal produced is in accordance with the requirements of the Controller of Distribution and so minimise waste.

It would be a pre-requisite that the Regional Controller as Chairman was relieved from his present duties which mainly concern themselves with issuing of certificates for stores and it is hoped that this set up would simplify procedure and greatly reduce the paper work now being put upon Mines Managers.

I also consider that both he and the Welfare Commissioner should be given extremely wide powers to deal with matters on the spot which effect the Industry after they have received the approval of the panel. In short they will be the executives to the panel who will run the Industry for the Government.

It must be evident to you that conditions governing wages, miners rations and so forth change from time to time and to keep labour working contentedly and the whole machine working smoothly, need adjustment within say a month or six weeks of the change becoming apparent. References to Delhi where all officials are already hard pressed and overworked cannot but spell delay.

In the set up I have in mind, however, Government have two senior and experienced servants with a knowledge of the mining areas and conditions to carry out quickly and effectively what the panel consider is good for the industry and it must be logical to assume that a group of experts on the spot are more likely to make a success where, to be frank, there has so far been failure.

I have made known to our sister Associations what was in my mind and what I intended to say today, and I hope they will be able to agree with most of it.

I should like to say again, good coal cannot be won from the deep pits with buckets and spades. We must have the equipment. We want stores, plant and spares, and we want labour.

Most of the plant we want is already on order and is available in the U. K.; it needs Government to get India's requirements put on No. 1 priority alongside the U. K. Coal Industry's requirements.

As for labour I think the main necessity is to see that Government's existing instructions are actually carried out. If this is done and even if it isn't you will continue to receive all the coal we can possibly give you, but I wish to utter a warning that it is impossible to expect an increase in production from the deep pits from where the good quality of coal is produced, or even to avert a steady decline in this production, unless machinery and spares are forthcoming at a very early date.

The exact organisation by which the panel would administer the Trade I have left purposely vague. Nor have I touched upon the various suggestions which I think the panel will want to put into force if and when the panel is set up. I would like to say however that the methods of the panel should be as free and flexible as possible. As far as possible we want to relieve collieries from interferences not add to them. We do not want merely to set up one hierarchy instead of another. See that collieries get their equipment and their labour (and on these matters we cannot do without Government support) and then leave them alone. If Government likes to encourage the good producers by E. P. T. concessions and output bonuses possibly so much the better though we do not ask for them. Let Government make sure however that quality is not lost sight of in their anxiety for quantity.

Perhaps I should not conclude without making a reference to our views on one matter to which the panel of experts will have to give their immediate attention. That is the question of wages and rations. You can bring the miner to the mine, but you cannot make him work. We want to abolish the issue of free food, and also the principle that any food, whether free or not, has to be given to a miner merely for attendance. We want to go back to what worked very well before—the issue of a week's ration, at a fixed rate, for a week's work, and, subject to the provision that we do not exceed our total allotment of rationed foodstuffs we want some latitude as to the proportions in which we issue them to the individual. This will be a most important factor in enabling us to keep all our employees happy and satisfied.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION AND ANSWER

PARTICIPATION BY RAILWAYS IN ROAD TRANSPORT SERVICES

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingan Chettiar: Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

(a) whether the Government propose floating any big companies to run road transport in Madras and other provinces by themselves or in conjunction with any other companies or agencies;

(b) whether they have received any proposals to that effect from the Madras Government or any existing Road Transport agencies in Madras; and

(c) if the Government propose taking road transport, what steps they propose to take to see that the present existing small transport agencies do not unnecessarily suffer?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Government do not propose to float any big companies to run road transport in Madras or other Provinces by themselves, but they hope that Railways will participate in existing road transport undertakings and in the formation of joint road transport operating companies in pursuance of the general policy of Government of securing the closest possible co-ordination between road and rail interests.

(b) Discussions have taken place between the Railways in the Madras Presidency and local road transport operators, but no final conclusions have been reached. The policy of the Madras Government in regard to road-rail co-ordination is still under consideration by the Madras Government.

(c) Railway administrations will welcome association in joint companies of existing operators, on any route, who desire to participate, although Railways will naturally find it more difficult to negotiate with large numbers of small operators.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know how many road transport agencies and what other firms have applied to the Government to run those transport companies in Madras?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I have not got full particulars. My information is that the railways in the Madras Presidency advertised to find out which road transport operators were interested in co-operating with them. They received a certain number of replies, but the terms on which replies were based were not considered very reasonable. Certain negotiations were entered into with some companies but so far nothing conclusive has come out of them, and in the meantime the Central Government are waiting to hear what is the policy of the Madras Government with regard to road transport. Until the policy of the Madras Government has been determined, the Central Government are not able to conclude their own policy for that Province, since road transport lies within the sphere of the Provincial Government.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I take it that if there are other companies which make fresh offers, they may be agreeable to the Government of India or the Government of Madras?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Certainly; subject to the determination by the Madras Government of their policy which may or may not permit of the formation of such joint companies.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: May I know what will be the position of those small investors who have got one or two lorries after this unauthorised liaison between the capitalists and the Railway Board?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The position would be unchanged: the giving of the permits rests with the Provincial Government.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: May I know whether the intention is to wipe off the smaller people, corresponding to the wiping off of the cottage industries in favour of mills? If so, I am sure there will be great opposition from the country.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Quite so: I fully appreciate that; but the Honourable Member misunderstands the position. Railways are prepared to negotiate with any parties; I only remarked that it is naturally more difficult to negotiate with a large number of small parties than it is with a small number of large parties.

Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury: If, as I gather from the Honourable Member's reply, every province has got a separate policy of its own in this matter of rail-road co-ordination, may I know whether the Government of India will present a policy of their own and prevent all differences?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The policy of the Government is to endeavour to negotiate agreements with parties in the provinces who operate road transport; but road transport is within the sphere of the Provincial Governments; if the Provincial Government wishes, for instance, that all transport within the province should be state-owned, then presumably it will be state-owned and the Central Government will then negotiate to co-ordinate transport

matters with the State. If on the other hand the policy is that there shall be independent road companies as at present, then the Central Government will endeavour to negotiate with those independent operators.

(Some Honourable Members rose to ask further supplementary questions.)

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order: I cannot have any further questions. The whole matter can be discussed on the Railway Budget.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT

RESTRICTION ON SALE OF MATCHES IN AHMEDABAD MUNICIPAL AND CANTONMENT LIMITS

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have received notice of an adjournment motion from Mr. Hoosainbhoy Lalljee. He wants to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely: Restriction
12 Noon. on the sale of matches in Ahmedabad Municipal and Cantonment limits manufactured by any Company except "Wimco" (a Swedish concern)—a clear case of discrimination between Indian manufacturing concerns and pseudo-Indian manufacturing concern (of the Swedish Syndicate).

Has the Honourable Member got the order?

Mr. Hoosainbhoy A. Lalljee (Bombay Central Division: Muhammadan Rural): I have got a copy of the letter of the District Magistrate ordering that no other matches except the matches of the "Wimco" company could be sold in the Ahmedabad Municipal and Cantonment areas and it is a well known fact that Government have been warned. . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The order has been passed by the District Magistrate?

Mr. Hoosainbhoy A. Lalljee: That is what my letter tells me. The order of the District Magistrate is No. M. C. S. M2-37.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): What is the Honourable Member reading from?

Mr. Hoosainbhoy A. Lalljee: This is the order of the District Magistrate. There can be no reason for this except the influence of the Wimco Company. This is a great discrimination against the Indian manufacturers. It is a monstrous thing that a foreign concern could bring about this discrimination. . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Who is the Government Member in charge of this?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque (Member for Commerce and Industries and Civil Supplies): The Central Government has not passed any order. I am not aware of any order and I am not responsible for the action of the District Magistrate. Since the Honourable Member tabled the adjournment motion, I tried to find out whether there is any order of the Central Government and I find there is no such order, by which we have given any direction to restrict the sale of matches to a particular concern. In fact, it cannot be, because other factories are working and their products are being distributed all over India.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member by means of a short notice question or some other way, should find out what the exact order is and who passed it.

Mr. Hoosainbhoy A. Lalljee: May I submit that this order is also applicable to the Cantonment area. . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That may be but the business of the House cannot be adjourned to discuss a matter like this, unless there is more definite information.

Mr. Hoosainbhoy A. Lalljee: This is restriction on trade. . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I disallow the motion.

THE RAILWAY BUDGET—LIST OF DEMANDS

SECOND STAGE

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The House will now consider the Demands for Grants in respect of Railways.

The Chair understands that the various Parties and Unattached Members have agreed that the available time should be divided among them as follows:

Today has been reserved entirely for the Muslim League Party. They will move cut motions No. 18 in Late List No. 1, 53 in the Final List and Nos. 9 and 17 in Late List No. 1.

Tomorrow has likewise been reserved entirely for the Congress Party. They will move cut motions Nos. 23, 40 and 89 in the Final List.

On Thursday, the 22nd February, upto 3-15 P.M. the time has been given to the European Group, who will move cut motion No. 7 in Late List No. 1. Then from 3-15 P.M. to 5 P.M. on that day and again upto 1-30 P.M. on Friday the time will be at the disposal of the Unattached Members. The cut motions selected by them are Nos. 16, 1, 6 and 46 in the Final List and No. 13 on Late List No. 1.

Lastly, from 3 P.M. to 5 P.M. on Friday the time has been given to the Nationalist Party who will move cut motions Nos. 19 and 21 in the Final List.

As regards the time limit for speeches, the usual practice has been for the Mover of the cut motions to take fifteen minutes and the other speakers also to take fifteen minutes and the Government Member replying will have twenty minutes. I suppose this will suit Honourable Members. The Muslim League Party will now move their cut motion.

DEMAND NO. 6-G—WORKING EXPENSES—MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall (Member for Railways and War Transport): Sir, I move:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 21,33,70,000, be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1946, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Miscellaneous Expenses.’”

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 21,33,70,000, be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1946, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Miscellaneous Expenses.’”

Refusal to grant Funds to run Motor Lorries

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I move:

“That the demand under the head ‘Working Expenses—Miscellaneous Expenses’ be reduced by Rs. 82 lakhs.”

I expected that when Government wanted to enter into a new policy they should place it before the House by a separate motion or Resolution in order to discuss the policy on which they were entering and this policy ought to have been discussed separately by the allotment of a full day for the debate. We were forced to bring this cut because if we had allowed this matter to come before the House in this indirect manner it would have meant that the House had agreed to the policy which had been laid down by the Government.

Honourable Members of the House know through the speech of the Honourable Member that 35 lakhs have been budgeted as a supplementary grant for the current year for the purchase of motor vehicles and this year an amount of 82 lakhs has been provided for the purchase of the motor vehicles as well as for the running expenses of those vehicles. This policy of Government, taking part in the road rail competition, ought to have been debated in this House and the opinion of this House ought to have been taken before entering into an adventure of this kind. Now, Sir, what the Government have done is this. They have not consulted the House. If the House had been consulted, and if it had been convinced that it was desirable to remove the congestion in traffic, then the House would have expressed its opinion as to what was the best method to be adopted. The Honourable Member is not only in charge of Railways but he is also the Member in charge of War Transport and in that capacity he controls large numbers of motor lorries which have come to this country under lease lend arrangement. If his personality had been concerned

[Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan.]

only with railways, then of course the matter would have been different. He has now a dual capacity and he monopolises all the lorries and also the railways. This is the grievance which I have got to refer to. I will explain how it affects the private bus owners. The Honourable Member made a speech at the opening of the Transport Conference and he advised us to pay proper attention to that speech before the debate on this cut motion started. Of course, I was myself present at that conference and I had carefully listened to the speech when he delivered it and I have since carefully read that speech a copy of which had been made available to the House. The policy which was laid down was rail road co-ordination in order that there should be no competition between the two. As far as this is concerned, everybody will wholeheartedly support it, but may I know on what principles and under what conditions is that co-ordination to be achieved? This is what the Honourable Member said in the speech he delivered on that occasion:

"The policy which the Government of India have therefore determined to put forward for consideration is to regulate competition between road and rail by the control of fares, routes and traffic together with the regulation of conditions of service exercised by the Provincial Transport Controller"

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That is important.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan:

" in accordance with the principles to be agreed upon between the Centre and Provinces."

Certainly then it means that if the conditions of regulation of service are agreed upon, then the present bus operators will have to say good-bye to their business which they have been carrying on for a long time past. What is going to be the condition of service? Nobody can operate any lorry on the road if he does not come in line with the railways according to the conditions of service. This means that a petty owner who has invested all his money will be turned out of this business. I know that in most cases, many of these petty lorry owners, have mortgaged their residential houses, and in some cases they have invested all their savings, and in some other cases they get advance from motor dealers or purchase lorries under instalment system. All these persons are going to be adversely affected by the policy which the Government is now embarking upon. Another policy which the Government wants to lay down is this:

"Management would be largely in the hands of those with expert knowledge of road transport operation. If an efficient management already exists, it will not of course be turned out merely to make room for railway personnel."

Now, Sir, may I ask who is going to decide whether a certain present management is efficient or not. As my Honourable friend Dr. Sir Zia Uddin pointed out what will be the fate of a petty owner, one who owns one or two lorries? What will be his fate under this system? It means that the railways will not employ these petty owners with only one or two lorries who have been working individually all along. In those cases, the management will not be left into the hands of the private owners, but will be in the hands of the railways themselves. It is only in the case of a big company with plenty of capital and a large number of lorries plying that the management will be entrusted to their hands. Now, Sir, my contention is that the capital and the funds which are available all belong to the taxpayer. If the railways are going to entrust the taxpayers' capital and funds in the hands of a third person who is not authorised by the taxpayers themselves, and if that third person is given a free hand to operate upon the capital, then I am afraid this is a principle to which the House will not give its assent. We cannot accept this principle that the taxpayers money should be entrusted to a man who is operating on his own behalf, looking after his own property as a managing director on behalf of the Railway Board.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi (Dacca *cum* Mymensingh: Muhammadan Rural): What is your suggestion?

