

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

FRIDAY, 16th MARCH, 1934

Vol. III—No. 5

OFFICIAL REPORT



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Friday, 16th March, 1934.



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

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

FOREIGN MAIL WORK AND REDUCTION IN EXPENDITURE.

484. *Mr. S. C. Mitra: Will Government be pleased to state:

- (a) whether their attention has been drawn to the articles appearing in the issues of *The Indian Post* for the months of September—October, 1933, and November, 1933, under the captions "Foreign Mail Work and Reduction in Expenditure" and "Foreign Mail Work—Another Big Saving", respectively, in connection with the probable huge savings that will be effected without loss of any efficiency if the scheme is tried;
- (b) whether it is a fact that the Superintendent, Foreign Post, has opposed the scheme; and
- (c) whether in consideration of huge expected savings, Government propose to bring the scheme into effect at least, as an experimental measure for six months, with the help of supervising officers like the Sorting Inspectors not directly under the control or influence of the Superintendent, Foreign Post?

* The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce: (a) Government have seen the articles.

(b) Yes.

(c) No. The suggestions contained in both the articles referred to in part (a) were carefully examined by the Postmaster General, Bombay, and were rejected as impracticable. There has not been any change in the circumstances since then which would justify the adoption of the schemes in question, even as an experiment.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if there has been any reduction in the expenses of the foreign mail work?

The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce: I should have to ask for notice of that question.

LOWER GAZETTED SERVICE APPOINTMENTS SANCTIONED FOR THE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT OF THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

485. *Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: (a) Will Government please state the number of lower gazetted service appointments sanctioned for the Engineering Department of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway?

(b) Will Government please state how many of these appointments are today held:

- (i) permanently by selected subordinates,
- (ii) in an officiating capacity by selected subordinates, and
- (iii) by temporary engineers and other superior service officers declared surplus to requirements during the recent retrenchment period?

Mr. P. R. Rau: (a) Sixteen.

(b) (i) One.

(ii) and (iii). I have called for information and will lay a reply on the table of the House in due course.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if the number of lower gazetted service appointments were created for new entrants or for those that were already in existence also in the Department?

Mr. P. R. Rau: The lower gazetted service was created to be filled mainly by promotion from selected subordinates.

LOWER GAZETTED SERVICE ON RAILWAYS.

486. ***Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** (a) Will Government please place on the table the original order issued by the Railway Board inaugurating the lower gazetted service in accordance with the recommendations of the Central Advisory Council for Railways appointed by this House?

(b) Will Government please state the particular rule under which temporary engineers and surplus officers were absorbed into the lower gazetted service?

Mr. P. R. Rau: (a) I am placing in the Library of the House a copy of a memorandum, sent to Agents of State-managed Railways in July, 1950, on the reorganization of cadres, which explains fully the details of the scheme.

(b) It was stated in the memorandum placed before the Central Advisory Council for Railways on the creation of the new lower gazetted service that this would include not only the posts in the Provincial Engineering and Local Traffic Services, which were abolished, but also certain other working posts of minor importance which were previously included in the superior service. It was made clear that the change would be introduced in such a manner that the status and prospects of existing officers are not impaired. Consequently, it was only in so far as vacancies occurred in the superior services that the posts could be relegated to the lower gazetted service and filled by promotion of selected subordinates.

As regards temporary engineers, the position is that a large number were discharged. It was considered desirable to retain a few on account of their qualifications and experience. Some twenty officers were specially selected by a committee of senior Engineers of the different State-managed Railways and two Members of the Railway Board and railway administrations were authorized to employ temporary Engineers in this list against vacancies in the lower gazetted service. At present there are ten-such on all the State-managed Railways.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Are Government aware that the Central Railway Advisory Council gave its approval to the introduction of the lower gazetted service only because Government led them to believe that it was reserved mainly for subordinates?

Mr. P. R. Rau: It was made clear to the Central Advisory Council that the lower gazetted service would include posts in the Provincial Engineering and Local Traffic Services which were abolished and in due course also certain other posts which were then included within the superior service, but which it was intended ultimately to relegate to the lower gazetted service. My Honourable friend is quite right in the idea that, when these posts were filled, they would be filled mainly by promotion of subordinates.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Are Government aware that the words in the pamphlet which the Honourable Member has placed on the table and which very few will ever read, "in such a manner that the status and prospects of existing officers are not impaired" have been interpreted by the members of the Central Advisory Council as referring to the existing officers of the Local Traffic Service and Provincial Engineering Service which were being replaced by the lower gazetted service?

Mr. P. R. Rau: I cannot obviously say how the words were interpreted by members of the Central Advisory Council.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Is it a fact that, according to the Railway Board's memorandum on the subject, the lower gazetted service will consist of "working posts of minor importance which are not included in the superior services"? I emphasise the words "superior services" for the Honourable Member's information as a direct and distinct contradiction to what he has just stated.

Mr. P. R. Rau: I do not see how it contradicts what I have stated.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: These "other posts" do not include the superior service and you have despite this insinuated Class I superior service into the lower gazetted service.

Mr. P. R. Rau: The position was, as I have already explained more than once here, that it was intended that a certain number of posts which were in the superior service would ultimately be transferred to the lower gazetted service. There was no question at the time of discharging officers who were already in the superior service and replacing them by promoted subordinates.

ILLNESS OF MR. OBEIDULLAH KHAN OF PESHAWAR.

487. ***Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** (a) Has any correspondence passed between the Government of India and the Government of the North-West Frontier Province in connection with the illness of Mr. Obeidullah Khan of Peshawar, a political prisoner now confined in the new Central Jail, Multan?

(b) In view of his serious illness, do Government propose to take up with the Government of the North-West Frontier Province the question of his early release? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Harry Haig: (a) The Government of the North West Frontier Province reported to the Government of India the facts which were subsequently published in a communiqué.

(b) No. The prisoner is undergoing imprisonment in default of giving security under section 40 of the Frontier Crimes Regulation and the Government of India are not prepared to interfere in the matter of his release, which is the concern of the North-West Frontier Province Government.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Is it a fact that Mr. Obeidullah Khan is suffering from tuberculosis?

The Honourable Sir Harry Haig: I understand that that is so.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Is it a fact that he got this disease at Multan Jail?

The Honourable Sir Harry Haig: I have no information as to where or when it developed.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Am I to understand that even if the prisoner's condition is very serious and the Government of the Province does not take any steps in it, the Government of India will not interfere?

The Honourable Sir Harry Haig: Certainly, Sir. I have no particular information as to the present state of health of this prisoner, but it is not the business, in my judgment, of the Government of India to interfere in every case in which a prisoner indulges in a hunger strike throughout India.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Are Government aware that his case has become peculiar on account of the fact that he has been sent to jail by the North-West Frontier Province Government and that the responsibility for his health is now on the Punjab Government, and so his case is a fit one for interference by the Government of India?

The Honourable Sir Harry Haig: I do not think there is any serious complication in the matter. The responsibility for his release or non-release rests plainly with the North-West Frontier Province Government.

Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury: Has the Honourable Member inquired as to the reason for his hunger strike?

The Honourable Sir Harry Haig: I have only the information which has already been given at full length in the North-West Frontier Province communiqué. They say:

"It was shortly afterwards reported that he had resorted once more, actually for the fifth occasion, to hunger strike, apparently as a protest against his retransfer to Multan."

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: Is it not a fact that he first contracted this disease at Multan and then he was transferred, but brought back again to Multan, the climate of which city does not suit him?

The Honourable Sir Harry Haig: I can only repeat for the information of the House the information already given in the North-West Frontier Province communiqué. They say:

“At the end of January this year, it was decided, in consultation with the Punjab Government, to send him back to Multan as a tuberculosis patient, on the ground that there exists a special tubercular ward in the new Central Jail at that place.”

So that the transfer was made directly in what the Government considered to be the interests of the health of the prisoner.

Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury: Who will be responsible for the death of this prisoner?

The Honourable Sir Harry Haig: If a man indulges in a hunger strike and dies, the responsibility is plainly on him.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: May I know the nature of the reply which was sent by the Government of India when the North-West Frontier Province Government reported to them the condition of this prisoner?

The Honourable Sir Harry Haig: No reply was sent, because no reply was required.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: Are Government aware that the mother of Obeidullah Khan sent telegrams to me and many Members of the Legislative Assembly in which his condition was reported to be very serious?

The Honourable Sir Harry Haig: I am quite well aware that pressure of various sorts has been brought to bear on a number of Members of this House in connection with this particular case.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: May I know how a telegram of sympathy is regarded by the Honourable Member as pressure being brought to bear upon the Members? It was only an appeal for justice, sympathy and humanity.

The Honourable Sir Harry Haig: The Honourable Member assumes that certain action ought to be taken: there, I am afraid, I must differ from him.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Is it a fact that on previous similar occasions the Government of India have intervened? Do they ever intervene in such matters?

The Honourable Sir Harry Haig: I have no recollection, except in a case which the Government of India regard as peculiarly their own, namely, the case of Mr. Gandhi.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: If a prisoner goes on hunger strike on account of certain violation of any jail rules, I can understand, but in this particular case the climate of Multan does not suit him: is it essential that he should be brought or kept in a place where the climate does not suit him?

The Honourable Sir Harry Haig: I have already informed the House that he was sent to Multan in accordance with what the Government considered to be the interests of his health.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Do Government propose to inquire from the Punjab Government whether this man got tuberculosis at Multan first?

The Honourable Sir Harry Haig: No: I do not propose to make any further inquiries at all from the Government of the Punjab or from the Government of the North-West Frontier Province.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: If Government propose to get rid of this man for ever, why do they not give him some poison?

The Honourable Sir Harry Haig: I do not think that is a reasonable way of looking at a hunger strike. If a prisoner chooses to try and force his will on the Government by means of a hunger strike and the results are unfortunately fatal, it cannot be said that Government have taken steps to get rid of the man: it is entirely a voluntary action on his part.

EFFICIENCY OF RAILWAY SERVANTS.

488. ***Sardar Sant Singh:** Will Government please state how the least efficiency of the Railway servants employed on the State-managed Railways is judged? Is it judged by the last one or two years adverse report of the employee?

Mr. P. R. Rau: The Court of Enquiry took the term "least efficient" to mean "not as efficient as others doing similar work" or "below the average". I cannot improve on that definition. No rules were laid down by the Railway Board to determine how this was to be judged. Since this test has been given up in subsequent retrenchments, the question of defining it does not now arise.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know from the Honourable Member how the Agents find out the "least efficient"?

Mr. P. R. Rau: They must judge the man's work in comparison with that of others doing similar work.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if the Honourable Member himself does not know how they do it actually?

Mr. P. R. Rau: As a matter of fact, this happened two years ago, and there is no question of their doing it now.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I know if a man, who has been reported as being inefficient, is given any chance to put up his defence against that charge?

Mr. P. R. Rau: Is my Honourable friend now talking of people who were discharged as inefficient or as least efficient?

Sardar Sant Singh: I am dealing with those who were discharged as inefficient.

Mr. P. R. Rau: I believe that certain special cases were considered by the Court of Enquiry and they made certain specific recommendations. But I have no detailed information at present about the procedure adopted.

