

6th March 1946

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

Official Report

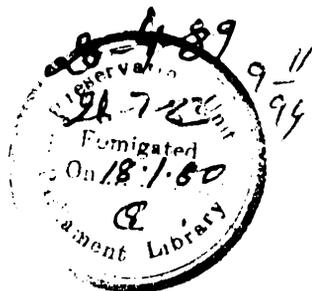
Volume III, 1946

(28th February to 14th March, 1946)

FIRST SESSION

OF THE

SIXTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1946



PUBLISHED BY THE MANAGER OF PUBLICATIONS, DELHI, INDIA
PRINTED BY THE MANAGER GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, NEW DELHI, INDIA
1947

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 6th March, 1946

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

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

MUSLIM ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER IN CENTRAL PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

715. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) the number of posts of Assistant Administrative Officer in the Central Public Works Department;

(b) how many of these posts are occupied by Muslims; and

(c) if the reply to (b) is in the negative, what steps he has taken to fill the vacant post of Administrative Officer by a suitable Muslim?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Three.

(b) None.

(c) The inference implicit in this question does not necessarily follow from (a) and (b) because the Central Public Works Department cadre is and must be treated as one. The subject is however, now under consideration.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Since the reply to (b) is none, may I ask the Honourable Member why a Muslim should not be appointed to the post of Administrative Officer?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I did not quite follow.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Since there are no Muslim Assistant Administrative Officers, may I ask the Honourable Member why should not the post of Administrative Officer be filled by a Muhammadan?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: It is a matter for consideration. I cannot give a guarantee that the post will be reserved for a particular community.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Have applications been received for this post?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Applications will not be called for.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Has it been advertised?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Not necessarily.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Why will not a Muslim be appointed?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I said that I cannot give an assurance. Besides, the Government of India cannot accept the principle that any community has a vested right in any particular post.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Particularly in view of the fact that the Honourable Member's Department is the worst in the Government of India. . . .

Mr. President: Order, order. The Honourable Member will please put the question.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: In view of the fact that the Labour Department is not sufficiently representative of Muslims, may I ask the Honourable Member to consider the appointment of a Muslim to the post?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I deny the assumption of the Honourable Member.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: May I

Mr. President: I believe there is one misunderstanding under which the Honourable Member is putting his questions. Will he resume his seat? What the Honourable Member of Government said was that he makes a distinction

between a particular post and the quota in the departmental posts. Am I right?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Yes, Sir.

Mr. President: He said he cannot assure a particular post being filled by a particular community. That is different from the quota.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: My submission is that in view of the fact that his Department has not the required quota of Muslims of 25 per cent., will he consider the question of appointing Muslims up to the minimum quota?

Mr. President: Yes, that is proper.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I do not accept the principle that that is the only method.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Does the Honourable Member deny that his Department has in the services the 25 per cent. quota of Muslims?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I deny it.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: With what result?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I cannot help the result, if there are not sufficient Muslim candidates. That is not my fault.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: May I tell the Honourable Member that this is nothing but a lame excuse on the part of the Honourable Member to say that there are not "sufficient Muslim candidates" when they are really available?

Mr. President: Order, order. That will be a criticism. The Honourable Member may put his question.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: May I tell the Honourable Member that sufficient Muslims are forthcoming but their claims are overlooked intentionally.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I have nothing to add to what I have said.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: I request your permission to add one word in part (d) of the question:

"(d) whether in view of the fact that in the event of prohibition of export of groundnuts as 'rightly' demanded by the public,"

That word is not there.

Mr. President: That is an argument. It means the same.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: I did not want them to understand that it is not what is "rightly" demanded by the public.

EXPORT OF GROUNDNUT AND OTHER OIL SEEDS

716. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Agriculture Secretary be pleased to state:

(a) if Government are thinking of prohibiting the export of groundnut and other oil seeds;

(b) whether Government are aware that the marketing trade of groundnut is very much in the hands of a few European and Indo-European concerns;

(c) whether according to the Government's report on groundnut marketing, these semi-monopolist industry concerns are in a position to control the prices;

(d) whether in view of the fact that in the event of prohibition of export of groundnuts as demanded by the public, the prices of groundnut will be depressed; and

(e) what steps Government propose to take to protect the interests of peasants and see that remunerative prices are paid to the producers of groundnuts?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) The export of groundnuts has been suspended for the present. In respect of other oil seeds it has been decided to allow exports only after meeting India's full requirements.

(b) The export trade is largely in the hands of such concerns, but the internal trade which covers more than two-thirds of the total production as well as movements from internal markets to ports for shipment abroad is almost entirely in the hands of Indian firms.

(c) Exporting firms are not in a position to control prices. The buying limits of these firms are, as a rule, based on the prevailing level of prices in importing countries. The prices of groundnuts in India are largely influenced by the extent of the internal demand.

(d) A complete ban on the exports of groundnuts may have a depressing effect on their prices.

(e) The whole position will be reviewed by the Oilseeds Committee when it is set up. In the meantime it may be pointed out that the present price for groundnuts is in the neighbourhood of Rs. 19 per cwt. as against Rs. 7 per cwt. in the pre-war period.

Mr. Manu Subedar: May I know whether the exports by the Food Ministry of the United Kingdom are subject to any licenses by the Government of India, and whether it is not true that notwithstanding the suspension of the export mentioned by my Honourable friend the Food Ministry has not only collected a large amount of groundnuts but is actually exporting them?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: I believe it is a fact that before the exports were suspended, the Food Ministry had made large purchases in this country. But since the suspension, no further exports have taken place.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will Government assure this House that, in view of the acute food position in this country, and that groundnuts can stay unsoiled and undeteriorated for a long time, the amounts collected by the Food Ministry will also be taken over by the Government of India and that they will not be permitted to export?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: That will be considered. In fact it is already under consideration.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Why is that in view of the fact that Government has prohibited all exports of groundnut, they do not fix the price of groundnut at which they consider it to be remunerative for the growers and then see that price is actually received by the growers?

Why is it they do not fix one price for groundnut and see that the growers of groundnut actually receive it?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: Is it the suggestion that the price should be fixed for all groundnuts throughout the country?

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Yes, by province after province, if necessary!

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: That suggestion has not been considered by Government so far, but I am prepared to examine it.

Mr. Leslie Gwilt: In regard to part (e) of the question. if I heard the Honourable Member correctly, he said the price of groundnuts is Rs. 19 as against Rs. 7 per-war. That is, I presume, the wholesale price. Has the Honourable Member any information as to what is the proportionate increase in prices that is being received by the grower?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: I am afraid I have no actual figures of the prices received by the growers. -

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is it not a fact that your marketing report on groundnuts has made it clear that 25 per cent. is absorbed by middlemen, including the deductions that they make?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: A certain percentage is absorbed by various intermediaries. I do not remember the exact figure. It may be about 20 or 25 per cent.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will Government consider a scheme of monopoly procurement for groundnuts fixing a fair price to the growers and eliminating the middleman altogether?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: The suggestion will be examined.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: The ban is put for the present. May I know how long the ban is expected to continue?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: I am afraid I am not in a position to answer that question. The matter is under examination and until the examination is completed the ban will continue.

MANUFACTURE OF PALUDRINE FOR CURE OF MALARIA

717. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Health Secretary be pleased to state:

(a) if his attention has been drawn to the A. P. I. report of the 9th February published in the *Hindu* of the 9th February, 1946, that a new drug known as Paludrine provides a complete and permanent cure for malignant tertian malaria;

(b) whether the drug is being produced on a small scale in Scotland;

(c) whether he is aware that Dr. D. G. Davey, ex-discoverer of Paludrine, has said that eminent doctors and experts of the Imperial Chemicals have considered it to be a great advance in the chemotherapy of malaria;

(d) whether Government are at present in great need of adequate supplies of quinine;

(e) whether it is the policy and responsibility of the Government of India to do all they can in co-operation with Provincial Governments to fight this wasting disease; and

(f) whether the Government of India are prepared to take early steps to start their own manufacture of this Paludrine drug?

Mr. S. H. Y. Oulsnam: (a) to (e). Yes.

(f) Arrangements have been made to obtain as soon as possible supplies of the new drug in order that extensive trials may be carried out. If the results of those trials are favourable the question of manufacture in India will certainly be considered.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is it proposed to import any expert from abroad in order to help the Government to manufacture this drug in India or are Government considering the advisability of sending India's own experts and scientists abroad in order to learn the process of manufacturing this drug?

Mr. S. H. Y. Oulsnam: That question does not arise until the trials are carried out and the results known.

Mr. Manu Subedar: What is the raw material of this particular drug?

Mr. S. H. Y. Oulsnam: We have no information on that.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will Government gather full information as to whether the particular raw material for this drug is or is not available in India and if it is available in India will they set up an experimental centre in India at once?

Mr. S. H. Y. Oulsnam: The question of setting up an experimental centre does not arise until the trials have been carried out and we are satisfied that the drug is one which will be useful to us.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will Government put themselves in communication with manufacturers of drugs in this country and invite them on their own account to undertake the experimental manufacture of this drug?

Mr. S. H. Y. Oulsnam: Until we are satisfied that the drug is a useful one such action will be premature.

Sri V. C. Vellingiri Gounder: May I know if any steps have been taken to increase the production of quinine in this country?

Mr. S. H. Y. Oulsnam: Yes, Sir. During the last three years some 3,000 acres have been brought under cinchona cultivation.

Sri V. C. Vellingiri Gounder: When is it expected to get quinine from this additional area?

Mr. S. H. Y. Oulsnam: The first supplies should be available before the end of this year.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: In what research institutions are these trials being made?

Mr. S. H. Y. Oulsnam: They will be made in various hospitals and field centres in the various Provinces.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Does it mean that the Government have not yet decided where and how these experiments are to be carried out?

Mr. S. H. Y. Oulsnam: Definite arrangements have not yet been made. They are under consideration and will be complete by the time the supplies are received.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: In view of the fact that the drug has been already found useful and in Scotland they have already undertaken its manufacture, why is it that the Government of India want to make trials in order to see whether it is going to be useful in this country or not?

Mr. S. H. Y. Oulsnam: This drug has been tried among military personnel in Australia and we are advised that before the drug is adopted for general use in India it is necessary to have trials of the drug under Indian conditions.

COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION IN LABOUR DEPARTMENT

718. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the exact number of Joint Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, Superintendents, Assistants, Clerks, etc., in the Establishment Branch of the Department of Labour (Main Secretariat)?

(b) How many Muslims and Non-Muslims are there in each grade?

(c) If the reply to (b) regarding the Muslims is in the negative, what are the reasons therefor?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) and (b). A statement giving the information is placed on the table.

(c) Does not arise.

Statement

	Total	Muslim	Non-Muslim
Joint Secretaries	3	1	2
Deputy Secretaries	4	1	3
Assistant Secretaries and Under Secretaries.	13	2	11 (including 1 European, 1 Anglo-Indian and 1 Scheduled Caste)
Superintendents	21	6	15 (including 1 Sikh and 1 Indian Christian)
Assistant in Establishment Branch	9	2	7
Clerks in Establishment Branch .	9		9 (including 1 Scheduled Caste)

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Sir, I did not ask for a statement to be laid on the table of the House, but I want the number to be stated on the floor of the House, as I want to ask supplementary questions.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: May I, Sir, give the figures?

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: There are no figures to give.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Yes, there are. My learned friend need not assume a threatening attitude.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: I am only reciprocating the threatening attitude of the Honourable Member himself.

Mr. President: If the list is not too big the Honourable Member may read.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar:

	Total	Muslim
Joint Secretaries	3	1
Deputy Secretaries	4	1
Assistant and Under Secretaries	13	2
Superintendents	21	6
Assistants in Establishment Branch	9	2
Clerks in Establishment Branch	9	...

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Do these figures include Muslim representation in the Resettlement and Employment Directorate?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I must have notice of that question.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: I asked for the figures of the Labour Department of the Main Secretariat. Cannot the Honourable Member say 'Yes' or 'No'; whether these figures include the figures of Muslim representation in the Resettlement and Employment Directorate or not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I must have notice of that question.

Haji Abdus Sattar Haji Ishaq Seth: Will the Honourable Member kindly tell us what Department in answer to the question 'in the establishment branch of the Department'.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: It is the Main Secretariat. As I said I want notice in order to be accurate in my information.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Is the Honourable Member aware that the Resettlement and Employment Directorate is quite separate from the Main Secretariat?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Of course I am aware.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Why is this large army of Joint Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries, Assistant and Under Secretaries necessary for the Labour Department and may I know whether my Honourable friend would not satisfy my Muslim friends by reducing some of the other communities in order to restore the Muslim proportion which they want?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I do not want to express any opinion on the Honourable Member's question.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Muslimise the whole Department.

Shri Sri Prakasa: May I submit in all humility that the Government may lay on the table before the beginning of every session a full list of all the various communities in the various departments, so that the necessity for most of these questions may be obviated and temper kept under control?

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: In view of the Government Resolution of the Home Department of 1934 fixing a 25 per cent. quota for the Muslims, and in view of the fact that there is shortage of Muslim representation in accordance with this resolution in the Labour Department, will the Honourable Member rectify and make up the quota by employing more Muslims?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The posts to which I have made reference in the course of my reply are not posts which are governed by communal representation. They are promotion posts.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: May I take it that the resolution does not apply to his Department?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The Honourable Member ought to read the Government Resolution more carefully than he seems to have done.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: The other day in reply to Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad the Honourable the Home Member said that Government Resolution does apply to the Labour Department. Will he transfer the resolution to the Honourable Labour Member?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I know the resolution very well.

Mr. President: Next question.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: One more question, Sir. Is the Deputy Secretary's post a Class I post?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: There is no such thing as a Class I post there.

LOSS OF PUBLIC MONEY IN THE 'DELHI STORE SUB-DIVISION
EMBEZZLEMENT CASE'

719. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please give the approximate amount of loss of public money in the 'Delhi Store Sub-Division Embezzlement Case'?

(b) Who were the culprits, and what action has so far been taken to bring them to book?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) There is no such case as "Delhi Store Sub-Division Embezzlement Case." If the Honourable Member has in mind the case of alleged over-payment in cartage of cement in Stores Sub-Division under Construction Division No. I, I can inform him that the matter is under investigation.

(b) Does not arise.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Is it a fact that the S.D.O. in question who embezzled two lakhs is still in service?

Mr. President: Order, order. The Honourable Member has already stated that there was no embezzlement.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: I entirely agree with the Honourable Member's reply. The point which he refers to is the same that a sum of two lakhs was overpaid.

Mr. President: My point is that the Honourable Member has replied that there is no case of embezzlement but only a case of over-payment. In his next question the Honourable Member need not again presume embezzlement: he can put a question on the over-payment.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The matter is under investigation and unless and until the result of that investigation is known Government cannot take any action against the officer.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: I ask whether the S.D.O. concerned who is responsible for this over-payment of 2 lakhs is still in service.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Of course he is.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Why?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Because the case is not yet proved against him.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: In such cases where matters are under investigation is it not the practice to keep the officer concerned under suspension?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Not unless we receive the report of the investigation.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Is it because he is of the scheduled caste?

Haji Abdus Sattar Haji Ishaq Seth: With regard to part (a)—about the amount involved—cannot my friend tell me what the amount involved is?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I must have notice of the question. As regards Mr. Jaffer's question, I would like to inform the Honourable Member that the man does not belong to the scheduled castes.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Even if he did belong to the scheduled caste, is it wrong not to suspend a man when there is a case against him?

Mr. President: Order, order: No arguments.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: How long has this been under investigation and is it departmental or by the police?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: So far as I remember—I cannot say definitely—the matter of course is investigated by the C.I.D.

GRIEVANCES OF MUSLIMS *re* APPOINTMENTS AS SUPERINTENDING ENGINEERS

†720. ***Mr. Muhammad Rahamat-Ullah:** (a) Has the attention of the Honourable the Labour Member been drawn to the articles published in the *Dawn* of the 27th October, 12th November and 19th December, 1945? What action has been taken to redress the grievances of the Mussalmans? If not, why not?

(b) Is it not a fact that out of the fourteen Superintending Engineers only one is a Muslim?

(c) Are Government aware that there are three qualified Executive Engineers in the Headquarters who are competent to hold the office of Superintending Engineer?

(d) Are Government aware that persons of less qualifications and standing of other communities have been appointed Superintending Engineers, if so, why were the claims of the Mussalmans ignored?

(e) Are Government aware that an I.S.E. Muslim Executive Engineer was ignored and the chance of a Superintending Engineer in the Headquarters Office was given to an officer who has risen from the ranks and is to retire very shortly?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) I have seen the articles. The posts in the Central Public Works Department which are subject to the operation of the communal representation rules, are duly filled in accordance with the requirement of those rules. It is, however, not possible to earmark individual posts for officers of a particular community.

(b) Yes.

(c) It is not clear which Executive Engineers the Honourable Member is referring to. None of the Executive Engineers of the Central Public Works Department who are posted in Delhi have, however, become due for promotion to the rank of Superintending Engineer.

(d) and (e). The posts of Superintending Engineer are Selection Posts and appointments to these are made purely on the basis of merit. In filling these posts the claims of all eligible Executive Engineers are considered and the officer who is considered to be most suitable is appointed. The case of the I.S.E. Muslim Officer mentioned by the Honourable Member was also duly considered.

COST OF STAFF AT KAMARAN QUARANTINE STATION

721. ***Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer:** (a) Will the Secretary for Commonwealth Relations please state whether it is a fact that in 1919 Col. Wilkinson estimated the cost of the permanent and temporary staff at the Kamaran Quarantine Station at Rs. 69,670?

(b) What is the present cost of the permanent and temporary staff at the Kamaran Quarantine Station?

(c) Are Government aware that according to the Anglo-Dutch Agreement Article No. 12 a sum of Rs. 10,000 only is to be paid annually from the revenue of the Kamaran Quarantine Station to the Government of India towards the maintenance of the Civil Administration of the Island of Kamaran, and that a much larger amount is paid? If so, why and what is the amount actually paid?

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

(d) Is it a fact that the amount of pension charged to the Kamaran revenue was Rs. 2,437 in 1920-21? What is the amount charged now?

(e) Is it a fact that the amount of allowances was Rs. 1,153 in 1920-21? What is the amount now?

(f) Is it a fact that Col. Hutchinson estimated not more than Rs. 60,000 for supplies at the Kamaran Quarantine Station?

(g) What is the amount of supplies for the Kamaran Quarantine Station now?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: (a) Yes.

(b) Rs. 87,468, plus free water, ice, fuel and furniture.

(c) According to the Anglo-Dutch Agreement only a sum of Rs. 10,000 is paid annually and not a larger amount.

(d) The information for 1920-21 is being collected and will be furnished on receipt.

A provision for Rs. 4,940 has been made for the year 1946.

(e) The amount of "allowances" in 1920-21 was Rs. 3,661 and not Rs. 1,153.

The amount under "allowances" has been estimated at Rs. 15,860 for the year 1946 including a war allowance of Rs. 12,180.

(f) Yes.

(g) A provision for Rs. 54,040 has been made for the year 1946 under the head "supplies."

CAPITAL AND RECURRING EXPENDITURE ON PILGRIMS AND STAFF AT KAMARAN

722. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: (a) Will the Secretary for Commonwealth Relations please state if it is a fact that a large amount of capital expenditure was incurred in 1927-28 and budgeted for 1929 and the surplus of Rs. 39,59,386 was converted into a deficit of Rs. 1,36,694? If so, do Government propose to give details of the capital expenditure incurred up to date, separately, for the convenience of the pilgrims directly and for the staff connected with the pilgrims and for civil administration?

(b) What are the figures of the recurring expenses per year of the Kamaran Quarantine Station since 1919, and what are the portions of the expenses borne by the Government of India and the Dutch Government?

(c) Is it a fact that repairs to military huts are also charged to the revenue of the Kamaran Quarantine Station?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: (a) The question does not state what expenditure the Honourable Member has in view. Presumably it refers to expenditure incurred on the Kamaran Quarantine Station. On this presumption the reply is that necessary but not lavish capital expenditure was incurred in 1927-29 to bring the Kamaran Quarantine Station upto date. There was a deficit of Rs. 2,31,138 in 1929, which was met from the balance at the end of 1928 leaving a balance of Rs. 11,00,431-3-0 on 31st December 1929.

The information regarding details of the capital expenditure is not readily available and the time and labour involved in collecting it would not be commensurate with the importance of the matter.

(b) The information is not readily available and the time and labour involved in collecting it would not be commensurate with the importance of the matter.

(c) The information is being collected and will be furnished on receipt.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: With regard to part (c), will this be charged to the revenue of the Kamaran Quarantine Station?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: As I have said, we have no definite information yet.

Mr. President: The next question of Mr. Jaffer cannot be put. It is the sixth question in his name today.

SUPPLY OF WATER BY CONDENSERS AT KAMARAN

†723. ***Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer:** (a) Will the Secretary for Commonwealth Relations please state if it is a fact that much more water is supplied to His Majesty's ships by the condenser at Kamaran than is supplied to pilgrims? Will Government give figures of the supply of water by the condenser at Kamaran to the pilgrims and others, separately, since its establishment, stating to whom water was supplied besides the pilgrims and what charge was recovered for the same? And if the charge was made did the amount recovered cover the cost of the condensing of water?

(b) Was the Kamaran Quarantine Station used for accommodating troops and prisoners of war or any other purpose during the World War Nos. 1 and 2? If so, was any charge made for the use? If so, what amount was recovered?

(c) Are the Government of India aware that no epidemic has broken out on board a pilgrim ship since the pilgrims are being fully immunised against cholera and small-pox necessitating the landing of pilgrims at Kamaran?

Mr. B. N. Banerjee: (a) The information regarding first portion is being collected and will be furnished on receipt.

The information with regard to the rest of the question is not readily available and the time and labour involved in collecting it would not be commensurate with the importance of the matter.

(b) The information is being collected and will be furnished on receipt.

(c) Yes.

SUPPLY OF EXTRA RATIONS FOR MANUAL WORKERS

724. ***Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Will the Food Secretary please state:

(a) if, in view of the cut in rations announced in the various parts of India, any extra rations are going to be allowed to any particular class of people, such as Railway workers, mill labourers, artisans and land workers, domestic servants who have to do heavy manual work, and other workers of the like class, and, if so, to what class;

(b) whether the cut in rations is going to be uniform throughout all the Provinces of India, or whether different Provinces are going to be treated differently; and

(c) whether, in case of refusal by surplus Provinces like the Punjab and Sind to send their surplus wheat and rice to other Provinces, he will recommend that other surplus products such as cloth or sugar or other materials in such other Provinces should be supplied short to the above surplus Provinces?

Mr. B. R. Sen: (a) Yes. Supplementary ration will continue to be allowed to heavy manual workers.

(b) The cut in ration will be uniform in all Provinces.

(c) This is a hypothetical question.

Mr. Manu Subedar: With regard to part (b), may I know if the cut in ration is going to be uniform, and whether it is not a fact that in the Punjab only three urban areas are rationed and that the percentage of rationed population is extremely small both in the Punjab and Sind, and whether Government propose to take more powers and to do something urgently and seriously about this matter?

Mr. B. R. Sen: As I have said, along with the cut in ration, we are trying to extend rationing in all provinces in India, including Punjab and Sind. That is a part of our policy.

Mr. Manu Subedar: In view of the fact that at the time of the Bengal famine, it was well known—and I regret to have to say this—that Punjab and Sind authorities were reluctant to permit surplus grain even to leave

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

those areas in time, will not Government be forewarned and will they not arm themselves with proper authority before the tragedy occurs?

Mr. B. R. Sen: The Government of India have all the authority they need, so far as legal powers are concerned.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May I know if any consignments of rice or wheat are being sent from the Punjab and Sind to other deficit areas?

Mr. B. R. Sen: Yes.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Is it a fact that Punjab has refused to send any large quantities of wheat on the pretext that no surplus is available?

Mr. B. R. Sen: The point is that no province up till now has admitted a surplus and then refused to give it.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: What is the situation as regards the Punjab? Has it declared itself a surplus province, or a deficit province or a normal province?

Mr. B. R. Sen: At the beginning of the year the Punjab declared a certain surplus, but as the months proceeded they found that the surplus could not be located: they could not get hold of the surplus. Therefore they came to the view that the surplus declared was an over-estimate.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: What is the basis on which the surplus is declared? Is it open to the Punjab Government to say "We must have a stock for two years before we can declare a surplus in this year"?

Mr. B. R. Sen: The surplus is determined according to a formula laid down by the Policy Committee presided over by Sir Theodore Gregory in 1943; and according to that formula a surplus is declared; but the trouble arises when there is a mistake about the production of a particular year.

Mr. Manu Subedar: What steps are Government taking in order to enforce monopoly procurement in these provinces, which will disclose the true surplus, if any? Again may I say that the surplus increases when rationing is introduced? Have Government taken that into account?

Mr. B. R. Sen: Government have taken that into account and as I have said more than once in this House, we have asked the Punjab Government to introduce a system of levy and they are examining the question.

Mr. Manu Subedar: I am sorry to persist in this, but I want the Government of India to realise the acuteness of public opinion on this question. It is not merely enough that this Government asks the Punjab Government: but we want this Government to assume powers as they did by 270 ordinances throughout India when there was an emergency and is the famine emergency not considered serious enough to take direct powers in the Punjab of procurement?

Mr. B. R. Sen: We have no reason to think that the Punjab Government do not realise the situation in India and we are fully assured by the Punjab Government that they will do everything possible to make over whatever surplus there is in the province.

Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan: May I ask whether it is a fact that in the Madras Presidency, especially in the west coast, they are giving groundnuts instead of rice, that the rice ration has been cut down to the last degree and whether the ground-nut is going to replace rice in places like the west coast of the Madras presidency?

Mr. B. R. Sen: It is proposed that groundnuts should also be included in the ration; because there is a shortage of cereals, there is no reason why we should not utilise our other food resources for meeting the deficit.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Has the Government taken any steps to transport rice quotas which are given in large quantities here in the north and in the United Provinces, to the south where they consume rice, and send the ground nut or wheat to the northern provinces?

Mr. B. R. Sen: We have taken all that into account when we formulated the basic plan. We had all this before us before we made our allotments.

Mr. Leslie Gwilt: Will the Honourable Member be good enough to inform the House as to whether all provinces have accepted the recommendations made by the Central Government in the matter of cuts in rations and whether any of them have accepted it with any reservation—particularly the surplus provinces?

Mr. B. R. Sen: I think all the surplus provinces have accepted the recommendation that we have made. We have not yet received a reply from one province up till now?

Mr. Leslie Gwilt: Which province is that?

Mr. B. R. Sen: It is the N.-W. F. P. Punjab and Sind and other provinces have all accepted our recommendation.

Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan: May I ask whether ground-nuts have any food value. I know it can be used to extract oil but is the ground-nut supposed to have any food value. I want to ask whether it can be given as part of the ration instead of rice?

Mr. B. R. Sen: Ground-nut has got some food value and that is why we are preventing the further export of ground-nuts and including it in the rations.

Pandit Balkrishna Sharma: How many provinces have declared themselves to be surplus provinces?

Mr. B. R. Sen: That varies from year to year.

Pandit Balkrishna Sharma: What are the surplus provinces this year?

Mr. B. R. Sen: The surplus provinces this year are the Central Provinces, Punjab, Orissa and Assam.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Is it not a fact that in the United Provinces the rice quota has been increased?

Mr. B. R. Sen: The total ration in the United Provinces is one pound and owing to shortage of wheat they have decreased the wheat part of the ration and increased the rice part.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Who not send the wheat to the United Provinces and the rice to Madras?

Mr. B. R. Sen: It is very difficult to make adjustments of this nature and we have got to take a long view of things. As I explained a few days ago the United Provinces Government had a target for procurement of wheat for the next few months and during the last two months they have failed to procure what they had set out to do. Therefore they are utilising rice to make up the ration. If, you send away the rice from the United Provinces, they won't have the necessary quantities of other foodgrains to make up the whole ration.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: We hear every day that Canadian wheat is being shipped to India. Why should not that wheat be sent to the United Provinces and rice from the United Provinces be sent to Madras?

Mr. B. R. Sen: We are seeing to it every day.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Is it suggested that Sind is not a surplus province this year, in view of the fact that I heard about six weeks ago that wheat was selling below the controlled rate in the province of Sind, which clearly indicates that it is a surplus province?

Mr. B. R. Sen: At the beginning of the rabi year, Sind declared a surplus of about 180 thousand tons of wheat. They then reduced it to 150 thousand tons. Ultimately they said that their wheat surplus was very low. As a matter of fact, in the months of December and January, we had to give some help from our imports because they could not maintain their ration in some of the rationed towns.

Mr. Manu Subedar: In order to allay the general feeling that everything may not be all right in the declarations of the Provincial Governments and Administrations, who are necessarily cautious, may I again suggest that in these usually surplus provinces compulsory monopoly procurement should be adopted by the Government of India?

Mr. B. R. Sen: The whole question of tightening up the method of procurement in Sind is under examination by the Sind Government. They have appointed certain officers to survey their stocks. Every attempt is being made by the Provincial Government to place their procurement on a satisfactory basis.

Haji Abdus Sattar Haji Ishaq Seth: With regard to the question of the uniformity of rations all over the country will my Honourable friend explain why in Malabar alone the ration allowed is 11 ounces as against 12 ounces all over the country?

Mr. B. R. Sen: I am not sure if the figure quoted by the Honourable Member is correct. So far as I know, the ration in Malabar is 12·3 oz. or so, a little over what it is in the other parts of the province.

Haji Abdus Sattar Haji Ishaq Seth: I have just returned from Malabar and I heard there has been a reduction in the ration?

Mr. B. R. Sen: There has been no reduction in Malabar, because the ration was already low.

Haji Abdus Sattar Haji Ishaq Seth: With regard to ground-nut, will the Honourable Member consider the suggestion that it should not be allotted to Malabar but sent to the east coast where the people are used to it?

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Not to the East Coast but to Northern India.

Sri A. Karunakara Menon: Although there are several varieties of rations given, in the West Coast there is a restriction that only affixed quantity of rice ought to be given; whereas in other parts of the Madras Presidency 12 ounces of rice or any other variety of cereals are given, in Malabar they are given only 8 ounces of rice and for the balance, they are compelled to take from other varieties. Why is this distinction maintained in Malabar.

Mr. B. R. Sen: That, I think, depends upon the supplies at a particular moment. There are variations from district to district, according to the supplies available.

Sri R. Venkatasubba Reddiar: What is the value of the supplementary rations to manual labourers?

Mr. B. R. Sen: One pound under the reduced scale. It is 12 ounces basic and 4 ounces supplementary.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Is there any difference between different types of workers?

Mr. B. R. Sen: There is a differentiation between heavy manual labourers and ordinary workers.

Sri R. Venkatasubba Reddiar: Does the Honourable Member think that the quantity allowed to the manual workers is sufficient?

Mr. B. R. Sen: I do not think so but we must cut our coat according to our cloth. We must spread over our supplies throughout the year.

Pandit Balkrishna Sharma: Are the textile mill workers classed among the heavy manual workers?

Mr. B. R. Sen: Yes.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Are the agricultural labourers treated as heavy manual workers?

Mr. B. R. Sen: They have been treated as heavy manual workers.

NUMBER OF INDIAN SWEEPERS SENT TO BURMA

725. *Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Will the Secretary for Commonwealth Relations be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Indian sweepers sent to Burma since its re-occupation by the British;

(b) on what conditions these sweepers were sent to Burma; and

(c) if they have been sent with their families?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: (a), (b) and (c). The information is being collected and will be furnished on receipt.

Shri Sri Prakasa: May I know the circumstances in which it was thought necessary to send my fellow countrymen as sweepers in Burma?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: I made a statement on this subject last month. The Government of India have not sent any sweepers to Burma. As I explained last month, the Indian public, particularly representatives of Burma Indian interests, have been insisting on all Indian evacuees returning to Burma. When we put forth that demand before the Burma Government, we cannot very well object to evacuee sweepers also returning to Burma. All that we have done therefore is that we have taken no exception to Indian sweepers who used to be resident in Burma before the war and who evacuated to India as a result of the Japanese occupation, being allowed to go back.