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: You will know everything if you wait. The only thing is that either the railways should manage their own lorries or they should leave this piece of work in the hands of private owners. Now, Sir, if the private owner comes in and he looks after his own interest, then the railways fear that they will have competition with this man. How can a big capitalist, like the Railways, suffer by competition from a small owner of one or two lorries, except that the big capitalist—the Railways—do not manage their own affairs properly. The Railways have invested hundreds of crores and why should they fear competition from a man who has invested only a few thousands, unless it be that the overhead charges of the railways are very heavy. Who will manage on behalf of the railways? That is the one principle which I want to know. Who will be responsible if a tyre bursts or a tube bursts? Who will see whether your piston has gone wrong, or whether the valves are working all right, how much load you have taken, what passenger traffic you have been taking, whether you have been taking more than authorised load and so on. These are some of the questions which only a small operator, who is the owner of a small number of buses, and who is the driver himself and who is a mechanic himself who will be able to safeguard his interest. In that case, the Railway administration will certainly have to be afraid of his competition, because your railway management means, an Inspector, a Driver, perhaps a Member of the Railway Board separately in charge of this particular work, who will be paid Rs. 4,000, perhaps there will be a Director drawing Rs. 3,000, perhaps a Secretary drawing Rs. 2,000, and various other paraphernalia. All these big officers will be sitting in the Secretariat rooms absolutely ignorant of what is happening on the roads. Therefore, you must be naturally afraid of competition from the small man. The small man can defeat you on account of your inefficiency. Otherwise you can never be defeated. You have got plenty of lorries and you can certainly oust the small man. By getting a monopoly for the railways, you want to oust the small bus owners and ruin these people who have invested all their money in this business. Your policy should be either that of the capitalist or your policy should be that of a Bolshevik. Sir, I cannot agree with this policy of using Bolshevik methods on the one hand to ruin the small owners and adopting a capitalistic policy on the other in order to gain the whole monopoly for themselves. These are principles which are not compatible with the requirements and the interests of this country. The loss of crores of rupees for the small man will be a loss to the country, and the result will be not only the ruin of these men but unemployment for thousands of people in this country. This unemployment will be a grave problem with which we will be faced. That employment which these lorries give now-a-days to the small operators—who are small capitalists also—will be gone and they will sit at home with all the increased cost of living and high prices.

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

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Sir, the railways have adopted this policy without taking into consideration the views of this House. That was absolutely wrong and I cannot agree to give my vote to this expenditure, though it may be for the purpose of removing congestion, when the lorry owners are refused any supply of new lorries and the Railway Board want to get in. In the U. P. I know there are two thousand lorries which were requisitioned at the very small price of Rs. 4,000 each, and they were never given back. There is no reason why they should not be returned to these people from whom they were taken and why they should not be asked to use on the road to relieve congestion.

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

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Sir, I move.

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

"That the demand under the head 'Working Expenses—Miscellaneous Expenses' be reduced by Rs. 82 lakhs."

Sir Kenneth Mitchell (Government of India: Nominated Official): Sir, I thank you for allowing me this opportunity to intervene in this debate and I trust you and the House will bear with me if in attempting to cover this very complex subject in the space of fifteen minutes I omit to say something which is necessary to the argument.

I should like to start by taking up one thing that my Honourable friend Sir Yamin Khan said, that the Honourable Member for War Transport being also the Member for Railways, he had in one hand all the lorries that came into India which he gave over to the other hand to be used by the railways. That is not exactly correct. Up to the end of last year we had about 19,000 new three-ton chassis that came into India, and those actually operated by our railways up to the end of last year were 152; so that it is not quite correct to say that all the lorries have been grabbed for the railways. As regards the vote under discussion, I should say possibly that it might amount to the capital necessary to purchase and the revenue to run about five hundred lorries; so that the big bad railways have not yet succeeded in getting 1/20th of the imports. But the main question which the Mover wants to raise is, I think, whether or not the railways should in future take a closer part in operating road transport. I need not remind the House, particularly after the questions and answers which have passed across the floor on the short-notice question, that roads are a provincial subject and that motor transport is a list III subject, that is to say, it is subject to central legislation but the executive authority is provincial.

Now, Sir, the purely practical aspect of this matter seems to me to be this; upon Provincial Governments; everything which is to be done in the way of co-ordination has to be negotiated between the Central Government and the Provinces; and you have, as it were, eleven safeguards, i.e., eleven Provinces, against any over-riding action by the Centre. We cannot do anything without the concurrence of the Provinces.

Now, Sir, the purely practical aspect of this matter seems to me to be this; and if I may take your time for a few minutes, I should like to remind you that after the last war the release of a comparatively small number of surplus army vehicles and a comparatively small number of drivers started the small-man motor-transport operators. That led in course of time to the introduction of hire purchase finance to keep these small people going, and gradually to operation by a number of small people in competition one with another; and partly owing to the constitutional distribution of subjects, partly owing to the fact that nobody recognised what was happening, it was not until 1939 that the present Motor Vehicles Act was passed. And we have now the prospect that after this war the number of motor vehicles which may become available as surplus will be in thousands and the number of returned drivers may be in lakhs. Now it is clear, as was observed by an Honourable Member speaking yesterday, that motor transport in spite of that or because of that, or whether there is a large number of vehicles available or not, will develop and develop very considerably after the war. We have also, as you know, a large plan of road construction; and the mesh of the railway system in India is such that if the rural roads are improved, and the district and provincial roads, it will, generally speaking, be a fact that there is practically no section of railway which is not subject to competition by road, either parallel or short-circuiting. And we who studied these problems considered that there should not be any restriction on the multiplication of buses, merely in order to hold the balance even between one form of transport and another. Therefore the effect upon railway finances of a large multiplication of buses will be such that unless real consideration and a practical scheme of co-ordination can be devised and implemented, there will be competition in which every one will get hurt, and

eventually and finally some kind of rationalisation or amalgamation will inevitably take place.

Now, Sir, Sir Yamin Khan spoke—and rightly spoke—of the small man who has, in certain provinces,—I would correct him and say, not in all but in certain provinces,—been the backbone of the motor transport business in the past. It is not our intention in any way to destroy his livelihood; but the railways are prepared to co-operate and to find any means of adjustment with these people if they will come into joint operation or if they will form themselves into amalgamations with which working agreements can be made. It is not possible, and it has been found impossible, even since the passage of the Motor Vehicles Act, where single operators remain on bus routes with perhaps six or seven owners of two or three buses each plying on one relatively small route, it is not possible for any railway to come to any working arrangement with these people, nor is it possible for these people to come to any working arrangement with the railways. In any case, whether you like it or not, I am afraid that amalgamation of the small owner must come and in fact it is already coming. That being so, the only question is whether the railways should form joint companies with these people or not.

Now, Sir, if I might go back, I would remind the House that, as I have already said, it was in 1939 that the Motor Vehicles Act was passed and I had the privilege of being in this House when that Act went through mainly in the Simla Session of 1938. Therefore, I think I can say that I do know the provisions of that Act fairly well and I mention that because I want to say a few words on the argument that you can get effective co-ordination completely through the provisions existing in the Motor Vehicles Act without the necessity for any fusion of financial interests. By bringing about co-ordination by the application of external controls, that is to say, by fixing minimum fares, by fixing freights, by restricting numbers and so forth, a lot can be done and a lot can be done particularly if there are established companies on the roads with whom the Railways can negotiate. But, Sir, I speak as a bureaucrat and as a bureaucrat I have not all that faith in the bureaucratic control which is implied in the suggestion that the whole thing can be adjusted by the application of external control. Therefore, it seems to me that as regards passenger services, if internal co-ordination were possible by some fusion of financial interests, it is likely to be far more effective and in the long run to give better services and better value for the money to the country. In those joint companies, we hope that the small operator will become a shareholder. Now, it is possible that as a shareholder he will not make quite so much money as he thought he would make, or perhaps during the war he has been making, by operating his bus independently. If that is the case, all I can say is that if he was making more money as an individual operator than he will make as a shareholder, then he has been running transport at an uneconomically high rate of charge to the public, and we cannot agree that in this matter of co-ordination the individual interests of the individual providers or the individual users of transport, should take precedence over community interests.

Prof. N. G. Ranga (Guntur *cum* Nellore: Non-Muhammadan Rural): How are the users going to be affected?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Let the Honourable Member proceed. He has got limited time.

Sir Kenneth Mitchell: We hope that the small operators will come in to these companies and that in that way they will not lose their livelihood. They will become shareholders in a proper concern.

The Leader of the European Group yesterday referred to the difficulties which had occurred in England and to the great campaign which the English Railways launched for a square deal and he added that he hoped that there would be a square deal for motor transport in India also. He might have added that concurrently more or less with that campaign the Railways—the Railways in England are company railways—and the bus operators got together and at

[Sir Kenneth Mitchell.]

the present moment I think the main line English Railways own about ten million sterling capital in the bus companies, and as far as the general public is concerned, I think I can say without fear of contradiction that the passenger services in Great Britain before the war—whether by rail or road—were second to none in the world, the fact being that uneconomic competition had been eliminated and both sides were able to concentrate on competition on the basis of service. It so happened that the recommended the same thing although in India Railways are State Railways and that being so possibly ultimately the joint companies will have to become something of the nature of public utility corporations.

Sir, I think my time is nearly up and I would like to say one word about the operation of goods services particularly during the war. There is such congestion on railways now, that the operation of extra services by road is necessary and will be profitable for the duration of the war although afterwards as soon as the railways can carry the traffic that offers at the average rates of about 8 pies per ten-mile, nobody would be anxious to consign goods any distance by motor lorry at rates of about 24 pies per ten-mile. Therefore I think it is highly desirable that railways should themselves operate these temporary services during the war, as otherwise people will come in, they will make a lot of money during the war and then they will find themselves left without any substantial business afterwards and will be forced to take to rate cutting competition.

Sir, I think my time is up, I oppose the motion.

Sir F. E. James (Madras: European): It was very very pleasant to hear our friend Sir Kenneth Mitchell after some absence from this House. I remember with him not only the debates in this House on the Motor Vehicles Bill but also the even more stormy debates in the Select Committee in Simla, in those weeks of 1938 when Mr. Griffiths and I put up as strong a fight as we possibly could for the interests of road transport, which at that time were seriously threatened with such control as would lead to their ultimate extinction, as an operative force in the transport system of the country.

Now, Sir, this debate began on a rather narrow issue, but my Honourable friend's intervention has broadened that issue to the general question of the principles underlying the control of road-rail competition, and therefore I propose to follow him and deal with the larger aspects of this question.

Sir, the Honourable Member for War Transport in his Budget speech made a statement on this matter which I am bound to say I found, rather obscure. He is a businessman, but no doubt his association with the bureaucracy has led him to adopt a form of English which, as far as possible, avoids any definite commitment one way or the other. Let me therefore read his statement in his Budget speech:

"Government are approaching the problem—the rail road problem in the post-war period in the light of the advice tendered by those two bodies—Transport Advisory Council and the Policy Committee on Transport—and from the point of view of securing the utmost productivity of all forms of transport on a basis of rationalisation with the maximum possible co-ordination between the various transport media."

Now, if my Honourable friend can really tell us exactly what that means, I should be very surprised, and I would suggest . . .

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Might I just refer the Honourable Member to the speech which I laid on the table of the House today?

Sir F. E. James: I was about to say that there is a welcome change from Benthall the obscure to Benthall the explicit, in the other speech which he has been good enough to circulate to the House.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: It has come too late.

Sir F. E. James: At least that, uses simpler words than he has used in his Budget speech.

Now let me turn to this statement of policy. I was able to get a copy of his speech from the daily press not knowing that we would be favoured with a

verbatim copy. In the first place, Sir Edward pointed out in his speech that the policy which the Government of India put forward for consideration was to regulate competition between road and rail by controlled fares, routes and traffic together with regulation of conditions of service. That is fully accepted.

He then goes on to say:

"We must consider how best we can develop and regulate transport as a whole for the benefit of the community as a whole and not of sectional interests, be they of Government or of private individuals."

That also we would accept. But I would put it to my Honourable friend that before he is able to lay down any detailed policy of either co-ordination or what he calls rationalisation between these two forms of transport, there must be certain broad principles on which the Government of India must determine their policy, which will govern their attitude to the various forms of transport in the country, not only roads and rail, but inland water, coastal shipping and ultimately air. I would put these four broad principles as follows:

First of all, the strategic obligations to the country—taking a long view, those will be very important indeed and they will, in time, have to be precisely defined.

Secondly, the policy of the Government of India in regard first to industrial development and secondly its export trade.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: What about agriculture?

Sir F. E. James: Certainly industrial and agricultural development and its export trade.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: That is better.

Sir F. E. James: Thirdly, its policy in regard to the location of industry.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: That is right.

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

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Otherwise it would not be spicy?

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

Sir F. E. James: My Honourable friend is as exuberant as he has always been and I welcome his return to this House. In spite of his natural exuberance, he does not disturb me at all!

(Prof. Ranga rose twice but Sir F. E. James did not give way.)

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member ought to be permitted to carry on with his speech.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: We are not interrupting the Honourable Member. By such replies he is wasting the time of the House.

