

[Shri Hem Barua]

of reprisal against our not permitting their aircraft to fly over our territory according to the terms of the Sino-Pakistan air agreement?

Shri Mohiuddin: I have already stated that on the 15th there was a flight except that an enquiry was made. On the 22nd perhaps because the Dacca office had not got the clearance or information that incident had happened. I am not sure whether this involves any reprisal as suggested by the hon. Member.

Shri P. R. Chakraverti (Dhanbau): In view of the fact that the first flight was allowed to continue without any interference and in view of the unsavoury experience had by the 21 passengers on the second flight, is the Government assured that no further trouble will arise?

Shri Mohiuddin: I hope, there will be no further trouble as far as the scheduled services are concerned, but it is not possible for me to prophesy anything that might happen in future(Interruption). The flight will take place as usual. I have the information that the DG CA, Karachi, has sent the information to Dacca that this flight will be a scheduled flight.

14.38 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS.

TWENTY-EIGHTH REPORT

Shri Hem Raj (Kangra): Sir, I beg to move:—

"That this House agrees with the Twenty-eighth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 26th November, 1963."

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

"That this House agrees with the Twenty-eighth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 26th November, 1963."

The motion was adopted.

14.39 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE: PENSIONS FOR ARMED SERVICES

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Now, the House will proceed with further discussion of the following Resolution moved by Shrimati Sharda Mukerjee on the 20th September, 1963:—

"This House is of opinion that pensions of Army Jawans, Airmen and Naval ratings are inadequate and should be revised upwards."

as also the amendment moved by Shri S. M. Banerjee. Out of the time allotted, 1 hour and 2 minutes remain. Shri Sheo Narain was on his legs; he might continue his speech.

श्री शिव नारायण (बांसी)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, यह बड़ा पवित्र प्रस्ताव है और इस का समर्थन करना प्रत्येक भारतवासी और देश भक्त का परम कर्तव्य है। मैं डिफेंस मिनिस्टर का ध्यान कुछ प्वांन्ट्स की तरफ़ दिलाना चाहता हूँ।

एक सिपाही १७ रुपये महीने पर भर्ती होता है और अगर वह नौ साल तक सर्विस करता है तो उसको मैजिस्ट्रेशन तन्हाह ३० रुपये महीने होती है। अगर वह मर जाता है, तो उस के परिवार को ३ X ६, अर्थात् कुल २७० रुपये ग्रेट्टम रिलीफ़ के रूप में मिलते हैं। एक सिपाही अपनी कीमती लाइफ़ अपनी कोम और मुल्क की सेवा में अर्पण करता है, लेकिन उसको कोई महत्व नहीं दिया जाता है। अगर किसी सिपाही को

बीच में ही चोट लग जाय और वह डिस-एवल्ड हो जाये, तो उस को केवल पांच से पच्चीस रुपये ही डिसएविलिटी पेन्शन के रूप में मिलते हैं । मैं यह निवेदन करना चाहता हूं कि अगर एक नौजवान को डिस-एवल्ड होने पर केवल पांच से पच्चीस रुपया दिया जाये, तो आज की महंगाई को देखते हुए आज-कल के जमाने में वह रुपया उस के अपने खाने के लिए भी काफी नहीं है । इस अवस्था में वह कैसे अपना और अपने परिवार का गुजारा करेगा ?

आप ने देखा कि अभी हाल ही में हमारे पांच बड़े आफिसर अचानक मर गए । देश भर की हमदर्दी उन के परिवारों के साथ है, लेकिन उनकी क्या गति होगी और उनका जीवन-यापन कैसे होगा, यह एक विचारणीय प्रश्न है । जिस दिन श्री कैनेडी की हत्या हुई, उसी दिन हमारे इन पांच अफसरों की मृत्यु हुई, जिस से सारी क्रोम और सारा देश दुखी हुआ । आज उनके बच्चों का कोई सहारा नहीं है ।

इसलिए गवर्नमेंट को यह बात सोचनी चाहिये कि अगर हमारी डिफेंस फोर्सिज में काम करने वाले आदमियों के लिए कोई सिक्योरिटी न होगी, उन के लिए किसी पेन्शन की व्यवस्था नहीं होगी, तो हमारे आदमियों का उत्साह कैसे बढ़ेगा । आज केवल पांच साल के लिए हमारे सिपाहियों की वाइज और बच्चों को पेन्शन दी जाती है । इस का अर्थ यह है कि अगर १८, १९ बरस की लड़की को केवल पांच साल के लिए पेन्शन मिले, तो पच्चीस बरस पर उस की पेन्शन बन्द हो जायेगी । उस के बाद उस की क्या दशा होगी और हमारी वर्तमान सोसाईटी को दृष्टि में रखते हुए उस पर क्या प्रभाव पड़ेगा, यह एक गम्भीर और विचारणीय प्रश्न है । सरकार और सारे देश और प्रत्येक नागरिक तथा विशेष तौर से हमारे डिफेंस मिनिस्टर को इस पर विचार करना चाहिये