Sardar Sant Singh: My question is if any charge is framed against the man discharged, is he given any chance to defend himself?

Mr. P. B. Rau: As a matter of fact, I have no information as regards the procedure at present, but if my Honourable friend puts a question on the paper, I shall endeavour to obtain it for him.

VACANT POSTS OF COPYHOLDERS IN THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS,
NEW DELHI.

489. ***Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) Is it a fact that several posts of copyholders are vacant in the Government of India Press, New Delhi? If so, do the Government propose to take steps for the representation of Sikhs in the Reading Branch? If not, why not?

(b) Is it a fact that posts of copyholders are being filled by bringing Bengali candidates from Calcutta?

(c) Is it also a fact that the remaining vacancies are proposed to be filled by Bengalis available locally? If so, what steps do the Government propose to take to prevent the preponderance of Bengalis in the Government of India Press, New Delhi?

The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce: (a) Four posts are vacant. As regards the latter parts of the question the attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given by me on the 24th February, 1934, to part (c) of his starred question No. 249.

(b) Three Bengali copyholders whose services were terminated in the Government of India Press, Calcutta, have been re-employed.

(c) No. The second part does not arise.

READERS AND REVISERS APPOINTED IN THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS,
NEW DELHI.

490. ***Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) How many vacancies of proof readers and revisers were filled in the Government of India Press, New Delhi, since the 1st December, 1933?

(b) How many applications were received in the office for these vacancies?

(c) Was any departmental examination held to fill these posts? If so, were the applicants permitted to join the departmental examination? If not, why not?

(d) Is it a fact that only copyholders already working in the Press were allowed to appear at the examination? Is it a fact that applicants for the posts possessed much higher university qualifications than those copyholders, some of them being graduates? If so, what were the reasons for not permitting them to sit in the departmental examination?

(e) Is it a fact that the Press would have saved some money by appointing these new applicants, because they would have been given new scales of pay?

The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce: (a) Ten of proof-readers and one of reviser.

(b), (c) and (d). A qualifying examination was held in December, 1933, to test the proficiency of copyholders and revisers to work as junior readers. A large number of applications was received for the posts from outsiders many of whom possessed university qualifications. A departmental examination is intended to test the proficiency of men already working in a department and outsiders are not allowed to sit in such examinations.

(e) Possibly.

**READERS AND REVISERS APPOINTED IN THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS,
NEW DELHI.**

491. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) What is the total strength of the Government of India Press, New Delhi? How many of them are Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, and Europeans, and to what province do they belong?

(b) Is it a fact that since December, 1933, all new appointments of proof readers and revisers have gone to Christians and Bengalis? If so, why, and is it a fact that the Manager of the Press is a Christian and the Assistant Manager a Bengali? What are the university qualifications of those Christians and Bengalis who were appointed as readers and revisers from amongst the copyholders of the office?

(c) How many applicants for these posts belonged to the Sikh community? What were their university qualifications and were their applications considered? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce: (a) The strength of the Press on the 31st December, 1933, was 407 made up as follows:

Hindus 185, Muslims 184, Sikhs 8, Christians 27 and Anglo-Indians 3.

Recruitment is not made on a provincial basis and I am not in possession of the information asked for in the last part of the question.

(b) Yes. The appointments were filled by departmental promotion. The Manager is a Christian and the Assistant Manager a Bengalee. As regards the last part six copyholders were promoted as revisers and readers. Two of them are matriculates and the remaining four have not passed any university examination.

(c) I understand that a large number of applications was received, but Government have no particulars of the communities or qualifications of the candidates.

DISCHARGE FOR INEFFICIENCY IN THE INDIAN ARMY SERVICE CORPS.

492. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will Government be pleased to state if a permanent hand in the Indian Army Service Corps (M. T. Branch) can be discharged for inefficiency? If so, under what rule of the Army Act of India?

(b) Is it obligatory on the part of the authority ordering discharge to frame a charge and give an opportunity to the person charged to meet the charge before any order of discharge is made?

(c) Is it a fact that the Officer-in-Charge, Indian Army Service Corps Records, issued an order No. 73 of 1922 by which he made it clear to all officers commanding that inefficiency in itself was not an offence and no charge be framed on that ground alone?

(d) Is it a fact that one Mohan Lal, No. 119221, permanent lower division clerk, was discharged on the 5th November, 1932, on the ground of inefficiency? If so, was any charge framed against him and was he given any opportunity to meet that charge? If not, why not?

(e) Was the said Mohan Lal brought under retrenchment (for which he was recommended by the Officer Commanding once before his discharge)? If so, were the retrenchment benefits given to him? Has he been given any pension? If not, why not?

(f) Is it a fact that one Ram Singh Anand, a clerk in the Vehicle Reception Depot Chaklala (Rawalpindi), was discharged under similar circumstances and was given retrenchment benefits? If so, what is the reason for this distinction?

Mr. G. R. F. Tottenham: (a) By "permanent hand" the Honourable Member presumably means an enrolled clerk of the Indian Army Service Corps, (Mechanical Transport). If so, the reply to his question is in the affirmative. The discharge is carried out under item (xx) of the Table appended to Rule 13, Indian Army Act, 1911.

(b) No.

(c) The order in question states "It should be noted that inefficiency in itself should not be framed as a charge, but rather its effects and results". The object of the order is clearly to ensure that charges are made as concrete as possible.

(d) Mohan Lal was discharged under the rule quoted because he was inefficient and also because he bore an indifferent character. As he was an enrolled clerk, it was not necessary to frame a formal charge against him. I can however assure the Honourable Member that he has been given every possible opportunity of representing his case and that it has already been carefully and repeatedly examined.

(e) Mohan Lal was discharged because his record of service was not good, and the circumstances were not such as to warrant the grant of the retrenchment concessions. He had not earned a pension.

(f) The circumstances were not similar. *Ex-clerk Ram Singh Anand's* record of service was more satisfactory than that of Mohan Lal and he was, therefore, given the retrenchment concessions.

Mr. B. V. Jadhav: With reference to part (b) of the question, is it the policy of the Government to condemn a man unheard without giving him an opportunity to explain his conduct?

Mr. G. R. F. Tottenham: It is not the policy of Government to condemn a man unheard.

Mr. B. V. Jadhav: But the reply to the question implies that: it is not obligatory on the part of the authorities ordering the discharge to frame a charge and give him an opportunity to meet the charge before an order of discharge is made.

Mr. G. R. F. Tottenham: That is a question of procedure. Those who are subject to the discipline of the Army Act are subject to a different procedure from those who are employed under the Civil Government.

The mere fact that a formal charge is not framed against a man does not mean that he is given no opportunity to make his defence.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I know what the Honourable Member means by the words "indifferent character"?

Mr. G. R. F. Tottenham: Well, Sir, I meant that he was not of very good character.

Sardar Sant Singh: Does the Honourable Member mean to refer to his moral character or his official character as a clerk?

Mr. G. R. F. Tottenham: No, Sir, I believe that, in addition to his inefficiency, he was also guilty of insubordination and things of that kind.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I know if the Honourable Member is aware that the same Officer, who reported against this man, officially wrote to him on the 18th of May in the same year, that his work was quite good?

Mr. G. R. F. Tottenham: No Sir, I was not aware of that fact. I am very surprised to hear it.

Sardar Sant Singh: Then, Sir, may I pass on this note in the handwriting of that Officer himself for the information of the Honourable Member?

Mr. G. R. F. Tottenham: Yes, Sir.

Sardar Sant Singh: If the Honourable Member finds after reading through this chit that the man bears a good character, will he be pleased to look into the matter once more?

Mr. G. R. F. Tottenham: Yes, Sir, I will certainly do so.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I at the same time ask the Honourable Member to reconsider the case and look into the matter further if he finds that the same Officer gave in writing "My mistake, very sorry, tell Mohanlal"?

Mr. G. R. F. Tottenham: I am quite prepared to examine the case further. I would only suggest that if the Honourable Member wishes the case to be looked into, he would be better advised to come and see me in my room rather than carry on a cross-examination on the floor of the House.

RUMOURED SUPERSESSION OF THE AJMER MUNICIPALITY.

493. ***Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to a note headed "Ajmer Municipality to be Superseded" published in the *National Call*, dated the 10th February, 1934?

(b) If so, will Government please state;

- (i) whether it is a fact that the Ajmer Municipality is going to be superseded, and
- (ii) whether it is a fact that the gentleman mentioned in the note is to be appointed to take charge of the Municipal Administration of Ajmer?

(c) If the reply to part (b) (ii) above be in the affirmative, will Government please state:

- (i) the age of the gentleman, and
- (ii) the salary which is proposed to be offered to him?

Mr. H. A. F. Metcalfe: (a) Yes.

(b). (i) and (ii). Government cannot commit themselves to any line of action before they receive the report of the Enquiry Committee.

(c) Does not arise.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: May I know, Sir, if the Committee which was appointed has completed its labours?

Mr. H. A. F. Metcalfe: No.

PROVISION OF CHAIRS IN THE OFFICE OF THE PROTECTOR OF PILGRIMS,
BOMBAY.

494. ***Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** (a) Is it a fact that no chairs or benches have been provided in the office of the Protector of Pilgrims, Bombay, for those who go there in connection with any business and that those people are made to stand for hours together?

(b) If so, do Government propose to consider the desirability of providing chairs to sit in that office?

Mr. G. S. Bajpai: Sir, with your permission, I shall answer questions Nos. 494, 495 and 496 together.

Enquiries have been made and a reply will be furnished as soon as possible.

LATE OPENING OF THE DOOR OF THE PILGRIM-SHIP "JEHANGIR".

†495. ***Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Is it a fact that the door of the Pilgrim-ship "Jehangir" was opened half an hour late after the notified time at Bombay on the 19th February, 1934?

ALLEGED BEATING OF HAJ PILGRIMS BY A EUROPEAN AT BOMBAY.

†496. ***Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Are Government aware, and if not will they enquire and state, that in Bombay on the 19th February, 1934, at about 2-50 P.M., when the door of the pilgrim-Ship "Jehangir" was opened for the purpose of loading the luggage of the pilgrims, a certain European beat and injured several pilgrims with a cane? If so, do they propose to consider the desirability of instituting an enquiry into the allegation and lay the result of it on the table of this House?

†For answer to this question, see answer to question No. 494.

FREIGHT ON WHEAT AND RICE BETWEEN LYALLPUR AND CALCUTTA.

497. ***Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Will Government please state:

- (i) the distance from Lyallpur to Calcutta,
- (ii) the freight on wheat per maund from Lyallpur to Calcutta,
and
- (iii) the freight on rice per maund from Calcutta to Lyallpur?

Mr. P. R. Rau: (i) 1,266 miles.

(ii) Rs. 1-0-4.

(iii) Rs. 1-3-4.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Will the Honourable Member please repeat the answer?

Mr. P. R. Rau: (i) 1,266 miles.

(ii) Rs. 1-0-4.

(iii) Rs. 1-3-4.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know, Sir, why there is so much difference in the rate of freight?