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

Sir F. E. James: The fourth broad principle is the course which the expansion of the social services of the future is to take. During the last eighteen months work of the Bhoré Committee on public health and medical relief in this country, we have been deeply impressed by the vital connection between public health, medical relief and communications, particularly village communications. Therefore this must be taken into consideration in any broad policy governing the transport services of the country.

Then I would ask my Honourable friend, the War Transport Member, if he would be a little more explicit on three questions which I would like to put to him, as to the meaning of his statements both in the House and at the conference which was held in the middle of January.

First of all, with regard to long distance goods transport. Is it his contention that the transport of goods on long distance routes should be the sole monopoly of the railways? If so, then I would join issue with him, and would have considerable sympathy with the point of view presented by my Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan. I believe that road transport ought to be encouraged to be a live and active competitor on equal terms of the railways.

[Sir F. E. James.]

and I should greatly regret the development of a policy which would give the railways, on long distance routes, a complete monopoly of all goods transport services. I do not believe that would be in the interests of the country. I should like to know whether that is what my Honourable friend has in mind as part of his policy.

Secondly, he referred to the railways obtaining a commanding or a controlling interest in passenger road transport.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: On a point of information, I think the Honourable Member is reading from some old document. There is no suggestion that the railways should obtain a controlling or commanding interest. It is a substantial interest.

Sir F. E. James: I should like to have further clarification of that. What does my Honourable friend mean by a substantial interest? What are the principles governing the participation of the railways in these transport companies? I think members of the Standing Finance Committee of the Railways and also of the House have a right to know with more precision what principles will guide the Government of India in determining and selecting their participation in the operation of road transport services in the provinces.

My third question is: While I agree that perhaps the more immediate and in some ways the more difficult problem is the road-rail problem, what about the waterways of this country—airways also—but, more immediately the waterways? My Honourable friend is doubtless aware that the opening up of the United States was very largely assisted in the early days by the proper use of the waterways of that great country. I have a feeling that the waterways in India are not being adequately used. They should certainly be brought in to any comprehensive policy relating to transport in this country, and I should like to ask my Honourable friend what steps have been taken to bring in to the orbit of his discussions these interests, either individual interests or through the Provincial Governments. The waterways of this country are extensive and useful, and if properly developed and utilised can be of very great service in opening up India and in developing her natural transport facilities and services.

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

Sir F. E. James: These are some of the questions on which I would like further elucidation. I believe that India has a remarkable opportunity after the war for improving her communications and transport services. I believe that opportunity will only be taken adequately if the Government of India are determined first of all to secure a policy with regard to her agricultural and industrial development which will require from the available resources the utmost development of all forms of transport, so that in the end the prosperity of this land may be greatly enhanced.

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty (Madras: Indian Commerce): Sir, this motion is mainly to discuss the policy of the Government with regard to co-ordination between road and rail transport. This is not the first time when the public is led into a trap by making declarations of unimpeachable character. So far as co-ordination between road and rail transport is concerned, there can possibly be no objection. In fact it must be within the recollection of the Government that on this side of the House a great deal of help was given to the Government in the matter of framing the Motor Vehicles Act in 1938 so as to reduce the possibility of much competition from the private transport companies of motor buses and to enable the Railways to keep itself protected against such competition and also, if possible, to enable services being run by the Railways. But soon after the Act was passed, unfortunately the war intervened and I think many amendments were made in that Act in the shape of Ordinances which removed practically the power of the various authorities we had provided under that Act. In fact the whole transport question seems to

have been taken charge of by the Central Government in one way or another or by the Provincial Governments as agents of the Central Government. Not being satisfied with the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act, the Government have been circularising the General Managers of Railways and the Provincial Governments on the policy of co-ordination between the road and rail systems. Sir, last year, that is, about a fortnight after the Budget Session was over, there was issued from the War Transport Department a circular dated the 29th April, to all General Managers of Railway system explaining the policy which the Central Government would like to adopt in regard to this question. It is not a secret that the general public do not believe or rather mistrust all businessmen and politicians and if these two characters are combined in one, so much the worse and the Honourable Sir Edward Benthall is a combination of both! Sir, I hope even he will not deny that in the declaration of the policy of the Government of India there are so many traps and pit-falls into which he may easily lead the public and make them fall into them. It is rather astonishing that while the War Transport Department in the name of the Railway Board issued a circular to the Railway administrations declaring specifically and definitely their policy with regard to this question, Sir Edward Benthall denied that the Government were committed to any particular policy as late as November 1941, when a deputation met him under the leadership of my Honourable friend Sardar Sant Singh. He said in reply to the deputation that the Government were not committed to any particular policy, that they were consulting the Provincial Governments and that they would be glad to receive schemes of the formation of companies or formulation of any particular plan to co-ordinate these two systems, while all along specifically instructions were given to the General Managers of Railway Administrations to proceed in a particular way pointing out to them that there would be about 3,000 chassis available from the Civil Supplies Department. There a question arises, Sir, as to how the War Transport Department got the 3,000 lorries from the Civil Supplies Department. I thought it was the jurisdiction of my Honourable friend the Civil Supplies Member, the Honourable Sir Azizul Huque. I do not know how the War Transport Department got hold of those lorries which were intended to be issued by the Civil Supplies Department to companies and organisations which were running bus services. Just at the time of the commencement of the war, under the stress of necessity of war, many of these private companies were asked to surrender some of their buses for the purpose of A. R. P. and other military purposes. While the Railways have been made an offer of 3,000 lorries, no opportunity has been given to these companies, whose lorries had been taken away from them, to replace their lorries. At the same time, instructions were issued to regional authorities not to issue permits in specified areas and that the grant of a permit should be an exception rather than the rule. Those were the terms which were conveyed to these regional authorities. And still Sir Edward Benthall said in November last that the Government was not committed to any particular policy.

Now, Sir, it is not as if we do not want this co-ordination to be taken charge of by the State or the Central Government as such: not because we are impressed by their skilful management of the railways, not because we feel that we would be assured of more convenience or more amenities in the bus services when they are taken charge of by the State. Our experience always points to the other way, that these services would be better if they were taken away from State control. Still we hope for a day when we will replace you and we will be able to manage things better in the interests of the nation. It is from that point of view that we would like the State to take control of these services. But what is happening is this. The whole policy is not co-ordination but it bears a very strong resemblance to the Co-prosperity scheme of Japan. What you want is usurpation and conquest not at all co-ordination. While you are saying that you would not like to kill private enterprise and the private bus companies, you have done every thing and you are doing every thing to put him down and to send him out of the field. Sir, it is not a proper policy,

[Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty.]

at any rate, it is not an honest policy. All the while you have been assuring the public that the private companies will not be displaced, that they must be taken into any organisation and then you say "Let him come into our organisation, let him form companies and make offers". But you do not say that you are going to accept any of the offers. You may reject any offer on the ground of its unsuitability and you are likely to give this business to a separate organisation altogether. So there is no meaning in asking this business to make offers. I would rather ask you, the Central Government, in consultation with the Provincial Governments to make out a skeleton scheme for each Presidency and say that these are the terms under which you would like to run the co-ordination of motor and rail transport and then ask these private bus companies to come in if they care to undergo these conditions. Those conditions must be liberal enough, they must be such as to induce them to come in without too much of a strain.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: On a point of explanation, I want to get this clear. The Honourable Member says that if the Railways approach these small operators and fail to come to terms by negotiation, the small man would be crushed. But that is not the case. I have repeatedly stressed in the speeches and statements that I have made that all this will be done by voluntary negotiation. The Railways will voluntarily negotiate with the people large or small, and if they come to terms, well and good. But if they cannot come to terms, then the *status quo* remains. What will happen then? Either you have route and rate agreements or you have cut throat competition. From
 I P. M. the point of view of the railways we are anxious to adopt a policy of co-ordination rather than cut throat competition, and our minds are extremely open to the best methods of doing it.

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty: Therein lies the whole difficulty. Instead of making your ideas well known and public, you want to keep certain things in private to settle by negotiation; that is to say, you always retain your power to reject anything which you do not want to favour: the terms may vary with each company and with each province and with each locality. Then, where is the guarantee for the existence of the private man? You have got the right of rejecting any and every offer that may come—small or big—if you do not like it on various grounds: that is to say, while these negotiations will be open for new comers also, you are putting a person who is already in the service and any new comer on the same terms—possibly with the balance tilted in favour of the new comer: it is just possible: why are you keeping these terms private? Why do you not say "These are the terms on which I am prepared to join with you"? "These are the terms for the C. P. These are the terms for Madras or Bombay." Then it must be open to the bus operators to accept or not to accept. That will be a fairer way of determining things.

Another point which I want to stress is this: you are speaking of sharing profits rather than service on roads. Only those who finance the construction of these roads—the Provincial Government or the district boards or the local bodies (and the Central Government on certain roads)—can come into this picture. If you are going to finance the whole thing yourself, it would be another matter. But here you are actually trenching upon the provincial field. If you maintain and construct the roads, then you can walk away with the profits. But it is the Provincial Government and the district boards and the local bodies from whose resources the construction and maintenance of these roads is made. There is absolutely no provision made for them at all to come into this picture: no mention is made of them at all. So far as the railway tracks are concerned you have constructed them at your cost and you are entitled to profits on them. But since the roads have to be constructed and maintained, not by you directly, except probably in a few trunk roads and even that very grudgingly, by others, they are paying the piper while you are calling the tune. Is that a fair way of dealing?

Another matter which I want to emphasise is this: the Provincial Governments must be given a chance to participate in the scheme; while they must also extend in their own sphere to the local bodies who want to put in money; they have got a lot of money to put in and instead of recognising the authorities or powers which are directly concerned, you want to open up a fresh avenue to automobile companies. . . .

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

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty: . . . which is apparent in the scheme. So, if in any scheme you want the co-ordination and also the support of this Assembly, you must see that no avenue is given to new companies, no avenue must be given to new comers; it must be reserved for Provincial Governments, local bodies, persons who are the users of these roads, and the Central Government. Beyond that it is inconceivable that you can open the field to anybody else. Now, the speech of Sir Edward Benthall, a copy of which was supplied to us this morning, no doubt makes the position a little more obscure than the lengthy speech he made in his Budget. Whatever it is, there seems to be a slight hit even against cart traffic. Is it the intention of the Government to completely eliminate the country cart traffic from the roads of India? Or is there any provision for them? Because I suspect that a little later you may. . .

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

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, the railways claim that they are services of public utility and as such they enjoy the privilege of paying no tax, no super tax and no excess profits tax. At other times they claim to be a business concern and they want to charge as much fare under the dictum "charge as much as the traffic can bear"; and they pay very little attention to the convenience of passengers and the development of industries. But one has to agree that these railways are a service of public utility. Besides these railways, we have three other services of public utility in matters of transport—that is, road, river and air; and it is the duty of the Government, as pointed out by Mr. Churchill on 24th April 1928 when he was the Chancellor of Exchequer, to co-ordinate the services of these three forms of transport. It is rather unfortunate that the person in charge of the co-ordination of all these forms of transport is also in charge of the railways; I think it is very desirable that the person who should be in charge of the co-ordination of these four forms of traffic should not be intimately associated with any one of these four forms; otherwise the three other forms of traffic will suffer.

The second thing is that it is rather unfair that this matter has been laid before us by back door method without giving us any opportunity to discuss the fundamental issues on which our decision should rest. One fundamental issue which we ought to have discussed is that by this method the industries and agricultural situation will develop. There is no scheme before us to show that this method is suggested for such development. The next important and relevant point is the payment of the capital and annual repair charges of the Road. In England the co-ordination conference presided over by Sir Arthur Salter in the year 1930 laid down these conditions:

"It is only fair in our view to consider the total annual cost of the roads and then to distribute it according to a just estimate of the use and enjoyment and wear and tear caused by different categories of users."

Then he says:

"The conference came to the conclusion that the initial charges and the expenditure incurred in the construction of roads should be borne by the community and the current repairs by motor transport."

Before we embark on any scheme it seems desirable that we ought to be satisfied how far the non-recurring and recurring charges on the roads will be borne by the railways. I remember what was done in Germany before the war;

[Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad.]

in 1930, when the railways embarked on the scheme of road transport they constructed their own roads side by side with the railways. If Railways are prepared to construct roads in the same manner as German Railways constructed their own roads, then the problem will be different and then they will have the right to use the roads in the manner they want. So long as the roads are constructed for the benefit of the community as a whole, the community has a right to use any vehicle on the roads subject only to the safeguard of the safety of the passengers and the safety to public. I do not think anybody has the right to stop any one from using the public roads which have been constructed at the expense of the community. These are the points on which we ought to be satisfied.

Sir Kenneth Mitchell has pointed out that the small investors can purchase shares in the bigger companies. The same thing can apply to cottage weavers. They can apply for shares in Birlas' Mills. That is very poor consolation for the poor man to ask him to close down his business and to take shares in the big companies. In any arrangement that may be made, we ought to be satisfied that the smaller people will not be annihilated altogether. This House will not support in any form any measure which really goes against the interest of the poor people and the small investors who live on small capital, and only safeguard the interest of the big capitalists. It is really unpleasant that the Railways have joined together with the big capitalists in such unauthorised manner, especially as they have not received the permission of the Legislature to do that. Sir F. E. James has mentioned four points. I agree with those four points. The speech of the Honourable Member which has been circulated does not make mention of those points. There is no mention of the development of industries. There is no mention of the protection of the small industries. Now, the Railways want to make more money by joining hands with the big capitalists of the country.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Before any scheme of co-ordination is introduced, it is desirable that the matter should be laid before this House in the form of a Resolution or motion as suggested by Sir Yamin Khan and this House should be given full opportunity to discuss all aspects of this question. It is only fair that this should be insisted upon. If the Railways are making their own roads, they can use their own motor vehicles. Then they will be in a different position.