Shri Sri Prakasa: May I take it that a large number of my countrymen applied to the Honourable Member that they were most anxious to have the privilege of cleaning Burmese commodes?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: Only such evacuees as are willing to return are returning now. No pressure or compulsion has been brought to bear on any evacuee of any class to return to Burma.

LOSS OF INDIAN LIFE AND PROPERTY IN BURMA

726. *Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: (a) Will the Secretary for Commonwealth Relations be pleased to state the total number of Indians in Burma before the Japanese invasion in December, 1941?

(b) What was the total number of Indian evacuees who returned to India?

(c) What was the approximate number of loss of life on the way to India?

(d) What is the approximate number of Indians in Burma at present?

(e) Is he aware that more than two lakhs of Indians are reported to have been killed after the withdrawal of British Forces from Burma? If so, has he taken any steps to verify this report?

(f) What is the approximate value of the Indian property lost or damaged since the withdrawal of the British Forces?

(g) Will Government consider the feasibility of taking necessary steps to ascertain the exact figures of the loss of life and property suffered by the Indians in Burma?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: (a) The Indian population in Burma immediately before the war was estimated at one million.

(b) About 4 lakhs.

(c) No reliable information is available but the estimate made soon after the evacuation was about 5,300.

(d) No reliable figures are available.

(e), (f) and (g). No information is available but efforts are being made to obtain it. Any information collected will be furnished in due course.

FACILITIES FOR EXPORT OF WOOL FROM INDIA

727. *Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state whether Government have received the resolutions

passed by the All-India Organization of the Indian Wool Manufacturers? If so, what action, if any, have Government taken thereon:

(i) to secure the transport and shipping facilities for the Indian wool for export to the U.S.A.; and

(ii) to secure export of the Indian Wool to continental countries?

(b) When do Government propose the abolition of the Government Central Buying Agency for the black, grey and coloured wools?

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

(i) Wool for export is given the same assistance by rail when necessary as other exports but as large stocks are reported to be at ports already, no special action is called for to move wool. As regards shipping facilities for export of wool to United States of America, Government have been informed by the American Mission that all arrangements for export to United States of America would normally be arranged by traders and only in exceptional cases would the American authorities ask for special assistance. No such request has been received so far.

(ii) The question is under active consideration.

(b) The question of the abolition of the Government Central Buying Agency for the Black, Grey and coloured wools is under active consideration of Government.

Mr. Manu Subedar: May I know why the profiteering is going on at the expense of the wool growers of this country throughout the operations of the Government Central Buying Agency?

The Honourable Dr. Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am not aware of any profiteering going on.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Is it not purchased at a price fixed by Government on monopoly conditions?

The Honourable Dr. Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am not aware of it, but I will try to get the information.

BAN ON IMPORTS OF STARCH

†728. ***Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai:** Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have lifted the ban on imports of starch into India and that they are either granting or propose to grant licences for imports of starch; and

(b) if so, whether it is not in contravention of the repeated assurances given by the Government of India to protect the interests of the indigenous starch industry?

The Honourable Dr. Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Imports of limited quantities of starch are being permitted in the interests of the textile manufacturing industry having regard to the fact that the food position in India makes it impossible for enough maize to be spared for the indigenous production of starch.

(b) No. In permitting imports the legitimate interests of the starch industry are kept in view. I may add that the case of the starch industry has already been referred to the Tariff Board for investigation.

GRANT OF LAND IN NEW DELHI TO KHALSA YOUNGMEN'S ASSOCIATION

†729. ***Sardar Mangal Singh:** (a) Will the Agriculture Secretary please state if it is a fact that the Khalsa Youngmen's Association, New Delhi/Simla, sent an application for the grant of land in New Delhi as far back as 1940 but so far no land has yet been granted to them?

(b) Is it a fact that land has been granted in New Delhi to certain other institutions after the Khalsa Youngmen's Association approached Government with such a request? If so, to whom, and on what terms?

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

(c) Is he aware that whenever any Sikh Association or other body approached Government with such a request, it has always received unfavourable consideration?

(d) How long are Government likely to take to grant land to the Khalsa Youngmen's Association?

(e) Now that the war is over, will he kindly consider the proposal to have a piece of land near the Baird Road area in New Delhi allotted to them soon? If not, why not?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) The application received in 1940 was rejected in June 1944 and the Association informed accordingly by the Chief Commissioner, Delhi.

(b) Yes. A statement is laid on the table.

(c) No. The Education Committee of the Gurdwara Bungala Sahib Sat Sang Sabha was allotted a site adjoining the Gurdwara Bungala Sahib in 1940 for constructing a primary school at a premium of Rs. 1,000 per acre plus 5 per cent. annual ground rent. The Young Men's Sikh Association were offered a portion of the open land on one side of the Gurdwara Bungala Sahib provided they secured the consent of the Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. They could not secure the necessary consent and the matter was, therefore, not pursued further.

(d) and (e). The Government of India have received an application from the Association on the 12th February, 1946 which has been referred to the Standing Advisory Committee for the development of New Delhi for advice.

Statement

(i) *Garhwal Sarab Hiteshi Sabha*.—Perpetual lease—Site measuring approximately 0.5 acre on Panch Kuin Road at a premium of Rs. 500 per acre with 5 per cent. annual ground rent.

(ii) *Anjuman-e-Tarraqqi-Urdu*.—Perpetual lease—site measuring about 3 acres at 'J' point at a premium of Rs. 5,000 per acre plus 5 per cent. annual ground rent.

(iii) *Children's Air Society*.—Perpetual lease—additional land measuring 0.19 acre adjoining the existing building at a premium of Rs. 500 per acre without ground rent.

(iv) *Red Cross Society*.—Perpetual lease—site measuring about 0.104 acre at a premium of Rs. 1,000 per acre plus 5 per cent. annual ground rent.

(v) *Cambridge Mission*.—Perpetual lease—additional site measuring about 0.137 acre at a premium of Rs. 8,000 per acre plus 5 per cent. annual ground rent.

PROPOSED GRANT OF ROUSE PARK TO SOME WOMEN'S VOLUNTEERS CORPS ASSOCIATION

†730. ***Sardar Mangal Singh:** (a) Will the Agriculture Secretary please state whether he has received any application from the Local Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee or Sat Sang Committee of Gurdwara Bangla Sahib, New Delhi, for the grant of land opposite to Gurdwara Bangla Sahib which is called the Rouse Park?

(b) Is it a fact that it is proposed to give the Rouse Park area to some Women Volunteers Corps Association in preference to the requests of the Sikh Institutions? If so, why?

(c) Is he aware that when a pavilion was erected on this plot, it was announced by the then Chief Commissioner, Delhi, that the area would always be used as Children's Park and was named as Rouse Park instead of Bangla Sahib Park?

(d) Is he further aware that there was then great resentment among the local Sikhs over the change of the name and for not handing over the Park to S. B. Dharam Singh Trust?

(e) Is he aware of strong feelings that now exist over the idea of this land being given to an association other than the Sikhs?

(f) Are Government prepared to reserve the land, in question, (if at all it is to be given away for any purpose), for either the Bangla Sahib Gurdwara Sat Sang Committee or the Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Delhi, or the Khalsa Youngmen's Association in preference to any non-Sikh Institutions?

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

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) No, but a representation has been received from them protesting against the allotment of this land to the Central Committee of the Women's Voluntary Services.

(b) An application for the allotment of the site in question to the Central Committee of Women's Voluntary Services is at present under consideration but no decision has so far been taken in the matter.

(c) and (d). No information is available on these points.

(e) Representations have been received by Government on the subject.

(f) A decision about the allotment of the land will be arrived at after examining the recommendations of the Standing Advisory Committee for the development of New Delhi. Due consideration will be given for the purpose to the claims of Sikh Associations.

VISIT OF BRITISH CABINET MEMBERS TO INDIA

†731. ***Sardar Mangal Singh:** Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state whether there is any truth in the Press report that members of the British Cabinet including the Secretary of State for India and his deputy will pay a visit to this country at the end of April or early May to assist the Viceroy in his negotiations with the party leaders for instituting a constitution-making Body?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The Honourable Member will have seen the statement made in the House of Commons by the Prime Minister and in the House of Lords by the Secretary of State for India announcing that His Majesty's Government have decided, with the approval of His Majesty the King, to send out to India a special mission of Cabinet Ministers consisting of the Secretary of State for India, the President of the Board of Trade and the First Lord of the Admiralty to act in association with the Viceroy in the steps outlined in His Excellency's statement of the 19th September 1945.

Mr. B. B. Varma: May I put this question, Sir, as I have been authorised by Mr. Gauri Shankar Saran Singh to put it on his behalf?

Mr. President: Has the Honourable Member got the Honourable Member's written authority?

Mr. B. B. Varma: Yes, Sir; I will produce it before you.

Mr. President: Very well; he can then put the question.

FOOD SITUATION IN BIHAR

732. ***Mr. B. B. Varma** (on behalf of **Mr. Gauri Shankar Saran Singh**): (a) Will the Food Secretary please state the present food situation in the Province of Bihar?

(b) Is he aware of the failure of *kharif* crop in most parts of the Province?

(c) Will he state the extent of estimated decrease in total production of paddy in comparison to two previous years, *vis.*, 1943-44 and 1944-45, and also to normal production?

(d) What is the approximate shortage of rice (or paddy) which the province will need for feeding its population?

(e) Will he state the quantity of rice and paddy imported into the Province during the years 1938-39 to 1944-45, year by year?

(f) Has the Government of Bihar made urgent demands for the supply of rice from outside the Province? If so, what is the quantity asked for?

(g) Have Government considered the constant worsening of the food situation in Bihar? If so, with what results?

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

Mr. B. E. Sen: (a) The Bihar Government have enough stocks to meet their commitments for the present.

(b) There was no widespread failure of the *kharif* crop in Bihar but it was somewhat below the average.

(c) and (e). Two statements are laid on the table of the House.

(d) The Provincial Government estimate that they will need 150,000 tons of rice during the present year in addition to 59,000 tons already received.

(f) Yes. The Bihar Government have asked for 50,000 tons of rice immediately and additional 100,000 tons later.

(g) Discussions have been held with the Bihar Government who are promulgating a levy order requiring all large producers of paddy to sell specified portions of their produce to Government and are extending rationing to several towns as stocks become available.

Statements

Part (c).—Forecasts give figures in terms of rice and not paddy. The estimated decrease in total production of rice in comparison with the average production and production in the two previous years is as follows:—

335,000 tons decrease over average production.

546,000 tons decrease over 1943-44 production.

236,000 tons decrease over 1944-45 production.

Part (e).—Quantities of rice and paddy imported into Bihar during the years 1938-39 to 1944-45.

Year	Rice	Paddy
1938-39	208,135	19,908
1939-40	225,786	12,194
1940-41	225,498	15,663
1941-42	161,295	16,985
1942-43	92,621	9,436
1943-44	14,457	25
1944-45	438,76.6	2,802
1945-46	59,000	...

(These figures exclude imports from Nepal)

Mr. B. B. Varma: May I ask if arrangements are being made to supply the demands of the Bihar Government?

Mr. B. E. Sen: The demands of these Provincial Governments can only be met to the full if we get sufficient quantities of imports. If we have not been able to supply Bihar the full quantities that they had asked for it is because we have not got the imports.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: There are many rural areas in Bihar which are deficit areas. May I ask if any effort is being made to introduce rationing in order to assure some supply of rice and other foodstuffs?

Mr. B. E. Sen: As far as I am aware, the Bihar Government have undertaken to extend rationing in the near future to four or five other towns. There is no scheme of extension of rationing to rural areas at the present moment.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Why is it that the Government of India do not think it their duty to see that the rural areas are provided with the minimum supplies of foodstuffs?

Mr. B. R. Sen: Government of India have issued general instructions to the Provincial Governments that they should extend rationing to the fullest extent not only to urban areas but also to rural areas and we expect that the Provincial Governments will take all necessary steps in that direction.

Babu Ram Narayan Singh: Is the Honourable Member aware that in the towns of Ranchi, Hazaribagh and Chatra there is a great scarcity of rice at the present moment?

Mr. B. R. Sen: I believe that is correct.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Does that mean that if a Provincial Government does not choose to protect the rural people from starvation, it is not the concern of the Government of India to see to it that these rural people are also assured of minimum supplies of foodstuffs?

Mr. B. R. Sen: That is the concern both of the Central and the Provincial Governments. Steps are being taken by the Central as well as Provincial Governments to extend rationing as far as possible.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable Member send a copy of this question and his answer and also a copy of the supplementaries and their answers to the Provincial Governments concerned?

Mr. B. R. Sen: Certainly, Sir.

Babu Ram Narayan Singh: Sir, in one place the Honourable Member says that the Government of Bihar has got a sufficient stock of rice and at another place he says that the Government of Bihar has asked for more rice. May I ask how do these two statements tally?

Mr. B. R. Sen: I have said in reply to the first question that they have got sufficient supplies for the present. There are still 8 months of the year to go and that explains what I have said.

Babu Ram Narayan Singh: What is the amount of sufficient stock that the Government of Bihar have got at present?

Mr. B. R. Sen: I must ask for notice of that question.

Mr. President: Before the next question is put by Mr. Varma, I should like to put in a word about the written authority. I have accepted this time the Honourable Member's assurance that he will produce it before me, but henceforward I should like the authority to be produced before me before the question, is asked. I should like to know the nature of the authority. If it is a general authority for the whole session, I am not going to accept it.

Mr. B. B. Varma: No, Sir, it is not a general authority; it was only for a particular day.

Mr. President: Next question.

PRICE OF FOODGRAINS IN BIHAR

733. *Mr. B. B. Varma (on behalf of **Mr. Gauri Shankar Saran Singh**): (a) Will the Food Secretary please state whether the Government of Bihar has fixed statutory maximum prices for principal foodgrains? If so, will he quote the prices fixed for rice and paddy in February 1945, and the present fixed prices for the said commodities?

(b) Is it a fact that rice is selling at present at the rate of Rs. 20 to Rs. 25 per maund in most Districts of Bihar?

(c) Do Government consider the interest of the producers while fixing the statutory maximum prices?

(d) In view of smaller crops especially of paddy, this year, do Government propose to take steps to fix a fair price in the interest of the paddy growers?

Mr. B. R. Sen: (a) Yes. In February 1945, the maximum prices for rice and paddy were Rs. 9 for coarse rice, Rs. 10 for medium rice and Rs. 6 for paddy. These prices are still in force.

(b) That is not our information.

(c) Yes.

(d) The present price of paddy provides a fair return to the grower for his produce.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: What steps have Government taken to see that the peasants actually receive these maximum prices? They are only ceiling prices; they are not expected to be the actual prices?

Mr. B. R. Sen: This question does not arise, Sir.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: The Honourable Member has said that they are satisfied that the growers are receiving remunerative or fair prices. What is the basis on which he assumes that the growers will receive remunerative or fair prices, when he has not considered it to be his duty to ascertain

Mr. President: Order, order; the latter part of the question need not be put.

Mr. B. R. Sen: What I have said is that the maximum prices fixed for rice and paddy in Bihar are the prices which provide a fair return to the grower.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May I ask when these prices were fixed?

Mr. B. R. Sen: I think they were fixed in February 1945.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Arising out of the answer to part (b) of this question, may I know if he does not admit that Rs. 20 to Rs. 25 per maund is the prevailing price now? May I ask what is the present price now according to his information?

Mr. B. R. Sen: Immediately after the food debate in this House there was a rise in prices in Bihar and at some places the price went up to even Rs. 20 per maund. Since then the prices have come down in different districts.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: In view of the fact that these prices were fixed so long ago as February 1945, may I ask what steps Government have taken to increase the prices?

Mr. B. R. Sen: The Honourable Member must be aware that the prices went up very high in 1943. Since 1943 the attempt of Government has been directed towards bringing down the prices all over India and to fix them according to the normal parity.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: In view of the fact that these maximum prices are considered to be remunerative or fair, why is it that Government does not consider it its duty to see that these maximum prices are actually received by the producers?

Mr. B. R. Sen: So far as I am aware, the Provincial Governments have satisfied themselves that a fair price is received by the grower. I may explain that these prices are the prices at which Government make their procurement. These are not the maximum prices.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: In view of the fact that there is growing scarcity, have not the Government considered the Resolution of the House that in order to induce agriculturists to grow more food and produce more foodgrains, the prices must be increased?

Mr. B. R. Sen: This question was brought up at different times, it was brought up in the Food Debate and again in connection with the Adjournment Motion. I have already explained the Government point of view on the subject.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: After the Resolution was passed in the Food Debate, what steps have Government taken to increase the prices where they are necessary?

Mr. B. R. Sen: The Government do not think that increase in prices in the present state of scarcity in this country is a sound policy for stimulating production.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will not this inaction on the part of the Government encourage black market and is it not now forcing the price of rice and paddy also to an abnormal level, such as Rs. 20 and Rs. 25 as hinted here in this question?

Mr. B. R. Sen: That is not the view of the Government.

GRANT OF MONEY FOR TAMING RIVER KOSI IN BIHAR

734. *Shri Satya Narayan Sinha: (a) Is the Honourable the Labour Member aware that the Governor General, during his last tour of Bihar, had flown to the area devastated by the vagaries of the river Kosi and that he was so much impressed with the pitiable situation obtaining there that he decided to move the Central Government for granting an adequate amount for taming the river and thus to save the lives and properties of the millions of the people concerned? If so, what is being done in that regard?

(b) Has any project been made ready? If not, what steps are being taken to expedite the matter which concerns the question of life and death for millions of people?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The Governor General during a recent tour did fly over the area devastated by the Kosi floods and did cause a communication to be sent to the Labour Department emphasising the importance of controlling the river as early as possible.

(b) The Central Waterways, Irrigation and Navigation Commission are conducting the investigations. They have with the permission of the Government of Nepal started aerial and ground surveys and the geological and hydrological investigations for the purpose. Investigation is being conducted with a view to planning the control of the Kosi by means of a storage dam in the Nepal Himalayas. Such dam will not only store surplus flood water and the large volumes of coarse silt carried by it and so prevent the damage at present caused by Kosi floods but it is hoped will also provide water for perennial irrigation of an area estimated at 3 million acres in both Nepal and Bihar and also will offer opportunities for the generation of cheap hydro-electric power. The investigation is being treated as one of high priority.

RECOMMENDATION OF NAMES FOR FOREIGN SCHOLARSHIPS FROM BIHAR

735. *Shri Satya Narayan Sinha: (a) Will the Education Secretary be pleased to state if the Government of Bihar have recommended any names for foreign scholarships for training in different subjects?

(b) Is it a fact that last year no such recommendation was received here from the Government of Bihar, while many other Provincial Governments had sent names and have sent names this year also?

Dr. John Sargent: (a) No, Sir, not yet. All Provincial Governments have been requested to forward to the Education Department by March 31st 1946. the names and other particulars of the candidates recommended by them for Overseas Scholarships to be awarded this year. This information has not so far been received from any Provincial Government.

(b) No, Sir, last year the Government of Bihar recommended 6 students whose names are given in the Report of the Selection Board, Overseas Scholarships, 1945. In addition to these students selected for Provincial Scholarships, the Bihar Government also deputed some Government servants for advanced studies abroad.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Out of these six recommended by the Bihar Government how many were actually accepted as scholars by the Government of India?

Dr. John Sargent: All the six.

CONSUMPTION OF TIMBER AND OTHER INDIAN FOREST PRODUCE

+736. *Sjt. N. V. Gadgil: Will the Agriculture Secretary please state:

(a) the total consumption, in tons, of timber and other forest produce from the Indian forests during the war-time;

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

(b) the pre-war consumption of timber and other forest produce from the Indian forests;

(c) the total quantity of timber and other forest produce exported during the war-time;

(d) to what extent the war-time average annual consumption of timber and forest produce is higher than the pre-war average;

(e) the extent of deforestation because of the above;

(f) how many years it will take to rehabilitate the forests, and the approximate cost for such rehabilitation; and

(g) whether Government have allocated any funds for this purpose; if so, what the amount is?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a), (b), (c), and (d). On the basis of such information as is available at present and assuming that annual consumption is the same as annual production, the figures for timber are 21 lakh tons produced on an average annually during the war, 12 lakhs tons produced annually in the pre-war period and 4 lakhs tons exported during the war. The war-time production is thus 1½ times the pre-war production. Figures for other forest produce are not available.

(e) Deforestation technically means that the forest is unfit for any further yield. In this sense, there has been no deforestation in Government and Indian State forests, as war demands were met by making advance but silviculturally sound fellings. Deforestation may have occurred in privately owned forests but no information is available about the extent thereof.

(f) It is considered by experts that no permanent damage has been done to Government and Indian State forests by the advance fellings that have taken place. The return to the normal yield will depend on the post-war working plans adopted by Provincial and State Governments; it is expected that they will spread the reduced fellings over a number of years, so that the effect on post-war yields will be small. No estimate can be made of the cost involved.

(g) The different Provincial Governments have provided funds in their post-war plans for the improvement of forests and the Central Government will give assistance to them on such principles, terms and conditions as may be decided upon in connection with central assistance for provincial post-war development plans in general.

PRICE CONTROL ON GOODS EXPORTED FROM INDIA

737. *Mr. P. B. Gole: (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state whether Government have imposed price control on goods exported from India?

(b) Is it a fact that no control of price has been imposed on goods imported into India? If so, why?

The Honourable Dr. Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Yes, Sir; price control has been imposed on certain goods exported from India, namely, jute, lac, sugar, gur, cotton textiles, and cotton waste.

(b) No, Sir; prices on imported goods are controlled under the Hoarding and Profiteering Prevention Ordinance, 1943, and specific Control Orders for individual commodities, such as the Paper Price Control Order, 1945, the Civil Motor Cars Control Order, 1945, the Motor Vehicles Spare Parts Control Order, 1944, the Brass and Copper (Control) Order, 1945, the Aluminium Utensils (Control) Order, 1945, and the Drugs Control Order, 1945.

Mr. P. B. Gole: Why should price control be imposed on export of goods from India?

The Honourable Dr. Sir M. Azizul Huque: That is because, it is in the interest of foreign trade and in the interest of internal control over prices within the country.

DECIPHERING AND PUBLICATION OF EPIGRAPHS IN BOMBAY PROVINCE

†738. *Mr. D. P. Karmarkar: Will the Education Secretary be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of epigraphs available for deciphering and study in the Bombay Karnatak districts, *i.e.*, Dharwar, Belgaum, Bijapur, and North Kanara;

(b) the number of epigraphs copied till now under the auspices of the Archæological Department;

(c) the number of epigraphs copied but not yet published;

(d) the measures contemplated by Government to expedite publication of the epigraphs already copied and deciphered; and

(e) the probable time within which the unpublished epigraphs are likely to be published?

Dr. John Sargent: (a) About four thousand.

(b) About two thousand and four hundred.

(c) About two thousand and one hundred.

(d) During the war, printing of the publications of the Archæological Department was suspended. Urgent steps have now been taken to resume publication and Government have sanctioned the appointment of a Superintendent of Publications in the Department for this special purpose.

(e) The probable time within which the unpublished epigraphs (including those not yet copied) will be published, is estimated at twelve years.

GRAIN SHORTAGE IN BOMBAY PROVINCE

†739. *Mr. D. P. Karmarkar: Will the Food Secretary be pleased to state:

(a) whether failure of crops this year has resulted in serious grain shortage in three of the Karnatak districts, namely the Belgaum, Dharwar and Bijapur districts in the Bombay Province;

(b) the number of villages in each of these districts where scarcity conditions have been declared and the measure taken under the Famine Relief Code;

(c) the anticipated deficit in cereals for this year in these districts, and the measures taken to meet that deficit;

(d) whether steps have been taken to see that no cereals are exported from those districts; and

(e) whether the situation in these districts came up for discussion when the Food Secretary accompanied His Excellency the Governor-General recently to the south; if so, what decisions were taken to meet the food deficit in these districts?

Mr. B. R. Sen: (a) Yes; except in Bijapur where about 49,000 tons of last year's cereals stocks were carried over to this year.

(b) Scarcity has been declared in 258, 533 and 392 villages of Belgaum, Bijapur and Dharwar respectively. Able-bodied labourers have been encouraged to migrate to centres where labour is required, and steps are being taken to employ such labourers. Programmes of scarcity relief works are also being worked out, and Collectors have been authorised to open works in anticipation of Government sanction. Collectors have also been asked to organise health units to prevent malnutrition and disease and to undertake deepening and repairing of wells and digging *kachcha* wells, etc. Distribution of *tagai* for maintenance in exceptional cases and for fodder, wells, etc., has been undertaken. Revenue collections have either been suspended or remitted, and distribution of gratuitous relief in kind and cash have been authorised. Government are also arranging to purchase fodder and cattle feeds for distribution to cattle owners at subsidised rates and are also encouraging by subsidies the growth of food and fodder crops by wells and other types of irrigation.

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

(c) Estimated cereal deficit in these districts is about 1,15,000 tons. Measures are being taken to make allotments to these districts from outside.

(d) No inter-district movement of foodgrains is allowed except on Government account.

(e) The difficult food situation in the whole of Southern India was brought under review and steps to be taken to meet the situation were generally discussed. Among the important questions discussed was the desirability of distributing the shortage on an all-India basis by a uniform cut in rations.

LOSS TO JUNIOR COPY HOLDERS IN GOVERNMENT PRESS, NEW DELHI

740. *Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member kindly state whether it is a fact that in the Government of India Press, New Delhi many Junior Readers are sustaining a loss of Rs. 10 or Rs. 5 per month in their promotion from the post of a Copyholder to that of a Junior Reader, and that the rate of increment too is Rs. 5 per annum in the case of Copyholders whereas Rs. 3 only for Junior Readers?

(b) What steps do Government propose to take to compensate them for their monetary loss and redress the anomaly in the existing rates of pay of a Copyholder and a Junior Reader?

(c) Is it also a fact that the arrears of the unified scale of pay to Copyholders sanctioned in the month of July, 1945, still remain unpaid, in spite of there being several representations in person?

(d) What are the reasons therefor, and do Government propose to give any compensation for such delay under the Payment of Wages Act? If not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes, in the case of those Copyholders who chose the unified scale of pay and were later promoted as Junior Readers.

(b) The question is under consideration.

(c) Yes.

(d) Although issued in July 1945, the orders had retrospective effect from September 1st, 1944. Time had to be allowed to the employees concerned to elect for the unified scale. Then the pay of those who chose the scale had to be fixed allowing each the benefit of past service to the extent of three years. The accounts authorities are pre-auditing the bills. Payment will be made shortly. The reply to the latter portion of the question is in the negative.

MUSLIM GAZETTED OFFICERS IN ESTATE OFFICE

741. *Khan Bahadur Makhdum Al-Haj Syed Sher Shah Jeelani: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member kindly state the existing number of the Gazetted posts in the Estate Office, New Delhi?

(b) How many out of them are being held by Muslims?

(c) Is the Honourable Member aware of the fact that in 1943 it was decided by the Labour Department in consultation with the Home Department that the posts of the Assistant Estate Officers will be filled by promotion from amongst the highly qualified Superintendents of the Central Public Works Department? If so, does the Honourable Member propose to see that the policy once laid down is adhered to?

(d) Do Government propose to see that the post now vacant which was reserved for a Muslim is under the rules filled by another Muslim in replacement?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Five.

(b) None at present.

(c) Although prior to the separation of the Estate Office from the Central Public Works Department Organisation, the normal method of recruitment to the post of Assistant Estate Officer in the office of the Chief Engineer was by

selection and promotion from among the Superintendents in that office, this position has since changed. The Estate Office now is not a part of Central Public Works Department but is directly under Labour Department. The Superintendents in the Chief Engineer's Office have therefore no claim now, as of right, for promotion to the post of Assistant Estate Officer in the Estate Office, but their cases may also be considered on merits when filling any of these posts.

(d) The question as to how the post which is now vacant should be filled is still under consideration.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: With reference to part (b), may I know how these five posts were filled and were there no Muslims who could be considered fit to occupy these posts?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I must have notice of this question.

EXPENDITURE ON 'GROW MORE FOOD' CAMPAIGN IN PUNJAB AND SIND

742. *Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: (a) Will the Agriculture Secretary be pleased to state how much money has been spent by the Government of India during the past five years for the 'Grow More Food' Campaign, and how much of this amount has been spent in the Punjab and Sind?

(b) What was the additional yield?

(c) How much of this additional yield has been made over to the Government of India for their Basic Plan?

(d) What is the additional extent of agricultural production in the Punjab and Sind during the past five years?

(e) What steps, if any, have been taken to send consignments of food from the Punjab and Sind to the deficit areas?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) The 'Grow More Food' Campaign was started in 1942-43. A statement is laid on the table showing the loans and grants sanctioned since then.

(b) The additional yield due to the 'Grow More Food' Campaign cannot be ascertained separately from the actual increase in yield due to seasonal and climatic factors. It is estimated, however, that the increase due to the former would be of the order of 1½ to 2 million tons under normal conditions.

(c) It is not possible to differentiate between the surplus of food-grains offered to Food Department from the normal yield of exporting Provinces and their additional yield as a result of the 'Grow More Food' Campaign.

(d) A statement is laid down on the table showing the average annual production of food-grains in the past 4 years as compared with the pre-war average

(e) The surpluses of major foodgrains in the Punjab and Sind are distributed by the Food Department to various deficit areas for whom the Punjab and Sind Government procure the food-grains. The actual despatch of consignments is done by them in consultation with the receiving areas.

Statement

Part (a)

	Loans in Lakhs	Grants in Lakhs
All-India	494	491
Punjab	Nil	21.7
Sind	Nil	8

Part (d,

	Four-year (1944-45) Average	Pre-war (1936-39) Average
	(in million tons)	
Punjab	6.53	5.40
Sind	1.39	1.08

Shri Sri Prakasa: Will the Honourable Member give this House an idea of the land that was brought under cultivation under the 'Grow More Food' Campaign in New Delhi?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: I do not think that arises out of this particular question. But if the Honourable Member wishes, I can supply him that information at some other time.

Mr. Manu Subedar: With reference to part (e), may I know what reasons the Government have got for supplying from the Central Reserve of Food to Sind? The Honourable the Food Secretary just now said so. Why is Sind, a surplus Province, be allowed to make depredations into the central reserves of food. Sind is normally a surplus Province. According to this answer we are told that surpluses from these Provinces of the Punjab and Sind are being sent to the Government of India. I like that answer. But the answer which the Honourable Food Secretary gave this morning was that Sind was in deficit and therefore the Government of India recently supplied a small quantity of food-grains to Sind from their own reserves. How do you reconcile these two answers?

Mr. B. R. Sen: Both are correct.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Has any foodgrain been supplied to Sind since the beginning of this year?

Mr. B. R. Sen: Yes, Sir; 10,000 tons.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Then may I know why this surplus Province—which in our opinion is shamming—is allowed to make inroads on the central food reserves of the Government of India, why they are not putting full monopoly procurement in their own districts and why they are not imposing full rationing as in other parts of the country before they come to the Central Government's resources for food in this manner?

Mr. B. R. Sen: Sind is a surplus province in normal seasonal conditions. Their argument is that last year the present *rabi* crop suffered from certain seasonal factors and the yield was very much less than they had anticipated.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will the Government of India give an assurance to this House that no normally surplus Province will be permitted to indent on the Government of India for any food supply until they take all the measures, both for procurement and rationing, to the same extent as they are taken in deficit Provinces?

(No reply was given.)

(b) WRITTEN ANSWERS

STOPPAGE OF EMPLOYMENT OF FORCED LABOUR

743. ***Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state:

(a) the extent of forced labour in this country;

(b) what steps, if any, Government propose to take to stop the employment of forced labour in this country;

(c) whether any steps have been taken by Government to fix a minimum standard of wages for agricultural and industrial labourers in several parts of this country; and

(d) whether Government is proposing to take any steps either by legislation or otherwise to see that labour is adequately and regularly paid; if so, what; if not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No detailed information is available.

(b) The attention of the Honourable Member is drawn to the reply given to Starred Question No. 381 of Professor N. G. Ranga, on 20th February 1946.