Mr. P. R. Rau: The rate of wheat from Lyallpur to Calcutta was previously the same as the rate for rice from Calcutta to Lyallpur, but it was reduced by Re. 0-3-0 from the 1st May, 1933, to encourage the movement of wheat to Calcutta by rail instead of by the rail-cum-sea route *via* Karachi.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Do Government propose to reduce the freight on rice from Calcutta to Lyallpur as well to encourage the movement of rice from Calcutta to the western part of the country?

Mr. P. R. Rau: I am not sure, Sir, that rice is particularly popular among the people of Lyallpur.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Do Government propose to make a reduction in the freight of rice as an experimental measure?

Sardar Sant Singh: May I inform the Honourable Member that Lyallpur people are not rice eating people?

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: In view of the fact that rice is very necessary for the intellectual development of the people, will Government consider the question of the reduction of freight on rice from Calcutta to the Punjab?

Mr. P. R. Rau: I am not going to interfere in these disputes between Provinces.

Diwan Bahadur Harbilas Sarda: May I know, Sir, if Government have ascertained the relative food values of rice and wheat in India? Have Government heard a famous proverb in Rajputana which says:

*"Bati kahe main jawoon anwoon,
Roti kahe main pohchanwoon,
Chanwal kahe main chokha khana,
Mere bharose kaheen naheen jana."*

It gives the relative food value of wheat and rice. *Bati* is made of best wheat. *Bati* says: "If you eat me, I will give you sufficient strength to go to your destination and come back". The *Roti (chappati)*, which is also made of wheat, says: "If you eat me, I will give you sufficient sustenance to take you to your destination". But rice says: "I am very good to eat, but for Heaven's sake do not go anywhere on the strength of eating me: I cannot give you strength to go anywhere". Since this is the state of affairs, do Government propose for the upkeep of the physical vigour of the people of India to encourage the use and consumption of rice more than that of wheat?

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: Is this a supplementary question?

FREIGHT ON RICE FROM PATNA TO DELHI.

498. ***Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Will Government please state:

- (i) the distance from Patna to Delhi,
- (ii) the freight on rice calculated according to the lowest rate from Patna to Delhi; and
- (iii) the freight on rice calculated according to the present rate from Patna to Delhi?

Mr. P. R. Rau: (i) 616 miles.

(ii) The minimum rate is five annas two pies per maund.

(iii) Nine annas per maund.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Are Government aware that the price of rice in Delhi is abnormally high in comparison with the price in Bengal and in Bihar and Orissa?

Mr. P. R. Rau: I was not aware that the price of rice in Delhi was very high at present.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Do Government propose to make any inquiries in this matter?

Mr. G. S. Bajpai: I think, Sir, I should answer that question. No inquiry is necessary, because the quality of the rice consumed in Delhi is much superior to what is produced in Bihar and Orissa.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Have Government ever made any inquiry before they make this statement on the floor of the House?

Mr. G. S. Bajpai: I can testify to that from my personal experience.

* **Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Will Government be pleased to make inquiries into this matter instead of relying on the personal experience of one Honourable Member in that Department?

Mr. G. S. Bajpai: It is not a question of the Department; it is a question of commonsense.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: Do Government propose to consider the question of lowering the freight on rice from Patna to Delhi with a view, as is said, to encouraging the movement of rice to this side?

Mr. P. E. Rau: This question was probably considered by the E. I. R., but I shall ask the Agent of the E. I. R. again to consider it.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Will the Honourable Member kindly lay on the table the information which he will obtain from the Agent of the E. I. R. on this matter?

Mr. P. E. Rau: In due course.

RECESS ALLOWED TO MUSLIM POSTAL EMPLOYEES TO OFFER FRIDAY PRAYERS.

499. ***Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen:** (a) Is it a fact that Muslim employees of Post Offices are allowed some recess on Fridays to offer their prayer?

(b) Is it a fact that for this reason they are not put to work in the Money Order or Savings Counter, Treasury or in Insurance Branch?

(c) Is it also a fact that during the absence of the Muslim officials, non-Muhammadan clerks perform their duties?

(d) If so, what compensation is paid to them for their extra work?

(e) Is it a fact that in the office of the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs the Muslim clerks are allowed to leave office for two hours on Fridays to offer their prayer?

(f) Is there any time limit to offer prayer or can they go out on this plea at any time and for any length of time they wish?

(g) Will Government please further state how a Muslim sub-postmaster of a single handed no-delivery post office can go out to offer prayer?

(h) Will Government please also lay on the table a statement showing the number of Muslim clerks in the following offices and how many of the work in the Departments mentioned in part (b):

Quetta, Kohat, Rawalpindi, Srinagar, Lahore, Delhi, Peshawar?

(i) Is it a fact that during Muhammadan holidays all the Muslim officials are allowed leave and non-Muhammadan officials are required to work in their place, and that during Hindu holidays too they are allowed leave but all the Hindus are not allowed leave?

The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce: (a) Yes. An hour's leave on Fridays is allowed to Muslim employees as far as possible subject to the condition that the arrangement does not interfere with public business or cause extra expense to Government.

(b) and (c). Government have no information. The matter is within the competence of Postmasters in charge of post offices.

(d) No question of compensation arises in view of the condition referred to in the reply to part (a) above.

(e) No. According to the orders of the Government of India only one hour's leave is permissible.

(f) Does not arise in view of reply to part (e).

(g) According to existing orders a Muslim Postmaster in charge of a single-handed post office can avail himself of the concessional leave on Fridays provided that his absence does not interfere with public business.

(h) Government regret that the information is not readily available, nor do they consider it necessary to call for it in view of the reply to parts (b) and (c) above.

(i) Government have no information. The Head of each Postal Circle is competent to make suitable arrangements for the disposal of urgent work in post offices on post office holidays.

COMPOSITION OF THE ALL-INDIA POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS UNION.

500. ***Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen:** (a) Is it a fact that All-India Posts and Telegraphs Union is composed of Muhammadans and non-Muhammadans?

(b) If so, will Government please lay on the table a list showing how many Hindu and other non-Muhammadan members there are in the above union? What are the names of office bearers and members of the executive council of the above union?

The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce: (a) It is presumed that the Honourable Member refers to the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Union which was given official recognition in December last. According to the Rules and Regulations of the Union, its membership is open to the non-gazetted staff of the Posts and Telegraphs Department in all its branches without restriction of caste or creed.

(b) Information is being obtained and a reply will be laid on the table in due course.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

AMOUNT OF UNPAID MONEY ORDERS.

206. **Mr. S. C. Mitra:** (a) Will Government be pleased to furnish a statement showing the total amount of unpaid money orders up to the year 1932-33?

(b) Will Government please further state how the money is invested and who gets interest of the accumulated amount?

The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce: (a) and (b). The system is that money orders which remain unpaid after the end of the second year in which they were issued are credited to the revenue of the Department. I have figures available for ten years only, and they show that during the ten years from 1923-24 to 1932-33 a total amount of Rs. 9,39 lakhs was so credited to the Department. A statement showing the amounts which lapsed year by year is given below. I should add that any subsequent payments are adjusted against this credit.

Statement of lapses on account of unpaid money orders.

	(Rupees in thousands.)
1923-24	1,50
1924-25	1,70
1925-26	1,13
1926-27	93
1927-28	83
1928-29	77
1929-30	80
1930-31	54
1931-32	68
1932-33	51
Total	9,39

**APPOINTMENT OF SIKHS AS THIRD DIVISION CLERKS IN THE OFFICE OF THE
MILITARY ACCOUNTANT GENERAL.**

207. **Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) What is the total number of permanent posts of Third Division clerks in the office of the Military Accountant General? How many of them are held by Hindus, Muhammadans and Sikhs?

(b) How many vacancies occurred in the above cadre during 1932 and 1933 and how many of them were given to Sikhs in accordance with the Home Department orders regarding the recruitment of minority communities?

(c) Is it a fact that some permanent Third Division vacancies exist in that office and that temporary hands not qualified by the Public Service Commission have been entertained against them? If so, why have the unqualified individuals not been replaced by the qualified ones, as is done in all the offices of the Government of India, and the vacancies filled permanently?

(d) Do Government propose to order the appointment of Sikhs who have qualified themselves in the Public Service Commission examination,

against the permanent vacancies mentioned above, so as to give the Sikh community its due share? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir George Schuster: (a) Presumably the Honourable Member refers to the routine grade clerks. If so, the information is as follows:

Number of posts	19
These are filled by	13 Hindus.
	5 Muslims and
	1 Sikh.

(b) In 1932 there was one vacancy carried forward from 1931 and one fresh vacancy occurred. Two vacancies occurred in 1933. One Sikh was appointed in January 1932.

(c) The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As the post-retrenchment cadre of the Military Accounts Department is under consideration, permanent appointments have not been made in these posts.

(d) Government are not prepared to take the action suggested. The Honourable Member will see from the reply to (a) above that the Sikh community has a representation in this grade of over 5 per cent.

APPOINTMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATOR OF THE AJMER MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE

208. **Mr. M. Masood Ahmad:** (a) Is it a fact that the present Excise Commissioner, Jaipur, and formerly an Income-tax Officer, Ajmer, is going to be appointed to take charge of the Municipal Administration of Ajmer?

(b) If so, will Government please state whether they are aware:

(i) that during his time the Muslim community was deprived of adequate representation in the department under his control as Income-tax Officer, Ajmer-Merwara; and

(ii) that the news of his recall as administrator of the Ajmer Municipal Committee has caused considerable alarm among the Muslim citizens of Ajmer?

Mr. H. A. F. Metcalfe: (a) Government are not in a position to state whether the gentleman referred to will be so appointed.

(b) Does not arise.

APPOINTMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATOR OF THE AJMER MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE.

209. **Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** (a) Is it a fact that the Muslims form about half the population of the city of Ajmer?

(b) Are Government aware that owing to the presence of the Dargah of the Khwaja Sahib at Ajmer, the affairs of the Ajmer Municipality are linked with the interests of the Muslims of the whole of India?

(c) If the replies to parts (a) and (b) be in the affirmative, will Government please state why they have selected a superannuated officer, to take charge of the Municipal administration in Ajmer?

Mr. H. A. F. Metcalfe: (a) No.

(b) Government are prepared to take it from the Honourable Member that the Muslim Community are interested in the affairs of the Ajmer Municipality.

(c) No such selection has yet been made.

DIRECT RECRUITMENT IN THE SUBORDINATE ACCOUNTS SERVICE.

210. **Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state how many direct recruits have been taken in the Subordinate Accounts Service since 1929?

(b) What are the qualifications required for a direct recruit? Did the persons so recruited fulfil those conditions?

(c) How many of them have so far been confirmed? If none, why not?

(d) What has been the percentage of successful candidates in the Subordinate Accounts Service examination before the recruitment of these recruits, say between 1925 and 1929, and afterwards between 1930 and 1933? What is the reason for the decrease in the pass percentage since 1930?

(e) Do Government propose to take some action whereby these young men may not be thrown out of the Department after wasting about four or five valuable years of their lives?

The Honourable Sir George Schuster: (a) and (c). Attention is invited to the statement contained in part (c) of the final reply (laid on the table on the 7th of April, 1933) to Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad's unstarred question No. 61. Since then five more direct recruits have been taken in the Subordinate Accounts Service. None of them has been confirmed as no one has qualified for confirmation by passing the Subordinate Accounts Service Examination.