The second point is that the Provinces cannot be ignored. We ought to have some kind of proposal from the Government by means of which the produce of the villages can be brought to the railway station and the manufactured article from the railway station may be sent back to the villages for distribution. There is no mention of this scheme in any report as to the way in which it will be given effect to. The scheme presented to us is simply this, that the Railways will join hands with the big capitalists in order to exploit the travelling public and kill small industries and thus get the maximum benefit for themselves. As the Railways are a public utility concern, we have exempted them from all taxes. They really exist for the development of industries and the comforts of the travelling public. They are not here to join hands with big companies for the purpose of money making. If they bring forward proposals for the development of industries, then we will consider this scheme of co-ordination. Unless a definite scheme covering all these points is brought before us, it is very difficult for us to consent to this thing and I support the motion moved by Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan.

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

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

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari (Tanjore *cum* Trichinopoly: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Mr. Chairman if the House will pardon the use of a personal pronoun, I would like to say that I have some experience of the working of the Motor Vehicles Act, in so far as it affects the provinces, having been associated for a period of three years with the Provincial Transport Authority in Madras. So far as this discussion is concerned, I would, basing what I say on my experience of the working of the Provincial Transport Authority, say that quite a lot of issues which are not quite relevant have crept in. I was expecting when I heard that Sir Kenneth Mitchell was nominated to this House that with the experience that he had behind him commencing from the days when he in collaboration with Mr. Kirkness issued their joint report, he would be able to give us a clear cut line for discussion and also delineate very clearly what he expected the Government of India to do. I am sorry to say that I was somewhat disappointed. I feel, Mr. Chairman that in so far as this discussion before the House is concerned, there are only two aspects of the problem that affect us immediately. Firstly the financial participation of the railways in transport operating concerns in the provinces and secondly the question whether by the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act of 1939, the interest of the railways could not be sufficiently well safeguarded and are not being safeguarded. Apart from these two, I think any discussion would necessarily be in the region of being problematical. So far as the post-war problem is concerned, what the Government of India can do is very limited, and Sir Kenneth Mitchell very clearly indicated that there were 11 safeguards against any mischief that can be played by the Government of India in this matter and these eleven safeguards happen to be the eleven Provinces. But it is possible that the Government of India by means of the superior wisdom and expert knowledge that it can command, coupled with the fact that in six out of the eleven Provinces, the Governments that exist do not reflect the views of the people and therefore can alter their views in tune with the recommendations of the Government of India, can dominate the situation and some decisions might be reached. The danger appears remote so far as present experience shows. In so far as my Province is concerned, they have not been particularly tempted to fall into line with the Government of India's wishes. That, I think is a matter which need not concern us at the moment. All that I would like to ask the Government of India in that matter is this, so long as six Provinces are governed by section 93, in the name of all that is holy, do not compel them to take any particular line of action which will prejudice the freedom of action of the Governments that would come into being in the future. But in regard to two narrow aspects of this question outlined by me. I shall deal with them presently within the limited time at my disposal.

Mr. Chairman, the idea from which this mischief emanated started with the Wedgewood Committee report of 1937. Sir Ralph Wedgewood and his collaborators were firm in their view that railways had neglected an obvious duty on their part to get into the motor transport trade and to organise the trade on lines that will suit them best because the bogey at that time was that railways were losing income. I do not know what was the estimate of the loss to the railway by way of revenue in the Mitchell-Kirkness report. I believe it is somewhere about two crores. I suppose the Wedgewood report improved upon it and put the figure at somewhere four crores and odd. But none of these experts had taken into consideration the fact that when a new factor in transport comes into being and that the economic condition of the country at the time was certainly not satisfactory and that readjustments which were inevitable lead to loss on one side, certainly on the side of the established administration, an administration which was wooden, which was not responsive. The mischief having started from there it was to a certain extent tempered by the wording of the various sections of Motor Vehicles Act. But again, Sir, I find that in the technical sub-committee report to the Sub-

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Committee on Transport issued in November 1943—I think the Honourable Member for War Transport referred to it as being an old document, and if that is also the document referred to by my Honourable friend Sir Frederick James in his speech—several recommendations have been made, recommendations very categoric in their scope, but which at the same time has been covered by this safeguard or reservation, namely, that the Committee has not got adequate staff, that they could not envisage the full financial implications and presumably they did not have the full co-operation of the Provincial Governments in making their recommendations. Sir, there are two specific recommendations in page 10 of this Report which deserve notice. The summary for Chapter III says:

"2. The principle of maximum amalgamation of road transport operators to form substantial concerns on main routes and controlled monopolies on light traffic routes should be the basis of policy.

3. Railways should now develop closer co-operation with road transport and ultimately acquire a commanding interest."

That is what I think my Honourable friend Sir Frederick James referred to if I heard him aright.

"A beginning should be made now. There is no advantage in State ownership divorced from railways."

The next important event was the speech of the Honourable Member for War Transport delivered on 15th January, and therein we find a categorical statement, very precise and not as obtuse as his speech was in introducing the Railway Budget:

"Maximum co-ordination will be sought between road and rail interests, where possible, by the negotiation of financial participation by the State owned railways in reliable motor transport companies either existing or still unborn combined with the correlation of rates and fares" etc.

Sir, the history behind this was given by my Honourable friend from Madras, Mr. Sarni Vencatachelam Chetty. I do not know how he got it.

I will now come to the point whether the Motor Vehicles Taxation Act of 1939 does not give sufficient protection to the railways. Section 43 of that Act, even before it was amended, lays an obligation on the provincial transport authority to safeguard the interests of railways. The provincial transport authority with which I was connected in Madras had this always in the forefront. There was no instance where there was a possible conflict between road and rail interests where the rail interests were not consulted, where the railways representatives were not taken into confidence and their demands met, at any rate to a reasonable extent. I do not know how the Motor Vehicle Act worked in other provinces, but so far as Madras is concerned I must say that within the limits possible—and they were fairly wide—we had safeguarded every interest of the railway in this matter. And I might tell you, Sir, that so far as the working of the Motor Vehicles Act was concerned, we in Madras started with this preliminary, namely, to prescribe so far as the individual operator is concerned that he should amalgamate so that the amalgamated unit will have at least one reserve bus. That is how Madras started it. If now larger companies are encouraged it was not done during the time that I was not with them; and by and large I think the system worked satisfactorily. There have been a few hitches here and there, but knowing as I do—and I can claim to know reasonably well the file of practically every transport operator in Madras. I do not think the Motor Vehicles Act was operated unfairly or inadequately. And I would ask the Honourable War Transport Member and his able collaborator Sir Kenneth Mitchell that if they would like an amendment of this Act in any particular respect so that the obligation of the provincial transport authority for safeguarding the Railway interests can be strengthened, I shall certainly assist them in that endeavour. But in regard to this question of financial participation what exactly is the charm? It is true that in the experience of other countries the railways have got in mainly by financial participation in road-operating concerns. But either these railways have been private companies or there has been, as in the case of the U. S. A., an organisation like the Inter-State Commerce Commission to hold the scales

even between the interests concerned. Here it happens that the railways are the property of the Government of India with all the influence and prestige of the Government of India behind them; and this concern operating with all the influence and prestige of the Government of India gets into financial participation with small operators presumably ultimately to obtain a commanding interest, unless my Honourable friend would straightaway deny it here and now. But I should like to ask this. Leave alone this question of what is happening in other countries. In view of the special position in which the railways are placed in India, what is the benefit that financial participation is going to give to the people. It cannot safeguard the Railways entirely so far as financial loss by road competition is concerned; the return that Railways will get will be a very small proportion of what they will ultimately lose, if the conditions of 1937 are going to be repeated again.

Mr. Chairman (Mr. Abdul Qaiyum): The Honourable Member has one minute more.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Are the railways going to bring in any expert knowledge to bear on this problem? I would here and now say assuredly, 'no'. The problem of the operation of motor transport is totally different, and I would certainly not like these wooden ideas of operating railways to be imported into the operation of motor transport. Sir, I think the House would do well to confine itself to the narrow aspect of the problem and condemn straightaway out of hand any further extension of this idea of financial participation with road operating concerns in the provinces. The provinces had better manage them just as they like. Whether they start public utility companies or whether they nationalise road transport or whether they encourage amalgamation of small operators with large operating concerns, it is their concern. But so far as the railways of the Government of India are concerned I think this House should say that we do not like this idea of financial participation in road transport. If safeguards are wanted, you can get them by enlargement of those provisions as are contained in the Motor Vehicles Act of 1939.

Mr. Hoosainbhoj A. Lalljee (Bombay Central Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I think this is a very wide question and one which requires very careful consideration. It is also a fact that when the Motor Vehicles Bill was before this House a special Session was invited and a long discussion took place; and it is not fair either to this House or to the public at large that a principle should be enunciated wherein so many questions arise. In the first place my Honourable friends have pointed out that they are going to carry on the work in co-operation with the Provincial Governments, but at the same time they have made it quite clear that whereas the Provincial Governments have made this motor transport free they will be at liberty to negotiate with anybody and everybody. What is the effect of this move? Naturally when the Provincial Governments are going to spend crores on road making they do not like that there should be monopolies established in their provinces; and the result would be that the railway authority would then be at liberty to make contract with one or the other party; and that contract will be at the expense of the public; that is to say, it will give a monopoly for 10 or 20 years. That contract will involve crores of rupees of public money being lent to them. It may be that if they do not have a dominant voice, they will have at least a substantial voice, which means crores of rupees. Now are you not going to handicap the Provincial Governments, if for any reason they wish to change their policy or make some changes in the districts under their command? If you have entered into agreement with one or the other party for a number of years and also involved public monies by advancing them or participating in their concerns, what would be the position of the Central Government and of the Provincial Governments? My friends have pointed out that at present there are six provinces that are working under section 93; and I must frankly admit that the popular voice is not there. But it is impossible that the popular voice would be set aside for all time. In these circumstances once again I say that when you ask the Provincial Governments that in post-

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war reforms roads must be made and crores of rupees should be spent on them, if the railway authorities are given a free hand to negotiate and do business with any of the companies in any manner they like, you take away the position you emphasise off and on that the Provincial Governments are independent and can do what they like.

Another point that arises is this. So far as the railway administration is concerned, it is clear after the speech of the Railway Member that it is going to be worked and it has been working as a pure and simple commercial concern, a dignified joint stock company managed by managing agents, looking forward only to the interests of keeping up the company in a fair way for continuance of the managing agents and otherwise. As a businessman I like very much that the concern should be kept strong and going, and as much of the profits as could be made from the working capital should be diverted first from the income-tax authorities and, secondly, from the shareholders. But, Sir, this Railway Administration, with due deference to my Honourable friend, the War Transport Member, is more concerned with the public. The first duty it owes to the public—and I do not speak here only about the third class passengers, but everybody—is to look to their welfare. First and foremost is the position of the agriculturist—for want of transport facilities, the agricultural produce is rotting in this country. Then, because there is no education, there is no medical relief and other facilities, people are suffering—even railway employees—much more than the workmen engaged in other industries. The War Transport Member is a businessman and he has done many things in his own concern as a private individual but has it ever occurred to him to take steps to provide maternity benefits for the Railway employees? No, nothing has been done anywhere in that direction. Railway Administration is an organisation from which people want to derive benefit in raising their standard and it is not going to be the monopoly of commerce and industry only. But what do we find in this whole plan for road transport? Facilities for the railways to keep up their income, but how those plans will suit the public at large, this it does not take into account. We have got to consider the position of people in the districts? What employment are you going to give them? None at all. A few buses that you will provide here and there will also be under the patronage of big companies connected with Railways. I know the conditions in several districts where only two lorries can ply. This is the concern of the Provincial Governments. If you were going to work the plan through the Provincial Governments, I would have conceded, but here the point is that the Railways are at liberty to negotiate directly with other parties, the principle being that the Provincial Governments should not have a monopoly of their own. They will set up public utility concerns.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: With the approval of the Provincial Governments of course.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: I will go a step further and say that in six out of eleven provinces, public voice is not there, and Government knows it very well that public voice is a great thing. Government is placing before us one side of the picture only. Surely when a large part of India has not got the means to voice their feelings, I do not understand how the Government can do all that with the concurrence of the provinces which in reality means the public voice.

At the present moment, the War Transport Member and his Department have a golden opportunity, as was rightly pointed out by one Honourable Member. Thousands of motor lorries will be available and as they are the distributors, they can dictate any terms they like to the other party. It is not possible to get ordinary machinery, which is badly needed, without the help of the Government of India, and here is an instance where the Government of India will have and even today has an opportunity of getting thousands of motor lorries. So naturally they can dictate their terms, and the other party is bound to agree. What is the Provincial Government going to do? If they

propose that this contractor or that contractor should be subsidized and you do not approve of that contractor, you will say 'we have not got sufficient lorries to give'. These are important questions which should be considered, and I appeal to the Honourable Member that in the present circumstances and as this is an important matter and we are not prepared for it, this whole thing should be fully discussed and provincial representatives—especially from those provinces where Section 93 is in force—should be given an opportunity to express their views. Of course you can veto the recommendations of this House and you can carry out your own plans, but still I must say that we do not agree to the principle, as it has been laid down here, without full discussion. Of course I agree that co-ordination is necessary, but at the same time it is not only necessary with regard to roads but it is also necessary with regard to waterways,—it has been clearly shown that that was one of the main causes of the famine in Bengal—coastal trade, and so on. That has got to be considered. Is it fair, therefore, either to this House or to the public, that this all-important question, for which a special Session was invited, should be given hardly a few hours to be discussed? If we agree to the principle, it would mean that we agree to a liability of crores of rupees if the Railways choose to incur. They can enter into twenty or thirty contracts, give to each contractor 50 or 100 motor lorries, and extend the contract to 20 or 30 years. That would mean crores of rupees. On the other hand, you find that everywhere Governments are trying their best to take over the public utility concerns. Even the Bombay Municipality is going to take over Bombay Tramway Company and Electric Company. It is therefore the duty of the Government to see that all public utility companies should, as far as possible, be taken over by the Provincial Governments, so that when there are popular ministers elected by the people they will have the choice to manage their affairs according to their own policy. It is no use putting obstacles in their way of development by taking away transport in one way or another. They should have a voice in any liabilities which the Centre incurs in this respect. I therefore appeal to the Honourable the War Transport Member, if he really wants that something should be done, that he should arrange for the allotment of one full day for the discussion of this matter. For passing this Bill a special Session was invited and nearly 16 days were allotted. Is it fair now to finish the whole matter within a few hours? We have also to consider the question of waterways, coastal trade and hundred and one other things. Besides you are spending crores and crores of rupees on road-making; the first planning report of the Government of India provides for an enormous number of roads; the Provincial Governments have undertaken the construction of a large number of roads. Who is going to maintain these roads? And how are the people going to pay taxes for all these roads to be maintained? . . .