हमारे देश की संस्कृति और परम्परा यह है कि हम की अपनी स्त्रियों को ज्यादा

से ज्यादा प्रोटेक्शन देना चाहिए । इस लिए आवश्यकता इस बात की है कि उन की सिक्योरिटी के लिए, उन के जीवन-यापन के लिए, उन की पेन्शन आजीवन कर दी जाये, जैसा कि बड़े आफिसरों के मामले में किया जाता है । आज उनके बच्चों के लिये कोई पेन्शन नहीं है । अगर सिविल साइड के किसी व्यक्ति की मृत्यु हो जाये, तो उस के परिवार को दस बरस तक पेन्शन मिली है, लेकिन मिलिटरी साइड में केवल पांच बरस तक । यह डिस्क्रिमिनेशन समझ में नहीं आती है । अंग्रेजों ने जो प्रणाली इस देश में चलाई थी, वही आज भी मौजूद है । मैंने परसों भी फिनांस मिनिस्टर साहब को कहा था कि पुरानी प्रणाली को चेंज कर दिया जाये । इसी तरह से मैं डिफेंस मिनिस्टर साहब को भी कहना चाहता हूं कि डिफेंस सर्विसज के पेन्शनरों को चेंज किया जाये और उनको अपने देश की परिस्थितियों और संस्कृति के अनुसार ढाला जाये । अंग्रेजों के दिये हुए पुराने नियमों को अब बदल देना चाहिये और उन के स्थान पर अपने देश के ढांचे और अपने देश की परम्परा के अनुसार नये नियम बनाने चाहिए ।

श्रीमन्, मैं मंदिर कमेटी का मेम्बर था और मैं जानता हूं कि कितना धन इस देश के मंदिरों में पड़ा हुआ है । अगर मंदिर वालों से वह पैसा लिया जाये, तो हमारे सैनिकों के बीवी-बच्चों के लिए काफी धन प्राप्त हो सकता है ।

हमारे जिन आई० एन० ए० के सैनिकों ने जापान के मुकाबले में अपने देश के लिए इतनी कुर्बानी दी थी, उन का नब्बे लाख रुपया आज भी गवर्नमेंट पर झू है । आज वे बेकार देश में दर-दर घूम रहे हैं । आज वे बेकार हैं और उन के खाने पीने और रहने का कोई ठीकाना नहीं है । अगर यह नब्बे लाख रुपया उन

[श्री शिव नारायण]

को दे दिया जाय, तो उन को कुछ सहारा मिल सकता है। इस के अतिरिक्त उनकी सर्वासज को यूटिलाइज करके हमारे सैनिकों को ट्रेनिंग दी जा सकती है।

पेंशन में एक दो रुपया बढ़ाने से क्या होता है? जो १७ रुपये पाता है, उस को १८ रुपये दे दिये और जो ३० रुपये पाता है, उस को ३१ रुपये दे दिये, इस से यह समस्या हल नहीं होगी। आज सेंट्रल गवर्नमेंट के चपरासी ७५ रुपये से कम तनखाह नहीं पाते हैं, उस से ऊपर हो पाते हैं। इसलिए फ़ट पर लड़ने वाले अपने जवानों की पेंशन को हम को बढ़ाना चाहिए। मैं पूरे जोर और ईमानदारी के साथ कहता हूँ कि हमारी देश की सेना के बड़े बड़े अधिकारियों और मिनिस्टर साहब को अपने दिलों पर हाथ रख कर सोचना चाहिए कि क्या वर्तमान परिस्थिति संतोषजनक है और इस का हमारे देश के भविष्य पर क्या प्रभाव पड़ेगा।

अखिर में मैं दो प्वायंट्स बता कर ख़त्म करता हूँ। मेरा सुझाव है कि पेंशन के रेट को कास्ट आफ़ लिविंग के आधार पर इन्फ़्लेज किया जाये, ताकि हमारे जवानों को सैटिसफ़ैक्शन हो सके और उन के परिवार अपना जीवन-यापन कर सकें।

इस सम्बन्ध में नान-आफ़िशल की एक कमेटी बनाई जाये, जिस में बड़े-बड़े रिटायर्ड जेनेरल रखे जायें, जिन्होंने मिलिटरी में काम किया है, जो विदेशों में रहे हैं। अभी ट्रुज एंड मैजिक रैमेडोज़ (आबजेक्शनधल एडवर-टाइजमेंट्स) एमंडमेंट बिल पर बोलते हुए एक मित्र ने कहा कि एक्सपर्ट नहीं रखे जाते हैं। सैर-एक्सपर्ट लोगों के हाथ में काम सारा मामला सौंप देने से काम नहीं चलता है। उस नान-आफ़िशल कमेटी में बड़े-बड़े एक्सपर्ट