(c) Proposals for minimum wage legislation for agricultural and industrial labour are under consideration.

(d) The proposed minimum wage legislation will provide for fixing minimum wages and for ensuring payment of wages at not less than the rates fixed.

POSITION OF DELHI PROVINCE AS PART OF PUNJAB FOR PURPOSES OF RATIONING

744. *Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Will the Food Secretary please state:

(a) if the Province of Delhi was treated as part of the Punjab, at any time during the war, for purposes of rationing of food or fuel or sugar, and if the same position continues now, if not, why not?

(b) if it is a fact that high officials for the Municipal, Judicial and other services in Delhi and New Delhi are mostly recruited from the Punjab services; if so, how many are in this Province now?

(c) what the objection is for treating Delhi as part of the Punjab for rationing purposes in all matters; and

(d) if the Province of the Punjab refuses to treat Delhi as part of that Province for the above purposes, whether he proposes to advise the Government of India to return all the Punjab officials in whatever capacity they may be employed in the Province of Delhi, to the Punjab, and recruit officials from the adjacent Province of the United Provinces?

Mr. B. R. Sen: (a) Free trade in food-grains between Delhi and the Punjab was agreed to in May 1943. Since the introduction of rationing in Delhi free imports of wheat and rice from the Punjab into the rationed areas of Delhi have been stopped and these commodities are being imported on Government account. The movement of certain non-rationed foodgrains like gram and millets has been temporarily banned by the Punjab Government. The movement of wheat, rice and other food-grains by road to Delhi has also been banned by the Punjab Government. These restrictions have been imposed in order to facilitate the procurement of food-grains in the Punjab.

Certain supplies of fuel for Delhi used to be derived from the Punjab but since 1944 these supplies have been stopped altogether on account of scarcity of fuel in the Punjab.

Sugar for Delhi has all along been exclusively received from the mills in the United Provinces.

(b) Yes. The number of Gazetted Officers borrowed from the Punjab for service in Delhi and New Delhi is 30.

(c) The appointment of officials from the Punjab is not connected with the question of supplies of rationed commodities.

(d) Does not arise.

EXPENDITURE ON CONSTRUCTION OF NEW DELHI AND ITS MAINTENANCE

745. *Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Will the Health Secretary please state:

(a) the amount spent on the construction of New Delhi so far, and on its maintenance per year;

(b) the amount realised by way of taxes and lighting and water charges in the New Delhi area during the year 1945-46 (up to January, 1946);

(c) the amount spent on the maintenance of staff in the various Branches of the Central Public Works Department services for the same period; and

(d) the amount spent on education, sanitation and public amenities during the same period?

Mr. S. H. Y. Oulsnam: (a), (b) and (d). A note giving the information available at present is laid on the table.

(c) Information has been called for and will be furnished to the House when received.

Statement

(a) (i) Expenditure to the extent of Rs. 20,48,08,217 has been incurred on the New Capital Project.

(ii) No separate figure for annual maintenance of New Delhi is readily available. However, the cost of maintenance of Central Government's Buildings in Delhi, including Old Delhi, for the current financial year is expected to be Rs. 50,34,500. These figures do not include the cost of construction and maintenance of Defence and Commercial Departments Buildings.

(b) Actual income for the period from April to December 1945 :

	Rs.	
(1) House Tax	5,00,330	
(2) Terminal Tax	1,66,488	
(3) Motor Tax	1,28,785	
(4) Dog Tax	2,982	
(5) Milch Tax	476	
(6) Wheel Tax	819	
(7) Lighting	16,90,667	
(8) Water rate (filtered)	7,08,014	
(unfiltered)	2,45,470	(to the end of January 1946).

Figures for items 1—7 for January 1946 are not readily available.

(d) Actual expenditure for the period April to December 1945 :

	Rs.	
(1) Education	1,38,281	
(2) Sanitation (including sewage disposal)	6,81,747	
(3) Public Amenities—		
(i) Maintenance of parks and gardens, etc	1,93,635	
(ii) Free water in public places	56,411	

Figures to the end of January 1946 are not readily available.

MUSLIM ENGINEERS IN CENTRAL TECHNICAL POWER BOARD

746. *Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon: Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Engineers selected and appointed so far in the Central Technical Power Board;

(b) the number of Muslim officers appointed;

(c) if no Muslim has been appointed, why;

(d) if it is a fact that some Muslim Engineers applied for the posts of different grades of officers but these candidates were overlooked in utter disregard of the Government order fixing communal quota; and

(e) in view of the *zero representation* of Muslims at present in the Power Board, whether Government propose to take up the question of appointing adequate number of Muslim officers to conform with the communal quota fixed by Government order?

The Honourable Dr. B. E. Ambedkar: (a) 17 excluding Chairman, as detailed below:

Hydro-electric Member	1
'A' Grade Project Officers	2
'B' Grade Project Officers	5
'C' Grade Project Officers	9
	17

(b) Nil.

(c) No Muslim officer possessing the requisite technical qualifications and experience was available for any of the posts.

(d) The Muslim Officers who applied for the posts were not considered suitable by the Federal Public Service Commission.

(e) As there has been no infringement of the Rules relating to the representation of different communities in the services, no action is called for.

MUSLIMS FOR ADVANCE TRAINING IN ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

747. *Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon: Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Electrical Engineers selected by the Electrical Commissioner on behalf of the Labour Department and deputed overseas for advance training in the Electrical Engineering last year;

(b) the number of Muslims thus selected;

(c) if it is a fact that this selection was made without the publicity being given through the Press; if so, why; and

(d) if the Muslim quota has not been kept up in the last batch, whether the Honourable Member proposes to give an assurance that a larger number of Muslims will be included in the next selection?

The Honourable Dr. B. E. Ambedkar: (a) Selected—10, Deputed overseas—9.

(b) One.

(c) The Provinces and major States were apprised of the scheme for training of Indians abroad and asked to make a preliminary selection of suitable candidates. 24 names were put forward by them of whom 22 appeared for interview and ten selected.

There was therefore no necessity to give publicity to the scheme in the Press.

(d) The Provinces and Major States recommended only one Muslim for selection and he was selected by Government. As such, the latter portion of this part of the question does not arise.

APPOINTMENT OF MUSLIMS AS ENGINEERS IN CENTRAL P.W.D.

748. *Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon: Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state:

(a) the number of temporary Executive Engineers and Assistant Engineers in the Central P. W. D. (i) in the Civil Engineering Branch, and (ii) Electrical Engineering Branch;

(b) the number of Muslim officers in each of the above Branches;

(c) whether it is proposed to retain all of them for permanent appointments;

(d) if the answer to (c) is in the negative, the number proposed to be retained; and while retrenching the staff, whether Government will bear in mind the need for maintaining the communal quota of Muslims; and

(e) if the answer to (c) is in the affirmative, whether in view of the small number of Muslims, Government propose to consider the question of appointment of additional Muslim officers to make up their representation?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) and (b). The total number of temporary and officiating Executive Engineers in the Civil Engineering and Electrical Engineering Branches is 65 and 13 respectively, of whom Muslims are 9 and 2 respectively.

(c) and (d). It has not yet been definitely settled how many of the existing temporary incumbents can be permanently absorbed in the Department. If the need for retrenchment arises, the orders regarding observance of the communal representation rules in effecting retrenchment will be duly followed.

(e) Does not seem to arise in view of the answer to clause (c), but the Honourable member may rest assured that the communal representation rules will be duly followed.

REFUSAL OF PERMITS TO INDIANS BY BURMA GOVERNMENT TO RETURN TO INDIA

749. *Sri V. Gangaraju: (a) Will the Secretary for Commonwealth Relations be pleased to state if it is a fact that a large number of Indians who went to the office of the Release and Rehabilitation Section of the Burmese Government to ask for permits to go back to India were not given any hearing?

(b) Are Government aware that they were lathi charged even while the Agent to the Government of India was present on the occasion?

(c) Did the said Agent protest against that unprovoked and violent attack on Indians?

(d) What steps have Government taken to protest against this indignity?

(e) What steps are being taken against the repetition of such attacks on Indians?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: (a) The number of Indians anxious to return to India is out of proportion to shipping facilities available so far. The procedure that has to be adopted for deciding and communicating priority for passages has been rather complicated. The Government of Burma's staff for dealing with applications for return passages is also reported to be inadequate and overworked. This has caused great delay in the disposal of applications for passage and complaints have been frequently made that applicants for passages are not given the necessary information.

(b) and (c). Towards the end of January, a very large number of Indians assembled at the Burma Government's Passage office and gave expression to their impatience and exasperation at delay in obtaining information and six eye witnesses complained to our Representative that those who were ostensibly regulating the crowd had assaulted about 50 persons. Our Representative drew the attention of the authorities concerned to the matter immediately with the result that the office for the issue of passages was shifted to a less congested place on the 4th February. The Representative also received further unconfirmed complaints about lathi charges and actually saw one policeman using a lathi on the crowd also at the new office. On the Representative's intervention, the policeman stopped.

(d) and (e). Necessary representations have been made to the authorities concerned and the issue of passages at the new office has been suspended for some time with a view to completing the repatriation of over 5,000 persons whose applications have already been registered. Active steps are also being taken to obtain additional shipping accommodation and simplify the procedure for registration of application for passages.

REFUSAL OF FACILITIES TO DETAINED INDIANS IN BURMA TO RETURN TO INDIA

750. *Sri V. Gangaraju: (a) Will the Secretary for Commonwealth Relations be pleased to state if there are Indians in Burma who have expressed their desire to return to India? If so, how many of them had been in jail in (i) Japanese custody and (ii) the British Burma custody after the cessation of hostilities with Japan?

(b) Have any travel facilities for returning to India been provided to such Indians as had suffered from detention in jails or internment camps?

(c) To how many of them were such facilities refused, and why?

(d) Are any steps being taken to help them to return to India to meet their relatives and look after their paternal properties?

Mr. B. N. Banerjee: (a) The reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative.

Information regarding the second part is being collected and will be furnished on receipt.

(b) Yes.

(c) Facilities to return to India have not been refused to any but their return has been delayed owing to essential formalities connected with their repatriation and partly owing to lack of adequate shipping.

(d) Yes.

INDIAN DETENUS AND CONVICTS IN BURMA JAILS

751. *Sri V. Gangaraju: (a) Will the Secretary for Commonwealth Relations be pleased to state if it is a fact that a large number of Indians are still kept in jails in Burma? If so, how many of them are detenus, and how many are convicted prisoners?

(b) Why are they still being detained or forced to serve their sentences even after the war is over?

(c) What are the charges against the detenus and against the others?

(d) How many of them have been released during the last three months?

(e) In the case of how many of them, facilities to return to India have been refused?

Mr. B. N. Banerjee: (a) About 1,100 detenus mainly civilian I.N.A. personnel are in detention in Burma awaiting repatriation. No figures of Indians convicted of any charge are available.

(b) and (c). Detenus are being detained under Rule 26 of Defence of Burma Rules but all are now awaiting repatriation to India.

(d) About 15 who claimed Burma domicile have already been released and five more are about to be released.

(e) Facilities to return to India have not been refused to any but their return has been delayed owing to essential formalities connected with their repatriation and partly owing to lack of adequate shipping.

APPOINTMENTS TO THE POST OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, CENTRAL P.W.D.

752. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) the number of persons who have successively held the post of Administrative Officer, Central Public Works Department so far;

(b) to which community each one belonged;

(c) whether it is a fact that no Sikh or a Hindu has so far been appointed to this post; if so, why; and

(d) if he proposes to consider the advisability of appointing a Sikh to the post which is now lying vacant; if not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. B. E. Ambedkar: (a) Four.

(b) The communities to which the officers belonged were as follows:

(1) Anglo-Indian.

(3) Anglo-Indian.

(2) Muslim.

(4) Muslim.

(c) Yes. The orders regarding communal representation in the public services are not applied singly to the post of Administrative Officer but to all Class I posts in the Central P.W.D. taken together. It is, therefore, not possible to ensure that the post of Administrative Officer is filled by a member of a particular community.

(d) The question of filling the post is still under consideration.

IMPORT OF FOODGRAINS FROM EAST AFRICA

753. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Food Secretary be pleased to state:

(a) if Government are considering the suggestion made by the Indian Rural People's Society in their letter, dated the 8th instant that there are great possibilities for importing foodgrains from East African territories and that the Indian Trade Commissioner at Mombasa should be asked to contact the local Government with a view to persuading them to spare some quantities of foodgrains for India;

(b) whether they have instructed by cable their Trade Commissioner to move in the direction suggested; if so, what his answer is; and

(c) whether Government propose to take expeditious action in this regard so as to obtain urgently imports from East Africa?

Mr. B. E. Sen: (a) to (c). Reports about the availability of surplus foodgrains in East Africa have been brought to the notice of the Secretary of State for India as well as the Indian Trade Commissioner at Mombasa. They have been requested to explore the possibility of imports of these foodgrains into this country.

RESTRICTION ON FEASTING IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

754. *Shri Satya Narayan Sinha: (a) Has the attention of the Food Secretary been drawn to the suggestion made by Mahatma Gandhi in regard to the threatening food situation in the country, namely that feasting on ceremonial occasions should be stopped?

(b) In pursuance of that suggestion, does he propose to move Government to pass a law immediately for rural and urban areas all over the country, stopping feasting on all ceremonial occasions or at least restricting the maximum number of people to be fed at fifty only?

Mr. B. E. Sen: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Restrictions on the maximum number of people to be fed at ceremonial occasions are already in existence in most of the Provinces in rationed areas.

Further instructions have recently been issued to all Provinces and States to tighten up these restrictions and extend them to non-rationed areas where possible.

IMPORT OF CARTRIDGES

755. *Hajee Chowdhury Mohammad Ismail Khan: Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state the quantity of cartridges imported by sea during 1938, 1939, 1940 and 1945?

The Honourable Dr. Sir M. Azizul Huque: A statement giving the required information is laid on the table.

Statement showing the quantity of cartridges imported by sea into India during 1938, 1939, 1940 and 1945

	Imports into British India			Imports into maritime states of Kathiawar		
	Cartridge cases, Filled No.	Cartridge cases, Empty No.	Cartridge cases, Total No.	Cartridge cases, Filled No.	Cartridge cases, Empty No.	Cartridge cases, Total No.
1938	16,209,311	530,039	16,739,350	5,015	...	5,015
1939	12,169,022	580,500	12,749,522	1,000	...	1,000
1940	12,720,322	822,444	13,542,766	10,140	...	10,140
1945 (January to November.)	6,189,783	...	6,189,783	Information not available		

N.B.—There were no imports of cartridges by sea into Travancore.

APPLICATION OF PAYMENT OF WAGES ACT TO JODHPUR RAILWAY

756. *Seth Sukhdev: Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the provisions of the Payment of Wages Act, IV of 1936 apply to the portion of the Jodhpur Railway running through British India; if so, why the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and the Supervisor of Railway Labour's annual reports for three years 1941-44, published in the Indian Labour Gazette, contain no reference to Jodhpur Railway; and

(b) if the information in regard to the inspection of the British portion of the Jodhpur Railway is available for these years whether the Honourable Member proposes to lay a statement on the table of the House giving the following information for the Jodhpur Railway:

(1) the number of staff (i) adults, (ii) children, (iii) substitutes and (iv) total wages paid to them,

(2) the number of employees fined and the amount of fine recovered,

(3) the number of employees debited with loss or damage of goods and the amount so recovered, and

(4) the number of inspections held and irregularities noted?

The Honourable Dr. B. E. Ambedkar: (a) The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The note published in the Indian Labour Gazette contains merely a general summary of the annual reports for 1941-44 on the working of the Payment of Wages Act on Railways.

(b) (1) to (3) A statement containing the available information is placed on the table of the House.

(4) The information is not readily available.

Statement showing the staff employed by the Jodhpur Railway Administrations in factories and otherwise than in factories in the British Section of the Railway according to the returns submitted in pursuance of the provisions of Rule 17 of the Payment of Wages (Federal Railways) Rules 1938.

	1941-42	1942-43	1943-44
Total number of persons employed—			
Adults	1901	1933	2024
Children	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total wages paid	Rs. 5,82,379	Rs. 6,35,938	Rs. 6,21,433
Number of employees fined	128	102	140
Amount of fine recovered	Rs. 41	Rs. 31	Rs. 48
Number of employees debited with loss or damage of goods.	1102	1127	1303
Amount recovered for damage	Rs. 1,287	Rs. 1,129	Rs. 1,985

FRESH CULTIVATION OF LAND DUE TO GROW MORE FOOD CAMPAIGN

757. *Mr. B. P. Jhunjunwala: Will the Agriculture Secretary be pleased to state:

(a) what steps were taken in the "Grow More Food" campaign to bring larger acreage of land under cultivation; and

(b) what acreage of land province-wise was so brought under fresh cultivation, and the average production of such acreage compared with the production in adjoining areas?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) Government "waste" lands where available have been leased to cultivators at economic or concessional rates of rent or free (as the case may be) for the production of food crops to the extent of nearly 900,000 acres. A statement is laid on the table showing the province-wise distribution of this acreage. Loans and grants have been given by the Central Government to the tune of Rs. 49 lakhs and Rs. 56 lakhs respectively for land reclamation and improvement projects, including the construction of contour bunds, covering 1½ million acres. A statement is laid on the table showing the province-wise distribution of the loans and grants.

(b) Reliable figures are not available showing the increase in acreage and production due to the measures mentioned but a statement is laid on the table comparing the average figures for acreage and production in British India in the 3 pre-war years with those for the 3 years 1942-45, showing an increase of 11 million acres and 3 million tons of the principal food grains.

Statement showing the extent of area of culturable waste lands leased out to cultivators in different Provinces at economic or concessional rates or free of any charge.

Name of Province	Total area brought under cultivation (acres)
Assam	97,655
Bengal	22,231
Bihar	6,673
Bombay	1,82,125
C. P. and Berar	87,990
Madras	93,276
N. W. F. P	Nil
Orissa	1,211
Punjab	2,40,077
Sind	1,64,706
United Provinces	880
Total	8,96,834

List of the schemes sanctioned during 1943-44 for reclamation and improvement of land

	Loan	Grant	Grant sanctioned from Cotton fund
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Bombay— Interest free taccavi advance repayable in three years for the cultivation of culturable waste Lands.	3,00,000	1,00,000	
Coorg— Grant of Bonus to actual cultivators at Rs. 7/8 and Rs. 20 per acre for the cultivation of waste lands to the extent of 1,500 acres of dry land and 1,500 acres of wet land respectively.		41,250	
Orissa— Reclamation of waste lands to the extent of 66,000 acres.	3,76,500	44,900	
Punjab— Reclamation of 50,000 acres of sailab (riverain) area.	..	3,00,000	
Total	6,76,500	4,86,150	

List of the schemes sanctioned during 1944-45 for reclamation and improvement of land

	Loan	Grant	Grant sanctioned from Cotton fund
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Madras—			
(1) Reclamation of 40,000 acres of dry land in Pattukkotai taluk to bring it under irrigation for paddy for 1944-45.	15,00,000	1,72,820	
(2) Reclamation of 25,000 acres of Government land in compact blocks in Chittor District.	1,25,000	41,666	
(3) Reclamation of 1,000 acres of land in Anantpur District.	...	2,500	
Bombay—			
Bunding and dry farming development scheme .	...	15,00,000	
Bihar—			
Scheme for contour ridging in Chhota Nagpur.	...	5,76,970	
C. P. and Berar—			
Converting single crop area into do-fasli . .	1,98,970	52,150	
Orissa—			
Reclamation of 1 lakh acres of waste land out of which 33,000 acres will receive financial assistance.	4,45,500	44,000	
Punjab—			
Extension of cultivation to riverain areas .	...	6,00,000	
U. P.—			
Construction of Daulbandi . . .	...	1,01,000	
Baroda—			
Subsidy for land development and contour bunding of 40,000 acres at Rs. 2 per acre and the cost of spl. staff and equipment,	...		52,000
Total .	22,68,470	30,91,106	52,000

List of the schemes sanctioned during 1945-46 for reclamation and improvement of land 1

	Loan	Grant	Grant sanctioned from Cotton fund
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Ajmer Merwara—			
Scheme for survey of land for contour bunding for a period of six months.	...	6,190	
Bombay—			
Bunding and dry farming and survey development.		14,83,860	
C. P. and Berar—			
Conversion of 18,050 acres of rabi area into do-fasli by field embankment.	4,91,500	40,960	
Subsidizing repairs to old paddy bunds . .	78,333	7,833	

	Loan	Grant	Grant sanctioned from Cotton fund
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Madras—			
Scheme for the reclamation of undeveloped lands for wet cultivation in the district of Trichnopoly.		20,855	
Reclamation of 15,000 acres of land in Pattukotai Taluk.	5,62,500	62,375	
Orissa—			
Reclamation of waste land	5,00,000	1,66,666	
Conversion of single cropped area into do-fasli	3,07,733	66,933	
Punjab—			
Scheme for the soil conservation in Gujrat, Ambala, and Attock Districts and soil conservation division and Hisiarpur, Jhelum, Rawalpindi Forest Division.	...	39,440	
Scheme for the soil conservation in the districts of Gurdaspur.	...	7,660	
Scheme for the extension of cultivation to riverain areas.	...	1,23,210	
Total	19,40,066	20,25,982	
Grand total for the year 1943-44 to 1945-46	48,86,036	56,03,238	52,000

Statement showing area and production of principal foodgrains in British India*

Provinces	Area ('000 acres)		Production ('000 tons)	
	Normal (Average 1936-37 to 1938-39).	Average 1942-43 to 1944-45	Normal (Average 1936-37 to 1938-39)	Average 1942-43 to 1944-45
Ajmer-Merwara	232	325	34	52
Assam	5,280	5,398	1,797	1,957
Bengal	22,686	26,604	8,982	9,740
Bihar	15,760	15,857	5,002	4,973
Bombay	17,412	17,718	3,254	3,168
C. P. and Berar	14,880	15,473	3,655	3,765
Coorg	85	88	55	64
Delhi	178	213	47	52
Madras	19,342	20,026	7,304	7,401
N. W. F. P.	2,004	2,158	582	567
Orissa	5,454	5,476	1,618	1,394
Punjab	19,709	22,965	5,403	6,685
Sind	3,897	4,464	1,075	1,476
U. P.	31,166	32,828	9,063	9,594
Total	158,085	169,583	47,871	50,888

* Including rice, Wheat, Jowar, Bajra, Raji, Maize, Barley and gram.

IMPORT OF ARTIFICIAL MANURE

758. *Mr. B. P. Jhunjhunwala: (a) Will the Agriculture Secretary be pleased to state the total quantity and value of the artificial manure imported from foreign countries during the last fifteen years?

(b) How much of the same was used by or through the Agriculture Department?

(c) What steps were taken by the Department to propagate the use of this manure?

(d) Why does the Department advocate the use of the artificial manure in preference to organic manure, farmyard manure and green manure?

(e) Has the fertility of the soil increased and is that fertility maintained by the use of this manure? If so, what is the total increase in production per acre as a result of the use of such manure?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) A statement is laid on the table.

(b) The Department of Agriculture did not import any fertilizers until 1944. During the fertilizer year 1944-45 the Central Government made the following purchases:

Sulphate of Ammonia	90,000 tons
Ammonium Phosphate	14,000 ..
Triple Superphosphate	3,500 ..

During the fertilizer year 1945-46, the Combined Food Board has allocated:

Sulphate of Ammonia	1,54,000 tons
Ammonium Phosphate	6,634 ..

All fertilizers purchased by the Government after 1944 were controlled by the Central Government and were allocated to the various Provinces and States for distribution.

(c) The Central Government has been providing grants for subsidizing the distribution of Sulphate of Ammonia for use on food crops mainly paddy. The subsidy varies from 50 per cent to 25 per cent of the cost of the fertilizer. This has made the cultivators more fertilizer-minded.

(d) The Department does not advocate the use of fertilizers in preference to organic manures. Fertilizers are recommended to be used in conjunction with whatever organic manure is available. Since large quantities of organics are not available to give sufficient plant food to the growing crops, application of fertilizers helps to distribute the organics over a wider area and at the same time provides the necessary plant food in a more readily assimilable form.

(e) Fertilizers are not applied to increase the fertility of the soil but to produce bigger yields of crops. The plant food in the fertilizer becomes very readily available to the crop. Judicious use of fertilizers increases the yield of crops by 20 per cent. to 40 per cent.

Statement showing the imports of artificial manures into India from foreign countries during the last fifteen years
I.—QUANTITY (TONS)

	1930-31	1931-32	1932-33	1933-34	1934-35	1935-36	1936-37	1937-38	1938-39	1939-40	1940-41	1941-42	1942-43	1943-44	1944-45	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
1. Nitrogenous :—																
(a) Nitrate of Soda.	4,329	2,009	1,241	2,217	3,542	2,732	2,476	3,404	2,171	6,226	3,151	2,639	2		..	
(b) Sulphate of Ammonia.	19,761	16,382	37,601	29,782	40,762	46,226	60,811	53,570	77,096	80,438	32,154	1,627	1,361	2,550	50,841	
(c) Others	1	1,203	407	890	708	482	544	589	891	3,350	900	20		..		
Potassic :—																
(a) Muriate of Potash.	4,318	5,047	3,386	3,112	3,937	3,376	2,064	2,928	1,829	2,110	1,585	100	696	1,258	597	
(b) Others	..	1,547	438	717	1,796	1,099	690	1,604	965	1,045	140	..	..	..
3. Phosphatic :—																
(a) Superphosphate.		3,983	3,478	2,980	4,740	6,478	5,975	7,405	6,788	7,758	6,732	2,722	..	148	1,572	
(b) Others	26,291	1,354	1,088	2,109	1,116	3,931	3,087	3,779	3,882	1,839	337	20			1,500	
4. Compounds :—																
(a) Ammonium Phosphate.		72	699	3,781	7,321	5,529	3,999	2,167	2,569	973	1,389	250			54,822*	
Fish manures	2,874	1,742	1,675	1,007	1,143	1,479	2,616	1,783	2,375	2,498	3,867	2,189	1,451	1,558	2,452	
Others	787	691	2,300	2,930	1,039	557	675	1,746	1,294	2,056	1,256	1,737	60	1	..	
Total	58,361	34,030	52,308	49,525	66,104	71,889	82,937	78,975	90,860	1,08,293	51,511	11,304	3,570	5,515	1,11,784	

* Under Verification

II.—VALUE, THOUSAND (RUPEES)

	1930-31	1931-32	1932-33	1933-34	1934-35	1935-36	1936-37	1937-38	1938-39	1939-40	1940-41	1941-42	1942-43	1943-44	1944-45
1. Nitrogenous—															
(a) Nitrate of Soda.	597	255	159	254	279	273	239	320	229	803	485	714	...	...	...
(b) Sulphate of ammonia.	2,639	1,000	3,834	2,902	3,980	4,555	5,800	5,643	8,337	9,690	5,469	369	354	374	10,861
(c) Others	...	109	37	97	75	43	47	59	103	348	169	6	...	...	..
2. Pottasio—															
(a) Muriate of Potash.	181	603	466	396	402	324	209	286	182	270	203	24	292	522	204
(b) Others	...	140	64	92	199	121	75	180	112	121	23	...	...	...	...
3. Phosphatic -															
(a) Superphosphate.	...	271	210	216	343	466	396	568	595	628	1,050	460	...	37	389
(b) Others	2,533	55	51	232	77	320	313	406	418	213	42	1	...	..	178
4. Compounds—															
Ammonium Phosphate.	...	21	152	562	1,115	794	601	316	395	160	338	64	...	...	2,714*
5. Fish manures	275	150	129	61	93	103	173	58	74	99	124	72	79	116	100
6. Others	50	74	154	426	100	71	80	164	146	253	79	97	24	...	...
Total	6,575	3,578	5,256	5,238	6,663	7,080	7,933	8,000	10,561	12,585	7,982	1,807	749	1,049	14,446

*Under Variation

AVERAGE PRODUCTION PER ACRE OF MAIN CROPS IN INDIA

759. *Mr. B. P. Jhunjhunwala: (a) Will the Agriculture Secretary be pleased to state the average production per acre of different main crops in India?

(b) How does it compare with production in Italy, Japan and other countries in Europe and America?

(c) What steps have Government taken to bring the cultivation to the same level of production as in foreign countries?

(d) What amount of money has been spent on this Department for the last fifteen years? How much of this money was spent in supplying improved seeds and implements free or at concession rates to cultivators?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) and (b). A statement showing the available information is laid on the table of the House.

(c) Owing to climatic factors and the condition of the soil, the yield in all areas cannot be the same. Government have been carrying on research to evolve improved types of seed and better cultural practices so as to improve yields. Since 1942-43, the Central Government are subsidizing schemes relating to (1) the multiplication and distribution of improved seeds (2) the distribution of manures (3) the provision of facilities for irrigation, contour bunding, drainage cuts and other works of land improvement under the Grow More Food Campaign.

(d) In connection with the Grow More Food Campaign, Rs. 494 lakhs have been spent as loans and Rs. 491 lakhs as grants. Of this amount a sum of Rs. 253 lakhs has been given by way of loans and Rs. 87 lakhs by way of grants for the distribution of improved seeds and a sum of Rs. 2 lakhs by way of loans for the distribution of implements.

* Average production per acre of main crops in India as compared with the production in Italy, Japan and other countries in Europe and America (Average, 1936-37 to 1938-39)*

	India	Japan	Italy	France	Germany	Poland	Rumania	Argentina	Canada	U S A
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Rice (in the husk)	lbs. 1,150	lbs. 3,451	lbs. 4,761	lbs. 1,398	lbs. 2,114	lbs. 1,070	lbs. 997	lbs. 923	lbs. 591	lbs. 2,224
Wheat	655	1,568	1,294	1,307	2,002	1,025	690	957	933	797
Barley	744	1,739	1,018	1,409	...	1,110	895	1,454		1,033
Maize	696	1,422	1,872							1,350
Sugarcane (tons of cane).	1,334									1,982
Cotton (Lint)	92	200						134		245
Linseed	259		542			448		571	227	384
Rapeseed	386	1,004			1,622	807	499	...		...
Groundnuts (in shell).	848				...			...		755
Tobacco	874	1,539	1,164	1,636			675			855

* Figures for foreign countries for war years are not available.

CULTIVATION OF FALLOW LANDS IN NEW DELHI

760. *Shri Satya Narayan Sinha: Will the Agriculture Secretary please state if Government propose to take immediate steps to bring under plough all lands lying fallow in New Delhi for growing vegetables and eatables, in view of the terrible food crisis that is going to confront the country?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: Steps have been taken to bring under vegetable cultivation 60 acres *i.e.*, about half of the Central Vista; and part of it has already been dug up for the purpose and the rest will be ploughed after the Victory celebrations are over. Tenants of Government bungalows have also been asked to grow vegetables in their compounds. Arrangements have also been made for officers of the Department to go round to the houses and advise householders as to where vegetables, etc., should be planted, of what types and when, and for the supply of seeds, manures, etc. The limiting factors in most cases are water and lack of staff trained in the growing of vegetables.

RATIONING IN GOVERNMENT HOUSE, LAHORE

761. *Seth Govind Das: Will the Food Secretary please state:

(a) whether Government are aware that rationing on an austerity basis has been introduced in the Government House, Lahore, as stated by an Associated Press report;

(b) if so, whether the Government of India will take steps to convey the suggestion of such a practice to other Government Houses and high officials like Collectors, Commissioners, etc.; and

(c) whether, in view of food shortage, they propose to give instructions to various organisations concerned as well as hotels and general public to prohibit parties being given by anyone or by an organisation at one time for more than ten persons?

Mr. B. E. Sen: (a) Yes. Sir.

(b) His Excellency the Viceroy has already made a general appeal to this effect.

(c) Certain restrictions are already in force in most of the Provinces and they have recently been asked to tighten up these restrictions as far as possible and to apply them more rigidly.

APPOINTMENT OF INDIAN TRADE COMMISSIONER IN IRELAND

762. *Seth Govind Das: Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please state:

(a) the arrangements made for promoting Indo-Irish trade; and

(b) whether the Government of India propose to consider the question of appointing a Trade Agent or a Trade Commissioner in Ireland?