(b) Direct recruits should be young men with fine University records, and, whenever possible, men who have appeared in the Indian Audit and Accounts Service Examination and have obtained high places in the list of unsuccessful candidates. There is no reason to believe that the Accountants-General have not exercised their discretion properly in selecting the best available candidates.

(d) I would refer the Honourable Member to the final reply (laid on the table on the 7th of April 1933) to Shaikh Fazal Haq Piracha's starred question No. 651. The percentage of passes in 1933 was eight.

(e) Extra chances and facilities for training are given to deserving candidates to enable them to pass the examination. The question of the future of direct recruits who have been unable to pass the examination is at present under consideration.

THE INDIAN TARIFF (TEXTILE PROTECTION) AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The House will now resume consideration of the motion* moved by the Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore for referring the Bill to Select Committee and the amendments moved thereon by Mr. B. Das† and Mr. Bhuput Sing‡.

Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I must at the very outset congratulate my friend, Mr. James, who spoke for the European Group yesterday . . .

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh (Muzaffarpur cum Champaran: Non-Muhammadan): Yes, yes.

Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer: My friend, Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh, says "Yes, yes". He is too impatient even to permit me to complete my sentence,—I congratulate my friend, Mr. James because he did not take mean advantage of the troubled waters. He did not fish in them. He tried to pour oil over them. It was the Deputy Leader of the Independent Party who troubled the waters. There was no necessity to trouble the waters when my friend, Mr. Neogy, the Leader of the most radical Party in this House, spoke with moderation and spoke like a statesman. It was for him to assault the Government, as Mr. Mudaliar assaulted men not present in this House, hitting them savagely behind their back. He insinuated that they were scoundrels. Sir, I read in the newspaper this morning: "The discussion on the Textile Protection Bill was resumed yesterday. Diwan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar spoke for over an hour during which the proceedings became very lively". It was unnecessary in an economic discussion for an opposition Member who supports a Government Bill to make the proceedings more lively than the Honourable Member in charge of the Bill was prepared to make them. Sir, Mr. Mudaliar further said "Politics seems to be the last refuge of some of those dissentient millowners". He had not the courage to call them scoundrels. "Politics is the last refuge of scoundrels". He parodying it instead of calling them scoundrels said that they were millowners, and it is the opinion of those millowners that the Government have submitted to us. If they came under the description of Mr. Mudaliar, who would sacrifice for a phrase the harmony in this House, surely the Government would not have taken the trouble to give us the opinion of that class of people. Do you know what they are saying about Mr. Mudaliar's speech after his having delivered it, in and outside this

*"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Tariff Act, 1894, for certain purposes (Textile Protection) be referred to a Select Committee, consisting of Diwan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, Mr. H. P. Mody, Mr. B. Sitaramaraju, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, Mr. B. Das, Mr. K. P. Thampan, Mr. S. C. Sen, Mr. R. S. Sarma, Lala Rameshwar Prasad Bagla, Mr. Nabakumar Sing Dudhoria, Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer, Raja Sir Vasudeva Rajah, Mr. J. Ramsay Scott, Mr. F. E. James, Mr. A. H. Ghuznavi, the Honourable Sir Frank Noyce, Mr. G. S. Hardy and the Mover, with instructions to report within ten days, and that the number of members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five."

†"That the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 7th July, 1934."

‡"That in the motion moved, for the words 'ten days' the words 'three weeks' be substituted."

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House? They also are capable of parodying well-known maxims, and they say "Mudaliar rushed in where Mody feared to tread" (Hear, hear), not that Mody is an angel. (Laughter.) But Mr. Mudaliar's speech has made Mr. Mody an angel and, to that extent, Mr. Mudaliar has done Mr. Mody good, though not the cause Mr. Mody has espoused.

Sir, I admit, my friends, Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh, Mr. B. Das and Mr. Neogy and others, who have spoken on this subject, are perfectly justified in approaching this question with all the suspicion with which they have approached. There is a discredited and inglorious history, unfortunately "inglorious", so far as Lancashire's trade with India is concerned. Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh was perfectly justified on an occasion like this to recall the opinion of Sir Horace Wilson, an authority who had condemned the Government of the last century, using the political arm of injustice to destroy our cottage industries, which could not contend on equal terms with these foreign machine made manufactures. The late Romesh Chunder Dutt, a Member of the distinguished Civil Service, to which the Honourable the Commerce Member has the honour to belong, in his numerous authoritative writings had talked of the miserable clothing of the miserable Indian labourer earning less than 2½ pence a day taxed by a jealous Government. And now we come to the 19th century and I shall quote the language of a great writer who was not an enemy of Lancashire, I mean Sir Valentine Chirol. The late Sir Valentine Chirol, in his last book, published some time in 1926, "India", said:

"Free trade was a British creed imposed on India, as she was repeatedly assured, for her own good."

It was not for our good. India resembles the United States of America in the wealth of her industrial resources in the multitude of her thrifty people. Protection suited us, but because England was committed to free trade, as Sir Valentine Chirol truly said, it was *imposed* upon us:

"All the greater was Indian resentment",

he goes on to say,—

"when England herself imposed upon India a departure from the sacred principles of free trade as soon as Lancashire began to feel the pinch of Indian competition. *At the behest of Whitehall*" (Mind you it is not Mr. Neogy or Mr. B. Das, but Sir Valentine Chirol who wrote this) "the Government of India imposed an excise duty on Indian cotton manufactures equal to the customs duty on British imports of similar goods."

And young Mody was denouncing it from a hundred platforms in Bombay and elsewhere. Fortunately, on this particular occasion, we cannot say that Sir Joseph Bhore introduced this Bill or produced this Agreement "at the behest of Whitehall". Better is the behest of one of our men, an industrial patriot, representing less than but nearly as much as 50 per cent. of the active looms and spindles in this country. That is why I say that it is always better in these industrial negotiations to trust to the industrial patriots. The best platform on which to stand for these Agreements is the platform of self-interest. The Manchester people are interested in this matter and so are the Bombay and the Indian mill-owners. Mody's head has been asked for in a charger out in the country.

and he has braved his opponents. He has faced the music; he has talked with a certain amount of emphasis which is inevitable when you are denounced up and down the country. And what is Mr. Mody's fault? Mr. Mody, representing as he has been for several years a number of industries all over the country, went to England and, in the spare hours that he had after Committee work, he went to Manchester. He met his rivals and, interested as he undoubtedly is in the development of our country, not only economically, but politically, he talked to them, because they are an obstacle in our way. At any rate, he felt that they were obstacles, and my friends, Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh and Mr. B. Das, still believe that they are obstacles. They are entitled to that opinion, but Mr. Mody is also entitled to his opinion. His is an opinion which is drawn from personal contact and conversations with them. Their's is an opinion which is based on ancient prejudice. Prejudice dies hard and I do not for a moment say that prejudice should die all too quickly. All that I say is that the time has come to open a new chapter in our relations. I do not for a moment say that you must help Manchester or Liverpool or Lancashire, because they are giving you the White Paper scheme. No. I am not satisfied with the White Paper scheme. It is riddled with safeguards. But I am anxious that these safeguards should not be used or abused and, if possible, should not come into existence. Mr. Mudaliar said, when there are Dases and Joshis, surely how can you help there being safeguards in the Constitution. Sir, I remember Winston Churchill using the same language, but not with the emphasis of Mr. Mudaliar for he left out both Mr. Das and Mr. Joshi. Surely Mr. Das and Mr. Joshi can retort to Winston Churchill, if not to Mr. Mudaliar: "So long as you have your Modies and Mudaliars in this country, why do you want safeguards?" (Hear, hear.) Fortunately, the Manchester people have conceded that the best safeguard is the goodwill of the people. If you read the answers of the witnesses representing the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, who appeared before the Joint Select Committee, when our Indian friends examined them, including my friend and Leader, Sir Hari Singh Gour, they admitted that the best safeguard is the goodwill of the people. Manchester, I shall presently prove to you, is fast changing her angle of vision. Who could have imagined in the 19th century the representatives of Lancashire speaking as they have spoken. This is what they said:

"In the very first place, the Chamber wishes to make it clear that nothing in the policy which it supports is in any way inspired by her desire to disregard the legitimate interests in their domestic market of the Indian cotton mills or of the handloom industry."

Could Mr. Mody have imagined, when he was condemning the excise duties, Manchester using this language:

"The Chamber recognises to the full that no matter what form of Government there might be in India, it would be nothing less than the obvious duty of those responsible for that Government to promote the well-being of the Indian industry in every way."

It looks like an extract from the speech of Mahatma Gandhi. I could not have imagined the Lancashire people going so far as they have gone in their memorandum submitted to the Joint Select Committee. I do not know how much further they have gone in their conversations with Mr. Mody to tempt him to go so far by way of rapprochement as he has gone. I do not know. It is not on record. He is a very careful man. He will

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rather be abused than open himself out for attack than disclose private assurances and private conversations, but I shall not refer to private assurances and private conversations.

Mr. Neogy is perfectly entitled to demand, if Japan agrees to buy a certain quantity of our cotton, why should not Manchester also likewise agree to buy a certain quantity. That is the position of Mr. B. Das, when he flared up, as he ought to flare up, in this House. This is not a wedding house. It is a debating society, though when you flare up you should not call your opponents "treacherous and dishonest", especially when you are on trial. That was the mistake that Mr. Mudaliar made, making it very difficult for us to carry our friends with us in this matter, but he cannot arrogate to himself the position of a super patriot and call his opponents names. He ought to study his subject and speak on it, instead of relying on his love of rhetoric and power of oratory. The position of Manchester and Lancashire in regard to the purchase of our cotton as justly demanded by Mr. B. Das and Mr. Thampan, whose names, I note, are among the Select Committee members, their position has got to be clarified, and I now see in the newspapers that the President of the Board of Trade, whom I always approach with a certain amount of suspicion, is changing. I approach him with a certain amount of suspicion, because at heart he is a free trader, and it is his class of politicians that forced India,—whose conditions were unsuited and are unsuitable for free trade purposes of exploitation,—into a free trade policy, much against India's wish. I approach Runciman and his class with a good deal of suspicion. In fact, I do not believe, probably Mr. Mody, if he reveals some secrets, might agree with me, that he could rely very much on these liberal politicians. They are wedded still to Cobdenism, even though the War and world conditions have hammered nails into the coffin of Cobdenism, but they are still relying on it. They are still hoping that some day free trade will develop in England over again. They are still imagining that they can force on us that free trade against our wish.