मिलिटरी-मैन के अलावा पार्लियामेंट के वे मेम्बरज भी रखे जायें, जो कि इस सम्बन्ध में जानकारी रखते हैं, जो एक्स-मिलिटरीमैन हैं, जिन के दिलों में देश-प्रेम है और जो देश के हितों की बात सोचते हैं। वह कमेटी इस समस्या पर विचार करे।

अन्त में मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि गवर्नमेंट इस पर विचार कर के पेंशन रेट्स को रिवाइज करे और ऐसी व्यवस्था करे कि हमारे जवानों के बीबी-बच्चे अपना जीवन-यापन कर सकें। इस से उत्साहित हो कर हमारे देश के नौजवान मिलिटरी में भर्ती होंगे और देश की रक्षा के लिए आगे कदम बढ़ायेंगे।

इन शब्दों के साथ मैं इस प्रस्ताव का समर्थन करता हूँ और आशा करता हूँ कि गवर्नमेंट इस पर शीघ्रातिशीघ्र स्टेप्स लेगी और हमारे सैनिकों को प्रोत्साहन देगी।

Shri Indrajit Gupta (Calcutta South West): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I rise to extend my whole-hearted support to this Resolution moved by Mrs. Sharda Mukerjee to the effect that upward revision of pensions of our army, navy and/air force personnel at the lowest ranks should be carried out. One of the good results of the Emergency is that at least this subject and this topic is now liable to attract much more public attention than it would have done in normal times and, therefore, the attention of the Government too. We have to remember that we are dealing here with persons numbering several hundred thousands who cannot be judged by the normal standards by which other Government employees can be judged. That is the first thing. Every possible circumstance has to be taken into consideration to give these men a fair deal. I am not grudging any of the facilities—they are meagre enough; everybody knows that—which the civilian employees of the Government of India enjoy. But all the circumstances under which our armed forces

are having to serve today, particularly in conditions of this Emergency, are such that they certainly deserve at least as good a deal, if not a better deal, as the civil employees of the Government of India enjoy. But the fact is that they are, in fact, worse off: far from getting a better deal, they are getting a worse deal. I think, it is time for the Government to consider seriously whether it is advisable to create an impression, an unfortunate impression—not intentional I am sure—of some sort of discrimination which does not correspond at all to the requirements of the Emergency.

These men retire from service after 20 to 21 years of service irrespective of what age they may have reached—there may be a man in the prime of life. But for the sake of efficiency—I suppose, the efficient standards of the army have to be maintained—they are compelled to retire after having put in 20 to 21 years of service. Obviously, at that stage, it is hardly possible for anybody to get fresh employment anywhere else. Now, these people are serving today in very difficult conditions, in some places in difficult terrain and very arduous climatic conditions, in hazardous conditions, and so on. While they are in service, they are paid less than their corresponding civilian counter-parts, that is to say, the cash emoluments that they get. I suppose, one of the reasons for that justification would be that while they are in service, they are receiving certain benefits in kind, like, rations, uniforms, clothing, conveyance and so on. That is understandable. But it does not explain one thing. When men retire from service or when they are compulsorily retired, and when the question of computing their pensions comes in or when it comes to calculating their rate of pension, why is it that these facilities and benefits in kind which they enjoyed while in service are not computed in money terms? These are not taken into account with the result that when they retire, they are getting pensions which are substantially less than what their civilian counter-

parts get. The other benefits and facilities are stopped after they retire. That element is not taken into the calculation of pensions at all.

Then, another point that we have to remember is that after all, there are certain hardships which these people are subjected to. A civilian employee, normally, during his years of service, is able to keep his family more or less with him most of the time. The people that we are concerned with in this resolution, probably in their whole term of service are not able to have their families living with them for more than perhaps four to five years, because, as everybody knows, the state of married accommodation for troops in our country is very low indeed. I do not think that more than about 14 per cent of people can be provided with accommodation, that is, married accommodation, among our troops. Therefore, for the overwhelming part of their active service, they cannot even live with their families.

These are the people in whose case we find that apart from the fact that they are not in a position to form trade unions to ventilate their demands or have any normal channels of representation, that is, effective representation, to the higher authorities, they have not got all those facilities which are open to civilian employees of the Government of India including the employees of the Defence Ministry. The hon. Minister knows very well that these employees under the Defence Ministry, industrial and non-industrial are fortunate enough to be very strongly organised and are in a position to ventilate their demands and grievances, whereas the men that we are concerned with in this resolution are not. Therefore, it is all the more necessary that particular attention and care must be given to removing their genuine grievances.