The Honourable Dr. Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Ireland is included in the jurisdiction of the Indian Government Trade Commissioner, London.

(b) The question of appointing a separate Trade Commissioner for Ireland will be considered should trade conditions warrant such an appointment.

FOOD PRIORITY FOR INDIA OVER GERMANY

763. *Seth Govind Das: Will the Food Secretary kindly state:

(a) whether the Government of India are aware of the statement of Lord Vensittart, Former Chief Diplomatic Adviser to the British Government, that needs of the starving India are paramount and that the food earmarked for Germany should be given to her;

(b) whether they are also aware of the statement that the Allies should be better treated than foes;

(c) whether Government propose to emphasise this point before the British Government; and

(d) whether they propose to see that India gets food priority over Germany?

Mr. B. R. Sen: (a) and (b). Yes.

(c) and (d). Government are doing all they can to press India's case for imports of foodgrains from abroad.

DISPOSAL OF U.S. ARMY CHAPEL IN NEW DELHI

764. *Sri S. T. Adityan: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether the U. S. Army Chapel, Parliament Street, New Delhi, is going to be surrendered to Government; if so, what Government propose to do with it?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Yes, the matter is now under consideration.

RESTRICTIONS ON SHIPPING SPACE FOR HAJ PILGRIMS

765. *Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: (a) Will the Secretary for Commonwealth Relations be pleased to state whether the Government of India are going to continue the restrictions on the shipping space for Haj pilgrims during 1946?

(b) If the restrictions are to continue, are the ports of Bombay and Calcutta likely to be opened for Haj pilgrimage owing to the changed circumstances on account of the end of the war?

(c) If the reply to part (b) is in the affirmative, how many Haj pilgrims will be allowed to sail from Karachi, Bombay or Calcutta?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: (a), (b) and (c). Arrangements for the next years Haj pilgrimage are under consideration and will be finalised in due course in consultation with the Standing Committee on Pilgrimage to the Hejaz. There are only seven ships left which can be used for the pilgrimage and it is hoped that all the seven will be available for the next pilgrimage. The maximum number of pilgrims these ships can carry will not, however, exceed 17,000. Whether pilgrims should be left to obtain passages direct from the shipping companies or a system of priority should be adopted for the booking of passages through Government has yet to be decided. Whether sailings will be allowed from all the 3 ports cannot also be decided at present.

ARRANGEMENT FOR HAJ PILGRIMAGE BY AIR

766. *Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: (a) Will the Secretary for Commonwealth Relations be pleased to state whether the pilgrimage to Haj would be possible by air during the ensuing Haj season?

(b) If the reply to (a) is in the affirmative, which company would be making arrangements for the flying of pilgrims?

(c) What air ports would be serving in India for this purpose?

(d) How much luggage each passenger would be allowed to carry in the plane?

(e) What rates of fare for single or return journey are proposed to be levied?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: (a) to (e). It is unlikely that arrangements can be made for a regular air service to Saudi Arabia for the purpose of the Haj pilgrimage during the next Haj season. Subject to air transport operating capacity being available at that time, Government will be pleased to give all assistance possible in making arrangements to facilitate flights for this purpose on a commercial basis. Intending travellers should make their proposals to one of the established air transport operating companies.

OPERATIONS OF U.K.C.C. IN INDIA

767. *Maharajkumar Dr. Sir Vijaya Ananda: Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state if they propose to take necessary steps to prohibit the United Kingdom Commercial Corporation from operating in India in view of the cessation of hostilities and India's need to build up her export trade? If so, when?

The Honourable Dr. Sir M. Azīzul Huque: The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply given in this House on the 5th February 1946, to Mr. Manu Subedar's starred question No. 17.

RE-ENTRY INTO MANIPUR OF INDIAN BUSINESS MEN

768. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the Honourable the Leader of the House be pleased to state whether any representation has been received by Government in regard to re-entry, into Manipur State, of certain Indian businessmen who evacuated therefrom during the war emergency period? If so, will he be pleased to indicate the nature of the grievances represented, and the action, if any, that has been taken on behalf of Government for the removal thereof?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Representations have been received by the Crown Representative from certain Chambers of Commerce against the Manipur Darbar's desire to refuse to re-admit into the State those merchants who abandoned their property in 1942 unless there should be any special reasons for allowing some of them to return; and also against the action of the Political Agent, Manipur, in cancelling the 'Pattas' of some former holders of land in the British Reserve in Manipur who similarly abandoned their property in 1942 without continuing to pay land revenue. These representations are at present being considered by the Crown Representative in consultation with the Governor of Assam and the Manipur Darbar.

RELEASE OF PERSONNEL FROM GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

769. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the total number of men, temporary and permanent, who are to be, released in 1946 from (i) the War Department, including Army, Navy and Air Force, (ii) Railways, and (iii) other Departments of Government?

(b) Is it a fact that some of them have put in exemplary service and are being now released?

(c) What steps are Government taking for getting them re-absorbed in other Departments?

(d) What special works do Government propose to set up for getting these men re-absorbed?

(e) Is it a fact that, simultaneously while Indians from various services are being thrown out of work, Britishers are being recruited for other services?

(f) Have Government considered the desirability of stopping such recruitment and taking Indians by giving them an opportunity to adapt themselves for other work for which fresh recruitment is started?

(g) 70 per cent of posts ordinarily filled by direct recruitment occurring Central Government and in the various Provincial Governments, and what is the machinery devised by Government to make necessary arrangements?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The information is not readily available. It is being collected and will be laid on the table in due course.

(b) Yes.

(c) Instructions have been issued requiring Departments to arrange for the registration at Employment Exchanges of discharged personnel and directing them to fill vacancies as far as possible through Employment Exchanges.

(d) Central and Provincial Governments are embarking on schemes selected out of the five-year plans with the special object of counteracting any tendency

to deflation and unemployment. These include productive schemes and schemes of economic importance which may not be self-financing, e.g., minor irrigation, roads, anti-erosion, agricultural measures, forests, etc. The two categories will provide *inter alia* considerable scope for building works, training and research, resettlement of *ex*-servicemen. Some other schemes, outside the 5-year plan, e.g., public health schemes, especially anti-malarial measures, water supply and drainage schemes, which will provide a considerable volume of employment, are also being taken up.

(e) No: except in those cases where specialists are required for particular appointments or the number is small and is required in the public interest.

(f) Does not arise.

(g) 70 per cent of posts ordinarily filled by direct recruitment occurring between the 29th June 1942 and 31st December, 1945, have been reserved for 'war service' candidates. Information regarding proportion of vacancies reserved by various Provincial Governments is not readily available. Applications for war reserved vacancies in the Superior Services have been invited from candidates and the last date of the receipt of applications was 15th February 1946 in respect of vacancies in non-technical Services and 1st April 1946 in respect of vacancies in technical Services. Candidates for technical Services will be interviewed by the Federal Public Service Commission who will make a final selection. Candidates for the non-technical Services will be first tested by Selection Boards of the type used by the War Department for recruiting officers for Commissions and subsequently interviewed by the F.P.S.C. who will make a final selection. In respect of vacancies in the Subordinate and Inferior Services arrangements have been made to receive applications from *ex*-service men after they are demobilised.

CONTROL ON METHOD OF PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF SALT DURING WAR TIME

770. *Pandit Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava: (a) Will the Food Secretary please state in what essential respects the method of production and distribution of salt in India was altered and brought under control during the war time?

(b) Is it a fact that special agents in different areas during the war time were appointed by Government who were granted sole monopolies over salt distribution in their respective areas? If so, what margin of profits was allowed to such agents?

(c) Are Government contemplating to grant monopoly of salt export from Sambhar and other salt producing centres in various Provinces in India to any particular individual or incorporated company? If so, to whom, and what terms?

(d) What are the advantages of that scheme?

(e) In the future schemes of salt distribution, will there be no place for free private trade whereby traders could, as before, directly import from the salt producing centres? If not, why not?

Mr. B. R. Sen: (a) No major change was made in the method of production. Distribution during war time was regulated by the Salt Emergency Distribution Order, 1942 (amended in 1943) which enabled quota allocations to be made to district nominees on a priority basis.

(b) The agents were appointed by the Provincial Governments. The Government of India have no information about the grant of monopolies or the margin of profits allowed to them.

(c) No.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) There is no question of cutting out private trade. Only to ensure regular supplies to every area, priority will be given to traders nominated by District authorities.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

EXPORT OF SUGAR AND GUR TO MIDDLE AND NEAR EAST

69. Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Food Secretary please state:

(a) whether any quantity of sugar or gur will be exported to the middle and near East countries this year or next year with particular reference to Persia; and

(b) what other articles of food will be sent to these countries?

Mr. B. E. Sen: (a) Small quantities of sugar and gur were allotted to Iran and Persian Gulf Sheikhdoms in the beginning of this year. The whole question is being reviewed in the light of the changed supply position. No decision has yet been taken about exports in 1947.

(b) Export of small quantities of onions and garlic, tea and coffee, and pepper is permitted. Export is also permitted of pickles, chutneys and vinegar, spices (other than pepper and cinnamon), essential oil-seeds (Coriander, Fennugreek, Fennel, Cumin Dil, Ajama, Ajwain, Alsica, Aniseed), malt, sauces, condiments, curry powder and tamarind.

The question whether the export of small quantities of pulses for use of the Indian community in the Persian Gulf Sheikhdoms should be stopped is under consideration.

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF STAFF IN VICEREGAL ESTATES DIVISION

70. Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the detailed conditions of service, *i.e.*, scale of pay, other free concessions granted and the place of duty, etc., under which the clerical and subordinate staff used to be employed in the Viceregal Estates Division at Simla or Delhi prior to the 14th July 1936?

The Honourable Dr. B. E. Ambedkar: A statement is laid on the table.

Statement

S. No.	Name	Designation	Scale of Pay	Pay at the time of transfers from the Viceregal Estates	Nature of free concessions enjoyed	Place of duty
1	Mr. Hussain Ali . . .	Sanitary Overseer . . .	Rs. 80—7—255	Rs. 241	Rent-free accommodation and exemption from payment of taxes, water rates and lighting charges	New Delhi
2	Mr. Shiv Saran Das . . .	Building Supervisor . . .	200—10—400	340	Ditto	Ditto
3	Mr. B. G. Mathur . . .	Ditto	Ditto	280	Ditto	Simla
4	Mr. B. C. Banerjee . . .	Ditto	Ditto	200	Ditto	Calcutta
5	Mr. Mohan Lal . . .	Draftsman . . .	60—5—150	130	Ditto	New Delhi
6	Mr. Madho Narain . . .	Sub-Overseer . . .	75—4—95—5—150	135	Ditto	Simla . . .
7	Mr. P. N. Chatterjee . . .	Electrical Supervisor . . .	200—10—400	400	Ditto	Ditto

1. Retired.

2. Since died.

3. Retired.

4—7. No more in the Viceregal Estate Division

APPLICATION OF HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT REGULATIONS TO JODHPUR RAILWAY

71. Seth Sukhdev: Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Hours of Employment Regulations apply to the Jodhpur Railway portion running through the British India;

(b) if the reply to (a) above be in the affirmative, why no reference to it is made in the Conciliation Officer and Supervisor of Railway Labour's report for three years 1941-44, published in the issue of the *Indian Labour Gazette* for December 1945; and

(c) whether the Honourable Member will please lay on the table of the House a statement showing the following information for the British portion of the Jodhpur Railway, separately, for three years, 1941-44—

(i) the number of staff employed,

(ii) the number of staff affected by the regulations,

(iii) the number of staff classed as continuous workers,

(iv) the number of staff classed as 'essentially intermittent workers',

(v) the number of staff excluded,

(vi) the percentage of staff enjoying calendar day's rest,

(vii) the number of inspections held,

(viii) the number of cases in which the classification was challenged by the Labour Inspectorate,

(ix) the number of doubtful cases which were referred to the Labour Department of the Government of India for decision; and

(x) the number of employees discovered working beyond rostered hours (i) habitually and (ii) occasionally?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The answer is in the negative.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Information is not readily available.

STATUTORY RULES *re* INSPECTIONS OF RAILWAY CONTRACTORS' LABOUR

72. Seth Sukhdev: Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to a remark in the report of the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour, for the years 1941-44, published in the *Indian Labour Gazette* for November, 1945 to the effect that the Labour Inspectorate appointed under the Payment of Wages Act, was handicapped in the inspection of Railway Contractor's Labour Establishments in the absence of statutory rules requiring contractors to maintain registers of wages, fines and deductions; and

(b) whether it is proposed to amend the statutory rules; if so, when; if not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The answer is in the affirmative.

(b) The matter is under consideration.

RESEARCH SCHEMES FOR COTTON GROWING IN PROVINCES AND STATES

73. Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai: Will the Agriculture Secretary please state:

(a) the various schemes of research which are in operation in the various cotton growing Provinces and States, year by year, from 1935 up to date; and

(b) the proportion of expenditure borne by the Indian Central Cotton Committee, the Government of India, the Provincial Governments and the Indian States in the case of each such scheme?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the table.

Expenditure borne by the Committees

Name of Schemes	1935-36	1936-37	1937-38	1938-39	1939-40	1940-41	1941-42	1942-43	1943-44	1944-45	1945-46	Committee's share of Expenditure 13
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
BOMBAY												
<i>Agricultural Research Schemes</i>												
Plant Puller Propaganda Schemes.	5,289	3,608	2,917	1,699	4,279	3,786	362	...	...	...	...	Full cost of Scheme.
Brosach Cotton Breeding Scheme.	11,921	9,251	9,980	9,416	9,446	9,092	10,222	4,814	5,837	6,140	6,730	Full cost upto 1-4-42 and 50% of full cost thereafter. Balance met by Provincial Government.
Jalgaon Cotton Breeding Scheme.	10,865	8,740	5,230	6,387	6,395	4,805	5,496	3,105	3,715	3,677	4,350	Ditto.
Survey of Goghari Cotton ..	870	871	1,101	739	108	...	...	...	...	...	...	Full cost of Scheme.
Defibration of Cotton Seeds	1,265	29	124	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Ditto.
Breeding of Wilt Resistant Cotton in Surat.	...	355	2,157	2,348	2,000	2,661	2,710	3,248	1,529	4,531	4,781	Ditto.
Inclusion of Northern and Western in Dry Farming Scheme at Bilaspur.	...	...	1,467	1,622	1,971	2,076	...	...	...	...	...	Ditto.
Breeding of Wilt Resistant Cotton in Poona.	...	...	10,227	7,027	4,666	8,266	8,236	8,113	9,264	10,061	10,417	Ditto.
Improvement of Dholleras Waged Cotton at Viram-gam.	...	...	5,128	4,374	4,595	4,810	4,122	7,081	7,949	7,998	8,887	Ditto.
Interspecific Hybridisation in Cotton at Surat.	...	...	...	1,470	2,491	12,040	8,740	9,063	9,062	10,500	11,383	Ditto.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Model Projects for extension of Improvements in Cultivation of Crops in Surat District.	...	...	...	...	...	...	735	363	231	862	782	25% of full cost. Balance 25% by the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research and 50% by Provincial Government.
Improvement of Cotton Crop in Kaira District.	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,286	1,561	2,784	3,139	3,610	Full cost of Scheme.
Improvement of Dharwar-American Cotton.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,964	2,707	2,036	3,333	Ditto.
Seed distribution and extension scheme )	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Ditto.
Habli Seed distribution Scheme.	10,079	878	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Ditto.
Gadeg Seed distribution Scheme.	8,018	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Ditto.
Athani Seed distribution Scheme.	7,140	3,125	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Ditto.
Surat 1027 ALF Seed distribution Scheme.	11,188	7,703	8,872	12,025	1,564	4,247	4,770	4,589	1,894	1,559	96	Cost of Staff & Seed depots upto 31-3-39 and 75% of cost of staff from 1-4-39. 15% total cost from 1-4-43. Balance by Provincial Government.
Khandesh (Berrilla) Seed distribution Scheme.	40,356	-5,043	7,029	186	-73	2,104	...	...	...	...	...	Full cost.
Deccan Canals (Berrilla) Seed distribution Scheme.	216	-7,126	3,162	3,754	-642	106	262	107	...	...	...	75% of cost of staff only. Balance by Provincial Government.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
MARKETING SCHEMES												
Grading and Marking of 1027 ALP and Suyog Cotton in Surat area.	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,981	139	3,100	6,128	3,142	50% of full cost. Balance by Provincial Government.
MADRAS												
<i>Agricultural Research Schemes</i>												
Herbaceous scheme . . .	...	264	19,974	8,075	2,186	...	...	...	...	...	...	Full cost of scheme.
Pempheres and Physiological scheme.	...	21,342	26,458	25,680	22,590	14,503	9,908	7,585	7,128	1,191	...	Ditto.
Fodder Cholam Scheme .	4,210	3,785	1,167	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Ditto.
Re-seeding of Nadam Cotton	2,429	2,283	22,200	1,687	1,993	2,028	555	...	...	...	...	Ditto.
Scheme for improvement of Mangari Cotton.	...	...	362	4,996	5,729	4,841	4,708	6,602	9,671	6,711	12,242	Ditto.
Scheme for improvement of Coconadas Cotton.	...	...	...	...	727	5,237	6,938	9,240	10,212	10,781	14,858	Ditto.
Investigation of the possibilities for Control of Cotton stem Weevil in South India.	...	...	...	...	2,400	3,830	...	...	...	...	...	Ditto.
<i>Seed distribution and extension Schemes</i>												
Tirupur Seed Scheme .	5,613	5,398	326	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Full cost of Staff. Balance by Provincial Government.
O. O. 2. " . . .	10,629	10,852	4,223	—632	1,081	...	...	...	...	...	...	Ditto.
H. 1. " . . .	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,055	5,543	9,865	14,633	Ditto.
O. O. 3. " . . .	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,093	4,333	16,988	23,759	Ditto.

(in salem district)	...	...	610	543	593	590	412	—38	1,796	900	Full cost of Scheme.
Maintenance of nucleus of pure seed of improved varieties of Cotton.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Full cost upto 31-3-36 of full cost of staff from 1-4-1936. Balance by Provincial Government.
PUNJAB											
<i>Agricultural Research Schemes</i>											
Botanical Scheme	35,091	24,112	26,927	23,004	17,812	19,723	23,042	23,226	27,045	...	Full cost of Scheme.
Entomological (Pink and spotted Bollworm) Scheme	32,402	27,810	9,147	60	47	...	...	...	...	...	Full cost of Scheme.
White fly Scheme	8,522	2,482	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Ditto.
Root Rot Scheme	8,394	9,471	10,008	9,719	7,943	4,591	...	...	...	...	Ditto.
Physiological Scheme	30,948	48,861	49,404	54,668	42,954	42,764	44,513	53,180	...	...	Ditto.
Clean up campaign of spotted Boll worm.	...	...	28,800	21,718	1,667	...	...	...	...	...	Ditto.
Jassid Investigation Scheme	...	...	3,102	3,426	2,171	2,480	2,796	2,676	3,186	...	Ditto.
Improvement of Punjab American 289 F Cotton.	...	...	...	2,081	2,438	2,713	2,938	3,318	4,292	...	Ditto.
Improvement of Cotton in Jhang district.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,100	Ditto.
Improvement of Cotton in South Eastern District.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10,704	Ditto.
Improvement of Cotton in Lower Bari Doab Colony	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,488	Ditto.
Improvement of Cotton in South Western District.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	50% of full cost. Balance by Provincial Government.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
MARKETING SCHEME												
Cotton Marketing Survey in the Punjab.	...	...	...	2,900	4,423	...	...	...	...	...	...	Full cost of Scheme.
MISCELLANEOUS SCHEMES												
Survey of nutritional values in relation to milch buffaloes of fuzzy Cotton Seed and Cotton Seed Cakes manufactured from such seeds.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	13,800	7,755	...	...	Ditto.
CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR												
<i>Agricultural Research Scheme</i>												
Botanical Scheme	39,869	43,133	43,818	21,891	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Ditto
Entomological Scheme	3,804	3,541	2,803	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Ditto.
Investigation of Helid this Obseleta	...	...	...	...	959	740	...	...	...	...	...	Ditto.
Central provinces and Berar Cotton Breeding.	...	...	...	...	10,873	7,684	10,716	8,774	10,158	11,477	12,848	Full cost 31-3-39 and 50% of cost thereafter Balance by Provincial Government.
Model Projects for extension of improvement, in Cultivation of crops.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,242	-115	725	697	25% of full cost. Balance 25% by the L.C.A.R. and 50% by the Provincial Government.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Hybridisation in sareboreum Cotton	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,816	3,371	50% of full cost. Balance by Provincial Government.
<i>Seed distribution and extension Schemes</i>												
C. 402—Seed Scheme	6,660	7,463	5,075	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Cost of staff in full. Balance by Provincial Government.
Perso-American Cotton in Western Districts	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9,715	14,589	17,789	16,484	Full cost of staff. Balance by Provincial Government.
SIND												
<i>Agricultural Research Schemes</i>												
Physiological Scheme	30,470	32,649	7,961	1,771	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Full cost of Scheme.
Jassid Investigation Scheme	...	...	...	2,840	2,661	1,954	3,267	3,961	799	...	...	Ditto
Investigation into Bleak headed Cricket in Sind	...	...	...	1,940	3,741	3,564	...	...	...	...	...	Ditto
Scheme for Production of Long Staple Cotton	...	...	...	...	817	26,912	21,405	24,084	28,880	31,588	41,974	Ditto
Bollworm Investigation and clean up Scheme	...	...	...	...	...	6,837	30,628	14,432	22,537	12,870	12,975	Full cost up to 29-2-44 and 50% of full cost from 1-3-44. Balance by Provincial Government.
Scheme for manual work on cotton	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,000	A portion of the total cost.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
INDORE— <i>contd.</i> Agricultural Research Scheme <i>amesa</i> <i>contd.</i>	...	...	...	...	...	34,614	34,597	39,017	37,512	39,858	44,390	Full cost of Scheme.
Cotton Genetics Research Scheme	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	43,947	51,887	80% of full cost. 20% by Sind Government.
Scheme for cotton Physiological Research	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
HYDERABAD <i>Agricultural Research Scheme</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Botanical Scheme	46,055	33,279	45,593	35,912	22,866	22,342	24,467	17,171	15,760	...	...	Full cost of scheme up to 31-3-39 and 50% from 1-4-39. Balance by State Government.
Cotton Survey Scheme	8,055	4,090	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Full cost of Scheme.
Pink & Spotted Bollworm Scheme	17,012	14,686	23,500	22,228	26,364	17,450	...	...	...	...	...	Ditto
Scheme for improvement of Kumptee Cotton	...	...	2,690	5,908	5,414	5,032	7,635	6,672	7,792	10,641	12,535	Ditto
Inclusion of Northern and Westerns in Dry Farming Scheme at Raichur	...	...	263	405	427	448	454	...	...	...	...	Ditto
Scheme for improvement of cottons of the Omras tract	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,571	11,195	11,862	12,975	14,167	Ditto
Georami Cotton improvement Scheme	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	18,002	17,178	50% of cost including cost of a portion of staff. Balance met by State Government.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
BARODA—contd. <i>Seed distribution and extension Scheme—contd.</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	24,841	25,098	Full cost of staff. Balance by State Government.
Vigaya Cotton Scheme	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	16,202	Ditto.
Distribution of Suyog (Seg 8-1) Scheme.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
<i>Marketing Schemes</i>												
Marketing of 1027 ALF cotton in Baroda State.	...	...	...	2,264	1,349	3,796	2,706	1,638	2,040	2,040	2,040	Full cost of Scheme.
MYSORE												
<i>Agricultural Research Scheme</i>												
Doddahathi Cotton Scheme	988	2,654	2,089	2,181	3,138	2,933	3,288	3,405	4,125	5,465	5,853	Ditto.
BIKANER												
<i>Agricultural Research Scheme</i>												
Bengal's Cotton improvement Scheme.	6,104	5,405	3,916	4,919	5,365	4,814	2,693	3,010	2,726	...	...	Full cost upto 31-12-40. 50% of full cost from 1-1-41. Balance by State Government.
NAWANAGAR												
<i>Agricultural Research Schemes</i>												
Preliminary trials at Nawanager for improvement of Dholleras Cotton.	...	343	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Full cost of Scheme.
<i>Other Schemes</i>												
Statistical Research	4,808	6,342	6,291	5,636	6,076	—364	...	4,361	9,322	37,438	17,330	Full cost. 50% from 1-9-45.

ASSISTANCE BY IMPERIAL COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH IN COTTON
RESEARCH WORK

74. Mr. Vadilal Lalubhai: Will the Agriculture Secretary please state what assistance is given by the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research in the research work being carried on in the country as regards cotton cultivation?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: The Imperial Council of Agricultural Research does not finance research on cotton cultivation. This is done by the Indian Central Cotton Committee.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STRIKE BY INDIAN SIGNAL CORPS, JUBBULPORE

Shri Satya Narayan Sinha: (a) Has the attention of the War Secretary been drawn to the report, published by the A.P.I. from Jubbulpore that the ring leaders of the strikers in the Indian Signal Corps, Jubbulpore, have been arrested and placed under strong military custody pending their trial by a court martial?

(b) Is it a fact that other Sepoy Strikers are on hunger strike in protest of arrests of their leaders?

(c) Is he aware that Congress leaders, Maulana Azad and Pandit Nehru, have expressed great concern over the said strike lest the recent history of Bombay may not be repeated?

(d) What steps are Government going to take to end the strike?

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

(b) No, Sir.

(c) I have seen a statement this morning by Pandit Nehru advising men not to refuse their duty.

(d) The measures already taken appear to be having good results and the situation appears to be better today. Except for those under arrest, the men appear to be returning to work.

Shri Sri Prakasa: What are the measures taken and what are the results?

Mr. P. Mason: They have been described in the press.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: What do Government propose to do in regard to those men who are already under arrest?

Mr. P. Mason: An inquiry will be held and, if it is judged necessary, they will be brought before court-martial.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: How many of them?

Mr. P. Mason: I do not know.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable Member make inquiries?

Mr. P. Mason: Certainly, Sir.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Sir, I submit that when replying to our questions the Honourable Members on that side should stand in their seats.

BHAGAULI TRAIN DISASTER

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state if he is aware of the reports appearing in the press regarding an accident between the 10 Down Dehra Dun Express and a Goods Train on Monday at Bhagauli, 48 miles from Lucknow, resulting in serious casualties?

(b) What is the number of killed and wounded, as well as the number of bogies damaged?

(c) What is the cause or causes which led to this accident?

(d) In view of past experience of such accidents, what preventive action had the Railways taken to avoid accidents?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Sir, I have not accepted this short notice question and I received it at 11.10 today. At the same time at 11.5, I have received notice of an adjournment motion. I do not know what is your wish and the wish of the House. I am quite prepared to answer the short notice question and give supplementary information but if I do that I think we should not have the adjournment motion.

Mr. President: I gathered the impression that the Honourable Member had consented to the short notice question and that is why I allowed it. But it is a matter for the Honourable Member's choice.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I am perfectly willing to answer it and give some further supplementary information outside the scope of the question, if that meets with the wishes of the House. By doing that I hope to avoid repeating the same matter in the afternoon.

Mr. President: It need not be necessarily presumed that after the information is received, the adjournment motion will be withdrawn. It all depends on the statement of the Honourable Member.

Mr. M. Asaf Ali: Sir, we cannot possibly bind ourselves to any kind of undertaking as regards the adjournment motion.

Mr. President: That is what I said.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I did not ask for any undertaking; I was expressing the hope that my wish to give the House all the information will be taken into account in the matter of moving the adjournment motion. I will now give the answer to the question.

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to my information there have been 43 persons killed and 56 injured. Two bogies were smashed completely and one was severely damaged.

(c) The cause or causes will be ascertained by the inquiry of the Government Inspector of Railways. This inquiry will be opened at Bhagauli on the 8th and will be continued at Lucknow on the 9th.

(d) The Government of India in the Railway Department have framed elaborate general rules for safety of operation in exercise of the powers conferred by the Indian Railways Act. The Railway Department takes into account the recommendations of the Government Inspectorate of Railways in the Posts and Air Department. Consultation and conference with the Government Inspectorate is sought before changes in the rules are made. Government will consider whether any further additions of changes are necessary following the report of the Inspector of Railways.

That answers the question but I have a certain amount of further information which will probably interest the House. Of the 43 persons killed, according to the General Manager's latest report, 26 have been identified. The bodies were evacuated to Lucknow under the directions of the Railway Police and those that were unidentified were photographed for subsequent identification. A number of the names of the killed and injured have been published; but as a number of persons killed are still unidentified I am unable to publish complete lists. Of the engine crews of 10 Down Dehra Dun Express, all the three members of the crew were killed and on the goods train two were killed and one injured. Of the injured I am informed that there are 56 of whom 11 were severely injured and 45 had comparatively minor injuries. I see that in the press a much larger number is given and doubtless there were numbers of people shaken by this disastrous accident. The injured were evacuated, as soon as possible, to Lucknow and Hardoi hospitals.

As regards the attention given to the sufferers, the Chief Medical Officer of the Railway happened to be on the train and immediately organised aid to the injured with the help of certain local doctors who appeared on the scene. Immediately the news was received at Lucknow and other railway centres assistance was sent out. A light engined brake van and signal inspector's carriage were sent out from Balamau and a motor trolley with various officers on board from Hardoi. The Lucknow relief train and Rosa relief trains were sent out and various other officers left from Moradabad. Special additional bogies were put on the relief trains for the removal of the injured, and they were removed as soon as possible either to Hardoi or to Lucknow. The Divisional Superintendent, whose report I received as I was coming into the House, reports that he made arrangements for refreshments to be put on to the relief train, and he states at the end of his report that from personal enquiries made among the passengers who were in the undamaged portion of the 10 Dn. Express, he was satisfied that all had been supplied with food and water and had no complaints on this score.

In response to my message of condolence to the General Manager, he sends me his assurance that everything possible is being done to relieve the sufferings of the injured. I might mention that the Posts and Air Department will set up an enquiry which will apparently commence on the 8th at Bhagauli and will continue on the 9th at Lucknow, and the public are requested to give any evidence which they may be able to give. That I think gives the bulk of the information which I think will interest the House, but I shall be glad to answer any questions.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will the Honourable Member state whether the place where the accident took place was a single track or a double track, and whether the accident took place through defective Signalling, or in which manner according to his information?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I have not got full information. There were three tracks at the station in question. The goods train was in the centre track moving apparently slowly when the passenger train came at a greater speed from one of the other lines on to the centre line on which it should not have been. The causes of the accident remain to be disclosed by the enquiry.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: In what state was the driver found—sober or drunk?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Both the drivers are dead and I think that is a most unwarranted suggestion which has been made by the Honourable Member.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: Disgraceful.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May I know how many such accidents have happened during the past year?

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

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: I gave a Short Notice Question with reference to a similar accident on the 31st of January, and the Honourable Member had not the courtesy to accept that Short Notice Question. He also requested me to withdraw my adjournment motion.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: To the best of my recollection it was an extremely minor accident. No one was killed in that accident.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Two were killed and nine people were injured—that was a minor accident. Life of two Indians has not much value.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That is most unfair, Sir. I might refer the Honourable Member to the ruling of the President which he gave on the 10th of February last year. The President ruled that because there has been an accident there is no reason why a meeting of this House should be adjourned.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Is it not a fact that because one accident in which people did not die, is not properly studied and investigated, such other accidents begin to take place?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: There was an investigation held in that accident; there is an investigation in every case.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Is it not a fact that I informed the Honourable Member on the phone before 10 O'clock this morning that I was putting in a Short Notice question?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The Honourable Member asked me if I would accept a Short Notice question and in reply I said that if he would be good enough to show me the question I will then consider giving a reply. I received it at twelve minutes past eleven, and I have done my best to give all the information which I possess.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Is it not a fact that the engine of the 10 Dn. Dehra Dun Express was completely smashed?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Both the engines were inextricably mixed up.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Is it not a fact that the through bogies were attached next to the engine?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I think that is so.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Is the Honourable Member aware that these through bogies are generally very overcrowded?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That does not seem to arise out of the question.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: My information is from the persons who have arrived from Lucknow last night that there were larger number of casualties and deaths, and, as a matter of fact, these two bogies were completely smashed. The Honourable Member could find out from the Delhi station as to how many tickets were issued for Lucknow that day?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I am not quite sure what my Honourable friend wants by way of reply. The first two bogies were smashed and the third was severely damaged, and it was in those carriages that the casualties occurred.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: I want the Honourable Member to find out how many through tickets were issued on that day from Delhi to Lucknow and from Meerut to Lucknow?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I cannot answer that question off hand. I will be very pleased to get this information for the Honourable Member.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: I want him to find out.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Certainly.