Mr. Chairman (Mr. Abdul Qaiyum): The Honourable Member has one minute more.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: Sir, I appeal to him that if he wants to carry through this project and if it is urgent he should set aside one day to enable this House to discuss it thoroughly and tender its advice.

Nawab Siddique Ali Khan (Central Provinces and Berar: Muhammadan): Sir, the Honourable the War Transport Member yesterday evening asked us to read his speech delivered on the 15th of January and to base our remarks on it. This morning I have carefully gone through his speech, but I regret to say that I have not been able to find in it a definite scheme put by the Honourable Member. He has given two reasons in justification of taking over the bus services throughout India. The first reason which he has given is to regulate competition between road and rail by the control of fares, routes and traffic. The second reason which he has given is co-ordination between road and rail by negotiation of financial participation by the State-owned railways in reliable transport companies, either existing or still unborn. This morning we expected that Sir Kenneth Mitchell would be able to help us in understanding the position, but with due respect to him, I must say that he has not been helpful in any respect.

[Nawab Siddique Ali Khan.]

The Honourable the Railway Member was talking about cut-throat competition. We have to see who has been responsible for this and who is guilty of this charge. Sir, I have got facts and figures in my possession from which I can satisfactorily prove that the railway itself has been responsible for this cut-throat competition. I have got personal knowledge of my province—the Central Provinces and Berar. There was a bus service between Nagpur and Amroati and the motor-owners charged Rs. 1-8-0 while the third class passenger fare was Rs. 2-4-0. This affected the revenues of the railway and the third class passenger fare was reduced from Rs. 2-4-0 to Re. 1. Similarly there was a bus service between Nagpur and Wardha. The bus people used to charge ten annas for the journey between these two places. The railway authorities started selling return tickets for Re. 1. There is a place called Kamptee at a distance of ten miles from Nagpur. The bus people used to charge four annas but the railway company started selling return tickets for three annas. So it is quite evident that this competition was started by the railways and not by the bus companies. In my province the expressions and terms used by the Railway Member raised suspicion in our minds when he said that this management had been entrusted to reliable motor transport companies either existing or still unborn.

I would like to give a short history of the motor owners and the bus services. This business was started 25 years back in the year 1920. The motor owners started plying touring cars and afterwards when they could get buses they started a bus service. After the enactment of the Motor Vehicles Act in 1939, some unions were formed and companies also were established. Unions were formed and registered under the Union Act and some companies in Amraoti and Yeotmal were also formed. At present, Sir, some of the unions are converted into limited companies and the rest of them are registered under the Indian Partnership Act as firms. These companies and firms are existing but unfortunately in my province newly created companies have come into the forefront and those people who used to sell motor accessories or deal in motor cars or had motor workshops have been at the instance of the Provincial Government formed into companies and the work has been entrusted to them. Thereby they have ousted the poor motor owners and thus deprived them of their livelihood.

We the members of this Party demand that those people who have been in this business for a number of years should not be ousted in such a manner. They must have precedence over other newly formed companies or the companies which the Honourable the Railway Member says are unborn.

The second thing which we want is that those people who are employed in this business should not be ousted by being replaced by those people who are at present serving in military motor transport. We want, Sir, that those people who have established this business so long ago should have the majority of the shares in the companies which are to be floated and they should have an effective voice in the management of the affairs of the new companies.

I do not want to take more time of the House as I understand that the Deputy Leader of my Party wishes to ask some questions of the Honourable the Railway Member.

I support the cut motion moved by my Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): It is not my intention on this occasion to take much of the time of the Honourable House: and if I intervene in this debate at all, it is with the object of clinching the issue which is for consideration before the Honourable Members of this Assembly.

Sir, it is evident, and it has been proved beyond any shadow of doubt by all the speeches, including that of Sir Kenneth Mitchell, that have been made by those who have preceded me, that we have indeed no scheme before us which we could consider and about which we could come to a decision whether the sum of Rs. 82 lakhs should be spent or not. Sir, I think it is

asking much and expecting too much of the Non-Official Members of this House to sanction such a large sum of money without knowing the details of the scheme on which this is to be spent. As was pointed out by Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, a prudent Government would have come forward with a resolution, before including a proposal like this in the budget, to get the opinion of the House with regard to such an expenditure. I said, Mr. Chairman, "a prudent Government"; Knowing the Government as we do, it is but natural that they should have thrown prudence to the winds. Sir, throughout the speeches that have been made by the representatives of the Government, inside this House as well as outside, all that one comes across are words like Amalgamation, Co-ordination, Rationalisation, Public Utility Corporation, etc. It is all words, words, and words and there is no definite scheme, there is no definite idea as to what it is that the Government intend to do. I think the Honourable Members of this House would really be failing in their duty if they voted such a large sum of money to be spent by the Government as they pleased without knowing the particulars of the scheme, according to which this amount was to be spent. Therefore it is that my Honourable friend Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan has come forward with this cut motion that this amount should be omitted from the Budget. If the Government later on are ready with a scheme and if they place that scheme before this House and the House approves of that scheme I have no doubt that the House will be prepared to sanction this amount or even more for this particular purpose. But we cannot be a party to placing such a large sum of money in the hands of the Government without knowing and approving the scheme which they intend to introduce in this connection. Therefore I hope that every Honourable non-official Member of this House would support this motion, because the object is that we cannot take the responsibility of entrusting the Government with such a large amount of money without knowing how that money is to be spent. I support the motion which has been moved by my Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan.

Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai (Bombay Northern Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Mr. Chairman, having been more or less an active party to the discussions when the Motor Vehicles Bill was under discussion, as Sir Kenneth Mitchell might remember, I feel that it is my duty to say a few words in support of this motion. That is not to be regarded, as indeed it is not, that any question of censure or hostility is involved in this motion. Let us consider this matter in the way in which it now appears, though my imagination did not carry me as far as that stage when we might find ourselves in some such situation as we find ourselves today. I will remind the House and such friends as were present on that occasion when the discussion arose as to whether or not there should be a representative of the Railways on the Motor Transport Authorities in the Provinces, I took part in that debate and I was one of those who supported that one of the members on the transport authority should be a representative of the Railways. The reason which I then gave still holds good but it should not be used for a wrong purpose. I then pointed out to the House, as I point it out again, that in this country, in so far as the Railways are concerned, we are in a somewhat anomalous position compared with the means of transport elsewhere, so far as I am aware. If there are two private individuals or companies or corporations owning two different forms of transport and a question of competition arises, the State or the Legislature is in a much more easy and comfortable position doing only the right thing as far as they think in the interests of the traveller. Here it is true that in so far as India is concerned we are debtors to the tune of some 800 crores and we have often said that the most integral part of the national debt is the ownership of the Railway system and in fact, the other day the Transport Member told us that now the State has practically swept into its ownership the last remnants of the railway system operating in this country. Hence it is that when it comes to a competition with other forms of transport we probably hesitate a great deal as to how the two things are to be co-ordinated, a word which must be used, whatever may be its implications, because what we lose on the Railways we

[Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai.]

will have to make good from the pocket of the taxpayer in order to pay our interest charge, which at one time stood as high as about 31 crores annually. I was for this reason anxious that the interest of the Railways should be protected to the extent to which we can as against any reckless competition, on a short route competition between any other forms of transport. But today we are up against a very different proposition. While the interest of the railways must be safeguarded, we must not make it more than a Frankenstein, as it is likely to be, if we agree to the grant of a proposition which is at present mooted before this House.

I remind the House that there was a time when year after year we moved Resolutions on the question that a workshop should be set up in India for the purpose of the manufacture of locomotives. Sir Zafrullah Khan, who was then the Member in charge, got up and told the House that their estimate was a cost of about some 95 lakhs of rupees and he also told us that if they were to purchase them outside it would be 20 per cent. cheaper in cost and hence the Government must consider whether such a large outlay as 95 lakhs should be made. He put forward that plea notwithstanding the fact that this side of the House clearly pointed out to him the fallacy. We said then, as it is now being painfully realised, "You have 800 crores sunk in Railways. You may have rolling stock, you may have the track and you may not have the engines". I have never heard it argued, no businessman ever tries to argue to himself whether each rupee that he puts into a business should be independently valued on its return. I then pointed out as I point it out again that it is a question of really finding out, whether or not 801 crores are paid and not whether or not one crore is paid and I trust that it is now being realised what advantage it would have been if they had then taken the course which this House time after time wanted the Government to adopt but which the Government each time, in its own wisdom, always turned down. That is the only co-operation which we have got out, during the many years that I have sat on these Benches. Hence it is that we must begin to consider (when we come with a salutary proposition on this side of the House, it is always rejected) that it is not a question merely of repaying the debt. It is a question of going slow when we have got to go slow.

Of all the means of transport that have been mentioned there is one which has not been mentioned and which is very important and hence it is that I wish to occupy the time of the House during the rest of the remarks that I have got to make.

During the course of the enquiry which took place many years ago into the rural economy of a part of the district to which I belong (a part of my own constituency) a question arose as to the cost of agriculture, and a certain figure was put down as the cost of maintaining two bullocks or four bullocks according to the number of acres the cultivator had: the commission which consisted of a judge and Sir Reginald Maxwell (whom I knew then as Mr. Maxwell) formed the committee and when we put forward the expenses, they were amazed and we had to point out these matters, germane to this proposition, that since the Tapti Valley Railway came into existence, half the earnings of bullock transport from Bardoli to Surat had disappeared completely, with the result that a bullock from the point of view of agriculture was twice the amount for purposes of maintenance as compared with what it was before: for, in the agricultural season it was used for pure and regular agricultural purposes, ploughing in particular, and in the dry season they plied carts from Bardoli to Surat for purposes of transport. So that, in this country very often when we talk of individual things, always remembering the bigger mechanical things which the world has now swallowed up, we begin to forget that the readjustment of the economy of this country requires far more care than has hitherto been bestowed upon it. I therefore say that it is not a mere question—you can flood this country with many vehicles, probably lakhs if not millions in their number, cast out or otherwise, for the purposes for which now they are being

manufactured, for the purpose of competing in the art of more intensively destroying man by man; but when they are cast out some avenue would have to be found for their use; and let me caution myself and this House against being in any manner unduly attracted by the prospect of this country being turned into a dumping ground of those products, and not remembering at the same time—it is not enough that you would have a railway to protect, it is not enough that you have the main organised services of the roads to protect, but you must remember that when you lay out all this expenditure there is the rural economy with which you will have to deal, and which has now fortunately after hundreds of years for the first time come to the forefront of the understanding in the new planning; and even when it comes to the future planning it must be obvious to those who have read these matters and considered with the care and attention which it was my duty to devote to it, that there is a supervening importance and exaggeration given to the industrial side of the development of this country. I am not one of those who do not desire it: in fact I am one of those who encourage it; but let it be remembered that no amount of mere industrial or mechanical progress that we may make or borrow, that you would be able to do as much from the point of view of the bulk of the population of this country, if you fail to pay attention to their economy; and hence it is that I refuse to lend myself to the proposition that is put forward before this House that the railway will start on this particular venture. As I said, it is a question of considering the people's interests at large: it is not a question of dealing with this matter as if it was just a mere demand out of the plenitude of the wealth that has come into the coffers of the War Transport Member this year.

But let me also remind my Honourable friend on the other side of two matters which I might have mentioned in another context but which is equally important here. This Budget no doubt on the income side consists largely of three debit items, apart from the monies that are paid by me and many other civilian travellers and whose goods are carried; and that is the Indian exchequer for the carriage of troops to the extent to which they have got to pay for it, the Americans—and I hope they too bear some share of it, and the British treasury; and that therefore this income while it is an income in so far as income tax returns are concerned, I hope and trust that this mere accounting on paper will not be regarded as so much income in his hand which like a spendthrift he can begin to spend as he likes; for indeed when the time comes to adjust these items, I am not so optimistic or sanguine a person as to imagine that all this money that he considers as in his hand is actually in his hand. I hope and trust that those who owe money to the railways by reason of the present transport—60 per cent. of it will still be paid, that this money, every pice of it, whatever may be in their adjustment, will be recovered to the last pie, and honestly paid and the debt discharged—it is only then this Budget will be a reality. Today this Budget is a reality to the extent to which I pay when I travel to Bombay; but it is not an equal reality when debits are made and credits are given by those who are stronger in economic situation than ourselves in the financial strength we possess; and hence it is that I do ask this House—and I hope and trust that the Government will consider long and carefully before making it an issue of opposition—that this House cautions them against entering on this new enterprise without due regard to the considerations which we have put forward. Sir, I support this cut motion.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Sir, with regard, first, to the remarks which fell from the last speaker, I could not be more in agreement with him when he said that the present figures in the Budget are not a reality. It was two years ago in my first budget speech when I used the term 'illusory' of the figures which we were facing then; and I am perfectly conscious that the figures with which we are now dealing are equally not a reality judged by ordinary conditions, and that they have to be dealt with with corresponding caution, a caution which I endeavoured to emphasise in the course of my Budget speech.