The only main point that I wish to deal with within this limited time is the fact of this discrimination. I call it discrimination. Broadly speaking, you may not be able to say that a jawan or havildar or a jamadar or

[Shri Indrajit Gupta]

a subedar can be weighed in the scales against a civilian employee, but there is a broad correspondence, as everybody knows. For example, if we take the clerical staff in the Army, the Army clerks or combatant clerks who get the same treatment and the same emoluments and the same pensions as the fighting men, we can see a broad correspondence. For example, a havildar corresponds broadly to a lower division clerk. A jamadar in the Army or a jamadar-clerk, which comes to the same thing, corresponds roughly to an upper division clerk. So, if we make a comparison like that, what do we find? First of all, these men with whom we are concerned now have practically no avenues of promotion. If they could have a normal avenue of promotion which would enable them to retire at a certain point where they will be qualified for a much higher rate of pension, that would be understandable. But we find that whereas civilian clerks are maintained more or less in the ratio of 48 per cent as lower division clerks, 33 per cent as upper division clerks and 22 per cent as assistant clerks, the corresponding ranks in the Army have different proportion; of them, 91 per cent are kept in the lowest rungs, that is, from sepoy to havildar, this range covers 91 per cent of the total personnel, and in the case of the jamadar rank, it is only 8 per cent, and in the case of the subedar, it is only 1 per cent. At a time when our Army is being expanded in the name of an emergency and we have undertaken quite substantial expansion programmes, nevertheless, no fresh avenues of promotion for these people have opened up. The result is that whereas a lower division clerk gets a maximum pension of Rs. 67.50, an infantry soldier gets a maximum pension of Rs. 24.50, a nayak gets a pension of Rs. 37 and a havildar gets a pension of Rs. 46, whereas an upper division clerk gets a pension of Rs. 105. And whereas civilian clerks are entitled, in addition to their pensions, to substantial gratuities, these

people in the Armed Services are not eligible for any gratuities whatsoever in their normal course of retirement.

Therefore, these are very gross discrepancies which should be taken into account immediately. I believe that quite recently, the pension scales of the officers have been revised upwards. It is a good thing, and I welcome it. But, now the discrepancy has got even more accentuated as a result of that, because a lieutenant retires from service on a pension of Rs. 300, and a captain on Rs. 425, and a major on Rs. 550 and a lieutenant-colonel on Rs. 675. You will find that the ratio that these officers' pensions bear to the salary they are drawing at the time of retirement is much higher than the ratio which the pensions of these jawans and airmen and naval ratings bear to the maximum pay which it is possible for them to draw on the eve of retirement. The highest basic pay which a lieutenant can reach is Rs. 540, but his pension is Rs. 300. A captain can retire on a pay of Rs. 970 and get a pension of Rs. 425, whereas these men who get a maximum pay of Rs. 70 have to be content with pensions of the order of Rs. 24 and Rs. 37. Therefore, it is my submission that this whole matter calls for very expeditious scrutiny and decision, and I think that it is high time that this House and the country do not rest content with simply paying verbal tributes to the services which these men have rendered to the country but do something more material and concrete to express their appreciation.

I would like the hon. Minister, if it is possible for him, to state it today, that this matter is under active consideration or that some machinery or some committee or some board has been set up to go into the whole question of upward revision and that we may expect an early decision and announcement to this effect.

The Minister of Defence Production in the Ministry of Defence (Shri Raghuramiah): I am very grateful to

Shrimati Sharda Mukerjee for having brought forward this resolution before this House and also for the interest which hon. Members have shown in this resolution. That is but right, because I, for one, fully endorse the view that this resolution relates to a category of persons who have always stood, as evidenced by the recent fighting, loyally and with great patriotism by this country and by Government, and, naturally, it is the desire of the House, and if I may say so, of the Government too, that anything that can be done to improve their conditions should be done. It is in accordance with this general policy that this question has been considered from time to time.

It is not true that nothing has been done for the last ten years. The new pension code came into force in 1953. That did not provide for the ordinary family pension. So, in 1957, a provision of that nature, although limited in scope, was made. Again, following the recommendations of the Jagannatha Das Commission on the civil side, a committee was appointed by Government, of which I had the honour to be the chairman, and in accordance with the recommendations of that committee, the pension structure of persons below the officer level too was revised with effect from 1st April, 1961. Recently there has been an *ad hoc* increase made in the pensions of the various categories who form the subject of this Resolution, with effect from 1-10-63.

15 hrs.