Mr. Manu Subedar: In view of the fact that two bogies were completely destroyed, is not the figure given by the Honourable Member, which is doubtless what he has received in turn, a little too low to cover the figures of the dead and the injured? If two bogies were completely destroyed, there should be much more than 43 killed and 56 injured as he has mentioned?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: It is possible of course that further bodies may be found. I am not, for instance, clear whether the bodies of the Engine Drivers and firemen, which are buried in the debris, have yet been recovered, but I suspect they are included in the 43 killed. It is possible that there may be additional dead discovered, but this is the best information which the Railway people have from the evidence which is available.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Is it not a fact that the newspapers published yesterday that the number of those who have been killed is 53 and those injured

150, and they also published that many of the dead bodies were entangled in the debris and they could not be extricated?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Yes, Sir. In the adjournment motion which I have received, the figures are 50 dead and 150 injured. The figures which have been reported by the Railway authorities, doctors and others of those admitted into hospital, and so on, are 43 killed and 56 injured of whom 11 are severely injured and 45 received minor injuries. I have no doubt, as I said before, that probably a hundred other people were very badly shaken but they were not in such a bad state as to require admission into a hospital. Not all the 56, who have received injuries, have actually been admitted into the hospital.

Maharajkumar Dr. Sir Vijaya Ananda: Will the Government appoint a non-official body to enquire into this disaster?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: As it is doubtless well known to the Honourable Member, the Provincial Government has full powers to set up an enquiry, and they will decide whether to do so or not. That enquiry can be either an independent enquiry or conducted in conjunction and simultaneously with the enquiry by the Railway Inspectorate under the Post and Air Department. That is a matter for the Provincial Government to decide.

Maharajkumar Dr. Sir Vijaya Ananda: May I know why the Railway Department should not also appoint a non-official body to enquire into the accident? Railways come under the Central Government, and it is the duty of the Government of India to appoint an enquiry committee.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: An elaborate machinery is set out for this purpose: There is a Branch Railway Inspectorate under the Post and Air Department who enquire into all these cases. In addition to that if the Provincial Government has any reason to interest itself in an enquiry, as it doubtless will in a case like this, they may also hold an enquiry independently or simultaneously with the Post and Air enquiry, and in those circumstances it is not necessary to set up a further enquiry. In two cases in the past there have been judicial enquiries by the Central Government. One was in the case of a disaster where there were a number of extraordinary circumstances attached to the accident, and the other was in the case of a series of accidents on the E.I.R. where an enquiry was set up under Mr. Justice Broomfield who looked into the series of accidents to see whether there was any connected reason such as sabotage. In that case there had been a series of accidents attributed in some cases to sabotage which had greatly perturbed the Government of India and the public and in that case there was reason to set up a separate judicial enquiry. But it is not the usual practice and in a case like this the ordinary practice will be followed.

Maharajkumar Dr. Sir Vijaya Ananda: Will I take it that Government is not prepared to make a departure in this matter?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Not under the present circumstances.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: How many railway disasters have taken place during the last six months?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Some other Honourable Member asked for that information and I shall be glad to place a statement on the table.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: How many railway accidents have taken place in the last six months on the East Indian Railway?

Shri Satya Narayan Sinha: Especially on the East Indian!

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I will confine my answer to be laid on the table to the East Indian Railway.

Pandit Govind Malaviya: Will this not be interpreted to mean that the Government of India is more concerned in accidents in which it suspects any political tinge and is then prepared to institute its own enquiries but is not in

the least perturbed over the loss of lives and injuries to persons involved in other accidents? Therefore, will the Government of India, in view of its responsibility for the railways as a whole and, in view of the number of accidents taking place all over the country, not consider the feasibility of appointing a committee of enquiry with which non-officials and members of this Non-Muhammadian Rural? Isn't it at the instance of the Government of India? Assembly should be associated, to go into this accident and also to report as to the best way of ensuring that such accidents are, as far as possible, avoided in future?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The answer to all three parts of the question is, 'No.' But I would add.....

Pandit Govind Malaviya: I feared so.

Mr. President: Order, order. Let him finish.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: It is a long question.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: And a short answer!

Pandit Govind Malaviya: It relates to a long list of crimes!

Mr. President: Order, order.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: If as a result of the enquiry by the Railway Inspectorate Department of the Posts and Air Department it is found that further amendment of the rules are wanted, we will go into it carefully. The indications are that it is the error of some railwayman, but that will be disclosed by the enquiry and what measures are necessary to prevent a recurrence will be considered when we know the facts.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Will the Honourable Member himself go down to the scene of occurrence and find out what loss of life has taken place and put at rest the rumours afloat and the charge against railways that they generally minimise loss of life and numbers of injured.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I think it is a most unfair suggestion that railways minimise loss of life.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: That is the public impression.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That is a wrong impression. You have a check both by the independent enquiry by the Posts and Air Department and also by the Provincial Government. As regards my own going down, it is rather difficult to get away on all these questions in view of my duties in the House. But I am in the closest touch by telephone and by letter as the information I have given to the House shows. I could have given a great deal more other details but I have given what is necessary.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Has the Chairman of the Railway Board been sent there?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No, Sir.

Mr. Manu Subedar: May I know why the Government of India do not consider this matter of sufficient importance to have it attended to by the highest officials of the Railway Department and not to leave it to the local agents of the railway.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: To white-wash!

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: It is the duty of the local officers to attend to these matters, and we cannot.....

Pandit Balkrishna Sharma: And the highest officers take fat salaries!

Mr. Manu Subedar: In view of the fact that His Excellency the Viceroy thought it necessary to go down and inspect the famine stricken districts, will not his subordinates in the Railway Department, untouched by Indian hands, now in view of the feelings expressed, deroute the Chief Commissioner at once to investigate and look into this matter and send us a report here?

Prof. N. G. Ranga: They are bigger than the Viceroy!

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I will consider that suggestion. -

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Why does not the Honourable Member say straight away "Yes, we are going to send our man there".

Mr. President: Order, order.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Because the Chief Commissioner has legislative duties here.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Will he give facilities to any Member of this House to go down to that place?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I did not follow.

Mr. President: "Will he give facilities to any Member of this House to go down to that place"?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Yes, I will do my best to arrange it. I would suggest that if Members of the Central Advisory Council for Railways are prepared to go, I could arrange it.

Mr. President: We will now take up the adjournment motions.

MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT

HUNGER STRIKE BY I.N.A. OFFICERS IN RANGOON CENTRAL JAIL

Mr. President: I have received notices of two adjournment motions. The first one is from Maharajkumar Dr. Sir Vijaya Ananda. He wishes to adjourn the business of the Assembly:

"To discuss the failure of the Home Department to see to the implementation of its assurance that the I.N.A. officers and men who surrendered at the time of the fall of Rangoon would be treated as Prisoners of War, thus necessitating a hunger-strike by 1,000 I. N. A. patriots in Rangoon Central Jail."

When did this hunger-strike start?

Maharajkumar Dr. Sir Vijaya Ananda (United Provinces: Landholders): I believe that the hunger-strike started on the 4th. But the Government of India, as usual, is sitting on the fence and not telling us how the prisoners are, and as this is a matter of very urgent importance I put in this adjournment motion.

Mr. President: May I know the Government view?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee (Secretary, Commonwealth Relations Department): I think this refers to about 1,100 Indian civilians who were connected with the I.N.A. and who are still under detention at Rangoon.

Mr. President: May I interrupt the Honourable Member? Detention by the Burma Government or the Government of India?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: By the Burma Government.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar (Madras Ceded Districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Is n't it at the instance of the Government of India?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: No. Question No. 751 which was put down in the list of questions today would have raised the matter and I would have perhaps been able to give the House some information on this subject. But unfortunately we did not reach that. But I have accepted a short notice question given by my friend, Mr. Sinha, on this very subject of the hunger-strike. I take it that the element of urgency in this matter is the hunger-strike but our information is that these people had become rather restive and threats of hunger-strike had been held out. But we have had no information so far that the hunger-strike has actually occurred. In any case I have accepted the short notice question and I expect to answer it on the 8th and give the House up-to-date information.

Shri Satya Narayan Sinha (Darbhanga *cum* Saran: Non-Muhammadan): When did you receive that short notice question?

Mr. President: I think it would be better if the Honourable Member states such of the facts as he has in his possession. They would be helpful to judge the admissibility of the motion.

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: Sir, we have been endeavouring for sometime to have these people brought back to India. But there has been delay in obtaining full information about their connections in India, their residence and other details. All difficulties are now settled and we are only waiting for shipping accommodation and I believe these people are due for repatriation to this country any day after the 8th of this month. We had a telegram a few days ago to say that they were threatening hunger strike but we have had no confirmation of it and I believe the hunger strike has not yet started. Now the Government of Burma have been informed by us that all preparations for their repatriation have been concluded and I imagine that the persons themselves have also been informed of these arrangements. It is therefore very unlikely that any hunger strike would take place now. I may also state that our Representative is maintaining a very close touch with these people and every endeavour is being made by us to expedite their repatriation. That is all I can say.

Maharajkumar Dr. Sir Vijaya Ananda: There is a statement by the Leader of the Opposition. With your permission, Sir, I will just read a few lines in regard to this particular matter

Mr. President: Is it a statement with reference to this matter?

Maharajkumar Dr. Sir Vijaya Ananda: Yes, Sir. He says:

"Prisoners do not resort to hunger strike for the fun of the thing: it is sheer desperation that drives them to it. The Government of India owe it to them to take steps forthwith. I am sure members of the Central Assembly belonging to the Congress Party will see to it that the Government of India awake up to their sense of responsibility in this matter and take proper steps before it is too late."

"The Home Member of the Government of India stated in the Central Assembly recently in answer to a question put to him that I. N. A. personnel in detention have been treated exactly like prisoners of war."

Sir, the fact of the matter is that the strike has been threatened, because they are not treated like prisoners of war and that is precisely why they are going on strike. If that assurance is implemented properly, then the strike will not take place. Who knows that the strike is already on now. The Government of India whenever it suits them

Mr. President: By whom is this statement made?

Maharajkumar Dr. Sir Vijaya Ananda: By Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, the Leader of the Opposition, from Calcutta.

Mr. President: Is the Honourable Member sure of the hunger strike.

Maharajkumar Dr. Sir Vijaya Ananda: I am, absolutely. They said that they will go on strike on the 4th and as to whether they are actually on hunger strike nobody can tell but the Government of India. As a matter of fact, whenever any political prisoner goes on hunger strike, the Government only give out the information when the prisoner's condition becomes very serious but not till then.

Mr. President: At any rate, the information today with the Honourable Member is that they were to go on hunger strike on the 4th.

Maharajkumar Dr. Sir Vijaya Ananda: Yes, Sir, at this time.

Mr. President: There is no information as to whether they have actually gone on hunger strike.

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: If they had actually gone on hunger strike, it is most unlikely that our representative would not have informed us immediately of it, because we are maintaining very close telegraphic communication with him on this subject. To the best of our information there has been no complaint of ill-treatment during detention. Their main complaint is the delay in their repatriation to India and, as I stated, all preparations for their repatriation, any day after the 8th March, are now complete.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: That is wrong. I passed on a letter to my Honourable friend stating how in a similar situation people are treated. They are not given even ordinary soap to wash themselves and their clothes,

[Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar]
nothing to clean their teeth with or comb their hair. Food is not given properly and no allowances are paid to them. They are starved. Those are their complaints

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: That refers to Malaya.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: And, therefore, their grievance is repatriation which they are awaiting and that on that account they are threatening hunger strike, is wrong. They are not treated like

Mr. President: Whatever it may be, it appears clear that on the essential question of urgency we seem to be in doubt.

Prof. N. G. Ranga (Guntur *cum* Nellore: Non-Muhammadan Rural): May I make a suggestion, Sir? Let the Government send a cable to their agent to ascertain whether or not these people have gone actually on hunger strike. Thereafter this question can be taken up.

Mr. President: The Government may send a cable if they like. That is a different matter. Not being sure on the essential ground of urgency, I would not admit this motion at this stage. But I would make it clear that, in case the hunger strike starts and we are sure about it, then the present ruling on the adjournment motion will not be a bar to a subsequent motion.

Maharajkumar Dr. Sir Vijaya Ananda: My idea was to prevent that hunger strike.

Mr. President: If it has not started, it has not started: that is all.

BHAGAULI TRAIN DISASTER

Mr. President: Then there is another adjournment motion by Mr. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, Prof. Ranga and Mrs. Aminu Swaminandhan regarding:

“The train collision between the Dehra Dun Express and a Goods Train resulting in 50 deaths and 150 injured and the carelessness and the indifference on the part of the Government to take steps to avoid such train disasters.”

With reference to this I might say to the House my own reaction to it and then Honourable Members may of course have their say. The matter undoubtedly is important and it is undoubtedly urgent also. But it would be better if further consideration of this motion on the question of admissibility is put off by a day or two, so that in the meanwhile the Honourable Member may have fuller information on the question and enlightened as on the details. We will then consider, in the light of the information that he gives, whether the motion is admissible or not.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall (Member for Railways and War Transport): What is the suggestion, Sir? A further short notice question?

Mr. President: I neither admit the motion nor reject it.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Sir, I suggest that if it is a matter of such urgent public importance as it is made out to be, it would be better to take it up today. I would, however, draw your attention to the ruling of the President on the 10th February, 1945. He said:

“Because there has been an accident that is no reason why a meeting of this House should be adjourned. There is no allegation that there was any negligence on the part of the railway authorities.”

Mr. President: I do not propose to admit it on the ground that whenever there is an accident on railways involving a large number of deaths, it necessarily becomes a fit subject for an adjournment motion. The difficulty which I have felt is that we are not clear about the causes of the accident or even the exact extent of deaths and the number of persons injured. That is the difficulty which I have been feeling. The adjournment motion speaks of carelessness and indifference on the part of Government to take steps to avoid such train disasters.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I should like to clear that charge today. As regards the cause of the accident that cannot be ascertained till the enquiry takes place. In fact, I would like to hear what the accusations are.

Mr. President: I would prefer to keep it over for a day or two.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: On a point of principle, if an adjournment motion, is raised as a matter of urgent public importance, it should be brought up on the first occasion and the House should discuss it immediately. I would submit that we should have the adjournment motion today or I shall be glad to give further information to the House on a short notice question on another day. It would not be proper for the House to adjourn an adjournment till a later date.

Mr. President: I do not mean to suggest that a matter which is urgent can be postponed for an indefinitely long time. Urgency does not necessarily mean that a delay of 24 or 48 hours will be absolutely inexcusable. That is how I look upon an adjournment motion. My point in making the suggestion is that unless we have some facts and further information, the discussion of the adjournment motion would mean nothing but accusations by one side and denials from the other. The House will not have the benefit of a clear discussion as regards the merits of the question. That is how I have been thinking.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: If the motion is taken up this afternoon, I shall undoubtedly have further information to give the House as a result of telephonic messages which I may receive. As regards the causes of the accident, nothing will transpire until an inquiry has been held.

Mr. President: Then, of course, in view of what the Leader of the House desires and has stated, I think the best course will be to admit this motion and fix it for discussion today at 4 o'clock.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): May I make one request to you and to the leader of the House also? As it is, we get very few days for non-official legislative business. Now that you have admitted this adjournment motion, I should like to make a request to you and to the Leader of the House that, in case all this non-official business is not completed, he will be good enough to give us another non-official day for Bills. As it is, you will find that the time given is very short and you will see that my request is very reasonable, and I hope you and the Leader of the House will accede to it.

Mr. President: Let us proceed with the business and we will see what happens.

Mr. M. Asaf Ali (Delhi: General): I must say a word or two about this, Sir. As a matter of fact it was our practice before to ask for two additional days for non-official bills and resolutions. I believe this matter was mentioned to the Leader of the House,—at any rate it was being discussed somewhere privately, but it has not yet been settled. But we do feel that the number of days allotted for non-official Bills and Resolutions are not enough for our purpose; and therefore we should like to have two additional days, one for non-official Bills and one for non-official Resolutions. I hope the Leader of the House will consider this question and necessary arrangements will be made. I am perfectly certain that we can arrive at some understanding.

Mr. President: This particular matter can be considered and talked over by Members of the different Groups and Parties with the Leader of the House. Now, we proceed with the business of the day.

FACTORIES (AMENDMENT) BILL

PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member): Sir, I present the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill further to amend the Factories Act, 1934.

SPECIAL MARRIAGE (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Special Marriage Act, 1872, for certain purposes, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Sir Asoka Roy, Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee, Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan, Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan, Shri Sri Prakasa, Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, Sri A. Karunakara Menon, Sjt. N. V. Gadgil, Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai, Pandit Balkrishna Sharma, Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava, Sardar Mangal Singh, Mr. Leslie Gwilt, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Mr. Madandhari Singh, and the Mover, and that the number of members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five."

I do not propose to take longer of the time of the House than I can help with regard to this Bill, or even with regard to the other social bills which stand in my name today. I should think that long speeches are not necessary at this stage and at this time of the day, for reasons which I will give; and that is that with regard to these social Bills, our social system has admittedly been very old. We are being governed by social laws which were associated with custom and religion for, I may say, hundreds of years. It is unnecessary for me to point out that the society has changed and is changing; that whereas the laws have remained rigid, the society is constantly changing and therefore whatever was applicable to the society then existing cannot be applied today.

Now, some other factors also that I might point out are these. We now feel that we are perfectly justified in changing our social laws for the reason that we are representatives of the people and as such I think we have a perfect right with the help of the Government, whichever the Government of the day may be, to change our social laws. I must say that the attitude of the Government also in this respect has been very helpful. I will also draw your attention to one more fact and that is, that not only we have changed the laws; but that if we had not changed the laws, then it is quite likely that we would still have been in the stage of *sati* and child marriage and all the inhuman conditions which were associated with the Hindu religion. One more fact of political importance I would point out and that is this: the coming of the Congress. Now that the Congress has come and it represents the public opinion, then you must take this factor into consideration. The Congress by its Karachi resolution has resolved that there shall be social justice for all Indians, irrespective of colour, creed, religion and sex. That is by a resolution of the Congress they have for all times determined and have made it known to everybody that so far as the social justice is concerned, they will not observe any difference with regard to sex. As you know, so far as the older laws of Hinduism were concerned—it may not have been done by design or purpose—but there is not the least doubt that modern opinion is that the laws of the Hindu society have been very unreasonable so far as the female element of the society is concerned; and therefore it cannot but be a matter of pride for all Indians and a matter of hope that the Congress has come and Congress has declared in no uncertain terms that they are for social justice of every individual concerned in India. Further, let me point out to you one thing, and that is the present members of this body have come to this House with the majorities that the public very well knows, and that this social reform in this House has been carried on by the Congress for the last ten years—if not earlier, at least for the last ten years; and the representatives of the Congress left no doubt in the minds of the electors that they were coming here for the purpose of social reform as well. I made it quite clear and I am informed that my colleague Mrs. Swaminadhan also expressly told her constituency that she was coming here for the sake of social reform. In spite of our making it quite clear the very fact that we were returned—and we were not returned by scratch majority—will show you how the public wind is blowing. Therefore under the circumstances I hope no arguments will be advanced and no objections will be raised that this is a legislative body and it cannot interfere with our social legislation nor such of the other obsolete arguments which we were used to hear before and which are repeated

meaninglessly to this day outside this House. Having established our right as far as I can see, to legislate for the social reform, I now come to this particular proposal.

In connection with this I will also mention one or two other instances which may help us to realise that the legislation that we are bringing forward is not a hasty piece of legislation that we have brought forward by impulse and without giving it proper consideration. The other factor I wish to refer to is the Draft Committee of the Hindu Code which has done very useful work in the matter of collecting facts and drafting a Code which will certainly be of great use to all legislatures which have anything to do with social legislation of any kind. Ourselves and the Government who appointed this committee realise that if you want to make any reform you must have an ideal code. From a practical point of view, to expect the large Hindu society to agree to this whole code dealing with succession, marriage and adoption and so on is not a practical proposition. Therefore we have to fall back on whatever reforms we can do by means of so called piecemeal legislation. As everybody knows life and logic do not go together. I must really congratulate the Government on the attitude they have taken. Let us do what we can so that in any case the progress of the society should not be hindered but it should go forward.

With regard to this particular Bill, I gave notice of it for the reason I will mention presently. You will find in the draft of the Hindu Code Committee an attempt is made to divide Hindu marriage into two types—sacramental and civil marriage. If you are going to have this division for future marriages, what is the remedy for the unhappy marriages which have taken place before and where the marital relations are not as happy or ideal as they are supposed to be. As you know, the ideal marriage is supposed to be made in Heaven and marital relations should never be disturbed. But as a matter of fact, I find that there is no society in the world where marital laws do not exist and therefore evidently it cannot be something that is made in Heaven. After all it is a worldly thing and therefore we must have laws to regulate these worldly affairs. It is also common experience that these marital people instead of being in Heaven find themselves in Hell. An attempt must certainly be made to bring them down to earth. The draft Hindu Code is trying to find a *via media*. It has divided marriages into sacramental marriages and civil marriages.

One more point I should like to bring to the notice of the House. It is a permissive or what is called an enabling measure. If they want to have sacramental marriage, they can have it. If they want to marry under the Civil marriage law, they can do it. What is the remedy for all those other cases where the marital relations are not as happy as they should be. That is one thing. Another thing is that educated people would like to take advantage of the modern ideas of marriage legislation. Therefore there must be some kind of redress or way open to them. Therefore they suggested an optional method of registering the marriage. In my opinion the draft code has provided a very good way and that is even if a marriage was sacramentally solemnised, if the parties want to turn it into a civil marriage they could do so by applying to the Registrar. Since there is a good deal of difference of opinion with regard to succession to property and things like that, I thought that if I could bring in a Bill which would provide for some such measure as was suggested by the Hindu Code Committee that would be accepted and my Bill really does not do anything more than practically incorporate the principle of the Hindu Code Committee.

However it has been pointed out to me that this is likely to raise many technical difficulties in law. Out of deference to my colleagues in this House who are more versed in law and who know the difficulties of the technical situation I am prepared to send this Bill out for eliciting public opinion, rather than to Select Committee. So far as this Bill is concerned, I accept the amendment of my friend Mr. Ayyangar. This will enable us to have public opinion elicited on the Bill. I therefore do not want to waste the time of the House by going into details at this stage. With these remarks I move my motion.

Mr. President: Motion moved:

"That the Bill further to amend the Special Marriage Act, 1872, for certain purposes, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Sir Asoka Roy, Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee, Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan, Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan, Shri Sri Prakasa, Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, Sri A. Karunakara Menon, Sjt. N. V. Gadgil, Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai, Pandit Balkrishna Sharma, Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava, Sardar Mangal Singh, Mr. Leslie Gwilt, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Mr. Madandhari Singh, and the Mover, and that the number of members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five."

I find that the Honourable Member has not mentioned any time limit by which the Select Committee should report.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: It is not necessary, as I accept the amendment of Mr. Ayyangar for circulation. I shall mention a date if you are particular about it.

Mr. President: As the motion for circulation is going to be proposed and carried, I am not very particular about it.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar (Madras Ceded Districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 31st August, 1946."

It ought not to be understood that this is a dilatory motion at all. I have got the greatest respect for my Honourable friend Dr. Deshmukh who has been taking interest on social legislation. One thing which he has done after the Sarda Act is that piece of legislation which is generally known as Dr. Deshmukh's Act of 1937, whereby the widow of a member of a joint Hindu family, who did not at the time of his death make any provision for her, gets the share of her husband. That is a very wholesome thing in practice, but unfortunately it has not gone the whole way because the Central Government under the list has no jurisdiction to legislate in regard to agricultural lands. Therefore, it was found by the Federal Court that so far as the agricultural lands are concerned, that Act will not apply and the Provincial Governments have not yet taken steps to extend the operation of that Act to agricultural lands. As there is a defect, I am sure as soon as the popular governments come into being it will be removed and the widow will be entitled to a share in all property left by her husband. That is a piece of legislation for which I must congratulate my Honourable friend in having done a real social service. He has a peculiar knack of finding out some defects or some inconveniences that persist today and with respect to which he is more than alert. He is an eminent doctor and he has applied his knife to certain defects which had crept into the society.

But, Sir. I do not agree with some other friends who are prepared to discard everything ancient. I do admit that when institutions start, they are not perfect and later on on account of change of circumstances some modifications may be necessary with respect to those institutions. Therefore, we need not accuse our ancestors for having started certain institutions. They had brought into existence certain institutions according to the exigencies of times and they have changed now. Though all of us are Indians, yet most of us talk in different languages. Many new things have happened since and therefore consistently with the change in circumstances some modifications are necessary. That is the reason why he has introduced already three pieces of legislation. Two more are coming up for discussion today.

The first is the amendment of the Special Marriage Act. I would have immediately consented to its being referred to a Select Committee but for one difficulty. You will see, Sir, whether the House is full or half empty. I do not accuse Honourable Members, though, according to me, it is a matter which ought to be decided by a composite House. Any law which our *Rishis* made was not accepted fully whenever a change was thought necessary. Institutions or assemblies of learned men gathered together and in these assemblies matters

which required some reform or modification were discussed and passed in the laws which governed the Hindus during that period. Before that Manu was holding the field. As there was a change between one age and another, a number of seers went to Sri Veda Vyasa and requested him to modify the rituals and also the rules of succession in accordance with the changing circumstances. He said: "We shall go to my father Sri Parasara." The latter then laid down certain injunctions. He said: "The whole practice is not suitable to the existing conditions and therefore we shall modify them in every respect. If, however, there are certain circumstances which require further modification or which have been inadvertently left out, we shall refer them again to the decision of the Assembly. There must be an assembly of three learned men who are universally acknowledged to be adept in these matters and who are mixing up with the people and are anxious to set things right. The assembly of such three persons must decide from time to time as to what course is to be followed and what reforms are necessary." Likewise I would have welcomed this piece of legislation to have gone into the country and to the assemblies of those who are interested in religious reform. I would have welcomed it to go even to other Associations of men and women who might have gone into this matter and given us advice as to what ought to be done. From the Statement of Objects and Reasons it does not appear that this has gone about and that we have already got the opinions of various persons. The Statement of Objects and Reasons is short. It says that there is a very large volume of educated public opinion in favour of reform in the existing marriage laws. I do not disagree with it. It further says that the object of this Bill is to provide a means of having the benefits of modern ideas on legislation respecting marriage without in any way interfering with the religious sentiments of the communities concerned. The object of the learned Mover is a noble one and he does not want to offend those sentiments which have an age-long standing in our country. Similar circumstances prevail all over the world. Therefore, he does not want to rub any particular section the wrong way in order to introduce this piece of legislation. What he says is that this has already been put to the test and it has already passed under the criticisms of various institutions which are interested in public welfare and in the modification of ancient institutions to suit the modern conditions. It is for that purpose that I am requesting that this Bill may be circulated for eliciting public opinion and I have fixed a date which is before the House meets during the next Session, namely, the 31st August. The very date will amply bear it out that I do not want this legislation to be put off eternally. I do want it in some shape or other, so that we may be benefited by it.

Then, Sir, the Bill has not been properly worded or drafted and what the learned Mover intends by this Bill is frustrated. The object is one thing but the manner in which that object is sought to be achieved is quite a different thing. Various other inconveniences may arise for which the learned Mover has made no provision. Further, he ought not to have brought it as an amending Bill to the Special Marriage Act because the two are absolutely inconsistent. It can never be a piece of legislation to the Special Marriage Act, because the preamble to the Special Marriage Act says:

"Whereas it is expedient to provide a form of marriage for persons who do not profess the Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muhammadan, Parsi, Buddhist, Sikh or Jaina religion (and for persons who profess the Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh or Jaina religion), and to legalise certain marriages the validity of which is doubtful; It is hereby enacted as follows"

The present Bill is to enable persons who are married under the ordinary rules of Hindu law. It does not apply to persons who celebrated their marriage long ago or who got it registered under the Special Marriage Act. It is not said here that that marriage which is done in a sacramental form is invalid. It refers only to marriages which are valid, solemnised according to Hindu Shastras and such valid marriages are registered once again under this Act and when once it is registered under this special law, the previous marriage becomes *null and void*. That is the object of the Bill. But that is not within the scope of the Special Marriage Act which came into existence as early as 1872 to

[Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar] enable persons belonging to different religions to get together in marital union by proclaiming that they do not belong to this religion or that religion. In some cases, if they belong to some religion other than Christian or Parsi, they can be married. The provisions were extended to all Hindus to whatever major caste they belonged, if they wanted to get themselves married under the Special Marriage Act, the amending Act of 1923 enabled them to do so. Persons who are not already joined in union under the Special Marriage Act come within the scope and object of the Act. My Honourable friend wants to introduce an amendment in the Special Marriage Act to enable married persons to marry once again. The first marriage was under the sacramental form. These two persons can marry once again. That is what my friend wants. I am aware of the practice of persons who have reached the age of sixty celebrating the marriage once again, and it is called *shahstiabdi poorty*, that is completion of the sixtieth year of age for the husband. If both the husband and the wife are alive, they once again go through a miniature form of marriage, not *in extenso*, this means they are starting a fresh lease of life for the sake of service to humanity.

Shri Sri Prakasa (Benares and Gorakhpur Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I have seen a person having 20 children celebrating his sixtieth birth day.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: I am not going to accuse that person, because very soon I am likely to reach that number.

Such marriages do take place and I am sure they need not invoke the aid of my Honourable friend Dr. Deshmukh. If it is the intention of my Honourable friend that marriages solemnised in Hindu form should be registered under the Special Marriage Act, I may submit that the scope of the original Act is absolutely different and the present Bill does not come within the four corners of that Act. Not that human ingenuity is barren that we cannot devise some methods by which we can bring an amendment to the original Act. But I must say that the present amending Bill has no place in the original Act. That is one of the objects with which I want this Bill to be circulated for eliciting public opinion. It is for the public to say whether they want this Bill or whether they want a different Bill with a few clauses to give effect to the objects of the framer of this Bill.

Now, Sir, let us see what are the inconveniences that will arise by accepting this Bill as it is. I will refer only to one or two matters, as I understand that the Honourable Mover is accepting my Motion for circulation.

If, as I understand it, the object of the framer of this Bill is to give the right of divorce in an indirect form. . . .

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: I did not say anything of the kind.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: I am much obliged to my Honourable friend for making his object clear that he did not intend it. Unfortunately I have been accustomed for the last 25 years to interpret pieces of legislation that have been enacted. Therefore, as I interpret this Bill, it tries to carry out certain things which my Honourable friend does not want. Therefore, if it is not his intention, to introduce divorce indirectly, the Bill as framed allows it. If a Hindu husband wants to divorce his wife, one day he can say, this new legislation of Dr. Deshmukh is a much better law. He will say, I cannot marry again, if I marry under the Special Marriage Act, because that Act imposes monogamy but under the ordinary Hindu law, I am allowed polygamy. Therefore, he can tell his wife, that he wants to be wedded to her alone, "come on, let us go and register our marriage before the Registrar". The wife perhaps guilelessly will accept the suggestion. After getting his marriage registered he can easily give notice to his wife saying that whereas the previous marriage under the Hindu law is dissolved under the Special Marriage Act. I hereby give notice of dissolution of marriage and I am free to divorce you. I say such a procedure is wrong. I am anxious that my interpretation should be

wrong. Unfortunately, however, the interpretation is possible which my Honourable friend the framer of this Bill, has not contemplated. There are many other unthought of hardships likely to arise out of the Bill, but inasmuch as my Honourable friend has no objection for circulation of this measure, I need not dilate upon the defects in the Bill any further. There are two other Bills pending before us for consideration. I move.

