

(ii) In the Army, even the present quota, out of the commissioned ranks, set apart for the lower ranks which is nearly 25 per cent, is not being fully subscribed due to non-availability of suitable candidates; and thus, there is no case for increasing this promotion in favour of the promotees.

(iii) In the Air Force, in the Technical Branches, high technical qualification is required, and like-wise for the Flying Branches, a basically high level of General Knowledge, apart from a high standard of physical fitness and certain other basic qualities is required. Accordingly, in these Branches, keeping in view the needs of the Service and its efficient functioning, no reservations have been made for direct induction into the commissioned ranks from the lower ranks. In the other Branches, however, as indicated above, reservations for induction from the lower ranks to the commissioned rank have been made. These percentages of reservations are considered adequate.

Common Mess for Officers and Jawans

580. SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 5312 on the 21st December, 1972 regarding common mess for officers and jawans and state the financial, administrative and other special reasons for not having a common mess for the jawans and officers?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI J. B. PATNAIK): It is not practicable to have a common mess for officers and jawans for the following reasons:—

- (i) While officers have to pay for their food except when stationed in operational areas, jawans are always entitled to free food at Government expense;
- (ii) It is feared that such an arrangement may lead to closer

familiarity between the officers and their subordinates which is likely to create difficulties in maintaining the high standard of discipline which is necessary for the efficient functioning of the Army.

Acquisition of Land for Cantonment in Bhatinda

581. SHRI B. S. BHAURA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any land has been acquired for the Cantonment at Bhatinda (Punjab) and, if so, the total area of the land acquired;
- (b) whether any compensation has been paid to the land-owners from whom the land has been acquired; and
- (c) if so, the amount of compensation paid so far?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI J. B. PATNAIK): (a) No, Sir.

- (b) and (c). Do not arise.

Production of Steel and Iron by Public Undertakings

582. SHRI S. N. MISRA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) the figures of production of Public Undertakings Companies producing steel and iron for the last three years for the months of September to December each year;
- (b) whether there has been any improvement in the production after the Holding Company has been formed;
- (c) if not, the shortfall in production in terms of money; and
- (d) the extra financial burden annually by creation of the Holding Company?