I would like to point out at this stage that there are four types of pension. First of all, there is the service pension, then there is the disability pension, then the special family pension and then the ordinary family pension. Service pension is payable where there is a qualifying service of at least 15 years. Disability pension is payable where the invalidment occurs by injury or other reasons attributable to service or aggravated by conditions of service. The special

family pension is admissible to dependents of those whose death is attributable to service conditions. The ordinary family pension under certain conditions is admissible to families of jawans who die in service or after retirement as a result of causes not attributable to service.

As I mentioned earlier, it is not as though these were left untouched all these years. Since independence, there has been considerable improvement. Before independence, the minimum service pension of a sepoy retiring after 15 years, service was Rs. 5, and the maximum Rs. 6 after 18 years of service. In 1953, these rates were raised in the case of the sepoy to a minimum of Rs. 15 and a maximum of Rs. 32, depending upon the group to which the individual belonged. Again in 1961, the rate was further enhanced to a minimum of Rs. 17 for the lowest pay group and a maximum of Rs. 40 for the highest pay group of a sepoy. Today the minimum and maximum rates in regard to service pension are Rs. 22 per month and Rs. 47·50 per month respectively.

The minimum disability pension for a sepoy for 20 per cent disability, according to the old pension code, was Rs. 3 per month and the maximum for 100 per cent disability Rs. 18. Today the minimum is Rs. 22 per month and the maximum Rs. 72·50 per month. Similarly, the special family pension has also been increased in recent years. According to the old pension code, the rates varied from Rs. 8 in the case of dependents of sepoy to Rs. 50 in the case of a subedar major. According to the latest orders, the dependents of a sepoy are entitled to a family pension varying from a minimum of Rs. 27·50 to Rs. 41·50 per month (maximum) and the dependents of a subedar major get a family pension varying from Rs. 81 to Rs. 88·50. Similarly, children's allowance has also been raised from Rs. 2 per month under the old pension code to Rs. 5 per month under the new pension code, and in the case of ORs and JCOs from Rs. 4 to Rs. 7.

[Shri Raghuramaiah].

Shrimati Sharda Mukerjee wanted to seek a clarification whether such family pension paid to families of other ranks was also given on the basis of minimum service. May I assure her that there is no requirement as to length of service in the case of this special family pension?

Suggestions have also been made that there should be a war disability pension. The regulations of the armed forces already provide for a disability pension in all cases where the disability is due to or has been aggravated by service conditions.

Shri Hem Raj (Kangra): What is the percentage of disability pension cases that are accepted by the Ministry?

Shri Raghuramaiah: Whether pension is payable on account of reasons attributable to service, whether it is a case where the disease or invalidation was due to conditions of service or is aggravated by it or not, is a technical matter entirely dependent on medical opinion. Most cases do not come to the notice of the Minister because they are all settled, I presume quite satisfactorily, at lower levels. When there is an appeal and the party is aggrieved, there is the Defence Minister's Appellate Committee on Pensions. Almost every appeal where the appellant wants relief, comes there and the Defence Minister himself with his advisers and other members of the Committee goes into it thoroughly and there every care is taken to see that ample justice is rendered.

Shri Hem Raj: In present circumstances of active military service, it constitutes a difficulty for people. They have to serve all their life. If a person dies while in service, the Government says that death took place due to conditions not attributable to service or it has not been aggravated by service conditions.

Shri Raghuramaiah: I am sorry to correct the hon. Member. I do not agree that they do not get the pension.

Wherever it is proved that the disability or death was due to conditions of service or was aggravated by it or caused by it, it is given.

Shri Hem Raj: Will not that definition change in present circumstances? If he dies while in service, why should he not get it?

Shri Raghuramaiah: If he dies in service, his dependents do get it, provided it is proved to the satisfaction of the medical authorities, I presume in this case, that the death was due to service conditions. It may be an odd case, a very extraordinarily odd case, where such relief is rejected. In that case, there is the highest tribunal which I have already mentioned, which is presided over by the Defence Minister, where every care is taken to see that these people and their dependents are provided for.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Probably he means service conditions mean only actual fighting in the line.

Shri Raghuramaiah: No, Sir. Anything done in the course of official business, in the discharge of his duties.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Suppose he dies of some disease.

Shri Raghuramaiah: If the disease is attributable to service conditions.

Shri Hem Raj: That is the point. Suppose he dies of fever. Will it be attributable to service?

Shri Raghuramaiah: Suppose there is an epidemic raging in the area and a soldier gets small pox or some other disease. It is raging in that station.

Shrimati Sharda Mukerjee (Ratnagiri): But not if he dies of T.B.

Shri Raghuramaiah: Even if he dies of T.B. I was going to refer to it later.

Even after a soldier retires, assuming that he died sometime after he was discharged, that is after retirement, if

the diagnosis shows it to be a case of TB....

Shrimati Sharda Mukerjee: But that is not attributable to service conditions.