Now, Sir, I am glad that Lancashire has agreed to and supported in their memorandum our policy of protection for this country. It is a great gain for us. But even Walter Runciman is changing as he must change, for the good thing about Englishmen is they are not immovable like puddles on the public road. They move with the times, and even Mr. Runciman, when he sees that there are B. Dases and Neogies in this House,—a small party comparatively speaking—we can overwhelm them with our vote, but whose supporters out in the country are not small, not at any rate so insignificant as to be denounced as treacherous or unpatriotic, when Mr. Runciman knows that there is this opinion in this country to face, he is changing so that they may also change. I never understood Mr. Neogy as so obstinate or Mr. Das as so stupid as being incapable of change. I never understood him to be anti-British, an attitude of stupidity attributed to him, the most charming member of my old Party. He was its Whip. Going further back, when I was anti-British—I am not ashamed to confess that—when I was absolutely incorrigible, perhaps stupidly anti-British, when I was a member of the Swaraj Party out to obstruct, and a very good obstructor too as this House knows, when I was deliberately willing to embarrass the Government, Mr. B. Das from the Nationalist Benches was a sucking dove. (Laughter.) He was almost as I once told him, and I apologised to him later on, licking the boots of our foreign bureaucracy. Of course, it was unkind language to use in a drawing room. I never did it

on the floor of this House, but in a great discussion I went for him. I never said that he was dishonest or that he was treacherous or that he was intransigent. I was trying to convert him in a drawing room debate. I wanted him to go the whole hog with me, for we were playing at the same game. In those good old days, Mr. Das was not anti-British. Has he developed any anti-British attitude as attributed by Mr. Mudaliar to him to our great disadvantage in the Committee, for surely if he is anti-British, he is entitled to write a political note of dissent which he will never write. I hope he will never do it even though goaded by oratory. Economic questions have to be approached from an economic point of view. The moment you introduce politics, economics goes by the board.

I was saying that the attitude of Walter Runciman is changing. This leads me to a question put by Mr. K. C. Neogy himself. He said he was entitled to know if the Government had anything up their sleeve. If you read this report, the evidence of the Manchester people before the Joint Select Committee, you will find that there is a reference to a long term Agreement. I do not want to go into long quotations unless absolutely necessary. The Government of India have dealt at present with a short term Agreement. This short term Agreement may be a prelude to a long term Agreement. Therefore, Mr. Neogy is perfectly justified in asking what is up the sleeve of the Government, and, before Sir Joseph Bore could answer it, it has been answered from Whitehall by the President of the Board of Trade. The answer is this: "Our intention is that Indian raw cotton should be used more and more in Lancashire" and the President of the Board of Trade said so on an important occasion, according to the London Correspondent of the *Times of India*. In a recent issue of that paper, in a letter dated the 2nd March, the following note appears—it is a very eventful thing:

"Although formal negotiations between the British and Indian Governments concerning Indian tariffs on British textiles have not yet begun"

—They are going to begin and Mr. Neogy was entitled to know how are you going to conduct those negotiations. He was entitled to know—are you going to put it to the British Government to take more of our cotton—

"the President of the Board of Trade whose special task is the negotiation of reciprocal trade treaties, made one pronouncement in the course of his speech at the British Industries Fair."

A forecast of this already appeared in the cables which appeared in the Press and we know briefly what Mr. Runciman had said. "Britain will become the largest buyer of Indian raw cotton in the world." Sir, what more do we want? We want to make a gesture. Sir Abdur Rshim brushed aside rather carelessly Mr. Neogy's suggestion what is up the sleeve of the Government. He thought that it was a sinister suggestion, but surely we want to know and we know that the Government have to take up this question of Britain's purchasing our cotton, for India is an agricultural country. India will always remain an agricultural country, though (Mr. N. M. Joshi: "Why?") Mr. Joshi says, "why?" I expected that question, because India is a large country and it should not import foreign rice or foreign wheat. It has to feed 350 million people and, in the matter of food, we have been self-dependent, and if we become dependent in the matter of food, India will cease to be an agricultural country. I hope Mr. Joshi is satisfied. I was saying that India will always remain an agricultural country: and dependent as we are on the monsoon, and anxious as we are to be saved from over-production, we will not altogether stick to the

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rice crop or the paddy crop and the wheat crop: we would like to increase our cotton crop. Therefore, from the agriculturist's point of view, we would like to increase our cotton crop, and we would like to have more markets for our cotton; and, from a revenue point of view, it will also be necessary, for if India is to produce all the cotton products necessary to clothe her entire population, you will have to build such a big tariff wall that the poor country will have to be taxed and excise duties will have to be revived. Therefore, we are sure to leave a margin for foreign imports. So far as the countries within the Empire are concerned—and here it directly leads me to the question of Dominion Status—we have got to give them better treatment than countries outside the Empire. I am not thinking of independence. If you want independence, if you want to declare war on Great Britain, if you want association with non-British or non-Imperial nations, then surely you need not think of economic alliances within the empire. I am thinking of Dominion Status for my country, and Dominion Status will suit her the most, because she has a large seaboard; she has a vulnerable frontier; I do not want history to repeat itself, for we cannot forget that the latest invader of India came from across the seas—or shall I say, also the last, and the most stable, Great Britain, invaded India from the sea. And then, our vulnerable frontier tells its own story—that it should not be vulnerable. India needs Britain to fight a foreign menace, the Mongolian menace. Britain needs India, as we proved during the last year that in times of need India was necessary, and, therefore, an Indo-British Trade Agreement will be worthy of the first Indian Commerce Member. (Hear, hear.) God grant that the foundation that he has laid will be the unshakeable foundation for all time to time! Political freedom does not go *pari passu* with economic thralldom. It is of equality that we are thinking. I was saying that the angle of vision of Manchester has changed, for you will find that the Bradford Dyers' Association has made the following statement:

“It would have added to the effectiveness of this assurance ”

—referring to the Clare-Lees Delegation's assurance that Lancashire would utilise more Indian cotton—

“if the Delegation had been able to convey the message that, say, one million bales of Indian cotton would be bought this season by somebody for whom they were entitled to speak and that this would be conveyed immediately to Liverpool and put on the market by auction so that the spinners who had adapted themselves to the spinning of the Indian growth might be attracted by supplies possibly at a lower rate than the market purchase price,”

—and Mr. Douglas went on to say that—

“If we are to expect India to go to the extent we desire in favouring our manufactures, we must reciprocate to the fullest extent and without reserve in enlarging our purchases from her.”

“Unhappily ”

—says the *Times of India* correspondent—

“The Lancashire industry is composed of so many warring atoms, divided in interest and outlook, that a transaction on this scale is impossible, and it will therefore be necessary for Government to step in, basing its assistance on the interests of the industry and indeed of the nation, as a whole. The British Government is subsidising a large number of minor industries, including sugar beet, coal oil, etc.; there is therefore no reason why it should, at any rate on grounds of principle, withhold financial assistance from cotton manufacture which, despite heavy losses, still remains our largest exporting industry, as raw cotton is, or has been and should be again, India's largest exporting industry.”

Sir, before the Joint Parliamentary Committee also Mr. Grey, one of the Manchester witnesses, showed the interest that Manchester is taking.

Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury (Bengal: Landholders): I do not want to interrupt the Honourable Member, but I simply want to inquire whether he is speaking as a Nationalist or not.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer: Will the Honourable Member please repeat his question?

Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury: I simply wanted to inquire if my friend was speaking as a Nationalist or not.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer: I think the Honourable Member wanted really to inquire whether I would leave some more time for speakers of his Party,—for such a representation has been made to me. Sir, I am the only speaker on this question from my Party. I never pretended to speak for my Party as a whole, for pretention is not in my line. Four Honourable Members of his Party have spoken (*A Voice*: "More."), and each of them has taken one hour—and my friend, Mr. Mitra, says more than four Members have spoken. I hope there will not be the impatience that Mr. Lahiri Chaudhury has exhibited in asking whether I am talking as a Nationalist or not. I say, yes, and as a Nationalist who wants to promote the export of my country's cotton to a country which will be a stable, and not a precarious, consumer of our products, for I will place before you the facts in regard to pig iron. Then you will know what it is to have a precarious purchaser of your cotton!

Sir, in 1929, the United Kingdom took in tons only 5,522 of our pig iron. Japan then took 3,53,561. But, in 1932-33, Japan took 71,371, while the United Kingdom took 75,802—more than Japan—while she was only taking 5,000 odd from us in 1929. When Japan ceased to take our pig iron, when our people were going to starve, when there was going to be a great deal of unemployment, when, Sir, the pig iron industry was going to be killed outright, who, I ask, came to our help? Great Britain. (Hear, hear.) And why? Because Great Britain is a part of the British Commonwealth. (Hear, hear.) I find the Honourable Member laughing. Probably my arithmetic, my friend, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, may consider is incorrect, but so long as he does not dispute these facts and these figures, those facts and figures must stand. And when the Government were starting negotiations with Great Britain, when the Government were thinking of giving some preference, may be a five per cent relief to Great Britain, what did Japan do? Japan resumed an attitude of friendship; and, in 1933-34, Japan has once again begun to take 1,65,724 tons of pig iron. It is nowhere the 1929 figure. And my friend, Mr. Lahiri Chaudhury, asked me again whether I was speaking as a Nationalist. Agricultural interests are a part of nationalism even though Independents may be independent of it. (Laughter.) Sir, I know that when Japan protested in voice of thunder and proposed a form of boycott, Japan was not talking through her hat. Japan was basing her protest on certain facts and realities which she was prepared to carry through. On the continent of Asia this little island has large lands and is growing cotton. If Japanese rice is considered to be a menace today, Japanese cotton will be a menace tomorrow (Hear, hear), and we want every help that Great Britain

[Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer.]

can give us, not only by taking our cotton, but also by making others take our cotton, for London is one of the greatest markets of the world. And what is the help that Great Britain is thinking of giving? Mr. Grey made this statement before the Joint Parliamentary Committee. I do not want that we should wallow in ancient prejudices. I do not condemn Members who approach this question with suspicion. Suspicion dies hard. I know it is so very difficult to open a new chapter, but when Manchester is willing to approach this problem from a new angle of vision, let it not be said of us that we were a stick in the mud. Mr. Grey said:

"We are using every endeavour in Lancashire to encourage the use of Indian cotton. As Mr. Rodier has pointed out, no doubt you are familiar with the fact that there is a great deal of Indian cotton that can only be used in relatively low qualities of yarns and fabrics, and in the main those are not Lancashire productions. But I might say here as a Director of the Lancashire Cotton Corporation that we are using ourselves between twenty and thirty thousand bales of Indian cotton every year, and that use we are endeavouring to extend and to encourage its extension, amongst all our spinners and our weavers. Of course, we realise this, that India will judge the question as to how many bales eventually are you able to take."

As Mr. Neogy, as Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh, as Mr. B. Das have repeatedly emphasised in their speeches, an emphasis which
12 NOON. Manchester has anticipated, we want a business relation, not the relation of a helot of the Empire and a boss of the Empire, but of two economic equals, and that is where the advantage of the Mody-Lees negotiations comes up before us. They are dealing as two equals, not a subordinate branch of the British administration, not an agency of Whitehall, but two independent interests whose reciprocal interests have been taken into consideration by the parties concerned. Mr. Grey says:

"Of course, we realise this, that India will judge the question as to how many bales eventually are you able to take. We are not only pushing it by way of propaganda . . ."