Mr. President: Amendment moved:

"That the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 31st August, 1946."

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. President (The Honourable Mr. G. V. Mavalankar) in the Chair.

Sardar N. G. Vinchoorkar (Gujrat and Deccan Sardars and Inamdars: Landholders): Sir, I appreciate the patience and perseverance of my Honourable friend Dr. Deshmukh in his ideas of reforming Hindu social life, but I am sorry to say that I fail to appreciate or understand the objects of the Bill before us, and it is only in this light that I should like to say a few words. If his idea is to let the people keep up the respect of or show respect for the Hindu form of marriage and also to enable them to avoid the restrictions that prevail now, I am afraid his object will not be achieved by the Bill before us, and it is only on that presumption that I will make a few observations. According to the present provisions of the Bill it appears that a man can marry according to the present form of Hindu marriage and also can change and adapt the provisions of the Special Marriage Act if and whenever he likes. That means that he will have to declare that he is not married and can then take advantage of the provisions of the Special Marriage Act. So I do not know how he can enable people not to offend the forms of the Hindu marriage law. The form of marriage according to Hindus is a sacrament. In the Statement of Objects and Reasons he says that the object of this Bill is "to provide a means of having the benefits of modern ideas on legislation respecting marriage without in any way interfering with the religious sentiments of the communities concerned".

This latter portion will be defeated the moment a person seeks the provisions of the Special Marriage Act because there he has to declare that he is not married. I will draw attention to clause 2 of the Bill which seeks to insert a new section 2-A. in Act III of 1872 regarding registration of marriages:

"A man and a woman described in section 2 who are already married to each other under any other mode of contracting marriage may get their such marriage registered under this Act if both the parties are agreed to have it so registered under the following conditions:

(a) neither party must at the time of registration under this Act have any other husband or wife living."

So this means that even those who are married under the present Hindu law have to declare that marriage as canceled and then take recourse to the marriage under the Special Marriage Act. I do not think this is in any way respectful or complimentary to the present law of Hindu marriage. I would wish parties to take straightaway to the Special Marriage Act rather than go through this formality which is more disrespectful than anything else. So, as I said before, I do not think the Bill is very clear in regard to the object of my Honourable friend Dr. Deshmukh as I understand it to be. As the Bill stands or as it is worded at present I find that it treats the Hindu form of marriage very lightly and not at all in a complimentary or respectful way; rather it seeks in a light-hearted manner to dissolve a marriage and enables parties to take advantage of the provisions of the Special Marriage Act. So you cannot think of a Hindu, either a husband or a wife, having it both ways. If they want to stick to the old form of Hindu marriage they must allow themselves to be under certain restrictions. After all a person cannot have always what he or she wishes because society and the laws and traditions will always have certain

[Sardar N. G. Vinchoorkar]

privileges as also restrictions. But this measure seeks to facilitate both ways. A young man perhaps wishing to satisfy his elders goes through a form of marriage according to Hindu law and then again he finds a way out of it by other means to dissolve the marriage and take advantage of the terms of the Special Marriage Act.

Then there is no time-limit fixed here as to when a person can take advantage of the provisions of the Bill. So I can anticipate certain complications arising in case there are issues in between.

Then again there are certain matters like divorce and succession and such others, which are also introduced by the back door. If a man chooses to take to the Special Marriage Act and take advantage of it, I have no quarrel with him at all. But what I object to is that he goes through a form of marriage according to the Hindu sacrament and then he can dissolve the marriage and go to the Special Marriage Act and take advantage of the provisions therein. This, of course, may not be in the mind of the Honourable Mover at all, but I mention these points just now as the Bill is meant to be sent out for eliciting public opinion, and I wish that it should be more clear and precise in meeting the objects of the Honourable the Mover; and if the Mover finds it necessary I think he can take time to make the Bill more clear and precise in order to meet his object in a more direct manner.

I also want the Honourable the Law Member to make the position of Government clear, specially as Government have got the report of the Rau Committee. Also, I imagine Government have certain other material with them, which will enable them to prepare a draft of codified Hindu law. That will be more welcome legislation than the present half-way attempts. That is why I want the Law Member to give us an idea as to what the intentions of Government are in this direction.

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I rise to oppose the amendment moved by my Honourable friend Mr. Ayyangar. It may be asked why I should intervene in a debate which is generally supposed to be a measure for the Hindu community or rather for those who describe themselves as Hindus or are called Hindus. Personally I feel that I need make no apology. My own position is that any man who lives in Hindusthan is a Hindu and that is the term used outside India and is still so understood. I remember many years ago when as a young man I was in America, that if I ever said that I was a Christian people they would stare at me and probably thought that I was either a Red Indian or at best a Muletto. Therefore I described myself as a Hindu and everybody there understood that we were Indians from this side of the world. We described ourselves as Hindus and we were always called Hindus. In France also if you want to describe your nationality you have to call yourself '*Ind Orenitale*'.

Now, Sir, what I mean to say is that just as a man who comes from England is an Englishman, a man who comes from France is a Frenchman, so a man who is born and lives in this country and whose ancestors have lived in this country is a Hindu and therefore it is wrong to say that only a man who is a Vishnuvite, or a Sanatanist, or an Aryasmajist is a Hindu and others are not Hindus. Secondly, I would also say that Hinduism or the word Hindu does not imply any definite religious creed. If there is such a creed which is called the Hindu creed, I would like to hear it, for I have never heard of it. I can understand a Sanatanist creed, I can understand Vishnuvite creed. I can understand an Aryasmajist creed, but I cannot understand what is the precise doctrinal creed which a man must subscribe to, if a man wants to call himself a Hindu. In my opinion Hinduism is the most tolerant of all religions. It is not a precise religious but it is a great social and cultural organisation, and an institution which has outlived ages and ages of history, and will outlive ages and ages of history till the end of this world or this civilization. I say, Sir, that it is perfectly right for a man to call himself a Hindu whether he is a Unitarian or whether he is a Trinitarian, or whether he is a pantheist, or

whether he professes any other faith which involves adherence to a set of religious doctrines. And, therefore, Sir, I submit that if a man holds a certain religious belief—and even that belief may be the Christian belief, or the Muslim faith—he does not cease to be a Hindu, he is not deprived of the heritage of his long line of ancestors, nor does he, therefore, repudiate the Hindu culture, nor does he repudiate his right to be called a Hindu, whether he calls himself a Christian Hindu or a Muslim Hindu, or a Buddhist Hindu or any other kind of Hindu.

Then, Sir, finally I feel that a measure like this is a measure of social reform and a measure of social reform to whichever community it may apply in a narrow sense should be the concern of all those who live in this country and of all those who form a part of the social structure in this country.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Hear, hear!

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. O. Chatterjee: Thank you. Those are my reasons for participating in this debate and I therefore make no apology for doing so.

The reason why I am opposing my Honourable friend, Mr. Ayyangar's motion for circulation is that he knows perfectly well and everybody else knows perfectly well that these are purely delaying tactics. My Honourable friend, I admit, is a patriot to the tips of his fingers, and also to the tips of his toes, but I think, Sir, it is surprising that it should be he who should try by this motion—as he knows perfectly well that he is doing so—to delay the passage of a very small measure of reform and a very small attempt at improvement in the status of women in our country. It is strange that history should repeat itself. As a humble student of history I am surprised how often and how truly history repeats itself. I well remember when what is known as the Sarda Marriage Act was before this House—I had the honour of being a Member of that Select Committee—it was an Ayyangar who was one of the strongest opponents of that Bill and he also sat very nearly where my Honourable friend the present Mr. Ayyangar sits. He did his utmost to try and prevent the passage of that Bill by trying to send it for circulation and by all other tactics better known to lawyers and politicians. That Bill of course was passed and it could only be passed, unfortunately one must admit, by every official having to vote for it, and therefore it is surprising that officials who had no particular or direct interest in the provisions of that Bill had to be mustered in order to carry out that very necessary measure of reform. I hope, Sir, today my Honourable friend, Mr. Ayyangar, does not desire that history should repeat itself in this case.

We have heard for years—you no doubt have heard again and again—of Sir B. N. Rau's Committee—I do not know for how long it has been sitting to codify Hindu Law—but so far as I understand, and even the mover of this Bill today said that he realizes that it is too large a bit to swallow and that will take years and years to become law. Therefore, Sir, I, for one, very much welcome these measures, although they may be very very moderate, to improve not the lot of any particular woman but really to raise the whole womanhood of India and bring them into the heritage into which they ought to have long ago. Not only this Bill but the other two Bills which stand in the name of my Honourable friend and will come up later on, try to seek this and they are very small measures of reform. I regret that he should have been so soft as to accept the motion of my friend, or said, or, at any rate, indicated that he is agreeable that these Bills may be sent for circulation which again means years of delay. I remember his brother bringing up a similar Bill in the last year and we know what happened to it because it was sent for circulation.

Let us now get on to the real question. I do not wish to tread on anybody's toes. I wish to speak straight. I love this country as much as any one else does; I am very much a member of Hindu society in its broader sense as anybody else. And I wish to speak straight. The whole thing is that it is a question of vested interests. It is a case of subjection of the weak by the strong. How often should history repeat itself; how often it is from those

[Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee]

Benchés that we hear of slaves, we hear of imperialism, we hear of exploitation of colonial people, and my Honourable friend, Mr. Ayyangar, who today wants to delay this measure of reform, is one of the loudest in his criticism of such wrongs which ought not to exist but do exist in this world.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: On a point of personal explanation, Sir, I want to make the Bill better.

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee: Well; let me have my say.

The point is this that the whole thing goes very deep; it relates to the question of domination and exploitation and imprisonment of women by men, such as has been a sad feature or curse of human society not only in India but everywhere. Today it is very prominent in India. I am fully conscious of the fact that less than 50 years ago—I speak subject to correction—a woman could not possess property in England in her own name nor could she have a bank account, but there women are now very advanced and they have got all that and many other things. What is happening in this country? In this country we give lip service to women just as a European used to give lip service of his women. He always said 'Ladies first'; when he opened the door to enter a carriage, he said 'Ladies first', and things of that kind, and gave them jewelry and presents, but dominated over them and yet gave them no real part either in politics or in the affairs of state, or anything else substantial. My Honourable friend, Mr. Sri Prakasa,—I do not know whether he is here or not—would remember that in the University of Cambridge when the first women took their degrees, they were, instead of being cheered, hooted and rotten eggs were thrown at them.

Now, Sir, this is a thing which has happened everywhere. But things have progressed elsewhere. Here in this country, my friend, Mr. Ayyangar, tries to keep up and wants to keep up that domination and I want to put this to him straight.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: I have no such domination at all.

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee: The only difference is that in this country we call our women 'Shreemati'. We address them as 'Devi's'. We call them 'Begum's'. Are they not titles like the titles which an imperialist power as such confers on colonial and subject people? This is exactly the same thing. This is what I want to put to my friend. This is what we are doing in this country. We are denying to our women the most elementary rights. Whereas we consider that it is right, or at any rate it has been our custom that a man can marry as many wives as he wants but a woman may never marry even if she becomes a widow at 8 or 10 or 14. If reforms are going to be opposed in this way, then how far do we stand condemned before the bar of history when we condemn others who have done equally hard things even though they may have done it to people of other nations. Today we stand at the dawn of, a new era in this country and we stand at a time which may be called the most challenging period of history in India. Are my friends prepared to herald the dawn of this era by themselves coming forward and freeing the section of people who are the most enslaved in this country, the people who are most exploited, namely the womenfolk of India? No country can go forward: no country can go and stand as a free nation and gain the respect of free nations if we are not prepared to carry forward and that very substantially and quickly these measures of reforms, though these measures are just mere nibbles at something which is still a dead wall. Until we are ready to do so, there is no use thinking we are going to become a great nation. Lip service is no use. Therefore I would pray of my friend, Mr. Ayyangar, the patriot that he is, also the champion of the rights of the exploited colonial people and the slaves of the world, not to put any spokes in the wheel of freedom for that section of the community in India who are treated the worst, who are the greatest slaves and more exploited than any other people in the country.

Before I sit down: I would like to ask you Sir, whether you have read the account of the Creation of the Sexes which Plato gave. I will read but a few lines. He says that Plato accepted—

“That man and woman are equal when he explained the creation of the sexes. The first people, he believed were ‘compound humans’”

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Even now they are so biologically.

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee: You are a medical man. I do not understand.

“ with a cylindrical body, four arms and four legs, one head and two faces facing in opposite directions.”

Shri Sri Prakasa: Do not go any further:

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee: “. . . . They peopled the earth and because they became arrogant, the gods cut them into halves. One has become a man and the other woman. Ever since man and woman have been two parts of a whole. Plato has warned us and said that if we do not behave properly the gods would cut each of us again and we would become quarters.”

Let us take warning. Let us not become quarters but let us become worthy halves and thus a perfect whole in this India of ours.

Pandit Balkrishna Sharma (Cities of the United Provinces: Non-Muhammadian Urban): I did not wish to intervene in the debate at this stage but for the remarks of Lt.-Col. Dr. Chatterjee who perhaps does not know the whole story and therefore most of his remarks are out of place. For instance, he has said that Mr. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar is putting spokes in the wheel of progress. Well, only if he had had the patience to hear what Mr. Ayyangar himself said at the time when he proposed his amendment to send the Bill into circulation, such doubts should have been removed. But I think at the time either he was not very attentive or absent from the House.

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee: I was here and heard it too.

Pandit Balkrishna Sharma: Oh, you were here! Then I do not think you heard him very attentively. Now the Bill as it stands has got certain lacuna and Mr. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar and Dr. Deshmukh, the Mover of the Bill, both sat together and came to an understanding that, so far as was possible that sort of thing should be removed. Now there was only one way out of it: either to send it into circulation or to request the Government to allot us a day when the official Bills came, say two or three minutes, for the re-introduction of that Bill and save us from sending it into circulation.

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee: Why don't you take that course?

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: If the Law Member accepts that I will have no objection.

Pandit Balkrishna Sharma: If the Law Member accepts it, the Doctor will have no objection. I would like to point out what those lacuna are. I think Col. Chatterjee will be convinced that it is necessary that they should be made up. Under this Act, if you are sacramentally married and you have children and somehow you fell out with your sons and you want to cut them off with a shilling, you persuade your wife and say: “Come along, dear, now let us go in for a contractual marriage”. And they go in for a contractual marriage. The former sacramental marriages becomes null and void.

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee: Why should an educated wife resort to that?

Pandit Balkrishna Sharma: For the very simple reason that she too may be dissatisfied with the children. Therefore, it is to avoid such a contingency. Then again there is something more. Suppose a man wants to get rid of his wife and somehow he gulls her into the belief that he is a very devoted man and he wants to live with her peacefully and does not want to marry a second wife; while he actually wants to get rid of her. He persuades her. She goes

[Pandit Balkrishna Sharma]

to the registration office. They enter into the contractual marriage and the former sacramental marriage being null and void he is free to give her the go-bye. These things have to be removed and Dr. Deshmukh having realized the importance and the gravity of the problem that he was trying to tackle consented. Of course, Dr. Chatterjee was very eloquent in throwing diatribes at the Congress Benches. I can assure him that there was no desire on this side of the House in any way to interfere with the social progress, nor do we want to put any spokes in the wheels of our social chariot. Our Party, as a matter of fact, has unanimously decided that the coming two Bills standing in the name of Dr. Deshmukh shall be sent to the Select Committee. Of course, if there are dissentients in our Party—one or two hardly—and if they want to dissociate themselves from this legislation, they are free to do so. But we as a party have decided that we shall go the whole hog with Dr. Deshmukh. Only some individual freedom on the ground of conscientious objection, has been given to certain members.

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee: By way of personal explanation, I want to make it clear I had no intention whatsoever to make any derogatory remarks about the Party to which my friend belongs. I was talking of individual opinions and social problems. I had no intention or wish to do any such thing.

Pandit Balkrishna Sharma: Thank you very much.

Col. Chatterjee said that modern education has given us sense of chivalry and we say 'Ladies first'. So far as this Bill is concerned if we adopt that maxim, 'Ladies first', it will be like adopting the maxim 'Ladies first' even if the bull charges. I do not think that Col. Chatterjee would like a lady to be
 3 P.M. crushed by a charging bull. There is something of a charging bull in this legislation that we want to avoid. It is for that reason that we are sending it for eliciting public opinion. I hope this will dispel the fears of Col. Chatterjee and those who think like him and I hope he will have no objection to sending the Bill for circulation.

Mr. President: I want to make one point clear to Honourable Members who wish to speak. We have only one hour left and there are two or three other Bills and I do not know what other private day will be available.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: We can cut down the speeches. So far as this Bill is concerned we are unanimous.

Mr. President: Is it the desire that this Bill should be debated upon further?

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Not necessarily.

Mr. President: I just wanted to know because I found two or three Members on opposition side anxious to speak. That is why I made that suggestion.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy (Law Member): Sir, I should like at the outset to make the position of the Government clear in regard to this Bill. The attitude of the Government is one of neutrality. Government were prepared to accept the motion for reference to a Select Committee, if it was the sense of the House that that motion should be accepted. I find that the Mover has agreed to accept Mr. Ayyangar's amendment that this Bill should be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion. Government is not opposed to the circulation motion at all. Government feel that it is for the Members of the House to decide whether, as stated in the preamble to the Bill "it is expedient to extend the benefits of the Special Marriage Act of 1872 (Act III of 1872) to persons who profess the Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh or Jain religion and who are already married according to rites or mode of contracting marriage other than under the Special Marriage Act, 1872". It is for the Members of the House to say whether there is any real need felt by the communities concerned for the amendment of the Special Marriage Act in the manner suggested in the Bill.

I may remind Honourable Members that this Bill is exactly similar to a Bill which was introduced by the Honourable Dr. Deshmukh on the 20th October, 1941. On a motion adopted by the House on the 7th of November,

1941, that Bill was circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinions. The opinions received were very divided and I cannot say that they were at all encouraging to the Bill. It is not the practice of Government to support a Bill affecting the social and religious customs of any particular community, unless it is clearly and unequivocally supported by a majority of the community. Therefore, Sir, in regard to this Bill Government take up the attitude of neutrality and if it is the desire of the House that this Bill should be circulated for public opinion again, Government will accept that. But I agree with much that has been said by my Honourable friend Mr. Ayyangar in his criticism of the Bill. I do not know if Honourable Members have realised the full implications of this Bill and I do not know whether my Honourable friend, the Mover, has realised what he has sought to do by this amending measure. I may just refer to one or two clauses of this Bill. One clause alone will do, Clause 12.

In Clause 12 of the Bill the Mover has suggested that after section 15 of the Special Marriage Act the following new section shall be inserted, namely: "on the marriage being registered under this Act",—that is to say a marriage between two parties who are already married according to the Hindu Law being registered under this Act,—certain consequences ensue. The Bill says that on the marriage being registered under this Act, the previous marriage between the parties should be deemed to have been dissolved and the parties shall be deemed to be married under this Act as from the date of such registration. That introduces a tremendous complication. The parties were married under the Hindu Law on a particular date. As soon as they get their marriage registered under the provisions of this Act, their previous marriage stands dissolved and they are deemed to be married on the date on which registration takes place. A pertinent question will immediately arise: what is to happen to the children of the marriage, who were born before the date of the registration. That is a matter which requires careful consideration.

Then, again, in Clause 12, in that particular section which is sought to be introduced, it is further provided that "the parties to such registration shall thenceforth have all the rights and be subject to all disabilities prescribed under sections", etc.". If you look at some of those sections you will find that the consequences are very serious. A Hindu who has been married under the Hindu Law gets his marriage registered under this Act. Immediately under Section 22, there is a severance effected from the joint family. Under Section 24 succession to their properties is regulated by the Indian Succession Act. Further, Sir, the man's father immediately has the right to adopt another son. Take the case of the father of a man who has got a son and a grandson by his son. The son gets his marriage registered under this Act. What is to happen to the grandson? Is he to lose the right of inheriting the grandfather's property? Some of the consequences which follow from the provision in Clause 12 that the disabilities prescribed under the Special Marriage Act will attach to the parties to the registration the moment their marriage is registered under the Special Marriage Act are serious. I submit that these are considerations which the Honourable the Mover of this Bill ought to bear in mind before he proceeds further with this Bill. But, as I told you, Sir, the Government's attitude is one of neutrality and I certainly do not oppose circulation.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: I do not want to take more than two minutes. My idea of the legal Department of the Government of India is that it is not there merely to point out difficulties but also to help tyros in legislation like me and I am very thankful to the Law Member for pointing out some of the difficulties which, to give due credit to my friend Mr. Ayyangar, both of them have pointed out. It was because those difficulties were pointed out to me that we thought that the best way out of them will be in one of two ways, as my friend Mr. Sharma has suggested. One way is this: so far as the substance of this Bill is concerned, it seems to me that we are all agreed that something has got to be done with regard to these marriage laws. At least that is the opinion, so far as I can see. Now, I admit that the legal form may not be correct; and therefore if the Law Member can extend his sympathies further, the best way out of this

[Dr. G. V. Deshmukh]

would be if he would say "You correct the Bill with my friend Mr. Ayyangar and I will do the rest"; and then in one minute it can be introduced on an official day and all these objections are likely to disappear. I may point out to him that there have been many precedents like this . . .

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy: May I explain? I did not intend to convey the impression that I am satisfied that this Bill ought to be proceeded with at all. I do not think that this Bill ought to be proceeded with at all, and I am not satisfied that there is any need for the Bill. That is why I have left it to the communities concerned to come to a decision.

Pandit Balkrishna Sharma: That will be a new Bill.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: It will be a new Bill which could be introduced on an official day in a minute. But if the official side is not willing, the only other alternative would be to send it out for public opinion; and the advantage of it will be that it will educate the public opinion; As the Honourable the Law Member himself has pointed out—I admit it was given in 1941, but he cannot deny that it helped his draft Code or the Hindu Law Committee for the very simple reason that he himself admits that many of the provisions of this Bill have been taken in the Draft Code Committee. I accept the amendment moved that it should be sent round for public opinion.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 31st August, 1946."

The motion was adopted.

DELHI SIKH GURDWARAS AND RELIGIOUS ENDOWMENTS BILL

Sardar Mangal Singh (East Punjab: Sikh): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill to provide for the better administration of the Sikh Gurdwaras in the Delhi Province and their properties wheresoever situate, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Sir Asoka Roy, the Honourable Sir John Thorne, Sardar Bahadur Captain Sardar Harindra Singh, Colonel Kumar Shri Himmatsinhji, Squadron Leader Sardar Surjit Singh Majithia, Sardar Sampuran Singh, Mr. M. Asaf Ali, Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava, Sardar Jogendra Singh, Shri Sri Prakasa, Mr. M. A. F. Hirtzel, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan, and Sardar Mangal Singh, with instructions to report before the 31st July, 1946, and that the number of members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five".

The Bill which I have the honour to move in this House is a simple measure. As is clear from the Statement of Objects and Reasons, there are several historical important Sikh Gurdwaras in the Delhi Province and some of these Gurdwaras have considerable properties attached thereto. At present these gurdwaras are managed by a committee registered under the Societies Registration Act and affiliated to the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar, constituted under the Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1925. Experience has shown that the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, though a statutory body, has got no legal powers to manage these gurdwaras, and therefore it has been thought desirable to bring forward this measure to provide for their better management and administration. Similar legislations have already been passed in the Punjab and the North West Frontier Province. This measure, as I have already said, is a simple one. It seeks to constitute a committee of 21 elected members, elected by the Sikh residents of Delhi, which committee will manage the gurdwaras, rituals in the gurdwaras and the properties attached to them. Some of the property is situated in the province of the Punjab.

I want to make it clear that this Bill does not in any way affect any vested interests. We have not to turn out the *Mahants* or the trustees who are managing the gurdwaras. That was done twenty years ago when the *Mahants* were asked to go. In some cases a liberal compensation was provided for them. In other cases they left themselves. At present there is no vested interest. My object is simply to give legal powers to a committee constituted under this Act.

DELHI SIKH GURDWARAS AND RELIGIOUS ENDOWMENTS BILL

The second point which I wish to make clear is that so far as the Sikhs are concerned, there is no difference of opinion on this measure. A similar measure is being introduced in the upper House by my Honourable friend, Sir Sobha Singh. All sections of the Sikh community are agreed—of course there may be difference of opinion in matters of detail here and there—that such a measure should be adopted by this House. I do not want to take much of the time of the House as other Bills are awaiting consideration. I therefore request this House to pass this motion. I notice that the Honourable the Home Member has tabled a motion for the circulation of this measure. Just now the Honourable the Law Member got up and said that he was prepared to accept a motion if it was for Select Committee but he would oppose if it is a motion for circulation.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy (Law Member): I did not say that.

Sardar Mangal Singh: I am sorry. I hope my friend the Honourable the Home Member will agree to accept my motion. I recognise that the Bill as at present drafted requires certain modifications but that can be done very well in Select Committee. I have therefore provided that the report of the Select Committee may be given before the 31st July. That gives sufficient time to consult both the Government and the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee or any other public bodies interested in this measure. I wish to make one point clear. I will have no objection if, instead of this Bill, the Government agrees to put the management and administration of these gurdwaras under the Sikh Gurdwaras Act of 1925, passed by the Punjab Legislative Assembly. This is for the Government to consider. If they are prepared to make suitable provisions in the Bill that these gurdwaras should be put under the administration of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar, personally I have no objection. But I have to take into consideration the wishes of the Sikh residents of Delhi. If they have any objection to that course, of course that will have to be taken into consideration, because I want that this measure should have the fullest support of the Sikh residents of Delhi who are after all to manage these gurdwaras and who are closely affected by this measure. Sir, I move.

Mr. President: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to provide for the better administration of the Sikh Gurdwaras in the Delhi Province and their properties wheresoever situate, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Sir Asoka Roy, the Honourable Sir John Thorne, Sardar Bahadur Captain Sardar Harendra Singh, Colonel Kumar Shri Himmatsinhji, Squadron Leader Sardar Surjit Singh Majithia, Sardar Sampuran Singh, Mr. M. Asaf Ali, Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava, Sardar Jogendra Singh, Shri Sri Prakasa, Mr. M. A. F. Hirtzel, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan, and Sardar Mangal Singh, with instructions to report before the 31st July, 1946, and that the number of members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five".

The Honourable Sir John Thorne (Home Member): Sir, the motion standing in my name is:

"That the Bill be circulated in Delhi Province for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon."

With your permission I should like to add to that phrase 'by July 1st, 1946'.

My Honourable friend Sardar Mangal Singh rather surprised me just now by expressing the hope that I would not move my amendment, because I thought, as the result of a number of talks with him, that he was going to accept my amendment. However, I will refer to that again later.

An Honourable Member: "Sikh strategy"?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I think it has already been made plain to my friend the Mover but I should make it plain to the House as well, that my motion is tabled not in any sense whatever of hostility to this measure or with any intention of needlessly delaying it. But experienced members of this House know that it is the usual practice to circulate for opinion a measure which affects the religious practices, authority and institutions of any community. And there is a further reason in regard to this Bill in that it bears

[Sir John Thorne]

signs of very hasty draftsmanship. I would not go through it clause by clause but I would call attention to clause 4 which says that, 'The Board shall consist of twenty-one members as under'. I had the curiosity to work out an arithmetical sum from the subsequent sub-clauses and I find that the total is 19 and not 21. Then again there are parts of the Bill which I think would more suitably be found in rules or bye-laws passed by a body to be set up by the measure. Those matters no doubt are such as could be rectified in Select Committee without much trouble, but I feel myself that a measure of this kind, which affects rights in property as well as religious practice, is one on which we should have the opinions of people who may be concerned within the Delhi province; and very few of us have that close acquaintance with Sikh religion and practice which would enable us in Select Committee to spot the details which needed correction. Therefore, Sir, I would press that this should be circulated. I have worded my motion so that circulation should be within the Delhi province only, but it will be necessary to look outside the province as well—not by circulation, but what I had in mind was that the Government should address the Punjab Government at the same time that the Bill is circulated in the Delhi Province, asking for any comments that the Punjab Government could give us from their experience of 20 years in the administration of the Gurdwaras Act which is in force in that province and also calling attention to certain parts of this Bill which affect authorities situated in the Punjab Province. For instance, sub-clause (vii) of clause 4 requires two members of the Board to be nominated by the President of the Shiromani Gurdwaras Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar. Then again clause 28 sets out a procedure for dealing with disputes and requires that—

"all disputes regarding the properties of the Gurdwaras under this Act, regarding the membership of the Board or the committees constituted thereunder and all other disputes in any manner whatsoever concerned with the said Gurdwaras shall be brought by a petition or by a regular suit as may be provided for under the law for the time being in force before the Sikh Gurdwara Tribunal, constituted under the Sikhs' Gurdwaras Act of 1925 (Punjab Act, No. VIII of 1925) and the decision of the said tribunal subject to the revisional powers of the High Court of Judicature at Lahore shall be final between the parties to all such proceedings."

Clearly it will not be proper for us to legislate in that sense without previous consultation with the Punjab Government and without asking them to say whether the authorities named there, the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar, the Sikh Gurdwara Tribunal and the Lahore High Court would be prepared to undertake the duties which the Bill, if passed, would impose on them. Therefore, Sir, I think it is quite necessary not only that the Bill should be circulated in the Delhi Province but that we should have time in which to consult the Punjab Government and give them time to consult the authorities who have been named in this Bill and obtain their views as to the practicability of these proposals and obtain the consent of those authorities and the Punjab Government to these functions being imposed upon them. I would therefore answer my Honourable friend's appeal to me to accept his motion by pointing out that there are certain very strong reasons why he should accept my motion and should allow this Bill to be circulated. Sir, I move.

Mr. President: Motion moved:

"That the Bill be circulated in Delhi Province for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by July 1st, 1946."

Sardar Sampuran Singh (West Punjab: Sikh): Sir, I rise to support the motion made by my Honourable friend Sardar Mangal Singh. The object of proposing this Bill is very laudable. The Bill is designed for the better management of the Sikh Gurdwaras in this great capital of the country and also to utilise their funds for the betterment of the community. We have an Act in the Punjab for the same purpose. That had to be rather elastic because it had to deal with large properties and a very large number of Gurdwaras spread over the whole province and each Gurdwara required a different type of management both on account of the conditions and the vested interests of the *Mahants*

and old managers. Consequently, we had to put up a Special Board called the Gurdwara Tribunal. All the Gurdwaras whose names were mentioned in the schedule were under it. People could raise objection on the inclusion of certain Gurdwaras or properties in that schedule and all those matters were fought like civil suits. In the same way if name of any Gurdwara was not included in that schedule, any Sikh could bring a suit to prove that the community had a special interest in that Gurdwara and those matters had also to be fought in that Tribunal and the parties concerned had to establish their rights. I am glad that we have not to adopt that long procedure so far as the Gurdwaras of Delhi province are concerned because there are very few Gurdwaras here and we claim that everything is so nicely defined already that there will be no trouble on that account and no Boards would have to be put up for that purpose. But we have to consider what type of management we will have to give to these Gurdwaras.

In the Punjab we have two methods. Some Gurdwaras are managed directly by the Shiromani Gurdwara Committee and except Akal Takhat these have local Committees as well, but they are without much authority and they are only nominal Committees. Consequently, in the case of Delhi we cannot adopt that style. The other method is to manage certain Gurdwaras through local Committees—subject to certain control by the S. G. P. C. All these Committees are elected. Naturally, we will have to give more rights to the resident Sikhs of this place, and the local Committees which we will have to organise or provide for Delhi will be more autonomous, subject to, in certain matters, control of the Shiromani Committee because they have to co-ordinate the activities of the whole Sikh community. For that purpose, we will have to keep some sort of affiliation with the mother body for the proper management of the Gurdwaras of this place as well.