Shri Raghuramaiah: I am coming to that. If the hon. Member will be patient, I am sure she will be quite happy with what I am going to say.

Even after retirement, if the diagnosis had shown it to be a case of TB, then the documentation of the man will also be looked into, the previous service records will be looked into; and if there is anything in the service, by reason of altitude or by reason of the particular conditions of strain under which he worked or whatever be the medical requirements of the case, even if there is that connection between the subsequent diagnosis of TB and his previous service, it is accepted as a case due to service conditions and the pension follows.

Shri Hem Raj: Does not Government want to liberalise this thing now?

Shri Raghuramaiah: I only wanted to refer to this point in the end.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The hon. Minister has to address me.

Shri Raghuramaiah: I am sorry I was carried away by the enthusiasm of the hon. Member, and I thought I would satisfy him.

Nobody says that the pension paid is completely adequate in all respects, or that it is an ideal state of affairs. I have shown that from time to time efforts have been made by Government to improve the conditions of service.

In regard to the ordinary family pension, Shrimati Sharda Mukerjee raised a point that in the case of officers their dependents get it for life, but in the case of other ranks it is not so, it is only for a period of five years. The reasons are purely historical. I might

mention at this stage that for a dependent of no other employce is a family pension paid for life. In the case of army, naval and air force officers, an exception was made. It is purely historical. Even so, Government are fully aware that something must be done to make improvements in this respect also in regard to other ranks. That is why, the House will be glad to know, a decision has been taken by Government that this pension payable to the dependants will, hereafter, be not for a period of five years only, but it will be for a period of ten years, subject, of course, to the condition that it would not in any case extend beyond five years from the date of completion of the term in the army, navy or air force. It is on a par with the condition obtaining on the civil side.

Again, previously, the ordinary family pension was payable only to the widow and not to any of the other dependents. Now it has been extended to cover the other dependants also.

Again, previously a man had to put in at least 15 years qualifying service for the dependants to be eligible for this, but now if he has put in ten years qualifying service, in certain circumstances, it will be payable. These are some of the improvements which Government have decided recently, a few days ago.

To give a broad picture of the improvements, I might give a few figures. In the case of a sepoy, under the old Pension Code which obtained prior to 1953, the minimum was Rs. 5 and the maximum Rs. 6. Now, with all the various improvements made, the minimum is Rs. 22.

Shri Indrajit Gupta: You think that is adequate?

Shri Raghuramaiah: I have said what I have to say on that point.

And the maximum is Rs. 47.50. In the case of a Naik, the minimum was

[Shri Raghuramaiah]

Rs. 7 and the maximum Rs. 9 before. Today the minimum is Rs. 26 and the maximum Rs. 53. In the case of a Subedar Major, earlier the minimum was Rs. 95 and the maximum 125; today the minimum is Rs. 111 and the maximum Rs. 178.

Shri Warior (Trichur): What about commissioned officers?

Shri Raghuramaiah: This resolution relates to persons other than officers, but I am coming to that point. I think he is echoing the point raised by Shri S. M. Banerjee the other day, and in a way referred to by Shri Indrajit Gupta, although his comparison is with civilian employees—the point of discrimination. I will first answer Shri Banerjee's point which I believe Shri Warior has in mind.

He drew a comparison between the officers' pensions and the pensions payable to other ranks, and stated that officers of the rank of Major and Captain had gained increases in pay up to Rs. 200 while personnel below officer rank had not been benefited much. That is one way of looking at things. You can compare the basic pay and the further increases, or you can take the percentage increase. I would advise the hon. Member, and I think that is the only right course to take in a matter like this, to look at the percentage of increase. If you look at it from that point of view, you will find that the increase in the case of sepoy vary between 21 and 33-1/3 per cent. In the case of officers, the increases are only 12 per cent for Majors and 15 per cent in the case of Lt.-Cols., 10.5 per cent in the case of Colonels and 8.5 per cent in the case of Brigadiers.

Shri Indrajit Gupta: You cannot console a man by percentages.

Shri Raghuramaiah: Whatever it is, they are there.

Shri Indrajit Gupta: Is it a good comparison to compare with the British rate of pension of Rs. 5 and then say that we have put it up by 20 per cent? What is the great credit that you are taking for that? The British used to pay Rs. 2.

Shri Raghuramaiah: The differences in the pay structure and pension structure exist. The reasons are historical, and it pertains to the whole field of governmental organisation in this country, and not merely the army. We cannot overlook that. So, the best thing that the Government can do, and I submit they are doing it, is to make an increase within the ambit of the pay structure in the country.