Manchester doing propaganda for us! Who could have imagined it 20 years ago? Who could have imagined it even 10 years ago? India is launched on a new road. India is marching in the direction of responsible government. You will have tomorrow a Minister for Commerce responsible to this House. Manchester fears that England's intransigent opponents will come and be in the Government as De Valera is in Ireland, and, in order to avoid De Valera tactics, they say, have safeguards. But as Mr. Joshi has said, no safeguards, no guard will be safe enough except the goodwill of the people. And they are recognising it. They are doing propaganda for us, and they are producing a machine, they are trying to invent a machine,—the invention is almost a success—to clean our cotton, so that our cotton will be as good as the best cotton in the world, so that it will not only have a London market, it will have a continental market, a world market. Manchester people are experts, and surely we want their brain to help India to produce the right kind of machinery to clean our cotton, and here is an undertaking that he (Mr. Grey) has given to the Joint Parliamentary Committee. I am reading his words:

"We are not only pushing it by way of propaganda, but at the Shirley Institute the British Cotton Research Association are bending all their endeavours to devise machinery for the cleaning of Indian cotton to make it much more extensively usable for Lancashire productions. I might say that they are meeting with a very considerable measure of success, and that success will not possibly apply or be applicable to

Lancashire alone. Any invention which improves the use or facilitates the use of Indian cotton will immediately become world wide, and any mechanical device which makes it possible for Indian cotton to substitute American cotton will be very speedily available not only to Lancashire producers but to Indian producers, to Continental producers, and producers all over the world."

That looks like Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru's oration in a cotton growing area to find markets abroad! Such being the case, may I not enquire why we should hug the carcass of ancient prejudice? I do not for a moment say that we should walk into Sir Joseph trap, for I recognise that there are two Sir Josephs. There is Sir Joseph Bhore whom we see, there is also a Sir Joseph whom we do not see. (Laughter.) I know the Honourable Member is getting embarrassed. Embarrassment sits upon his brow, but it is a fact. There are two Sir Josephs, Sir Joseph the patriot who wants to see that Indian industries flourish and agricultural products, such as cotton, find a market here and abroad. But there is also a Sir Joseph, a great enemy of India and Indian aspirations, and I find that he has put up a fight as a member of the Joint Select Committee, I believe, that not only should there be safeguards, but also a clause that the Indian Government should not be in a position to give bounties to Indian industries. This is what Sir Joseph Nall says. (Laughter.) Sir Joseph Nall, not Sir Joseph Bhore. (Loud Laughter.) This is what Sir Joseph Nall says

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore: (Member for Commerce and Railways): I am sorry that my Christian name has caused so much embarrassment to my Honourable friend. (Laughter.)

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer: I wanted to embarrass the Honourable gentleman a little bit, for it should not always be smooth sailing. In this House, he has been embarrassed with so much applause that I thought I might produce this little ruffle.

There is at this end a Sir Joseph who loves this country with the passionate and profound love of a patriot, and there is at the other end the other Sir Joseph, an Imperialist of Imperialists, a die-hard who is not satisfied by the safeguard clause who says that the Government must be prevented for all time to come from getting rid of that safeguard by giving bounties to the industry. He says:

"Therefore, the constitution should be such that it would not enable the trade agreement to be over-ridden by further Government action. The constitution should contain provisions which would prevent further Government action frustrating the trade agreement."

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-official): A safeguard to a safeguard.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer: As my friend says, it is a safer safeguard. Sir Joseph Nall says:

"It will be entirely fallacious to ignore the possibilities of bounties being used for the ultimate frustration of the Trade Agreement."

It is fortunate in this connection to mention that the Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore has seen to it that Sir Samuel Hoare does not walk into his namesake's net. It is a great credit again when we have an Indian Commerce Member here that the Tory Secretary of State should have given a bit of his mind to Sir Joseph on the other side of the ocean. He said:

"I am sure this must be a matter for discussion by the Committee afterwards and I would only say now that I do not accept Sir Joseph Nall's view."

[Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer.]

I am glad he did not say by mistake Sir Joseph Bhore's view, because I am pretty certain that Sir Joseph Bhore has had to put up a fearful fight with the British Government to get us what he has got just as Mr. Mody who is fighting us here had to face the music there. I know it, but I am not speaking about it, because flattery is not in my line, and it is just as well that Mr. Mody faces the music for a while, for he is opening a new line.

Lastly, I must refer to my friend, Mr. B. Das's light motion for circulation. For the last ten years or more, Mr. Das always headed a debate with a motion for circulation. (Laughter.) It was sometimes a trick of his, sometimes it was a necessity, as on this occasion a trick to get the first place and give the right lead, a legitimate ambition, because I myself have competed with him and successfully in regard to the Railway Board debate. He came five minutes too late even though the newspapers had given out that I had come to an agreement with Sir George Rainy to have a simultaneous discussion in this House when the Federal Structure Committee was discussing the Railway Board question in the Viceroy's House. My Honourable friend, Mr. Das, was the tortoise and I was the hare, and I won, because I ran quicker than he. (Laughter.) This time, my Honourable friend, Mr. Das, had the field free to him and led us into a formidable discussion. He was entitled to do so, but he knows more than anybody else that circulation motions are not invariably meant to be pressed to a division, and my Honourable friend, Mr. Neogy, also made it very clear in the course of his speech. My Honourable friend, Mr. Das, knows that "afterwits are dearly bought", but I will tell him "let thy forewits guide thy thought".

As for my Honourable friend, Sir Joseph Bhore, I can only say in conclusion that he follows up and lives up to the principles of Napoleon Bonaparte when Napoleon said that a statesman's heart must always be in his head, and often times the heart of our Commerce Member is in his head and it is pretty clear as the Committee will know that, throughout the discussions, throughout the negotiations with Japan and throughout the framing of this Bill, he has got India's interests in his heart as well as in his head. Sir, it is not necessary for me to applaud him on the triumphant settlement which he has almost made with Japan; only verbal transactions have yet to be concluded in regard to which word should be used or which word should be taken out; the substance is there.

When I delivered a speech 20 years ago, as a delegate of the All-India Industrial Conference in Bombay, presided over by Sir Dorab Tata, on the question of protection, I little imagined that within my lifetime the excise duties would have gone and Manchester would come on bended knees before India and invent a machine to improve our cotton and find us a market to take our cotton in larger quantities. If that is going to be Imperial Preference, I do not mind that Imperial Preference. But if by Imperial Preference is meant that India should be a hewer of wood and drawer of water seeking some kind of Imperial isolation, I am not for that Imperial Preference. I know the present preference is of a protective kind and we have to examine all the points that Mr. Das and Mr. Neogy and the Opposition have made in regard to the Bill in Committee, and if the Committee thinks that the Bill is worth accepting, it should be accepted.

If it thinks that it should be modified, it should be modified, but there is no case now for circulation as my Honourable friend, Mr. Das, himself recognises and as he has told me so.

Lastly, Sir, I must conclude with this tribute to the first Indian Commerce Member who handled this question as the first Indian Minister of the Federation in a popular House would have done. He is a statesman,

"Who makes by force his merit known
And lives to clutch the golden keys,
To mould a mighty State's decrees,
And shape the whisper of the throne."

(Applause.)

Sir Cowasji Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I would like to bring the House down to realities and to the Bill that we are discussing. While I cannot be over-enthusiastic over the Indo-Japanese Agreement, I would like to add my congratulations to those, of others to my Honourable friend, the Commerce Member, and his colleagues, for having been allowed in the first time in the history of India to be the real Government of this country on an important matter, without the interference of their lord and master several thousands of miles away; for I am given to understand that the Honourable the Commerce Member was given a free hand in these negotiations and he and his colleagues were allowed to do the best they could in the interests of India.

Sir, while not being able to be enthusiastic about a reduction of the protective duty from 75 per cent to 50 per cent, the House must realise and I am sure it has realised that the interests of the textile industry and the interests of the producers of the soil are linked together for ever. It is the prosperity of the agriculturists which makes the prosperity of industry and especially the textile industry, and, therefore, if this Agreement attempts to secure for the cotton grower a certain market for a certain percentage of his produce, the textile industry must be prepared to have a lower percentage of protection against its most powerful competitor, the Japanese. But I do want to raise a voice of warning as to whether this Agreement is going to give the agriculturists what they have a right to demand, namely, a fair price for their cotton. I am given to understand and I know it to be true that the price of cotton today is lower, compared to American cotton, than it was when the boycott was in full swing. How is that possible? It is possible through the manœuvres of the Japanese Cotton Spinners' Association who have a control over freight. I am given to understand that they have refused the proper share of freight to Indian exporters of cotton. They have gone further. I understand that ships have actually left India since 22nd January with space available rather than give it to Indian exporters of cotton. I understand, Sir, that discriminatory restrictions have been placed upon non-Japanese exporters, and whereas, before the boycott, it was competent to non-Japanese exporters to ship cotton to Japan without, at the date of shipment, having entered into any contracts for the sale of that cotton, now that the boycott has been lifted, it is absolutely impossible to obtain a permit to export cotton unless the contract has in fact been entered into and the cotton is shipped under that contract, and what is more, that contract has to be with a mill in Japan. Sir, under these circumstances, it is not surprising to find that cotton is today 25 to 30 rupees a bale lower than it ordinarily ought to have been; and, therefore,

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these facts bring me to that very important clause in the Indo-Japanese Agreement, namely, the most-favoured-nation treatment clause. Sir, I should like the Honourable the Commerce Member to tell us a little more about this most-favoured-nation treatment clause. As my friend, Sir Leslie Hudson, said, these clauses are now out of date. It was, I believe, in August 1904 that a Convention between India and Japan respecting commercial relations was signed at Tokio. I should like some information from the Commerce Member as to whether the most-favoured-nation treatment clause is going to be on the lines of the 1904 Convention and whether he does not think that the time has come when some further provisions should be embodied so as to ensure that the most-favoured-nation treatment should not only apply to the Japanese, but also to Indians trading with Japan. It might be an action of the Japanese Government, it might be an action of a private association; but if that action has the effect of discriminating against non-Japanese traders in this country, I contend that it is the duty of Government to see that in this clause there must be provision to prevent this discrimination taking place in the future. Sir, I fully realise that due to the Agreement, which forces the Japanese to buy a certain quantity of cotton, machinery will be necessary to enable them to do so. But surely that machinery should not be taken advantage of for the purposes of discrimination. It is impossible for them to carry out their Agreement with India if they have not got the necessary machinery. Give them all facilities by all means to have such machinery both in India and in Japan. I have no objection to it; all credit to them that they have been able to bring such machinery into existence and work it so successfully,—an object lesson to this country. But I do think that there are limits to which such machinery should be used.

Mr. President, I will just mention the question of quotas. My Honourable friend, Sir Joseph Bhole, stated that the quota that he had embodied in the Agreement was a guarantee against dumping. Well, Sir, 400 million yards is no small quantity to be imported into this country. Only in the two years, 1929 and 1932, has that figure been exceeded; and if the Japanese can import 400 million yards, I do not see the justification for the statement that it will be a safeguard against dumping.