[Sir Edward Benthall.]

With regard to the Honourable Leader of the Muslim League Party, I understood him to say that he could not and would not agree to this grant unless he had full details of the scheme that he was asked to sanction.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: And the scheme had the approval of this House.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I cannot guarantee the approval of this House, but I am in the happy position of giving him all the details that anybody can wish for; and I may point out further that if any member of the Honourable Member's party on the Standing Finance Committee had there asked for the details, they would have been put before him straightaway on that committee.

Sir, the 82 lakhs to which the cut motion refers is a provision, not for any post-war transport purposes, but for the provision of lorries and the running expenses of lorries and buses on certain routes in order to relieve congestion during war time. This demand is there for the purely temporary purpose of relieving congestion in war time and has nothing whatever to do, except indirectly in that the railways will be owners of the vehicles, nothing whatever to do with the post-war schemes which have been under discussion. I am sorry to bring this forward at this late stage but I think my Honourable friend the Mover was aware of the position.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: No, Sir. If the Honourable Member will allow me, the Budget proposals which came before the Standing Finance Committee were handed over to us only a day before. We had to discuss the whole scheme and I suppose that all the Honourable Members of the Standing Finance Committee will agree that there was great pressure on our time when we had to go through the scheme and we had to sanction this scheme and we did it on the clear understanding that we were not bound by what we did and that we simply left the matter to be debated by the House when the proposals come before it.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I quite understand the difficulties under which the Standing Finance Committee was working and I do not wish to make a point of that. I wish the House to understand what this 82 lakhs is about. It is a grant for temporary war purposes and is not for post-war transport at all. It is for affording relief on certain routes. I am prepared to give the Honourable Member full details. On the B. & A. Railway, there is a goods service, Siliguri to Bagrakota for the carriage in one direction of coal and in the other direction of tea in order to relieve congestion on the metre gauge railway. There is a passenger service from Dacca to Naraingunj and from Santipur to Nabadwip. On the G. I. P. Railway there is a goods service from Poona to Ahmednagar to relieve a very congested section of the railway where we cannot carry the goods required for war purposes. On the South Indian Railway, there is a Coimbatore—Ootacamund goods service, primarily started, if I remember aright, for moving potatoes down from Ootacamund, because the trains could not move them in sufficient quantities. There is the Mettupalayam—Ootacamund passenger service and there are three or four more but I think I have quoted sufficient to indicate to Honourable Members that this is not a question of post-war transport but merely a matter of relieving congestion of goods and passengers in an emergency, a congestion which we were asked by the Central Advisory Council to relieve. I hope that statement will satisfy the Honourable Members.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: I am afraid it is too late now. If the Honourable Member would allow me just one second, I would like to say that I wish the Government had stated their case earlier during the course of this debate and not at the last moment now. We are at a great disadvantage, because we cannot examine the speech of the Honourable War Transport Member. Now, he has referred to certain services. Will he give details as to

how these services are being run, who is running them, what is the position of the private operators, are there any companies, what has happened to them, how are the licenses granted and so on?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I will answer all these points straight-away. I am only too anxious to give you the facts. The lorries are either worked departmentally by the railways, that is, owned and operated by the railway or they are in some cases run by tied mileage contractors, contractors who are given the lorries in order to run them for the railways for the purpose of relieving rail traffic and the licences are issued by the Provincial Government who have been consulted and are of course aware of the congestion of traffic on these particular routes. I think that is a complete answer to my Honourable friend's question. (Interruption by Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari.) I am not giving way.

Mr. Chairman (Mr. Abdul Qaiyum): The Honourable Member has only twenty minutes to reply. He should not be interrupted.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I shall find it difficult to cover the whole ground in 20 minutes. This cut refers to 82 lakhs for war time purposes. I am aware that the discussions in the House have not centred on that at all and that that is not the intention of the House. I am perfectly aware of what the intention of the House is. What the House seeks to secure, as I understand it, is first of all that in the case of any schemes in which the railways embark on road transport, the House should have a discussion and a full understanding of what is going on and secondly that the small man should be protected. If that is a correct understanding, then I am in no disagreement with my Honourable friends. I welcome this discussion and made special mention of this subject in the Budget speech with the object of drawing attention to it. We had not reached anything like a policy until about January 15th when we discussed this matter with the Post-War Policy Committee after a two days' discussion on the Transport Advisory Council which consists of representatives of Provinces and States. Up to that time we were groping about the policy. Mr. Chetty was perfectly correct in quoting my statement that the policy was not settled in November. The policy has been subject to constant modification. It is still subject to modification in the light of discussions in this House and in the light of the Provincial Governments' policies. I gave the widest possible publicity to the discussions of the Transport Advisory Council and the Post-War Policy Committee in order that the public might know precisely what was in the mind of the Government and I was frankly hoping for some Resolution which would give an opportunity for discussing the matter in the House, if the House was really interested in the matter. This is the first opportunity to discuss it and for the first time we have been able to put before the House a co-ordinated plan, settled within the last month.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: What is that plan?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: It is very difficult to cover the whole of this subject in 20 minutes.

Mr. Chairman (Mr. Abdul Qaiyum): The Honourable Member can carry on. There is plenty of time.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I am only too anxious to deal with the subject in all its details. Sir F. E. James mentioned four principles. I need not go into them, for lack of time. He referred to strategic obligations, industrial and agricultural development, the export trade, the policy of the location of industry and the course which the expansion of social services is to take. The road transport expansion is in accordance with plans which are being agreed between the Provinces and the Centre, between the Centre and the States and between the Provinces and States because roads run continuously through Provinces and States without regard to jurisdiction; and the plans will naturally have regard to all the important considerations to which he referred. We cannot hold up planning pending, for instance, the final solution of the social service programme of the country. We must get ahead with this planning and we must be prepared to modify it, as we are to go. Then Sir Frederick James found great difficulty in understanding what is meant by "raising the

[Sir Edward Benthall.]

productivity of transport." I meant precisely what I said. I have read through the sentence in the Budget speech and I think it puts the position very well, if he will only carefully study it. It means putting each medium of transport to the maximum use. It is no use running empty buses and empty trains in competition with each other. In brief this is what that phrase means.

As regards the question of long distance goods transport, I have here quotations from the minutes of both the Transport Advisory Council and the Post-War Policy Committee who have discussed this and have agreed.

This is what the Policy Committee says:—

"long distance traffic on roads should be restricted in the interest of over all transport economy, due regard being given by the controlling authorities to the special requirements of perishable and fragile goods for rapid transport by road over longer distances."

Sir, this was the plan which was very carefully considered.

With reference to the remarks of the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition, it is vitally necessary in our planning that we should take care of the railway finances. Railway finances are one of the keystones of the prosperity of India. If they go to pieces as they went to pieces in the thirties, there will be that much money less for development of education, health, agriculture and everything else. In the broad interests of the country, not only of the railways, but in the broad interests of the country, it is necessary that we should try and keep their finances stable, both that they may contribute to the general revenues which in turn could contribute to the other nation building services and because if they do not and the reverse happens, they become a drag, and then all our financial planning and the proposed post-war development will go by the board. Sir, it has been suggested that railways are trying to secure a commanding or controlling interest. That phrase was used in the earlier stages, but as I have explained, it has now been modified. All that we seek to secure at the present time is a substantial interest and by substantial interest, we mean whatever may be suitable to the particular company. In the case of one company, we are negotiating for 51 per cent., in the case of another—I think I am correct in saying—it is as low as 25 per cent. Obviously a five per cent. interest in a company is not enough to make an investment worth while. But one big object of taking a financial interest is to secure closer integration with road transport operators. Obviously if you are in a position to sit round a table and discuss your problems of competition, with a financial bond between you, then you are in a much happier position to come to an agreement as to how best to regulate the competition on that particular route than you will be by sitting in two separate rooms and fighting each other by correspondence. That is really perhaps the biggest gain of all the contact which comes from close association. I would remind the House that these two Committees, the Transport Advisory Committee and the Policy Committee, both—the latter by a small majority—agreed that the railways should endeavour to negotiate an interest in road transport.

Sir Syed Raza Ali (Cities of the United Provinces: Muhammadan Urban): On a point of information. The Honourable Member mentioned 51 per cent. and 25 per cent. as substantial interest that the Railways desired to have. Does that include also shares both of Railways and Provincial Governments or the share of Railways alone?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Perhaps I had better pass straight on to the question of the policy of the Provinces. Road transport in its administration is a provincial subject. It is the Provinces who issue licences, it is they who will say whether a certain company can run buses or lorries along a certain route, how many buses can be run, what the maximum and minimum rates should be. It is they who regulate them, and it is they who will regulate a company in which railways are interested just as much as they regulate a one-man owned bus. Now, Sir, Provincial Governments have varying ideas on the subject of provincial transport. Two Provinces—I am not going to specify their names because their policies like ours are in a state of flux—two provinces at least have stated that they intend themselves as Governments to own their motor transport in their Provinces. Very well. It is for them to decide to own

all the motor vehicles in that Province. Then there is all the more need for us to come in as the Centre and come to some agreement with that Province, because provincial finances represented by road ownership will be directly in competition with Central finances as represented by the Railways, so that obviously there is all the more need for co-ordination. Other Provinces, I can think of four immediately, are intending themselves to take an interest in road transport in varying degrees. One at least intends to divide its area into ten spheres of influence and to form ten companies in which it proposes to take an interest. Sir, time does not permit me to go into greater detail.

[At this stage, Mr. Chairman (Mr. Abdul Qaiyum) vacated the Chair which was then occupied by Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta).]

I should like to make the point that when a Province wishes us to take a financial interest in road transport, are we to refuse to take any interest in developing road transport in that area? I think, Sir, it is very difficult for the Central Government to refuse.

Then, Sir, with regard to the remarks of the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition about cart traffic, I am in cordial agreement, but I trust that the Honourable Member's desire, which I share, to preserve the bullock cart will not mean any lack of desire to push out good roads into villages for general development.

I will now try and bring this discussion to a close. One of the main interests which the House showed was a desire to preserve the small owner. That is also the desire of the Central Government, but I must put the position to the House. Imagine, for instance, a road running parallel to the railway and six bus owners on that road competing for passenger traffic with the railways. Now, Sir, it is our desire to reach an agreement with these six bus owners on rates and fares. It is our desire, and we will try if we can, to reach a financial agreement, to form a little company with, say, a lakh of rupees as capital and try to work it as a combined concern. But it is perfectly open to those owners to say, "No, we are not interested, we prefer to carry on as we are, to compete with you." What can we do then? We can try and reach an agreement if we can, but if we are not able to reach an agreement, what then?

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Stop their license.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: But it does not rest with us. It rests with the Provincial Governments.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: How will they compete with you when you lower fares?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: You get on to the jolly old cut throat days.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Might I point out that third class fares from Meerut City to Delhi is only eleven annas by railway, while the motor bus owners charge one rupee. There is no competition from the bus owners, on the other hand the competition is from the railways.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Ordinary road passenger fares and rail passenger fares are much the same. That point is dealt with at some length in the Road-Rail Expert Committee report. Ordinarily there will not be competition in long distance goods, but there will be competition in passengers. Now coming to those six bus owners, you see the choice of competition lies not with the railways but with those bus owners. What, briefly, we are trying to do is to suggest to these six bus owners to get together and form one little combine themselves. Then the railways will try to make working arrangements with them and, if they are willing, to take a financial interest in the company for the common good. If they do not agree, then we must regretfully agree to compete with each other and sooner or later, one side or both will suffer, and if in fact disagreement goes on all over the country, you will get back to the cut throat days which existed before the war. It is those conditions that we desire in the joint interests to eliminate. We are trying to bring in a new era in road-rail co-ordination; we are making an earnest and serious attempt to do so. We are trying quite candidly to maintain the interests of the railways because they are essential interests which must be protected in the interests of

[Sir Edward Benthall.]

the country. But we are also trying to build up a sound and prosperous road transport system, bringing in the co-operation of the provinces, bringing in the co-operation of all operators and trying to take care of the interests of all. It is a very complex and difficult problem. I seek the support of the House in this matter, and am anxious to secure it. This discussion, as I hope Honourable Members will agree, has been very useful and I trust illuminating, in spite of some of the remarks that have been made. I think, Sir, that the rejection of the post-war policy not only of the Central Government but of the Provinces would be very regrettable, and it will certainly be a very big set-back to the progress of planning. Road transport and road development is in the forefront of planning, and it will be unfortunate if we come to a dead stop and cannot get ahead. I think I have said enough to show the House that what we are seeking is a rational form of development. It may lead on to what I understand is the desire of some Honourable Members of the House, public utility corporations. We are trying to do nothing to prejudice developments in that direction in the future. Sir, I am only too anxious to secure the support of the House in this matter.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member's time is up.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Sir, I will make a proposal. I am anxious to have this matter further discussed. I am afraid, it is, as the length of my speech has already shown, one which takes a good deal of time and a good deal of close study; and I am quite prepared that this subject should be taken up by one of the committees which deals with railways. Sir Frederick James suggested the Standing Finance Committee; there is the Central Advisory Council for Railways, or I am prepared to consider a special committee for the discussion of this matter. I trust that the Honourable Mover will consider this

proposal and give us an opportunity for further discussion of what is a very important subject, and that having heard what I have to say he will be good enough to withdraw his motion.