Shri Indrajit Gupta made some comparisons of pensions payable to jawans and civilian personnel of comparable categories. May I point out to him that a civilian getting a maximum pay of Rs. 85 earns a maximum pension of Rs. 39.50 only after 30 years, whereas a sepoy drawing approximately the same pay would be entitled to a pension of Rs. 39 after only 20 years of service? It is very difficult to draw comparisons, because the whole structure of pensions is different in the case of civilians and in the case of army personnel. In the case of army personnel, in the matter of the pay structure also the whole scheme is different. Nevertheless, I have given these figures to show that by and large the civilian is not much better off. From the figures I have given, it would be clear that in this case where this man gets a pension after 20 years, the civilian has to work for 30 years to get the same pension. Anyhow, I would not like to go further into comparisons, because I do appreciate the point raised by Shri Indrajit Gupta. That is one of the considerations which weighed with me very heavily when I was Chairman of the Committee, namely that nothing that we pay by way of pension or pay will really compensate these jawans, naval ratings and airmen for their sacrifice, for the hardship they undergo, for the life of travail which they pass through. It is quite true that most of the time they have no married quarters, or they work in very dangerous altitudes and in climates which may not be quite healthy from

the medical point of view. They do it with a spirit of patriotism. So, let us not look at it purely from the financial point of view. But that does not mean that Government are not aware of it. They are aware, of their responsibility and I have given figures to show that from time to time efforts are made to improve these conditions. As I have mentioned, even recently, with effect from 1-10-1963, an *ad hoc* increase has been made. I have given the cumulative figures when I gave the position prior to 1953 and the present position. In these circumstances, I do not think a committee is required. It is true as Shri Indrajit Gupta says that these people have no trade unions. But may I submit that is just the reason why Government are always conscious of their own responsibilities in the matter. For instance, the Pay Commission report did not cover the Army personnel but immediately that came out Government *suo motu* took up the question of their pay and pensions and made some increases. Nothing is allowed to be lost just because they do not organise themselves. The Chief of the Army Staff and the other Chiefs are always in touch with the ranks and they know the difficulties of the jawans and they bring to the notice of the Government whenever a situation arises which calls for increase in remuneration. In the light of these remarks, considering also that the Government themselves from time to time are making revisions, I would submit that it will not be necessary to appoint a committee. I would in the same spirit request the hon. Member, Shrimati Sharda Mukerjee not to press for the Resolution and to withdraw it.

Shrimati Sharda Mukerjee: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to Raghuramaiahji for what he said and for giving some concessions in pension rates. One such concession is that the period of service is going to be reduced from 15 years to ten years. Members from all sides of the House have expressed deep concern over the present insufficient compensation given

to our jawans and other ranks who are invalidated and especially to the widows and families of the deceased. I am sure that Raghuramaiahji himself knows too well the hardships and the risks incumbent upon service life. There is always the possibility of the dark hour, when a man is invalidated or disabled and becomes unfit for service or for civilian employment. It is worse for the families and for the children who live with meagre pensions.

We were told by him that a civilian would have to work for thirty years to earn the pension as against a military personnel working for 20 years. But what guarantee is there that the military jawan will live for twenty years to earn that pension? It is a little known fact that in the Air Force among the general duty pilots only one man lived to earn a pension. Can this comparison make sense? Is it reasonable? What recourse have these servicemen? As Mr. Indrajit Gupta pointed out quite rightly, they cannot have recourse to the normal channels through which civilian employees can express their discontent. At the most they can talk among themselves. I am not surprised that Raghuramaiahji and some other senior officers are not aware of the discontent and hardships that exist among the jawans and other ranks because they would not dare to speak to senior officers because they may be misunderstood. They must be sure of getting a sympathetic hearing before they would dare to speak. I know what a long battle has been going on to increase the rates of pension and to improve the rules of pension. I had a letter from woman whose husband was reported missing but believed to be dead; she was given a pension of Rs. 7 a month while the Army Headquarters waited to ascertain the fact whether the man was indeed dead or whether he was a prisoner of war. I do not blame the A.H.Q. They are bound by rules and regulations and they could do nothing more than to stick to those regulations. When the

[Shrimati Sharda Mukerjee]

hon. Minister said that fifteen years had been changed to ten years, I asked a question and he replied that the rule of fifteen years did not apply to a man killed in action; his widow will get special family pension in any case. But the delay that is involved in taking a decision is the point to be considered by the Minister. It is not possible for these widows and dependents who live in remote areas and who have no access to A.H.Q. or to the Ministers to reach the Minister or the A.H.Q. Secondly, the Defence Minister said that it was not necessary for us to have special war disability pension and that it was already covered in the present rules. When death or disability occurs due to service conditions, a man will get the necessary pension. Disability pension is related to the rank of the man. If a man after two years of service suffers a disability, his pension is not commensurate with the disability. What will he get?.... (Interruptions). 20 per cent of the salary to which he was entitled.