Sir, I have nothing further to say. The Honourable the Commerce Member and his Government have agreed and we shall have to loyally carry out the Agreement he has entered into with Japan. But I do have apprehensions that there is a risk of dumping continuing. Mr. President, specially do I desire to draw the attention of my Honourable friend to the fact that when there is a quota for textiles, there should be no loophole left for the undue export to this country of artificial silk at cut throat prices. It has been stated here by more than one Honourable Member that the protective duty on artificial silk is low. I agree, and I would make an appeal to the members of the Select Committee to examine this question very carefully indeed and to see that the import duty on artificial silk from Japan is of a character which would be effective and that it will not very greatly add to this quota of 400 million yards of textiles. It is a duty which this House imposes upon the Select Committee, and I trust that the Select Committee will see to it that no injustice is done to the industry by this unfair competition of artificial silk.

Now, Sir, I will just come to the Agreement between the Millowners' Association and the Lancashire industry. My Honourable friend, Sir

Abdur Rahim, laid down a principle with which I am in complete agreement. He stated that if an industry in a country enters into an agreement with a similar industry in another country and if there is complete unanimity in both countries, there is justification for Government to give that agreement Statutory effect. But if there is a difference of opinion amongst the industrialists of a country and if only a section of the industry enters into an agreement with the industry of another country, there is not that justification for Government to give it Statutory effect. He went further and said that it was the duty of Government to see that such agreements did not adversely affect any other interests. I am in complete agreement with that principle, but, I am afraid, Sir, that the Agreement between the Millowners' Association and the Lancashire industry has suffered on account of the name that has been given to it and a considerable amount of injustice has been done personally to my friend, Mr. Mody, due to this Agreement commonly having been called the Mody-Lees Agreement. It was an agreement between the Millowners' Association of Bombay and the Textile Mission that came out to India. Mr. Mody, who is the paid Chairman of the Millowners' Association, was in constant touch with the most influential members of his Committee during those negotiations, and Mr. Mody would not have encouraged those negotiations if he had not the support of the most influential members of that Committee throughout those negotiations: and who are the members of that Committee? They are men like Sir Ness Wadia, Sir Naoroji Saklatwala, Sir Manmohandas Ramji, Sir Chunilal Mehta—and may I ask if Mr. Mody is to be called a traitor, a man who has sold the interests of his country, why is it that my Honourable friends will confine those complimentary terms merely to the Chairman of the Association and not to Sir Chunilal Mehta, Sir Manmohandas Ramji, Sir Ness Wadia and Sir Naoroji Saklatwala, who were just as much responsible for this Agreement as their Chairman? I consider this unfair; if this Agreement is not in the interests of India and if you are not in agreement with it, if you think that it has been the act of a traitor, then be fair and call all those men, whom I have named and whom you dare not face, traitors as well.

I now come to another very important point: and that is the cross-examination to which our attention has been drawn of the representatives of the Manchester Chamber before the Select Committee in London. My Honourable friend, Sir Abdur Rahim, and I think Mr. Neogy, read out questions and answers: they were perfectly correct: the tone has changed, but the substance has not. (Hear, hear.) A deliberate question was asked whether the safeguard, which can be interpreted to mean that Indian industries should not be allowed to expand lest they compete with British industries, was insisted on. The answer was "yes". Now, I desire to bring to the pointed attention of this House, in connection with those answers and those questions, the Agreement entered into by the Millowners' Association of Bombay and the representatives, the authorised representatives, of those very gentlemen who gave evidence. In my humble opinion, the most important point in this Agreement is laid down in the following words:

"It was agreed that the Indian cotton textile industry is entitled for its progressive development to a reasonable measure of protection against the imports of the United Kingdom, yarns and piecegoods."

I consider that that admission, made by the mission that was sent out to India by the Lancashire interests, is the most important admission in the whole of this document. What does it mean? It means that "we

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from Lancashire agree that the Indian Government. have a right to impose upon the imports from the United Kingdom such reasonable duties as they consider are necessary to protect the interests of the textile industry in India, and the growing textile industry of the country. . . .

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Who is to decide the reasonableness of the duties?

Sir Cowasji Jehangir: The Government of India are to decide. I consider that if you place upon the answer given before the Select Committee the interpretation that has been placed upon it in this House, that these words that I have quoted are a contradiction of that answer and are inconsistent with it; and I would prefer a written and signed document of this sort to any questions or answers before the Select Committee. This is a document in which undertaking is given that Lancashire admits our right to develop our industry, for it says "progressive development". You are in a position to develop your industry so as to spin finer counts and make finer cloth; and then you are in a position, according to this Agreement, to so tax imports from the United Kingdom as to protect that industry. I do admit that there are certain concessions in this agreement. With regard to textiles, personally I see no great concession—the duty remains in the Bill what it was and what it is today: there is an undertaking that, if the surcharges are removed, no claim will be made for further protection; but I admit that in yarns there is a reduction; but my Honourable friend, the Commerce Member, has gone further; it will be left to the Select Committee to examine that and to see how far the reductions suggested in this agreement and the further reduction suggested by my Honourable friend are justified. I admit that on artificial silk. . . .

Mr. B. Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): May I ask if we have got the power in the Select Committee to raise the duties that are put in the Bill and whether we have got a right to suggest an alteration of the duties?

Mr. H. P. Mody (Bombay Millowners' Association: Indian Commerce): Surely it is open to the Select Committee to try and convince the Government and get the Government to agree to a higher scale of duties.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): So far as the technical point, as to whether a Non-Official Member has got a right to move an amendment increasing the duties, is concerned, Non-Official Members cannot have a right in Select Committee that is denied to them in the Assembly: they cannot have a right to move an amendment for increasing the duty; but the Select Committee offers an opportunity, where the discussion can be more informal across the table with the Government and Non-Official Members, to have a chance of convincing the Government that an increased duty is necessary.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer: Is this one of the realities about which the Honourable Member talked when he began his speech?

Sir Cowasji Jehangir: Very much so indeed. Not only is it a reality, but the very substance of the Bill.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer: We will then oppose this suggestion tooth and nail.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir: You are welcome to oppose it as much as you like and you are welcome to interrupt as much as you like. (Interruption.) But I would suggest to the Honourable Member to keep cool. It is a virtue sometimes. . . .

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer: But you began with realities as though I was talking of unrealities.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir: Will my Honourable friend realise that a little fun is permitted? I do not want to waste the time of the House. But if I did tell my Honourable friend that he did go off the realities, was that a great crime?

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer: I am entitled to my opinion that you are going off the realities.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir: I do not give way any further.

Now, it is the duty of the Select Committee to examine the rates put down in the Agreement with regard to artificial silk and I trust the Select Committee will do their duty and examine whether these rates are such as will in any way interfere with our industry, and, if they do, I trust that they will strongly bring it to the attention of the Government.

Sir, we have been asked—what is the *quid pro quo*? In my opinion, the chief *quid pro quo* for this Agreement is the lines I have read and the admission that has been made. The next is an undertaking that more cotton will be consumed by Great Britain. I need not state how important it is to have a competitor to Japan in this country for our cotton. I have made that point in the beginning of my speech.

Mr. President, I very much regret the length of my speech. I have just spoken, I think for quarter of an hour,—I have not spoken more, and I apologise to my friend, the Commerce Member, for having taken up the time that was assigned to him. We shall look forward all the more to his reply after he has been fortified with lunch. (After consulting Mr. S. C. Mitra who was sitting behind.) Mr. President, as my friend, Mr. Mitra, would like to have five minutes, I trust that you will forgive me for the time I have taken.

Mr. S. C. Mitra (Chittagong and Rajshahi Divisions: Non-Muhammaddan Rural): Sir, I do not know how I should devote these five minutes you have been pleased to give me

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The Honourable Member can take quarter of an hour after Lunch.

Mr. S. C. Mitra: I am afraid, Sir, in this debate I cannot devote my time only to alluding to realities, but I like also to refer to some of the other considerations which have an important bearing on the whole subject. Sir, India produced cloth enough not merely for her own consumption for several centuries, but she also supplied it to her neighbouring countries and to even distant countries. I shall not go into details, but only say

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that I have no quarrel with the British Government for forbidding in the 18th century the inroads of Indian cloth into England, but what I do contend is that this Government, by its deliberate policy, ruined the Indian cloth manufacturing industry.

Sir, my friend, Mr. Ranga Iyer, contended that we should make no attempt to produce the entire amount of cloth required in the country. Here I entirely disagree with my friend, because I feel that every country should supply or produce its own bare necessities of life like foodstuffs and clothing, and when India is already producing more than 80 per cent. of her total consumption, had India been free, I can say, without any fear of contradiction, she would have produced all commodities so as to make herself self-sufficient in cloth and all her requirements. Mr. Ramsay Scott and Sir Leslie Hudson referred to Japan putting 400 per cent duties and even prohibiting the import of fabricated silk into Japan. Sir, India would have done the same thing if she had been free.

Sir, the Tariff Board reported that India had satisfied all the four conditions necessary for protecting an industry which could ultimately produce the entire consumption of the country and within a few years by internal competition the price would certainly go down in the interests of the people of India, but I know that this is a cry in the wilderness. We can have protective duties for sugar expecting to produce sugar sufficient to meet the entire consumption of sugar by the country, but we cannot expect it in the case of cloth, because England does not produce sugar, but produces enough cloth. I know that we are a subject nation, and I agree with my friend, Diwan Bahadur Mudaliar, that there is no use in a hide and seek policy as he complained against the attitude of the Indian Chamber of Commerce

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The Honourable Member may continue after Lunch.

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

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Two of the Clock, Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury) in the Chair.

Mr. S. C. Mitra: Mr. Deputy President, at the time when the House rose for lunch I was discussing the attitude of the Indian Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Indian Chambers as regards their attitude of non-co-operation, and I said that I agreed to a large extent with my Honourable friend, Mr. Mudaliar, as to their policy of going to Government surreptitiously and avoiding the public. At the same time, I must say that I do not agree with my Honourable friend and also with Mr. Ranga Iyer when they said that commercial interests in this country should have nothing to do with politics. As a subject nation, I cannot think of anything which is not intimately connected with politics, much less in a matter like commerce. A policy of tariffs makes or mars the prospects of industries in India, and so, I think, my Honourable friend, Mr. Mudaliar, most unwittingly perhaps did a disservice to the country by encouraging the

Government in their attitude of non-co-operation with the Federation of Indian Chambers. From our experience we know that the Associated Chambers of Commerce frequently deal with political matters. They were foremost in ventilating anti-national feelings in India. They were against the transfer of law and order in some of the Provinces, suggesting bi-cameral Legislatures in Provinces. My Honourable friend is not asking the Commerce Member to non-co-operate with the British Chambers of Commerce as well. If, in the exuberance of national spirit, commercial bodies in this country for a time deal with matters which are not primarily their concern, but if they retrace their opinion later on, I think it behoves the Government not to adopt an attitude of non-co-operation, but to help them by their guidance; but if they adopt that attitude in the case of the one, they must show at least the same attitude to the other.

Mr. B. Das: May I inform my Honourable friend that the Federation of Indian Chambers is quite willing to let the dead past bury its dead and to welcome Government Members to its annual meeting which takes place at the end of this month here?

Mr. S. C. Mitra: I am very glad to have this piece of news from my Honourable friend, Mr. Das, who, being a member of the Executive Committee of the Federation of Indian Chambers, can speak with authority, and I hope that Government will reciprocate that feeling by their attendance, or they will adopt the same principle with all the commercial bodies that happen to deal with political matters as well.