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

"That the demand under the head 'Working Expenses—Miscellaneous Expenses' be reduced by Rs. 82 lakhs."

The Assembly divided:

AYES—58.

Abdul Basith Choudhury, Dewan.
 Abdul Ghani, Maulvi Muhammad.
 Abdul Qaiyum, Mr.
 Abdullah, Mr. H. M.
 Ayyangar, Mr. M. Ananthasayanam.
 Azhar Ali, Mr. Muhammad.
 Banerjee, Dr. P. N.
 Chattopadhyaya, Mr. Amarendra Nath.
 Chettiar, Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam.
 Chetty, Mr. Sami Vencatachelam.
 Choudhury, Mr. Muhammad Hussain.
 Daga, Seth Sheodas.
 Dam, Mr. Ananga Mohan.
 Das, Mr. B.
 Das, Pandit Nilakantha.
 Desai, Mr. Bhulabhai J.
 Essak Sait, Mr. H. A. Sathar H.
 Fazli-Haq Piracha, Khan Bahadur Shaikh.
 Gauri Shankar Singh, Mr.
 Ghiasuddin, Mr. M.
 Gupta, Mr. K. S.
 Habibar Rahman, Dr.
 Hans Raj, Raizada.
 Hegde, Sri K. B. Jinaraja.
 Hosmani, Mr. S. K.
 Iamail Khan, Hajee Chowdhury Muhammad.
 Kailash Bihari Lall, Mr.
 Krishnamachari, Mr. T. T.
 Lahiri Chaudhury, Mr. D. K.

Lakhichand, Mr. Rajmal.
 Lalljee, Mr. Hooseinbhoj A.
 Liaquat Ali Khan, Nawabzada Muhammad.
 Maitra, Pandit Lakshmi Kanta.
 Mangal Singh, Sardar.
 Manu Subedar, Mr.
 Misra, Pandit Shambhudayal.
 Murtuza Sahib Bahadur, Maulvi Syed.
 Naidu, Mr. G. Rangiah.
 Nairang, Syed Ghulam Bhik.
 Nauman, Mr. Muhammad.
 Neogy, Mr. K. C.
 Pande, Mr. Badri Dutt.
 Raghbir Narain Singh, Choudhri.
 Ram Narayan Singh, Mr.
 Ranga, Prof. N. G.
 Raza Ali, Sir Syed.
 Reddiar, Mr. K. Sitarama.
 Satyanarayana Moorty, Mr. A.
 Sham Lal Lala.
 Siddique Ali Khan, Nawab.
 Siddiquee, Shaikh Rafuddin Ahmad.
 Sinha, Mr. Satya Narayan.
 Sri Prakasa, Mr.
 Srivastava, Mr. Hari Sharan Prasad.
 Subbarayan, Shrimati K. Radha Bai.
 Yamin Khan, Sir Muhammad.
 Zafar Ali Khan, Maulana.
 Zia Uddin Ahmad, Dr. Sir.

NOES—46.

Ahmad Nawaz Khan, Major Nawab Sir.	Khare, The Honourable Dr. N. B.
Ambedkar, The Honourable Dr. B. B.	Krishnamoorthy, Mr. E. S. A.
Anthony, Mr. Frank R.	Kushal Pal Singh, Raja Bahadur.
Azizul Huque, The Honourable Sir M.	Lawson, Mr. C. P.
Benthall, The Honourable Sir Edward.	Mitchell, Sir Kenneth.
Bewoor, Sir Gurunath.	Muazzam Sahib Bahadur, Mr. Muhammad.
Bhagchand Soni, Rai Bahadur Sir Seth.	Mudaliar, The Honourable Dewan Bahadur
Caroe, Sir Olaf.	Sir A. Ramaswami.
Chatterjee, Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C.	Mudie, The Honourable Sir Francis.
Daga, Seth Sunder Lall.	Piarc Lall Kureel, Mr.
Dalal, Dr. Sir Ratanji Dinshaw.	Raisman, The Honourable Sir Jeremy.
Dalal, The Honourable Sir Ardeshir.	Richardson, Sir Henry.
Dalpat Singh, Sardar Bahadur Captain.	Roy, The Honourable Sir Asoka.
Ghuznavi, Sir Abdul Halim.	Shahban, Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir
Habibur Rahman, Khan Bahadur Sheikh.	Muhammad.
Haidar, Khan Bahadur Shamsuddin.	Spence, Sir George.
Imam, Mr. Saiyid Haidar.	Stokes, Mr. H. G.
Inskip, Mr. A. C.	Sukthankar, Mr. Y. N.
Ismail Alikhan, Kunwer Hajee.	Sultan Ahmed, The Honourable Sir.
James, Sir F. E.	Thakur Singh, Capt.
Jawahar Singh, Sardar Bahadur Sardar Sir.	Tyson, Mr. G. W.
Jehangir, Sir Cowasjee.	Tyson, Mr. J. D.
Joshi, Mr. N. M.	Wagstaff, Col. H. W.
Kamaluddin Ahmad, Shamsul-Ulema.	Zahid Husain, Mr.

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 1—RAILWAY BOARD

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Sir, I move:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 22,65,000, be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1946, in respect of 'Railway Board'."

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

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 22,65,000, be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1946, in respect of 'Railway Board'."

PAUCITY OF MUSLIMS IN RAILWAY SERVICES.

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

"That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

The purpose of this cut motion is to discuss the paucity of Muslims in Railway services. In 1934 the Government of India through the Home Department passed a Resolution fixing certain percentages for the Mussalmans in the railway and other services. Since 1934 nine years have elapsed and we should now see whether the progress is worth mentioning, or not. When the Resolution was passed, there was much agitation in the country that the Mussalmans have been favoured and have been shown undue favouritism. But it was not the case. That Resolution was a very faulty one. According to that Resolution, the European element was to be excluded, and whatever remain 25 per cent. of that was to be given to Mussalmans. In those days, the European element was about 50 per cent., rather above, and out of the remaining 50 per cent., the Muslims were given 25 per cent., which means 12.5 per cent. Nothing more than that. However, that Resolution was given effect to and it was introduced also in the Railway Services.

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

What we find from the railway administration report is that our position in the three classes of services has deteriorated. These three services are the Superior Service, the Senior Subordinate Service (up to 200 or Rs. 250) and the Subordinate Service. Our position in the Superior Gazetted Service in 1934 was 4.67 per cent. and in 1944 it came to only 9.88 per cent. The progress per year has been about .58 per cent., which means that it will take 47 years to complete our quota of 27 per cent. Our population in this country, according to the new census of 1941, is about 27 per cent. of the whole. If even on population basis we are going to be given anything, then we can have something more.

[Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani.]

In the second class of service, i.e., the Senior Subordinate Service, our position in 1934 was 4.84 per cent. and in 1944 it was only 3.21 per cent. That means that we have secured only 3.37 per cent. That means that it will take 72 years to complete our quota.

In the last service, that is the service taken as a whole, the total number of persons working in all railways in 1934 including the Railway Board and the Railway Clearing Accounts Office was 7,01,436 of which the Mussalmans were 1,51,634, i.e., 21.61 per cent. Now, the total number of persons in 1944 working on all the railways is 8,89,072. Of these, the Mussalmans are 2,09,190, i.e., 23.52 per cent. We have gained only .212 per cent. per year, which means that we shall take 127 years to complete our quota. This is the position of the Mussalmans in the railway services in a nutshell.

By this the House can judge whether the Mussalmans are given a fair deal in the railway services. I know every shelter will be taken under direct recruitment. When I moved this cut-motion in 1938, I remember that the Member in charge then told the House that he could not wave the magic wand to put in the Mussalmans and evict others but now the Honourable Member in charge should judge what is the position of Mussalmans after nine years as I have shown according to the report prepared by them.

As regards direct recruitment, I will just draw the attention of the House to page 33 of the Administration Report, Volume I, for 1943-44. Here the combined figure percentage is given of permanent and temporary recruitment.

According to the tabulator, the Muslim percentage rose up to 31.2 in 1936-37. This was maintained in 1937-38. But after 1940 it commenced to go down. It decreased to 28.8 per cent. in 1940-41, 27.5 per cent. in 1941-42, and 24.7 in 1942-43. Today, it is the same as it was in 1943-44. From this you will see that every year it has been going down instead of rising. Whereas, if you will compare the figure of the majority community, say Hindus, you will find that from the year 1939-40 the figure of 57.5 per cent. has risen up to 67.3 per cent. in 1944. Then you will find that in the case of Mussalmans, it is regularly going down and in the course of the same period majority community, in whose hands every power is, the percentage has been gradually rising. The Mussalmans can legitimately say that in the year 1940, when the Pakistan resolution was adopted at Lahore, its reaction commenced and it is the reaction of that resolution which worked on the minds of the majority community who have power and influence in railway services and having regard to that they made certain kinds of arrangements by which the percentage of Mussalmans went down regularly every year.

Different kinds of arrangements are made to deprive Mussalmans although appointed in service. I pointed out in the debate in 1941 that two posts were reserved for Mussalmans in the Lahore Division of the North Western Railway. Two Mussalmans were appointed. After a year it so happened that one non-Mussalman was imported from Baluchistan circle and he was taken in against one of these two posts of Mussalmans already in permanent service and on probation. The non-Mussalman who was imported from Baluchistan was confirmed and one of the Mussalmans who was appointed on a permanent basis was after a year turned out. Similarly you will find that when the O. T. Railway was taken over by the Government there was one Muslim of Bihar acting as an Apprentice Inspector of Ways and Work. His services were approved and appreciated while he was at Izzatnagar but the moment charge of the line was made over to the O. T. Railway that Muslim was turned out. He was the son of a late engineer serving on that railway.

Recently, I have been informed that three special class apprentices were turned out from Jamalpur (E. I. R.). One is Sabir Ali, who has worked for three years, the second is Hashmi, who has worked for two years and the third is a man whose name is not known to me. These are special class apprentices who had been appointed on the recommendation of the Federal Public Service Commission. The plea on which they have been turned out is most whimsical

and fictitious. It was due to discipline. What kind of discipline these people want is known to them only. I regret to say that the officers, the persons in authority also shut their eyes and did not see that persons who were selected by the Federal Public Service Commission and who had received training for three years at least after taking their B.Sc. degree, were summarily turned out. These things are happening daily. The cases are innumerable and time does not permit me to place before you the atrocities and *zoolums* of railway officers who exercise their undue influence and turn out the Muslims.

In the last Session I put questions regarding one Superintendent of Telegraphs at Lahore who forged the register. He marked all the Muslim linemen who were written down as literate as illiterate by adding "il" before "literate" and did *vice versa* to the non-Muslims. The illiterate Hindus were marked as literate.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadian Urban): Who did it?

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: The Superintendent, Telegraphs, Lahore Circle. I say that such things are happening in the Telegraphs Department. In the Railways also you will find such things happening under the very nose of the Government of India. Registers are forged. Letters have been detected giving instructions to subordinate officers to appoint such and such a man, who is a son or relation of the author of the letter. Letters are discovered instructing people to see that someone passed a certain examination. Last year at Patna such a kind of letter was discovered but what was the punishment? Only that fellow was transferred from Patna to Calcutta.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: What department was it?

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: The Posts and Telegraphs Department. I know I am discussing Railways but as an instance I say that such malpractices are practised against the poor Muslims of this country.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Not on the Railways.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: The railways are full of instances but time does not permit me to give them.

• **The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** Just give one instance.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: I have just said that you have turned out the special class apprentices at Jamalpur. You may examine that case.

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

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: With these words I move my cut motion.

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

"That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall (Bhagalpur, Purnea and the Sonthal Parganas: Non-Muhammadian): Sir, I beg to oppose this motion. I want to make it clear at the very beginning that my opposition is not because I do not feel that justice should be done if there has been any injustice done to some section of the people who follow the religion of Islam but my opposition is on account of the fact that such a motion in this House fouls the atmosphere of this House. I think that on such occasions I will be failing in my duty if I do not point out to my friends that it is not in good spirit that such motions should be brought in the name of a class of people who happen to follow a particular religion.

I find in the motion that the Government is to be censured because there is paucity of Muslims in the Railway Department. I cannot understand what it means. If the Muslims are there as Muslims that is, followers of Islam, then it is really a thing that should be understood in the sense that perhaps more prayer is required in the Railway Department by Muslims. They may go there and offer prayers and they may demand some facility for making prayers so that that administration may reform and the well-being of the general mass of people promoted. But I think perhaps that is not the sense of the mover of this motion, viz., that they want more facilities for prayer in the Railway Department nor that the conditions of the people may be improved, because

[Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall.]

other people may vie with them in offering prayers to the Almighty for improving the condition of the people.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (East Central Punjab: Muhammadan): I will offer prayers that Mr. Kailash Behari Lall may be converted to Islam.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: I will think it a proud privilege to get myself converted to Islam if I may be able to do some good to the people by that way.

I cannot make out any meaning in such motions in this House to the effect that there should be more Muslims in the Railway Department. Incidentally I may point out, without any feeling against any community as a community, that there are departments of the Government, where accidentally, there may be all Sikhs or all Sanatanists or some people who may follow any other religion. For instance, I may point out that even in the Railway Finance Committee, where I sit as a member, there are only two persons or three persons who follow religions other than Islam and the other members (perhaps the total number is 14 or 15) are all followers of the faith of Islam.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa: Muhammadan): What is the number of members on the Standing Finance Committee?