I know that in our community there is no difference of opinion, so far as the general principles of the Bill are concerned and I have no hesitation in accepting the amendment proposed by the Honourable the Home Member. A few months' delay no doubt may cause some difficulty, but considering the importance of the measure and the time required for further inquiry into the matter, we will have no hesitation in accepting this motion and allow the Bill to be circulated for the present. With these remarks I support the original motion of Sardar Mangal Singh.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Sir, it is true that in my talks with the Honourable the Home Member I agreed to accept his motion, but I did not think it proper at that stage, if I may say so. I reserved those remarks for the present occasion. In view of the difficulties pointed out by him and in view of the observations made by my Honourable friend Sardar Sampuran Singh, I think I should accept the motion for circulation. I never doubted for a moment that this circulation was meant as a dilatory motion. I recognise the difficulty of the Honourable the Home Member. He wants to consult the Punjab Government, the Delhi Administration and certain other interests as well. I am prepared to give him that time. In return, I would ask him that he should give me facilities to get this Bill through the next Session. If my Bill is blocked by my Honourable friend Dr. Deshmukh, who always brings half a dozen Bills every Session, then the Honourable the Home Member will be kind enough to give me some time on an official day, so that we may get this Bill through during the next Session. Sir, I accept the circulation motion moved by my Honourable friend the Home Member.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): I do not get the official support; you do?

Mr. President: The question is.

“That the Bill be circulated in Delhi Province for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by July 1st, 1946.”

The motion was adopted.

POSITION RE SUPPLY OF QUESTION LISTS TO MEMBERS CONSEQUENT ON STRIKE IN GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, NEW DELHI.

Mr. President: Before I call upon the Honourable Member, Dr. Deshmukh, to move his motion in respect of other Bills, I have to make a statement to the House about a situation which is a sorry one. I have just come to know that, on account of a strike in the Government Press, it will not be possible for us to have printed lists of questions prepared as usual. We have to devise some other method till the Press is again in the working order. Ordinarily, Departments are supplied with printed questions five days in advance and a number of copies that are struck are sent to the Honourable Members to their residences and are also placed on the table of the House. In view of the situation that has now arisen, the only other course is to have the copies cyclo-styled or to resort to some other process of multiplication. Obviously, a large number of decent copies cannot be had by any process other than printing. Therefore, we have to consider the other alternative of having a fewer copies and yet meet the reasonable needs of the Honourable Members as also of the Departments. It is, therefore, proposed that instead of each Department of the Government being sent copies of these questions, copies should be sent only to the Department concerned, which has to reply the questions on a particular day. In case any other Departments or even the Departments concerned want any further information, they can always have access to the Assembly Office and get the information about the questions that they may want. They are supplied advance copies of questions as they come in, but they may like to know exactly the forms of questions as admitted and also as disallowed. What I would suggest in these circumstances is that they may proceed on the assumption that the advance copies are copies of questions as permitted and then a little modification here and there of questions disallowed may be looked to thereafter. That is so far as the Departments are concerned. So far as Honourable Members are concerned, each Honourable Member knows which questions he has given notice of. There are two alternatives before Honourable Members; either copies may be sent to the residences of Honourable Members in which case, it will not be possible to have an equal number of copies placed on the table of the House, so that Honourable Members will have to carefully preserve the copies sent to their residences and bring them here when they come to the Chamber; the other alternative is to have the copies placed here on the table of the House, instead of being sent to the residences of Honourable Members. I am entirely in the hands of Honourable Members.

Mr. M. Asaf Ali (Delhi: General): That will not work.

Mr. President: Then, the only alternative that can be adopted is to send copies to the residences of Honourable Members, of course, excluding official Members.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy (Law Member). Presumably questions as admitted will also be supplied to the Departments.

Mr. President: But as I said, fewer number of copies will be supplied. At present, I believe we are supplying 15 copies. Instead of that the number of copies will be three or four.

Mr. M. Asaf Ali: I am not quite certain how long this arrangement is expected to last. Does it mean that the present strike is going to last very long? If I am not mistaken, questions relating to 14th or 16th March are already in circulation. That is to say we have got copies of these questions in advance. If the press strike is going to be extended beyond the 16th, I do not know what might happen. I do not see why we should not take steps to end the strike. This is an urgent matter of public importance and we ought to be able to devise some way to settle this dispute as quickly as possible. I suggest that the Honourable Member in charge of the Press may invite the leaders of Parties or their representatives to a conference and invite others also and we can all sit down and settle the whole issue straightaway.

Mr. President: The time for transacting the non-official business set down on the agenda is very short. I am anxious to see that the two Motions of Dr. Deshmukh are carried through today, otherwise they do not stand the chance of ever going through. So, I will hurry up. My only purpose in inviting the attention of the House to this factor was that inconvenience may not be caused to Honourable Members all at once and as a matter of surprise. That does not mean that the strike may be continued any longer. Steps will no doubt be taken to see that the strike ends soon. If the Press works normally or even less than normally, efforts will be made to have these questions printed, as usual, but so long as the facilities are not there, we have to restrict ourselves to this rationing of questions, if I may say so.

Sardar Mangal Singh (East Punjab: Sikh): May I suggest that copies of questions may be printed at the Viceroy's Press. There is no strike there.

Mr. President: We will discuss all these matters, later on.

HINDU MARRIED WOMEN'S RIGHT TO SEPARATE RESIDENCE AND MAINTENANCE BILL.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I move:

"That the Bill to give Hindu Married Women a right to separate residence and maintenance under certain circumstances be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Sir Asoka Roy, Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee, Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan, Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan, Shri Sri Prakasa, Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, Sri A. Karunakara Menon, Sjt. N. V. Gadgil, Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai, Pandit Balakrishna Sharma, Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava, Sardar Mangal Singh, Mr. Madandhari Singh, Mr. Leslie Gwilt, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, and the Mover, with instructions to report by the 21st March, 1946, and that the number of Members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five."

Sir, I do not want to make any speech in commending my Motion for the acceptance of the House. I hope we are coming to less controversial matters. My Party is practically unanimous that this measure should go to the Select Committee, and as far as I know the Honourable the Law Member is sympathetically considering this question. This is a very old question which has been discussed by the previous Assembly and it was unanimous in appointing a Select Committee. So I do not wish to make any speech. Sir, I move.

Mr. President: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to give Hindu Married Women a right to separate residence and maintenance under certain circumstances be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Sir Asoka Roy, Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee, Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan, Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan, Shri Sri Prakasa, Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, Sri A. Karunakara Menon, Sjt. N. V. Gadgil, Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai, Pandit Balakrishna Sharma, Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava, Sardar Mangal Singh, Mr. Madandhari Singh, Mr. Leslie Gwilt, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, and the Mover, with instructions to report by the 21st March, 1946, and that the number of Members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five."

Mr. P. B. Gole (Berar: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I have tabled an amendment to this Motion for the circulation of this Bill. But if it has been settled in our Party that this Bill should go to the Select Committee, I do not propose to move that amendment. But at the same time, I would like to bring to the notice of the House certain features of this Bill.

Mr. President: I might inform the Honourable Member before he brings in those features, there is another Bill of Dr. Deshmukh which has to be moved. There is another Bill of Shri Sri Prakasa. There is a further motion by Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer. We have now got only 18½ minutes, to be exact.

Mr. P. B. Gole: I am very sorry Sir, there is no time. But that is no reason why I should not have my say on the measure.

Mr. President: There is no reason why the Honourable Member should curtail his remarks. I merely pointed out that these are private Bills and it will be for Honourable Members to adjust the discussion as they think fit. It

[Mr. President]

do not want any Honourable Member to curtail his remarks, not the least. That is not my intention.

Mr. P. B. Gole: I am not on the Select Committee. It would therefore be much better if I offer my remarks at this stage.

Mr. M. Asaf Ali (Delhi: General): Do you wish to be on the Select Committee?

Mr. P. B. Gole: I do not wish to force myself on the Select Committee.

Mr. President: Does the Honourable Member wish to have his name included in the list of members for the Select Committee?

Mr. P. B. Gole: I shall offer my remarks now, if I am not included in the Select Committee.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar (Madras Ceded Districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I formally move, Sir:

"That the name of Mr. P. B. Gole be added to the Select Committee."

Mr. President: Motion moved:

"That the name of Mr. P. B. Gole be added to the Select Committee."

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy (Law Member): I accept the Motion for reference to the Select Committee. There are certain defects in the Bill which can of course be remedied in the Select Committee.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That the name of Mr. P. B. Gole be added to the Select Committee."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That the Bill to give Hindu Married Women a right to separate residence and maintenance under certain circumstances be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Sir Asoka Roy, Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee, Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan, Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan, Shri Sri Prakasa, Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, Sri A. Karunakara Menon, Sjt. N. V. Gadgil, Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai, Pandit Balakrishna Sharma, Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava, Sardar Mangal Singh, Mr. Madandhari Singh, Mr. Leslie Gwilt, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Mr. P. B. Gole, and the Mover, with instructions to report by the 21st March, 1946, and that the number of Members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five."

The motion was adopted.

HINDU MARRIAGE DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I move:

"That the Bill to remove legal disabilities under Hindu Law in respect of marriage between Hindus, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Sir Asoka Roy, Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee, Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan, Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan, Shri Sri Prakasa, Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, Sri A. Karunakara Menon, Sjt. N. V. Gadgil, Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai, Pandit Balkrishna Sharma, Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava, Sardar Mangal Singh, Mr. Leslie Gwilt, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Mr. P. B. Gole, and the Mover, with instructions to report by the 21st March, 1946, and that the number of members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five."

Mr. President: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to remove legal disabilities under Hindu Law in respect of marriage between Hindus, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Sir Asoka Roy, Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee, Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan, Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan, Shri Sri Prakasa, Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, Sri A. Karunakara Menon, Sjt. N. V. Gadgil, Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai, Pandit Balkrishna Sharma, Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava, Sardar Mangal Singh, Mr. Leslie Gwilt, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Mr. P. B. Gole, and the Mover, with instructions to report by the 21st March, 1946, and that the number of members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five."

Mr. Madandhari Singh (Bihar and Orissa: Landholders): Sir, I have tabled a motion that the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Sir, I should like to point out that this should be the least controversial because it was accepted by the last Assembly.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy (Law Member): By a majority of one vote.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Still, it was accepted. And I take it that the same attitude of sympathy on the side of Government and on this side continues.

Mr. President: If the Honourable Member wishes to move his amendment I cannot prevent him from doing so.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: If he would like to come to the Select Committee I have no objection. That will give him a chance to express his views in a more authoritative way, and I am sure he will agree to it.

Mr. Madandhari Singh: I have no objection, Sir.

Pandit Balkrishna Sharma (Cities of the United Provinces: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I move:

"That the name of Mr. Madandhari Singh may be added to the list of members of the Select Committee."

Mr. President: The question is:

"That the name of Mr. Madandhari Singh may be added to the list of members of the Select Committee."

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy: Sir, I shall accept this motion for reference to Select Committee but I shall only repeat what I said on the last occasion that clause 2(b) of this Bill is wholly unnecessary. And I also presume that my Honourable friend the Mover does not wish that his Bill should go further than is suggested by the Hindu Law Committee in their draft Code.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: That will be settled with the guidance of the Law Member.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar (Madras Ceded District and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, clause 1 is absolutely non-controversial and must be accepted. As regards clause 2 the Select Committee suggested that freedom may be given to the provinces to modify it so as to make it suitable. Whichever province is forward may accept it and if any province wants to wait, the power may be given to the Provincial Government.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy: I did not go into the matter in detail.

Mr. President: We need not go into all these details now.

The question is:

"That the Bill to remove legal disabilities under Hindu Law in respect of marriage between Hindus, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Sir Asoka Roy, Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee, Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan, Shrinati Ammu Swaminadhan, Shri Sri Prakasa, Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, Sri A Karunakara Menon, Sjt. N. V. Gadgil, Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai, Pandit Balkrishna Sharma, Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava, Sardar Mangal Singh, Mr. Leslie Gwilt, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Mr. P. B. Gole, Mr. Madandhari Singh, and the Mover, with instructions to report by the 21st March, 1946, and that the number of members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five."

The motion was adopted.

INDIAN COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Companies Act, 1913.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Companies Act, 1913."

The motion was adopted.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

HINDU INTER-CASTE MARRIAGE REGULATING AND VALIDATING BILL.

Shri Sri Prakasa (Benares and Gorakhpur Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to regulate and validate marriages between different castes and sub-castes of Hindus.

Mr. President: The question is:

“That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to regulate and validate marriages between different castes and sub-castes of Hindus.”

The motion was adopted.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

INDIAN ARMS (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer (Bombay Southern Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Indian Arms Act, 1878.

Mr. President: The question is:

“That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to amend the Indian Arms Act, 1878.”

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT

BHAGAULI TRAIN DISASTER

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar (Madras Ceded Districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I beg to move:

“That the Assembly do now adjourn.”

By moving this motion I wish the House to consider a matter of urgent public importance, namely, the train collision between the Dehra Dun Express and a Goods Train resulting in 50 deaths and 150 injured and the carelessness and indifference on the part of Government to take steps to avoid such train disasters.

4 P. M.

Sir, all Members of the House will be aware that the accident took place on Monday last in the early hours of the morning at Bhagauli, 48 miles from Lucknow. The latest information regarding the casualties is 50 dead and 150 injured. It is said, Sir, that it is a major disaster. In the *Hindustan Times* it is stated that the head-on collision is described by officials who visited the scene of the accident as a ‘major accident’. It is not the non-official version, but the official version itself, and the figures speak for themselves. It took place in the early hours of the morning and there could be no justification for it unless there is something wrong in the mechanism itself and the manner in which the Government has been managing its business. It is not the first instance within recent years when a collision of this sort has occurred. I have got here, year after year, the figures showing the number of collisions—owing to the beautiful management of the Government and the Administration—and you will see that they have been increasing, and the number of casualties have been mounting up. Collisions alone have increased from 263 in 1940-41 to 371 in 1942-43, 423 in 1943-44, and 423 in 1944-45. Within a period of five years, they have increased by 75 per cent.—from 263 to 423. Similarly, derailments have also increased from 5,601 in 1940-41 to 8,550 in 1944-45. It is an appalling figure.

Then I come to the number of persons killed and injured. The number was 9,998 in 1940-41 and it rose steadily to 11,146 in the next year—1941-42, 11,245 in the third year; 13,734 in 1943-44; and 14,667 in the last year 1944-45. The figures speak for themselves.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall (Member for Railways and War Transport): May I ask the Honourable Member if that includes train accidents due to trespassers and so on?

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: No, they are only collisions and derailments. I have taken these figures from your Red Book.

This is the tale. So far as the present year is concerned, I have been anxious to get the figures from the Honourable Member himself and put a question across the floor of the House and my Honourable friend, Mr. Saksena also asked for the same information. It is easy to gather that information. My Honourable friend had notice of a thing like this. I can refer him to one such after the Assembly started this year. On the 31st of January there occurred an accident near Jodhpur where two persons were killed and nine were injured. You can see how this Government has been callous and indifferent. My Honourable friend himself was asked by me to accept a question of short notice regarding this, but he considered the death of 2 persons on a train smash as absolutely unimportant and refused to accept a short notice question. Has he answered that till now. Life of an Indian is absolutely nothing so far as this Honourable Member is concerned; that is how he has flouted this House and the entire Indian nation. It is for this thing alone that an adjournment not only for one day but for the entire Session will be proper though it is cutting off our own nose to spite others.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Why not cut off his nose to spite us.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: If I had power I would certainly do so.

Let us now consider how such accidents happen. Such occurrences can happen in one of three ways. First of all, I would like to have some information from the Honourable Member. It is said in today's *Hindustan Times*:

"An eye-witness of the accident gives the following account: "It was a ghastly sight . . . I am sure that the driver of the Dehra Dun Express, who has been killed, was not to blame. The home signal had been given, but the points do not appear to have been changed. That was how the collision occurred. The Express was running at a speed of 20 miles per hour. . . ."

If it is so, the home signal was given but the points did not change. It is a matter which is entirely due to the faulty system. I would like to know from the Honourable Member if the automatic interlocking system prevails on this section of the E. I. R.? May I know from the Honourable Member if it is so?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I could not tell you. I require notice.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: I am aware of these alternatives. If the interlocking system is there, the points must have changed. If they did not, then there is a defect. This defect was pointed out to the Honourable Member—not to his department—by two persons one from the M. & S. M. Railway where in spite of the interlocking, points did not change. The man was sought to be sacked. He was a Station Master at Gudur, one Ayyangar. That man complained and wrote out a long article, and also sent a report saying that in spite of the interlocking system certain defects occur and those defects must be removed. He was sacked and this is how this 'inconvenience' has been cured. That is all due to the beautiful administration of the department in the hands of my Honourable friend. If there is no interlocking system there is absolutely no reason why in a major line of this kind interlocking system ought not to have been established. Therefore in either way the Administration has been responsible for this kind of fault. Interlocking system will automatically do away with many of these accidents. Even in certain cases in spite of the interlocking system being established, accidents may occur, but the Administration must be on the look out for such defects occurring and they should adopt remedial measures. He has not done so.

At this stage Mr. President vacated the Chair, which was then occupied by Mr. Deputy President (Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan).]

I am also informed that a driver at Betragunta went into a wrong line. He was sought to be dismissed and on appeal he was reinstated. Ultimately he was able to satisfy the authorities that there is a defect in the mechanism

[Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar]

—lowering of the signal does not change the point. It is more than a year ago. What steps have been taken by the Administration to remove this defect and bring the system absolutely up-to-date?

Thus they cannot run away with the explanation that some people there were responsible for this. It is easy for the administrator to say this. Most of the reports, where inspectors have entered into the investigation of such accidents, have thrown the blame on the man on the spot,—a coolie who gets about Rs. 10 to Rs. 12. He is ultimately sacked. But that man is not responsible. It may be due to negligence or due to sabotage. Neither of these has up to now been alleged. Let me take the first: negligence on the part of those people. They are overworked. The Honourable Member has those men on duty for 16 to 17 hours a day. He thinks that those people must work like machines. When I enter into the compartment of a railway train my life is in the hands of the railway administration. It is not a matter of indifference. You invite people to get into your trains. You create a monopoly, and then when these things happen you say it is an ordinary affair! I say the blood of every individual that has been shed rests on the Centre. But look at the indifference with which they have taken it. They have not even tried to alleviate the grievances of the people in charge of it. If it is negligence, you must reduce the hours of work. There is a railway strike already threatening. The strike of the postal peons seems to have been resolved. We have yet to see how the railwaymen's grievances are redressed. We do not know whether the strike is coming. If it is sabotage, even then the railway administration is responsible for it. In any case, whether it is the machines or the persons who misbehave, these things could be averted. I do not want to throw blame on the Honourable Member's organisation provided it is absolutely due to causes beyond the control of human agency which can be prevented by proper steps being taken. I say, this could have been prevented.

Even to-day, what is the attitude of the Honourable Member? My Honourable friend asked him if he would run up. He says he is too busy. He would not send the Chief Commissioner. He would not send the person in charge of the Traffic Department. Would he be allowed to do this in his own country? As regards the officials, the Inspector is subordinate to this Government and subordinate to the Honourable Member. But whether he is subordinate or not, I have found that these people white-wash themselves and they throw the blame on some individual there. I say that the administration will have to pay compensation for the 50 that have died. Therefore a man of the administration would not do justice. Therefore, Justice Thom, a High Court Judge, was appointed to go into the Bihta disaster. There they said that it was due to sabotage. He said:

"I am satisfied after a full consideration of the entire evidence that the Railway Administration have been guilty of negligence. It was suggested in the course of argument that the Railway Administration in relation to the matters under discussion had acted throughout in a manner consistent with ordinary railway working."

That is again the explanation that my Honourable friend was going to give.

Mr. Deputy President: The Honourable Member's time is up.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Continuing Sir John Thom says:

"I am unable to accept this contention. The law upon the matter is perfectly clear. It demands from the Railway Company, as indeed from every other concern which has a duty to make due provision for the safety of the Public, that care, caution and circumspection which a prudent man of business would exercise in the direction of his own affairs. The Railway Company, in my judgment have clearly failed in the discharge of their functions to exercise that ordinary care upon which the law insists."

I do say, Sir, that in any case, judging it from any point of view, this loss of life of 50 people and injury to 150 (possibly the actual figures may be more than 150) is the result of maladministration and carelessness and indifference. I cannot find words strong enough to censure this Government. I do request the whole House to support this motion for adjournment.

Mr. Deputy President: Motion moved:

"That the Assembly do now adjourn."

Mr. Manu Subedar (Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau: Indian Commerce): May I suggest that the Honourable the Leader of the House do give use the additional information which he promised and also deal with this subject from the Government point of view? That is the usual practice: that early in the debate the Member for Government intervenes.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths (Assam: European): That is not so. On a point of order. It is the general presumption in this House that when a Member moves an adjournment motion he is himself in possession of the facts on which it is based. He is not supposed to rely on the Government Member for the facts that he wishes to charge against them.

Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Let us hear the Government case.

Mr. Deputy President: The Chair cannot force the Honourable Member to speak. That is his look out and the look out of the House.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I do not wish to make a speech at this moment. I think it is much better to answer the points raised by Honourable Members. I gave very full information this morning. I have certain further detailed information to give which I will give in the course of my speech. If you will permit me just to give one or two additional facts and then speak again when I am winding up the debate.

Mr. Deputy President: If the Honourable Member wants he may speak now. If he wishes to defer his speech he may.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The Honourable Member asked for certain facts on a point of information.

Mr. Manu Subedar: He said by four o'clock he would be in possession of more facts as he was himself in telephonic communication with the authorities.

Mr. Deputy President: Either the Honourable Member can speak now or defer. He cannot make half the speech now and the other half at another time.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I can give one or two points of information.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena (Lucknow Division Non-Muhammadan Rural): Some other Member can give the information.

Mr. Manu Subedar: I am sorry the Government are not helping us with additional information which they must have secured by telephone between the discussion this morning and by four o'clock now. I hope that they have adequate answer to give to the charge which is levelled against them, namely, one of negligence, one of carelessness, of broken promises and of failure to carry out the undertakings given to this very House after the last disasters. I remember, Sir, after the Bihta disaster there were prolonged enquiries and in this very House a long list of assurances was given to the public that Government would take all these various measures in order to prevent such disasters. I shall await from the Honourable Member, *seriatim*, a reply to those points, to those definite promises which he himself made in this House and which his predecessor made in this House after the Bihta disaster.

The first impression one gets when one reads of a terrible tragedy like this is one of gloom. We cannot imagine the scenes of the train suddenly going off into a crash and in that very instant of the crash hundreds of people being shocked nervously, hundreds being injured and many killed outright. It is a

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scene which we may deplore, we may offer our sympathy to the victims and to all those people connected with them, but nothing that we say here is going to bring those back to life. Our sympathy, Sir, and the sympathy of every Member of this House goes out to those who have suffered in this manner, and I was glad to hear from Government this morning that the Chief Medical Officer was on the train and something was being done for those who were injured. I, doubt however, whether there was any medicinal equipment available.

As a matter of fact, I remember on previous occasions it was definitely suggested that medical equipment of the first aid variety should accompany every big express train when it is running. Was that done on this occasion? Was such equipment available. I ask? Sir, the Honourable the Leader of the House said this morning that relief trains were run down there, the injured were brought back to Lucknow and every thing possible was being done. I hope that information is correct and I hope that from the popular side we shall not hear that this is an exaggerated account and that officials are taking credit to themselves for something which they had not done.

With regard to rewards and compensations, these victims were all third class passengers. If that is so, all the more my sympathy goes out to those bereaved and to those who were dependent on the dead. And in this connection may I make a suggestion for the consideration of Government and that is this. They came to this House and got this House to accept a Limiting Act, by which the total amount of compensation to any particular individual was limited. But I know the manner in which these compensations are worked for the very poor. They do not know their rights. The Railway Administration does nothing to inform them what their rights are under such circumstances. It is some wily lawyer who gets hold of them and divides probably the bulk of the money given between himself and the members of the family. I would ask the Government in this particular case to consider whether a little more liberal allowance of compensation may not be given in those cases where the number of dependents is large and where the distress is very real. In view of the fact that the railways have made enormous earnings, what I say is only just and fair, that those who are really aggrieved and those who have really left behind an unmanageably large family and to whom the meagre sum of compensation which will be given under the legal award will not be adequate, should be considered sympathetically by this Government.

The causes which usually lead to this sort of thing are many. In this particular case the Honourable the Railway Member has pleaded that he is not aware so far of the cause and that enquiry is going on. On the last occasion it was a question of speed. Whether the speed was not excessive, whether it was possible for the driver as he was speeding up to be able to judge, whether he was going at 40, 50 or 60 miles an hour—I will confess myself that travelling between Bombay and Delhi I have occasionally felt that the train was going at an unduly high speed—it is not possible for a layman to judge whether the speed is within the limits prescribed or whether it is not excessive. On the last occasion when this point was raised the Railway Administration said that it was not possible even for the driver to judge, because he had not the means in all cases. He had not the speedometer. He had not the equipment to judge within five to ten miles whether he was going over prescribed speed. In case a driver is driving at an excessive speed he is asking for trouble and personally I would say that if the Railway Administration cannot do better than produce this dismal record, which my friend read out, let us reduce the speed all round. We would rather have safety first. We would rather have a complete assurance that this sort of disasters would not occur than try and ape at European and American standards of speed without the same efficiency in the administration of the railways, which those railways possess.

Then there is the question with regard to signals and points. These are old stagers, old friends of ours, and they come up whenever a large accident occurs and whenever the question arises as to whether the signal equipment was

correct and whether the points were correct. In this connection I think the House will pay the just weight to what my friend, from the experience of another station master, clearly indicated; viz., that the points have a way of getting out of order and if they are not frequently inspected by superior authorities they would misbehave on some occasions. These enquiries by the Senior Government Inspector are routine enquiries and they are of no use. They go on evidence which is forthcoming. May I ask whether this Government has always accepted the findings of their own officers and the recommendations of their own Senior Government Inspectors in respect of past accidents, whether all the recommendations of those people have been carried out or whether they have been blue-lined and red-lined by superior officers sitting in Delhi, who thought that these recommendations were not necessary. In any case these enquiries generally take the line of white-washing and as my friend rightly pointed out, it is the small pointsman who is victimised. Take the case of these pointsmen. They are poor men who are not given a proper minimum wage, men who are unable within the small amount which is given to them to get adequate food, men who are worked long hours. I hope in this enquiry it will not be the small man who will be victimised to cover it up. The real culprits are at the top and it is they who have failed in the system. It is not the small man whom they will find out.

We have to learn the lesson with regard to these disasters when they occur. As I said, in 1938 a long list was drawn up of the precautions which the Railway Administration was going to take in order to prevent accidents and tragedies of this order and yet since 1938, in spite of all that was promised, my friend has read out there are every year no less than 423 collisions, no less than 8,500 derailments and no less than 14,800 lives lost.

Sir, these are poor men. It is a mere accident and good fortune that any one of us is not involved in this disaster. Therefore I call upon every Member of the House to judge the depth of the tragedy from the point of view as if it would occur to anyone of us and I say that this is no laughing matter.

Now, Sir, the administration of the railways in this country, in spite of many protests from this side of the House, has been kept at the top both in every system of the railway and in the Railway Board entirely in the hands of the whiteman. I do not wish to bring racialism into this problem but I cannot avoid pointing out to the attention of this country that we must hold these men responsible. They are drawing fat salaries, they are drawing salaries which should go to the sons of the soil and they have been found incompetent, they have been found inefficient as the story of the collisions, derailments and the lives lost clearly proclaims. As my friend said, just assume that in this disaster 50 whitemen had been killed. Assume that it was a military train in which white soldiers had lost their lives to the extent of 50 men and 150 injured. You would have then found all my friends here moving heaven and earth and trying to find out what was what and trying to put it right. It is true that in the past the attitude has been that life was cheap in India and that they need not go out of their way to do anything special. But I say that no Government should put a limit to the extent of the care which it extends to the provisions which will prevent tragedies of this kind.

This is no place for complacency of any kind. Every Government must look into every disaster of this kind and draw a lesson for the future, as to what could possibly be done in order to prevent a repetition. Has this Government done this properly in the past? I have no hesitation in saying that after the immediate enthusiasm, after meeting the adjournment motion in this House, this Government goes to sleep. It does not do its work properly. And what more proof could we have found of their negligence in this direction than the reluctance of the Honourable Member this morning to accept the suggestion that was put forward from here that the Chief Commissioner for Railways should go? I understand the difficulty. I myself have had occasions to deal with factories lying in further parts of the country where difficulties have arisen;

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and if you send down a head office man, it does appear as if you are for the time being passing over the authority of the local man. But it can be done without this departmental sensitiveness. These national disasters are not the kind of occasions when you should stand on this sort of narrow and technical ceremony, and I again suggest, and I trust the Honourable the Railway Member will give us a definite and categorical assurance, that the Chief Commissioner of Railways whose direct responsibility it is, to look into these accidents and to take all the measures which would avoid such accidents in future, I do want this assurance that Government have decided to send him down and that the report which he will prepare on this subject will be given to Members of this House. Sir, I support the motion for adjournment.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa: Muhammadan): Sir, I rise to support the motion before the House. I have no doubt that the whole House including Sir Edward Benthall the Honourable Member in charge, do feel that happening of such tragedies should be avoided in this country. These accidents have been so frequent in the last few years that sometimes we have begun to suspect the capacities of these people who run the Railway administration. I should point out one fact which just came out in one of the newspapers which is printed at Bombay and has been delivered here by air—it says that the engine was too powerful and that the number of bogies were not sufficient to give the necessary load with the result that the speed could not be controlled and the engine ran at a speed which was responsible to some extent for the accident. I am not going to say anything regarding the verification of the fact at the moment, because that is one of the many other versions that has been given by the press. I would certainly like that a categorical assurance should be given to this House by the Honourable Member in charge in this connection that the whole thing will be looked into carefully and a further assurance that efforts will be made in future to avoid this as far as practicable.

Of course, the Government may say that it was never the intention of E. I. Railway administration to have brought about this accident. Accident itself carries the philology which means what it means; but at the same time human efforts should be directed on lines which would minimise the chances as much as possible. I would like to impress upon this House that if we compare the figures of accidents per 1,000 miles run average in other countries where traffic probably is more dense than here, the percentage of the accidents in our country as compared to any other country in the world—is higher by nearly three hundred times.

Most surprising feature is that this has happened more frequently during state management of Railways. Probably during the company management, things were not bad enough. I have always been one of those who advocate the cause of the Railway employees and pleaded for their better conditions of service; but at the same time I am not here to say that these employees should be allowed to neglect their duties and do things which would not be in the interests of the public whose servants they are. It is in that very spirit, that I have been advocating their cause but when we feel that these Railway servants were not coming up to the expectation we have to warn the administration. We expect that they also should take due care of responsibility that they have in the matter. With these few words, I support the motion.

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: (Secretary, Posts and Air Department): My only reason for rising to take part in this debate is to deal with the points raised by the Honourable the Mover and the Honourable Mr. Subedar regarding the inquiry into this accident. Last year, at the time of the Railway Budget, a cut motion was moved by Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: he advocated the desirability of judicial inquiries into railway accidents involving loss of human life. The

matter was debated at very great length and on that occasion I explained to the House the exact constitution of the railway inspectorate and its function. Perhaps as the House is new to some extent, it would be useful to explain that as a result of the report on the Bihta disaster and the subsequent resolutions passed in this House and in the Council of State, the Government of India decided to separate the railway inspectorate from the Railway Department. Formerly, the Government inspectors were selected from among railway engineers and they worked as inspectors for a certain number of years and when their turn came for promotion they were reverted to the railway. The result was that the inspectors felt to some extent afraid of the General Managers when they were inquiring into an accident which occurred on a railway system. The present constitution is this—there is a Chief Government Inspector of Railways who is the adviser to Government in the matter of railway safety. He is not under the Railway Department. He is under the Posts and Air Department, the Member for which is different from the Member in charge of the Railway Department. (Interruptions). There are five inspectors who are stationed in different parts of India and it is their duty to inquire into accidents. Section 4 of the Indian Railways Act lays down the duties of the inspector and section 83 explains when the railway inspector is required to inquire into accidents. The section says:

“When any of the following accidents occur in the course of working a railway, namely, any accident attended with loss of human life or with grievous hurt or with serious injury to property, any collision between trains of which one is a train carrying passengers, or the derailment of any train carrying passengers in any part of a train, any accident of a description usually attended with loss of human life or with grievous hurt as aforesaid and any accident of any other description which may be notified in this behalf by government.”