Shri Raghuramalah: My colleague referred to 20 per cent disability.

Shrimati Sharda Mukerjee: But the disability pension he will get will be 20 per cent of the salary and not a hundred per cent. That is what I am trying to pinpoint. People who are disabled in action get very small compensations. A young sergeant wrote to me that he had lost both his eyes with severe and permanent physical injuries. He gets a pension of Rs. 30 plus Rs. 8 for an attendant. This man is not going to be fit for any kind of work for the rest of his life. We should not relate disability pension with the number of years of service a person has put in. If I am getting Rs. 20 maximum, I can get Rs. 20 plus 20. If I am getting Rs. 70, I will get a larger amount. But what I say is that there should be a war disability pension which is not related to the years of service that a man puts in. Although we find ourselves in a period

of emergency, there is no war disability pension. That is my point. This is the stark truth: a widow who gets Rs. 7 per month while the A.H.Q. makes up its mind whether she should get more; a sergeant who gets Rs. 38 a month but is completely disabled, blinded and is physically very badly hurt. This is the truth which is very little known outside the services. Perhaps it is not in the public interest! But the glitter and gold of ceremonial parades, the pomp and panoply of military parades—is this in public interest? We are supposed to know that. So, must we not try a little more to see that justice is meted out to these men?

From the service point of view, I will tell you that there are benevolent funds both at the unit level called the CO's fund and at the Central level called the Indian Air Force Benevolent Fund. I am sure similar funds exist in the army and the navy. These are voluntary subscriptions by servicemen themselves. They give *ad hoc* benefits, but at best these benefits are tantamount to charity. I submit that it is the duty and responsibility of the Government to see that it is not the voluntary organisations but the Government itself that guarantees the security of the armed forces' families and their dependents in case of death and of the armed forces personnel themselves in case of physical disability. Therefore, I am forced to submit that there are certain lacunae, certain discrepancies, in the statement made by Shri Raghuramalah.

I am also aware that there are high-powered committees which function at Delhi. It has been my sad experience that they have little link with the districts. I know that the widows and families of the ex-servicemen are forgotten. Their letters remain unanswered; there is nobody to advise and help them. Therefore, I would suggest one thing to the Defence Minister. If they cannot immediately do anything about other discrepancies,

they should at least have a Welfare Directorate attached to each service, and it should be the duty and function of this Welfare Directorate to see that the welfare of ex-servicemen and of the widows and families is looked after. At present, what happens is that the officers take on the welfare work in addition to their normal duties. The size and structure of the armed forces is far too large today to leave welfare to be done in this haphazard manner. We know of the innumerable forms and claims which have to be made are beyond even the educated ones. Can you imagine what happens when they have to be dealt with by these unsophisticated and simple jawans and their families? How many of them are even literates? So, per cent. Who is to advise them? So, I do feel that it is necessary that there should be a Welfare Directorate attached to each service and those Welfare Directorates can also advise these high-powered committees and see that their policies are implemented.

I would like to make one more suggestion. Even if the Minister feels that there should not be a committee on whose advice he will be forced to act, may I suggest that there should be a committee on which there is at least one representative of the Other Ranks, an airman, a jawan and a rating? There should be some non-officials also. This will ensure that the prescribed pension, say, of a woman, to the tune of Rs. 15, is not reduced to Rs. 8 just by default because she does not know what to do with the filling in of forms and so on. May I at least have that assurance from the Minister?

Lastly, I must request the Defence Minister one thing. In the past, it has been the custom in our country that the report of the Defence Ministry gave no indication whatsoever either of the ratio between salaries and pension or of the amount of budget allocated to salaries themselves. This is not an unconventional request. It is

the usual practice in democratic countries like the United Kingdom and the U.S.A. I would suggest that in the next Defence Ministry's report, those particulars should be mentioned so that we can have some idea whether adequate funds are being allocated to pensions and other benefits in relation to the salaries.

As I said before, it is more than evident that we have had a deep concern about the insufficient rates of pensions and the lacunae in the pension rules. I trust that the Government will recognise these things and will not delay too long in implementing, as the Minister has expressed, his sincere intentions. Having expressed this confidence, I seek permission to withdraw my Resolution.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: There is an amendment by Shri S. M. Banerjee. Does he press it?

Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur): I do not want to press it.

The amendment was, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The Mover of the Resolution wants to withdraw it.

The Resolution was, by leave, withdrawn.

15.37 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

Shri P. Venkatasubbaiah (Adoni): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I beg to move the following Resolution:

"This House recommends that a Committee consisting of Members of Parliament, agricultural experts and progressive farmers be constituted to go into the causes of failure in agricultural sector and make recommendations for better co-ordinated efforts of official and non-official agencies in