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: I do not count the heads there to see how many there are who profess the Islamic faith or the Sanatani faith or the Arya Samajist faith and so on. That is never my business and so I never counted how many there are.

Mr. Sri Prakasa (Allahabad and Jhansi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): They prey on the public!

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: According to that point of view perhaps this motion is not relevant in that sense; rather it is to infuse a feeling of grievance in the people in that way that there are certain sections of the people who are victimised because they follow a particular faith. Of course it is a matter for sympathy if it were really so. And if it was so, I must emphasise on the Government with all my strength that they should not continue like this. But as a matter of fact I find the thing is otherwise. For instance the tendency is to magnify things in such a way that I am afraid you may bring up a motion to censure the Government in case an accident happens and people are killed—as to how many Muslims were killed or how many Sanatanists were killed or followers of other faiths were killed: you may even say that an inanimate thing like the engine is against the followers of the Islamic faith and therefore it killed more Muslims than others. If things are carried to that extent, I think we should oppose such tendencies.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): May I tell my Honourable friend that Maulvi Abdul Ghani has presented the report and quoted these items to the House: do you deny them?

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: I am coming to that point. If the grievances were to find out by hunting for the figures in the report and elsewhere, then I must say that there I have given you one example—the composition of a committee. I once told you in the form of a dream here in this very House about the composition of the officers of this House. I am telling you that if the Government were to work on the right path then this trouble would not have arisen. I take the Government more to task for bringing about this state of affairs because they started in a wrong way and they recognised principles which they should not have done in the interests of the nation over which they rule and over which they profess to bestow love and promise in season and out of season to ameliorate the condition of the people. They should not have followed the principle of recognising communities on religious denominational basis. I put a question during the time of Sir Andrew Clow when he was in charge of the Railways, whether the Government would recognise the principle of distributing services in the railway department on a territorial basis, and the reply he gave was “Government do not recognise the principle of distributing services in railways on territorial or provincial basis. The Govern-

ment recognises only the communal basis". If at all the Government recognises the principle of communal basis, then once for all they should do justice and there should be no occasion for raising this question year after year in this House, and they should manoeuvre things in such a way that the public atmosphere and the atmosphere of this House should not, in the interests of the nation, be fouled by such motions. By retaining these pin pricks for all time they give the people a chance to cry in the name of religion—in the name of Islam or in the name of Sikhism or any other faith. Why should they do this? Is there any country in the world where such principles are recognised, where responsible people rule over the destinies of a nation by recognising such nasty and dirty principles? They tickle the passions of the people by such methods and make the people argue before them and make the people come before them and ask them "Give us so many more posts because we Muslims are suffering." Is that in the interests of the nation? Is it in the interests of wholesome principles? Government must set this thing at rest once for all. If there is any grievance, Government have every facility to set it right; if the Government sees that there is injustice done to the Muslims, they can set it right, so that there will be no occasion to bring it up every now and then constantly asking for more and more, so that this ever increasing demand may not always hang like a Damocles sword over them. You should recognise that this principle must be done away with. I have spoken times without number in this House that the British, of all people in the world, cannot feign ignorance of the real state of affairs in this country. They cannot say that these things are so simple and they are so innocent that they do not know what is the feeling in the country among the Muslims and other sections of the people. You know it and you are tickling the passions deliberately and you are retaining these things so that the people may be always at loggerheads on such questions and they may foul the atmosphere. Government must be held ultimately responsible for all this. Of course, on different grounds time was when you got despatches from your country to widen further this Hindu Muslim differences and you worked on them knowingly and deliberately. But cannot you cry halt even now when you say that you mean to offer responsible government here—God knows whether you say it sincerely or insincerely—

Sardar Mangal Singh (East Punjab: Sikh): You are still in doubt!

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: I may be in doubt or not, but I want to remind them that they have announced from the house tops that at least after the war they are going to give some responsibility to the people; but if at all there is any sincerity in them, then at least they should revise their present policy and see that such communal cries are not encouraged. We saw in the Delhi University Bill how they went to the length of asking for Muslim examiners: the time may come when we may hear cry for Hindu trains and Muslim trains and Sikh trains, and probably Sikh stations also. These things should not be carried to such excessive limits but must be stopped: that is why I thought it my duty—I would not justify the name of my party, the Nationalist Party, if I were not to raise my voice against such sorts of nasty things—and I request you to ponder over this policy which makes people year after year bring up motion like this and saying 'here is injustice done to the Muslims'. I must warn my friends also not to make their demands ever mounting—ultimately it may go against them. They should carefully examine if at all there is any injustice done because of their faith, because of the habit of favouritism and nepotism and other considerations in the minds of officers who are responsible for making the appointments. I also appeal to the authorities as well as my brethren that the sense of responsibility and fairness should be raised so much that the people should revolt against this habit of nepotism and favouritism; and if any man in high places is in the habit of favouring any one because of his religion or relationship, then it should be taken as high treason against the state and the man should be brought to book at once.

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

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: If you do things on this principle, then you will be doing justice to the whole nation and to the sacred cause for which you hold these principles. With these words I oppose the motion.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): There is time only for one more speaker. I do not know if the Government Member will want to reply.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I am prepared to reply at ten minutes to five.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Sir, I am very glad that my Honourable friend Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall has recognised in his speech one principle, for which I am very thankful to him and to which he made a reference. He has recognised that if there is any injustice done to anybody who is a Mussalman simply because he is a Mussalman then he feels sympathy for him. I thank him for this assertion. He also agrees to this principle, that if any quota had been given then this quota should be adhered to by the Government and the Government should not do anything which will bring this controversial question year after year before this House. That means that he practically agrees to what Maulana Abdul Ghani has said. I have got no quarrel with him. I want to make it absolutely clear that the Mussalmans do not want any kind of favouritism. The Mussalmans do not want that anything should be given to them beyond what is their due. What the Mussalmans want is that perfect justice should be done to them and that the quota that had been agreed to be given to them should be adhered to in the most honest manner. There should be no loopholes found here and there and this quota should be given both in the spirit and the letter, as it has been agreed to by the Government of India, which means 25 per cent. on the whole of India basis and that will be spread out on the different lines. I have got no quarrel with that and I hope my Honourable friend Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall and other Honourable Members will agree with me there. Of course Maulvi Abdul Ghani was not quite correct in laying the blame where the whole blame does not lie absolutely. The blame may be somewhere else also. He made a target of some people. There is no such thing as Pakistan or the people getting excited over Pakistan. In regard to matters which were disclosed last year, we found that in the matter of the Lower Gazetted Staff it was not the Hindu who was injuring the Mussalman. It was the European who was getting the share of both the Hindu and the Mussalman. We found that only 47 Hindus and only 13 Muslims were there out of a total of 180. This matter has been debated in this House during the last 25 years. I have seen it debated from 1921, from the very day this Assembly was inaugurated and this demand has been put up every year from that time and the net result was found after 20 years. Out of 180 lower gazetted services to which the people had been promoted from below, the result came in that only 47 were Hindus and 13 were Muslims and the rest were Europeans. There may be one or two Sikhs probably. (*An Honourable Member:* "What about Anglo-Indians?") They also did not get much in spite of the fact that the Anglo-Indian was the man who built up the Railways from the very beginning. He also did not get his proper quota. He is also an injured person. Whatever promotion was given from the lower job was given to the European. He was the biggest sharetaker in that. We find that this case is coming before this House every year, year after year. I remember Mr. Jinnah said in this House 15 years ago, when he was the Leader of the Independent Party, to which several Members now sitting on that side of the House belonged, that Government should take action which may stop this question coming up before this House year after year. Is it the intention of the Government not to settle this question, so that they may accentuate the differences between the Hindus and the Mussalmans, to play one against the other, to keep the Mussalmans dissatisfied so that the Hindus may think that the attack was on them and they may get up and say something against the Mussalmans and the whole atmosphere of this House may be spoiled year after year. Mr. Jinnah's remark was that anything that was done was done on Machiavellian

tactics and he warned the Government 15 years ago and I find that after 15 years the matter is still there—where it was. If you are honest and if you want that this thing must be settled, then why don't your officers see and scrutinise every day all the reports to see whether anybody is getting proper treatment or not. If you find that the proper treatment is not given to your subordinate and if you allow this to go on, then I say that you do it deliberately and there could be no other intention but to keep the Hindus and Muslims divided, so that somebody speaking for the Mussalmans may say that the Hindus have harmed them and so on. I say it is not the Hindu who is causing the injury. It is the European who is causing the injury. You are trying to play one off against the other. We find that this matter has gone too far and this matter has remained unsettled too long. Government should see to it that nobody is treated badly and injured, simply because he happens to belong to a particular community. If a Muslim does any injury to a Hindu then I will condemn that man equally and I will give him no sympathy. To my mind, everybody should get his proper share of the quota. Everybody should get the quota reserved for him. If you neglect it, then you are guilty and your guilt is so strong that it is written in bold letters that in spite of the fact that for the past 25 years this matter is being talked about and that since 1934 this matter has been settled once and for all, you still find that in 1945 a gentleman getting up and giving you figures to prove whether you have progressed since 1934 or gone behind since then. I want to remove any misapprehension that may be lurking in the mind of my Honourable friend Mr. Kailash Behari Lall or of any other Honourable Member that Muslims want to injure any other community. The Muslims have no desire to injure any Hindu or European or Anglo-Indians or Sikhs or anybody. The Muslims only want their quota according to the formula laid down by the Home Department. I want the Government to follow that formula in spirit and not shelve it. We do not want to appropriate the rights of anybody else. We will be the last to advocate this.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If he wants the Government to reply to the debate, then he must give the Government Member some time.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Yes, I shall conclude soon and give an opportunity for the Government to reply. I do not want detailed figures. If the Honourable Member assures me that he will carefully watch and examine the position that he will see that the quota is adhered to, then I shall be satisfied. If he finds that any high official, be he even a European, is guilty of ignoring this formula of the Home Department, then he should be sacked.

Mr. Sri Prakasa: He will have to sack himself.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: If he finds anybody under him not carrying out the orders of the Government in the spirit which has been laid down, then I hope the Honourable Member for Railways will see that justice is done to the Muslim community. I want an assurance from the Honourable Member on these lines.

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

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: I have got with me a pile of letters setting forth the grievances of the lower paid employees, they are all not merely from Muslims but from other communities also, Hindus and Sikhs. They have all asked me to plead for their cause before the Railway Member and redress their grievances. Sir, I support the motion.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Sir, within the last hour I was given a certain amount of latitude in summing up, so that now I cannot blame my Honourable friend opposite. He quite clearly however does not give me time to give a full explanation of the position to the House. The reservation for Muslims is, as everybody knows, 25 per cent. But as regards inferior servants, the existing percentages have been maintained at 45 per cent. on the N. W. R., while on other Railways, 33 1/3 per cent. of the vacancies are reserved for

[Sir Edward Benthall.]

redress of marked communal inequalities. As regards superior services, we have endeavoured to carry out this arrangement, but unfortunately the required number of qualified Muslim candidates has not been obtained through the Federal Public Services Commission. In the last ten years, the Muslims have actually obtained 23·2 per cent. Nevertheless the composition percentage has increased from 4·6 per cent. to 9·86 per cent. in the same period, so that some progress has been made. No vacancy reserved for Muslims has been filled by a member of any other community except when qualified Muslims are not available.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: What about the instance of three Muslims who were dismissed and replaced by persons of other communities?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I understand that the Honourable Member is referring to three Jamalpur apprentices, they were dismissed and three more were taken on at a later date.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: One Muslim was taken and two others were not taken.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: As regards subordinate services, the percentage is supposed to be 25 per cent. varying for the different railways, so that on the N. W. R. the recruitment of subordinates is 60 per cent., for the B. & A. railway it is 42·5 per cent. and so on, down to 7 per cent. only on S. I. R.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Do you intend to recruit Muslims at the risk of efficiency?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I am not giving way. The facts are that in the last year the permanent recruitment was on the basis of just over 25 per cent. and temporary recruitment on the basis of 24·8 per cent. and the total recruitment is 24·9 per cent. against the target of 25 per cent. Well, Sir, there is a deficiency of 1 per cent. One of the difficulties which administrations have been up against, not only administrations but also the N. W. R. Services Commission, is the difficulty again in getting adequate number of Muslims. The reason at the present time is a very creditable one. We are informed that a larger number of Muslims than of other communities have joined the fighting forces, and fewer therefore have joined the railways. In passing I may say that exactly the same situation has arisen in regard to the Anglo-Indians, perhaps to a larger extent. More Anglo-Indians have joined the armed forces and fewer in the last two years have been going into railways so that the Anglo-Indians quota has not been filled. But as the House is aware, since the middle of 1942, recruitment has only been in a temporary capacity and 70 per cent. of the vacancies which have occurred by the end of the war will be filled ultimately by ex-service men. Now, Sir, that recruitment after the war from ex-service men will be on a communal basis and in view of the large number of Muslims and Anglo-Indians who are in the fighting forces,—I have no doubt Sikhs also,—there is every probability that the very small deficiency of 1 per cent. in the case of Muslims will be rectified when recruitment is put on a permanent basis after the war.

Sir, my time is up and I have only to say that in response to the Honourable Member's request that I should give my personal attention to this and endeavour to see that communal percentage is properly adhered to, I am pleased to give him that assurance. It is our constant desire and endeavour to carry out the arrangements which Government have undertaken to carry out, and if we do not do so, then it is the duty of the Home Department to see that we do carry them out. In the circumstances, I must oppose the cut motion and I must ask my Honourable friend to withdraw the same.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: I beg leave to withdraw the cut motion. The motion was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 21st February, 1945.