Now, the railway inspector receives the very first intimation of an accident and he proceeds to the scene of the accident as soon as he possibly can; and when he has made his inquiry, he submits his report to the Chief Government Inspector, who then sends it to the Posts and Air Department. During the course of the discussion last year, Mr. Nauman who spoke on the motion, complained that the public did not know when and where the Government Inspector held an inquiry. I made inquiries as a result of Mr. Nauman's complaint, and we have since prescribed that whenever a Government Inspector of Railways is going to hold an inquiry, he shall immediately communicate it to the press, have it broadcast through the A.I.R. and give intimation in the local area; he calls upon any member of the public whether he is a passenger or whether he is a spectator at the time of the accident or soon after, to come and give evidence; and if it is inconvenient to such witness, we are prepared to allow him to come up to any place where it is convenient to take his evidence.

It was suggested by Mr. Manu Subedar that the Chief Commissioner or the Honourable Member in charge of the Railway Department should go and inquire. I would submit that this is extremely undesirable. The Government Inspector should not have these big personages going there and making inquiries. The Inspector is the statutory authority for making inquiries and I think we would hold his inquiry and make his report with far less difficulty or embarrassment than if the Chief Commissioner or the Honourable the Railway Member went and stayed there to make inquiries. An inquiry of this kind takes considerable time. It involves an examination on the spot of various technical matters and taking evidence from the people. In this particular case I do urge upon the House to hold its judgment in abeyance. Various allegations have been made and the newspapers have been publishing all sorts of allegations. Well, I say—give time to the Government Inspector to go and find out for himself. My friend, Mr. Manu Subedar said that there must be a defect in the interlocking system. May be it is so, I do not know. Mr. Nauman says that the train had got a light load and therefore the engine could not stop in time. That may be so—I do not know but I urge on the House to hold its judgment in abeyance. I have no reason whatsoever to hold that the Government Inspector would in any

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way try to whitewash the administration. I would like to tell the House that I have been in charge of this Government Inspectorate for the last nearly 4 years. I have never seen any attempt on the part of any Government Inspector to try and show that the Railway Department was all right. Whenever there have been defects, he has not hesitated to point out what the defects were. Sometimes it is a failure of the human element—a driver driving against signals. Well, you cannot rule out such accidents. They occur in every walk of life. Sometimes it may be a defect in the system in which case immediate steps are taken to remedy that defect. A new rule is prescribed or a new device is adopted by which such accidents could be stopped.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: May I ask one question. Is it a fact that whenever any recommendations were made by Inspectors, they were immediately implemented by the Railway authorities?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: That is a matter for the Railway Department to implement. We call for a report as to what action the Railway Department has taken. There have been cases in which the Railway Department has not been able to implement anything. I can give one small instance—headlights on engines. During the war we could not get the bulbs. Engines had to travel without headlights or sometimes A.R.P. precautions stopped engines using head-lights and some accidents had occurred, due to this absence of a head-light but I have never had a case in which the Railway Department refused to accept the recommendation of a Railway Inspector and the system is exactly the same in the United Kingdom. I would like to assure Mr. Manu Subedar that on the last occasion I visited England I went and saw the Chief Government Inspector of Railways there and I ascertained that both the principles of working and the methods of working of the Inspectorate are exactly the same. The inquiry is made by an independent Inspector. As you know, in England railways are run by companies whereas here they are run by the State but the Inspectorate is independent and an inquiry is made by the Inspector and by none else.

I would like to state one more point. A railway Inspector not only inquires into the cause of the accident but it is also his duty to inquire into the number of casualties that occurred and the remedies adopted for evacuating the injured, the provision of refreshments for the people on the spot, the time taken in clearing the railway line for open running and so on. All these matters are reported upon by the Government Inspector. In order to satisfy the House and in view of the interest that the House is taking, I am prepared to make available the preliminary report of the Inspector. The preliminary report confines itself to a factual presentation. In order to arrive at the exact cause of the accident, as you will understand, he has to examine a large number of witnesses. Most witnesses, particularly those in the department try to protect each other or protect themselves by throwing the blame on some one else and he has to have a technical examination made but the preliminary report gives as accurate a presentation of the facts as possible regarding the place where the accident occurred, the casualties, the medical relief that was given and so on and I am quite prepared to make that available to the House. I would urge upon the House not to take the view that there has been neglect or that there has been this or that, before an inquiry has been made into this accident. The inquiry will be made by an independent authority and his report will be available to the House.

I have no reason to suppose that there have been many more accidents than usual. Various figures were read out but those include all kinds of accidents, those which occurred in ordinary goods yards and various other things. (*An Honourable Member:* "Collisions"). Every kind of thing is called a collision. (Interruption). The Honourable the Railway Member will explain the position as it concerns the Railway Department but I am concerned with the accidents

into which the Inspectorate is required to inquire under the law and those are the accidents in which, as I mentioned, there has been either loss of life or grievous hurt or serious loss of property. Into those the Inspector inquires. As the House is aware, during the last five or six years, the Railways have been working under very great strain. There has been an enormous amount of traffic moved, which in ordinary times would not have occurred. They have stood the strain very well indeed and there is no reason to believe that accidents have increased in any way. I do not think my friend Mr. Manu Subedar need be afraid of travelling by the Frontier Mail at 60 miles an hour. The speeds are all examined and prescribed with due regard to safety. I therefore urge that this adjournment motion should not be supported by the House.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: Mr. Deputy President: I do not propose today to make a lengthy or a formal speech. I shall merely explain in a few sentences why we in this Group are not prepared on the evidence at present before us to support this adjournment motion. (*An Honourable Member:* "Why not"?) I will tell you why not.

I take it for granted that every member of every Party in this House is deeply moved and shocked at the tragedy that has taken place. The number killed and the number injured are not yet exactly known. Whether that number be small or great, the fact that this tragedy should have occurred is a fact which must move us profoundly, but our sorrow at that fact must not blunt our reason or lead us impulsively into forming conclusions before we have before us the facts on which alone those conclusions could be based.

At this stage I must say, and I say it with reluctance, that I deplore the attempt made by Mr. Manu Subedar to introduce a racial issue. I deplore his statement that if fifty white men had been concerned we in this Group should have been crying out for an inquiry. Whether the people who were killed were white or of whatever other colour, we in this Group would regard their death as a tragedy. We should nevertheless wish to know the facts before we attempted to pass our judgment regarding these facts. I trust that my Honourable friend Mr. Manu Subedar, if he values at all the maintenance of goodwill and a calm atmosphere for the next few weeks, will try to abstain from this kind of unfair racial insinuation.

Mr. Mann Subedar: You are callous. The British officers are callous at Indian deaths.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: When my friend made the insinuation before, he pointed out at our Benches and he spoke not of the British officials but of the European Group. Now he has changed his ground. Let him be more careful in his statements and charges.

As far as we are concerned, we try to examine the motion as it stands before us today. It charges Government with carelessness and indifference. I speak, Sir, from a fairly long association with these problems. Although I have charged the Government many times before with many things, and I am as severe a critic as anybody else in this House, I have never charged them and can never charge them with indifference to human life or to human suffering. Many other faults they have, but indifference to human life is not amongst them. When I come to the second charge, the charge of carelessness, I frankly do not know on what facts this charge is based. It is a very fine phrase to say: "You are careless". People have died and so there must have been carelessness. Does it always follow in human affairs that if people die, there has been carelessness? I frankly have no idea whether the Government or the Railway are blameworthy or are not blameworthy in the present case.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Is not the Railway bound to take people safe?

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: They are bound to try to make people safe and if I had evidence to show that they have failed to try to make people safe, I shall be the first to come forward to condemn them. Let me remind my friend that we in this Group have not supported Government throughout in matters of this kind. (*An Honourable Member:* "Question"?) I am glad my friend says "Question". Either he has a short memory or his political experience does not go back as far as mine. Perhaps he forgets that at the time of the Bihta disaster the first person in this House to condemn Government was not a member of his party, but myself. I severely condemned the Government at that time for what I considered their gross negligence and it was very largely as a result of that censure that the Government Inspector has since been taken away from the Railway Department. We in this Group are just as ready as my friends over there to censure the Government if and when we find there has been dereliction of duty. But we hold that even Government is entitled not to be judged until the facts have been made available. As far as we are concerned, we shall, therefore, suspend judgment on this issue and as long as we suspend judgment, we cannot go into the lobby with our friends who have moved this adjournment motion.

I have one more point to make. My friends over there made a great fuss about the fact that the Chief Commissioner or one of his colleagues has not been sent down to conduct an inquiry at once. Their memory is very short. They are forgetting that it was alleged at one time that inquiries made by those under the control of the Railway Member or those under the control of the Railway Board could not be regarded as impartial inquiries. It was they who came forward with the plea that inquiries into these accidents must be made by persons not under the control of the Railway Department and it was for that reason that Government took the decision, which I personally consider a very wise decision, to transfer the Department of the Government Inspector from my Honourable friend's Department to the Department of Posts and Air. That transfer was made purely in the interests of impartiality, and now my Honourable friends say: Send your Chief Commissioner to make an inquiry. In politics one does not expect very much consistency, but at least one ought to see some faint imitation of it. When I see the new point of my Honourable friends with regard to this matter. I cannot help feeling that they are now going back on their attitude to this transfer saying "Send your Chief Commissioner or one of the Members of the Railway Board to inquire." I feel that even in the depressing sphere of politics a little more consistency would not be wholly unwelcome.

Finally, let me reiterate what I said in the beginning, that we hold no view at the moment on the question of the blame for the present accident. We shall wait with great interest and attention for the report which will come forth in due course from the Government Inspector. When we have dealt with that report if we disagree and often we have disagreed with such reports in the past, we shall have no hesitation in saying what we think about it. If we think Government worthy of condemnation, we shall condemn them as loudly and vociferously as my Honourable friends on the other side of the House.

Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: Without going into the lobby.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: Which lobby we go to will depend on what is the issue before the House. Unless we know that, we cannot decide what lobby we should go to. When these facts are before us and when the inquiry has been held, we shall assess the inquiry report and thereafter we shall know how to act.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena (Lucknow Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Mr. Deputy President, I rise to support this motion and in doing so I want to make it clear that when I suggested to the Honourable the War Transport Member to go on the spot and see things for himself, I did not want him to hold the inquiry. I suggested that course purely on humanitarian grounds. A friend of mine who had left Lucknow on the evening of Monday reached here last night. He had to come via Sitapur and he reached here only last night.

He gave me such a horrible account of the accident that the first thing I did this morning was to phone the Honourable Member and to tell him that I had received this information. I could not believe him because his stories may be baseless. So, I wanted authentic information and I told the Honourable Member that I was putting a short notice question on the subject. In reply he said that he would look into the question and see whether he could accept it or not.

Now, in the morning he informed us that there were only 43 deaths and about 55 injured. Just now I have got this paper which says that there were at least 60 deaths. It is the *National Herald* of Lucknow. It says:

"Forty-two bodies have so far been identified and handed over to the relations of the dead. Four unidentified bodies have been made over to a Muslim organisation at Aishbagh and three others kept in the King George's Medical College Hospital."

In addition to this 49 dead, he says 12 more are lying buried in the debris and he gives the names of the persons whose relations are supposed to be buried there. He says:

"Mr. Radheyal Agarwal and four other members of his family, residents of Narahi in Lucknow. They are supposed to be buried in the debris."

Not only that, here is a list of the persons who were identified and the list is printed in the morning paper of Lucknow, but the Honourable Member did not have that information in his possession. That paper also gives the number of injured. It says that so many were brought to Lucknow, so many were taken to Hardoi and so many to Shahjahanpur. The number is much more than 100. But what I want to bring to the notice of this Honourable House is this and I would like to draw the attention of my friend Mr. Griffiths to it. There is no doubt that the authorities were very callous. Let us see how these dead bodies were treated and how they were brought to Lucknow and how these injured persons were looked after. I will read out the statement from one of my friends who went to the station and who says in what condition he found these dead bodies. This is Mr. C. B. Gupta, the President of the City Congress Committee. He says:

"This morning I visited the railway station. It was the most pitiable sight to look at the bodies that were brought from Baghauli. Possibly it was one of the worst disasters in the history of railways. The arrangements made by the railway authorities to bring the injured as well as the dead were most unsatisfactory. No consideration was given by the authorities to the hygienic conditions in placing the bodies for inspection in the open space, flies hovering round their bodies and faces disfigured and smeared with blood. Till late in the afternoon no attempts were made to ward off the flies nor was any help given to the friends of the deceased to provide them with lorries to take the bodies to the cremation ground on behalf of the administration. It was the most callous exhibition of the wooden system of the administration that prevails in the country. While it should have been the duty of the railway administration to help the friends and relatives of the deceased by providing them with money and other things necessary for cremation, nothing was forthcoming from their side, and it was only left to a few public spirited citizens including the Chairman of the Municipal Board of Lucknow, and the Congress volunteers to arrange for the removal of the dead bodies to the cremation ground. I cannot but too strongly condemn the inhuman attitude of the railway administration."

I want the Honourable Member to deny this. I want him to tell me what arrangements were made for the disposal of these dead bodies. In what condition they were kept. Even in the report that I read today, it was given out that when the bodies came they were emitting very bad smell. They had not been properly kept. Anyway, surely some help should have been given to the relatives of the deceased. My Honourable friend did send a message of condolence. I thank him for this small mercy. But he sent the message of condolence to whom? To the Manager of E. I. Railway at Calcutta. He did not care to send any directions to those looking after the dead bodies at Lucknow as to what is to be done in respect of these dead bodies. Nor was any help given to the friends and relatives of the deceased. My Honourable friend must realise that in many cases, their relatives having died, the people who went there to look after the dead bodies must have been left penniless. They had not the wherewithal to enable them to dispose off the dead bodies or keep in touch with their friends.

[Shri Mohan Lal Saksena]

What I meant by my suggestion this morning was that some responsible member of the Government should go to the spot. The Government should have done at least what an ordinary lorry driver is expected to do in the case of accidents. When a lorry driver or a motor driver is found to have killed or run over a person, we take into account the subsequent conduct of the person as to how he looked after the persons injured or killed and in determining the sentence or the punishment, we take that fact into consideration.

It was admitted on all hands that this was a major disaster in which so many lives were lost, and still my Honourable friend says it was not the concern of the House. I did not want any enquiry to be made by them. I only wanted that some responsible officer of Government should go and see what was done to the injured and the dead, whether they were cared for at all. In case of such disaster, I know certain facts will have to be examined and enquired into before arriving at any conclusions. Our only suggestion is that non-officials also should be associated with this enquiry, or that some judicial enquiry should be held. What we are most anxious is that at least so far as the relatives of the deceased and injured are concerned, they must be made to feel that the Government are doing all that was possible under the circumstances. So, on this side of the House, we could not remain silent.

The Honourable Member for Railways was given an opportunity by the President to say whether he wanted more time to ascertain the real facts. But the Honourable Member wanted the adjournment motion to be taken up today. I suspect that he felt that later on more facts would be revealed and if the adjournment motion was taken up some other day, then it will not be possible for the Honourable Member to deny them. Unfortunately for him, full facts have come to me and I have read them out from the newspaper. I have got these figures, and I read them out. I want the Honourable Member to deny them. They cannot be denied, because the names of 42 persons who died are given out. The names of persons whose dead bodies were handed over are given out, the names of persons whose dead bodies lay in the debris are also given. Four persons were handed over to a Muslim organisation for disposal. I want to know whether any money was paid to that Muslim organisation. Three bodies were kept in King George's Medical College.

I do not want to go into the number of accidents. The facts and figures before me show that there were more collisions during recent years. My Honourable friend, Sir Gurunath Bewoor, said that there were collisions and collisions. But I say that here is a collision which cost human lives. We find from the report that the loss of life as well as the number of injured have gone up. If the number of accidents had gone up but the number of injured and killed had decreased, there would have been some justification in the way in which my Honourable friend wants to explain.

Now, Sir, I want to put it to my Honourable friend, Mr. Griffiths, through you, Sir, Mr. Deputy President, is it or is it not callous to have left the dead bodies in the condition in which they were left, the manner in which they were brought to Lucknow and the manner in which they were left in the open place for identification and the manner in which relations and friends of those killed were treated. They were not given any help by the railway administration in the matter of lorries to remove the dead bodies or in the matter of any monetary help. Does this or does this not show callousness on the part of the railway administration? I do not want this House to censure the Government for this disaster, because the causes of this disaster have yet to be enquired into. Those causes may have been different. I want the House to censure the Government for their failure to have done what was necessary on humanitarian grounds towards the deceased.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: I rise to a point of order.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: I do not give way. My time is limited.

Mr. Deputy President: Since the Honourable Member wants to raise a point of order, he must be allowed to do so.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: I would recall to the House the terms of the Adjournment Motion of which notice was given:

"The train collision between the Dehra Dun Express and a Goods train resulting in 50 deaths and 150 injured and the carelessness and the indifference on the part of the Government to take steps to avoid such train disasters."

There is no mention of callousness in this motion.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Callousness is there. Callousness is proved beyond doubt. Indifference is there and it can be proved. I do not think the Motion can be modified now. But from the facts which I have brought before the House, it is evident there has been gross callousness on the part of the railway administration.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: May I say, Sir, I do not accept the version given out in the newspaper read out by the Honourable Member?

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: I do not want him to accept these facts merely from newspaper reports. I offered the Honourable Member to go to Lucknow. I wanted him to give the number of tickets of passengers that were issued from Delhi and from Meerut. We know that two Upper class carriages were attached next to the engine, next there was a third class bogie. It was smashed. It was said that third class passengers suffered more. I fail to understand how it is that the upper class passengers who were in the bogie next to the engine did not suffer damage, whereas the passengers in the third class bogie which was farther from the engine suffered more. In a way, the facts are as I have stated. I should like the Honourable Member to deny those facts. I made it clear to the Honourable Member that we on this side of the House desired that he should go to the scene of disaster or we suggested that he should send some responsible officer, or send one of ourselves to the scene of occurrence. It was not to hold an enquiry. We wanted to ascertain what were the things which could have been avoided. That was all we suggested.

Mr. Deputy President: The Honourable Member's time is over.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Sir, I myself find these accidents extremely distressing and shocking, accentuated by the fact that I and my Department are responsible for them. There is enough suffering in the world without these things taking place in addition. But I must say that I find it also positively sickening that my Honourable friends opposite should endeavour to make racial political capital out of this kind of thing and that they should try to raise racial animosity in such a mean way out of people's suffering. Not only that, but they do not even abstain from throwing stones at their own countrymen. Some of my Honourable friends opposite also did not hesitate to accuse us of deceiving them or trying to conceal facts. Why should we want to conceal facts? I stood up this morning in response to an irregular short notice question and gave all the information at my disposal, and I promised to give anything further that came in the course of the day. I am glad to meet the wishes of the House now in giving such further information as has come in since I spoke this morning. My information is secured from the railway authorities and I may point out that there were no less than seven doctors present on the spot, apart altogether from local doctors who came to help, and I do not think professional men of that sort would normally be accused of putting forward misleading figures. Up till this afternoon my information is that there are 47 dead. This morning I said there were 43; two more have since been reported as having died at Hardoi, and I do not know what the difference of the other two is due to. I have the names of 26 and the other 21 are unidentified. I will not argue much about that because the figure of 47 dead and the figure of 50 given in the adjournment motion are sufficiently near and it is possible that one or two more may be discovered under the wreckage of the engines, although five engine drivers and firemen who were killed have, I understand, been identified.

[Sir Edward Benthall]

As for the injured, my information is that there are 58 or 59 who were sufficiently bad to be taken to hospital. This morning I think I mentioned 56. I do not know how the discrepancy occurs; but of the injured, eight with major injuries have been taken to the Medical College and the Railway Hospitals at Lucknow and 36 with minor injuries, a total of 44; and 14 were taken to Hardoi Sadr Hospital. There were three more who were slightly injured and who did not want to go to hospital at Hardoi, and that may account for the difference between 56 and 59. But these were, as I understand it, the hospital cases. I have no doubt, as I said this morning, that there will probably be fully a hundred people who got shock and slight cuts, and naturally having been present at such an accident, found it very distressing to the nerves; and it is quite easy to make the figure up to 150 by including those who were not hospital cases.

Now I will show the thoroughness with which these figures were gone into. I am able to give the House full details of all the passengers on the train, those who were dead except the unidentified, those who were injured and those who were on the train but were not injured.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: How many are unidentified now?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: It is 25 or 21; it depends of course on the time of the report.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: When was this report sent?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: At 2-45 this afternoon.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: I have here the names of 43 identified people.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: We must agree to differ. When the enquiry report comes out we shall see who is correct, and I have little doubt that my figures will be more accurate than those of my Honourable friend.

I was asked for various further information this morning. Somebody asked me for the number of tickets from Dehra Dun and Mussourie. I have some details here of about 111 tickets issued from those places. I do not quite see the relevancy of it because I think there is no proof that these people were in the carriages affected. Somebody again asked me where the coaches were put on and whether they were through coaches. The first coach—a First, Second and Intermediate coach—was put on, I understand, from Meerut to Lucknow; the second—also a First, Second and Intermediate—was from Delhi to Lucknow and the third coach was a third class coach running from Hardwar to Gaya.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: What about the number of tickets from Delhi to Lucknow?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I will find that out and give the Honourable Member the information.

Then I was talking about the relief given. I mentioned at considerable length the extent of the relief measures taken by the railways the moment they got the information; and I have not yet received complaints—I do not think I shall—of lack of medical attention. In fact I have the report of the Divisional Superintendent who made special inquiries on the spot that the passengers in the rear coaches were properly attended to and given food, water, and so on. As regards the dead bodies laid out for identification, they of course will be in the care of the railway authorities guided presumably by the medical officers. The bodies were under the charge actually of the railway police. My Honourable friend opposite asked whether any money was given to the friends and relatives of these people. The standing orders are that every assistance is to be given in such cases, but in the case of these dead bodies the trouble was that they were unidentified and therefore no relations were available to help. Once the relations turn up every assistance is given.

My Honourable friend Prof. Rauga this morning made what I thought was a most reprehensible suggestion that the driver was drunk. If my Honourable friend had read the *Hindustan Times* this morning he would have seen the testimonial of some passengers that the driver appears to have acted with great presence of mind. The moment he realised his points were wrong and he was going on a wrong line he jammed on the brakes, otherwise there would be an even more serious accident. This was reported in the *Hindustan Times*.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: It also says that the number of killed is over 50 and the number of injured over 100.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I have dealt with that. I do not understand why my Honourable friends opposite denigrate their own countrymen in a way which is sometimes extraordinary. Unfortunately the drivers were killed,—one a Hindu and one a Muslim. The firemen killed were one Muslim and two Hindus. I do not frankly understand why aspersions should be cast in this manner; it is beyond my comprehension.

My Honourable friend Mr. Ayyangar asked why we did not send down a responsible officer. We did; we sent down the Chief Operating Superintendent of the Railway, the officer responsible for operating the line. He happened to be in Delhi on that day attending an operating meeting; and as soon as information came through we sent him down to the scene of the accident or rather he went of his own volition. He is the officer responsible.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Why did not the Commissioner in charge of the Traffic Department go?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: He did. The Chief Operating Superintendent of the Railways went down immediately. In addition to that the Divisional Superintendents of two Divisions went immediately to the spot and it is they whose duty it is to attend to unfortunate accidents of this sort. My Honourable friend Mr. Saksena contradicted my Honourable friend Mr. Manu Subedar's suggestion that the Chief Commissioner for Railways should have gone down to report. My Honourable friends, Sir Gurnath, and Mr. Griffiths have both explained why that sort of thing is not done.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Not even after the enquiry of the senior Government Inspector, in order to see what steps should be taken to prevent such accidents in future?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That comes at a much later stage, but my Honourable friend in his present frame of mind would have been the first person to suggest,—as he did indeed by using the word 'white-washing',—that if a Member of the Railway Board had gone down to the spot, it would be interference with the independent enquiry, and we would have been accused of trying to formulate opinion as to the causes why the accident happened. My Honourable friend knows that very well. But some Honourable Member this morning asked whether a Member or Members of this House could go down. I said I could see no objection to that. The objection certainly does not come from my department, and I do not think it will come from the Post and Air Department who will conduct the enquiry. If Members of the Central Advisory Council wish to go down and attend the enquiry and see how these things are carried out, I should be only too pleased and perhaps then they would be able to see that these enquiries are impartial and they would be able to report to the House that things are not as they fondly imagine they are. That is an offer, and I should be very pleased if Honourable Members of the Central Advisory Council would accept it.

The real gravamen of the adjournment motion, as I understand it, is "the carelessness and indifference on the part of Government to take steps to avoid such train disasters". One Honourable Member opposite asked how many accidents there had been on the E. I. R. during the last six months.

Mr. Deputy President: The Honourable Member has two minutes more.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I am sorry I cannot give my Honourable friend the statistics that he wanted, but there have been no derailments and collisions to passenger trains on the E. I. R. in the last six months before this accident. In the previous six months there were two which were enquired into by the Inspector of Railways.

It is suggested that we do not take sufficient trouble to avoid such train disasters. There are in existence elaborate rules which Honourable Members will find in the Library of the House

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: On paper.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: covering the railway operation and I should like to take this opportunity of assuring the House that these rules are not usually amended, rather they are not ever amended, without reference to the Inspectorate, and practically all the recommendations arising out of an Enquiry Committee are accepted. We are just as anxious as anybody else, rather more anxious than anybody else, to prevent these accidents.

I do not think I need cover at length the ground which has been covered by my Honourable friend, Sir Gurnath Bewoor, but I would like to say, in addition to the points that he has made, that the Government Inspector is charged with reporting specifically on the adequacy or otherwise of relief measures. That touches on the point of callousness.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: What about the interlocking system?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: As regards the interlocking system, I have made enquiries. As that station is on the main line, I am informed that the probability is that it is fully interlocked, but whether the accident occurred due to failure of the interlocking gear, or whether it was due to the human element is entirely a matter for the Railway Inspectorate, and the United Provinces Government if they wish to appoint any enquiry committee.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: In either case you are responsible.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: And I might add that the Government Inspectorate is entirely Indian, and I hope my Honourable friend will not say that they are partial.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: It makes no difference so long as you are there.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I have no jurisdiction whatsoever over the Railway Inspectorate and if they wish to censure me or my officers, it is their duty to do so.

Mr. Deputy President: Honourable Member's time is up.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I can only close by saying how deeply I deplore this occurrence, and assure the House once again that in spite of what has been said, all steps are being taken and will be taken to try and mitigate the dangers of railway travel, which, statistics show, are infinitesimal, and incidentally less than those in the United States. I have here figures to show that the accidents per thousand passenger miles are less than $\frac{1}{4}$ in one year and less than $\frac{1}{2}$ in another of those that take place in the United States of America. I can only hope that the United States of America will work up to our standard of efficiency.

Mr. Deputy President: The question is:

"That the question be now put."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Deputy President: The question is :

"That the Assembly do now adjourn."

The Assembly divided :

AYES—56.

Abdul Ghani Khan, Khan.
 Abdullah, Hafiz Mohammad.
 Abid Hussain, Choudhury Md.
 Adityan, Sri S. T.
 Ali Asghar Khan, Mr.
 Asaf Ali, Mr. M.
 Ayyangar, Sri M. Ananthasayanam.
 Banerjee, Sree Satyapriya.
 Chettiar, Sri T. A. Ramalingam.
 Daga, Seth Sheodass.
 Damodar Swaroop, Sjt. Seth.
 Dani, Mr. G. B.
 Deshmukh, Dr. G. V.
 Gangaraju, Sri V.
 Gole, Mr. P. B.
 Hans Raj, Raizada.
 Ishaq Seth, Haji Abdus Sattar Haji.
 Jaffer, Mr. Ahmed E. H.
 Jagannathdas, Sri.
 Jhunjunwala, Mr. B. P.
 Jinachandran, Sri M. K.
 Khan, Mr. Debendra Lal.
 Lahiri Choudhury, Srijut Dharendra Kanta.
 Mahapatra, Sri Bhagirathi.
 Malaviya, Pandit Govind.
 Mangal Singh, Sardar.
 Manu Subedar, Mr.
 Menon, Sri A. Karunakara.

Mukhopadhyay, Mr. Nagendranath.
 Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava, Pandit.
 Nairang, Syed Ghulam Bhik.
 Narayanamurthi, Sri N.
 Nauman, Mr. Muhammad.
 Neogy, Mr. K. C.
 Paliwal, Pandit Sri Krishna Dutt.
 Rahmat-ullah, Mr. Muhammad.
 Ram Narayan Singh, Babu.
 Ramayan Prasad, Mr.
 Ranga, Prof. N. G.
 Reddiar, Sri R. Venkatasubba.
 Saksena, Shri Muhan Lal.
 Salve, Mr. P. K.
 Sanyal, Mr. Sasanka Sekhar.
 Sharma, Mr. Krishna Chandra.
 Sharma, Pandit Balkrishna.
 Siddique Ali Khan, Nawab.
 Sinha, Shri Satya Narayan.
 Sri Prakasa, Shri.
 Sukhdev Udhowdas, Mr.
 Surjit Singh Majithia, Squadron Leader
 Sardar.
 Swaminadhan, Shrimati Ammu.
 Thakur Das Bhargava, Pandit.
 Vadilal Lallubhai, Mr.
 Varma, Mr. B. B.
 Vinchoorkar, Sardar N. G.
 Zafar Ali Khan, Maulana.

NOES—36.

Ambedkar, The Honourable Dr. B. R.
 Azizul Huque, The Honourable Dr. Sir M.
 Benthall, The Honourable Sir Edward.
 Bewoor, Sir Guronath.
 Bhattacharyya, Rai Bahadur Devendra Mohan.
 Chatterjee, Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C.
 Cook, Mr. B. G. A.
 Fenton, Mr. R. V.
 Griffiths, Mr. P. J.
 Guruswami, Mr. S.
 Gwilt, Mr. Leslie.
 Harendra Singh, Sardar Bahadur Captain
 Sardar.
 Himmatsinhji, Col. Kumar Shri.
 Hirtzel, Mr. M. A. F.
 Jehangir, Sir Cowasjee.
 Joshi, Mr. S. C.
 Kharegat, Sir Pheroze.

Lawson, Mr. C. P.
 Mason, Mr. P.
 Morris, Mr. R. C.
 Naqvi, Mr. A. T.
 Oulsnam, Mr. S. H. Y.
 Roy, The Honourable Sir Asoka.
 Sargent, Dr. John.
 Sen, Mr. B. R.
 Sharbat Khan, Khan Bahadur.
 Spence, Sir George.
 Sri Chand, Chaudhri.
 Stokes, Mr. H. G.
 Sundaresan, Mr. N.
 Thorne, The Honourable Sir John.
 Turner, Mr. A. C.
 Tyson, Mr. Geoffrey W.
 Vaidyanathan, Mr. L. S.
 Waugh, The Honourable Mr. A. A.
 Weightman, Mr. H.

The motion was adopted.

POSITION RE SUPPLY OF QUESTION LISTS TO MEMBERS CONSEQUENT ON STRIKE IN GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, NEW DELHI

Mr. Deputy President: I want to inform Honourable Members that the President had stated this afternoon that it might be possible to get cyclostyled copies of the questions which would be available in a small quantity. Now the Legislative Assembly Department has learnt that it may not be possible to get even the cyclostyled copies, because all alternative arrangements for printing or duplicating the lists of questions have failed and it will not therefore be possible to have lists of questions prepared for the meetings of the 12th March onwards until the strike in the Press comes to an end. There is therefore no alternative but to ask Members at question time to read each question to the House from a copy which will be supplied to them for this purpose. The answers will then be given by Government in the ordinary way.

That is a very unfortunate situation but it cannot be helped as long as that situation remains.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, the 8th March, 1946.