Before lunch, I said how our cottage industry was deliberately ruined and destroyed by England when, after the Industrial Revolution in the early part of the 19th century, with the invention of steam power, they took to this industry. Sir, I agree that there is not much good in discussing old matters; we should look more to the future. I give credit to the great Bombay industrialists who in India revived the manufacture of cloth through mills. They deserve all our congratulations. I further maintain that the textile industry is a national industry, and here I should like to differ from my Honourable friend, Mr. Raju. This textile industry is producing 85 per cent of the total consumption of India and is providing lakhs of labourers with work

Mr. B. Sitaramaraju (Ganjam *cum* Vizagapatam: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Does my Honourable friend mean by that only mill production? If he does, he is wrong. The handloom's position in the production is by far the most important consideration.

Mr. S. C. Mitra: If my Honourable friend had waited a little, he would have understood my point. When I speak of the textile industry, I include both the handloom industry and the mill industry. If the figures supplied by my Honourable friend, Mr. Thampan, are correct, namely, that 85 per cent of the yarn used by the weavers in India is also produced in Indian mills, then ultimately it implies that a much larger proportion of Indian population depends to a great extent on the textile industry. I think that it is a premier industry of India, and that it is a national industry.

I regret that my Honourable friend, Mr. Mody, referred to the public meeting in Bengal. I can only tell him that the public meeting in Bengal was a reply to the public meeting in Bombay. I think that a cosmopolitan city like Bombay should not refer to these small matters in future.

[Mr. S. C. Mitra.]

I should like to say a few words about the so-called fiscal convention of which we talk so much in this House. What is this fiscal convention? If anything is necessary to prove that it is merely a farce, I would invite the attention of Members of the House to the evidence of Mr. Rodrigues before the Round Table Conference itself. The principle is that where the Government of India and the Legislature agree, the Secretary of State should not intervene. Now, whatever may have happened in the past, for the last two or three years it has been perfectly clear to everybody that the Government of India here have ceased to function. Even in small matters the Secretary of State lays down principles and gives instructions and there are even little variations, and everything must be done according to his dictation. So there is really nothing to be proud of in this fiscal convention and that was the point that Mr. Rodrigues had in view. They are certain of their position, so long as the present Constitution exists, but if the future Government of India may be independent to any extent, to that extent they wanted safeguards for their interests.

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

My friend, Mr. Mudaliar, said that due to agitation in India, the political situation had been worsened, but the result of a true study of the situation is that, after each Round Table Conference, they went down from the former position. If it was due merely to agitation in India, then Mr. Mudaliar should also remember that it was the attitude of the die-hards and the Churchill clique that aroused this strong suspicion and agitation in this country. I personally believe that Britishers as a practical nation do not care at all for any agitation, whether for or against, in these matters. They are guided by the strength of political opinion in India. It is the whittled state of the Congress and other political parties in India that has goaded them in weakening the little concessions they first proposed to confer by this White Paper Constitution. It is natural that they will be dictated essentially by their selfish interests. They will never yield when there is no necessity for it. If by mere force of logic or by soft words freedom can be attained—I know in India there are schools of thought who believe in it—let them try by all means, but I for one do not in the least believe that by mere reasoning and logic we can have freedom in any sphere of our activities in India. I believe that if the Britishers would have understood their true interest, then certainly there was possibility of co-ordination with the Indian people; but, as a matter of fact, we find in experience that bureaucrats in India also think that they have succeeded by the policy of coercion and that the other policy of conciliation is not necessary. How unreal this House is when I find here member after member thinking that there is any possibility in the near future of co-ordinating British and Indian interests having regard to the attitude of the British Government at home. My time is over, and I cannot dilate on this question; but I like to say that, whatever laws or Tariff Bills are passed in this House, the people in the country cannot be induced to accept foreign goods or British goods or Empire goods as you may like to call it. They cannot force our people to buy it, and that is well realised by statesmen in England. I would advise that a real attempt should be made to reconcile the people of India. I know that the Government can carry any legislation

they like, but that will not help the British traders to sell their goods in India, if they really want it. Real reconciliation is necessary, and it is not by soft words either here or in England or by even, what one of my friends called, licking the boots of the foreigner, that we can get freedom or solve this question.

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore: Sir, I do not propose at this stage to go into the details of the Bill. The proper time for that will be in Committee and at the consideration stage of the Bill. I propose now to confine myself to the more general points that were raised in the course of the debate and, it is only in respect of some of the more important questions that I can here make comments.

I must of course make it clear that I am opposing the motion of my Honourable friend, Mr. Das. I submit that there is absolutely no substance in the arguments which he has adduced in support of his motion. The Agreement between the Bombay Millowners Association and Lancashire has been before the country for many months and there has been the amplest opportunity for public opinion to express itself upon that Agreement. Nor do I think that the House can complain that we have not given it sufficient time to consider this measure. Equally I must oppose the motion of my Honourable friend, Mr. Bhuput Sing. I need only point out to him that if our labours in the Select Committee are not finished within the period of time mentioned in my motion, we shall come up to the House and ask for an extension.

Now, Sir, my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, delivered himself of some peculiar sentiments. He said that private organisations had no business to enter into any agreement in regard to tariffs. That sentiment was, I think, endorsed by the Leader of the Opposition, and I think he went a little further and he said that Government should do their best to discourage such agreements. Such agreements so far from meriting Government's discouragement appear to me to be of the utmost value for trade and commerce, provided, as pointed out by my Honourable friend, Mr. James, firstly that the hands of Government are free to accept, to modify or to reject them in the interests of the country, and, secondly, that the legitimate sphere of the Legislature is in no way invaded. Mr. Joshi, I think, overlooked the fact that this particular Agreement can have no validity unless it has been approved both by the Government and by the Legislature, and we are now in fact seeking the approval of the Legislature. Nor can I follow my Honourable friend's suggestion that successful mills should come to the help of the unsuccessful and that there should be a pooling of the profits and losses before they have any right to come to this House and ask for protection. I personally do not visualise such a state of affairs being brought into existence, certainly not in the near future.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Why?

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore: I do not visualise it.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Why?

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore: Because possibly I have not the "vulture" or "eagle" gaze of my Honourable friend. All that could have been done at the present moment, the Tariff Board has done, namely, to base their conclusions on the conditions of mills which have attained a standard of reasonable efficiency.

[Sir Joseph Bhore.]

Then, Sir my Honourable friend contends that protection must be made contingent on improvements in labour conditions. Here, Sir, I submit to him that that, from his own point of view, is a dangerous proposition. In the first place, if for some reason, protection were withheld, the first sufferers would be labour, and, secondly, I suggest that improvements in labour conditions must be treated and considered on their own merits and entirely apart from any question of protection. If such improvements are necessary and practicable, if they are worthy, and possible of acceptance, then they should be brought before this Legislature, and legislative sanction should be obtained for them quite irrespective of whether protection is granted or not.

Sir, my Honourable friend, Mr. Maswood Ahmad, said that he would like to see Indian mills use Indian cotton to the extent of 75 per cent of their consumption. May I say to him that his wish is more than satisfied, for, so far as my information goes, something like 88 per cent. of the consumption of Indian mills is Indian cotton. That fact, I think, Sir, shows beyond all doubt the inter-connection between the cotton grower and the cotton textile industry of this country. The welfare of the one is inextricably bound up with the welfare of the other. (Loud Applause.)

Now, in regard to the complaint of unfairness in the allocation of cargo space to Indian shippers, I will at the present moment abstain from saying anything, but I can assure my Honourable friends that that matter is engaging the attention of the Government of India. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Neogy, Sir, made two points, to which I should like particularly to reply. He laid emphasis on the point that one-fourth the production of the Ahmedabad mills consisted of the higher counts, namely, 30's and above, whereas only 1/8th of the production of the mills in Bombay Island was of the same nature. He, therefore, argued that Ahmedabad had a greater interest, and a larger concern in the rates that have been imposed on United Kingdom products, which enter more largely into competition with the higher counts manufactured in this country. Now, may I put it to my Honourable friend that if that is the standard of judgment, we should not turn our eyes to the percentages, but we should take into account in each case the total quantum of production. Now, I will give the House the figures. In 1931-32, Bombay Island produced, of the counts referred to by my Honourable friend, in round numbers, 42 million pounds. Ahmedabad in the same year produced 34 million pounds. In 1932-33, despite the fact that certain mills had closed down owing to the failure of a large group, Bombay Island produced 44 million pounds, and Ahmedabad produced 39 million pounds. I submit that, judged by that standard, the interest of Bombay in this matter is far larger than that of Ahmedabad. Now, my Honourable friend also asked me whether I had any other treaty with Lancashire up my sleeve. I can assure him that there is no treaty at present, and I am sure that he knows, as well as I do and as well as everybody does in this House, that no additional preference of any sort can be given without the consent of this Legislature.

The Raja Bahadur said that he would not be satisfied or put off by any mere promises of larger purchases of Indian cotton by Lancashire. I attempted, in my opening speech, to explain the position in regard to the use of Indian cotton by Lancashire, but my Honourable friend would be

satisfied with nothing but figures. Those figures were, as a matter of fact, given to him by my Honourable friend, Diwan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar, but then someone—I think it was my friend, Mr. Neogy—interjected—“what about Germany?”, and I think later certain figures were quoted and the attempt was made to show that the increases in Germany's purchases of Indian cotton were far greater than those of the United Kingdom. I am afraid, my Honourable friend must have quoted the figures of a single month. I propose to quote figures from year to year so far as they are available.

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): It was in response to a point made by my Honourable friend, Diwan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar, where he also referred to the figures of a single month.

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore: Well, Sir, I will refer to the figures for years which are much more reliable than the figures for a single month—as my Honourable friend will agree. In 1931-32, the United Kingdom took—here, again, I am quoting round figures—29,000 tons of Indian cotton, Germany took 29,000 tons. In 1932-33, the United Kingdom took 29,000 tons, Germany took 27,000 tons. In the ten months of 1933-34, the United Kingdom took 42,000 tons and Germany took 28,000 tons.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I am very sorry to interrupt my Honourable friend. Will he refer to the figure for the ten months corresponding to this particular period in 1930-31 and tell the House as to whether it is a fact or not that England took about 36,000 tons in 1930-31 as compared with 42,000 tons this year? How much then is the increase?

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore: I am afraid I have not got those figures handy, but I shall be happy to verify the statement of my Honourable friend.

Mr. B. Das: Is it not the case that Germany is on the gold standard?

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore: Now, Sir, I would cordially endorse the remarks of my Honourable friend, the Raja Bahadur, about governmental assistance to the silk industry, but that assistance must come from Local Governments. As the Tariff Board has pointed out, it is useless to give assistance to this industry through the shape of tariffs and high import duties if Local Governments, as a matter of fact, do not do everything in their power to help on the development of this industry. I would like personally to express the hope that the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research will find it possible to finance schemes of research, without which this industry cannot make any serious advance.

Raja Bahadur G. Krishnamachariar (Tanjore *cum* Trichinopoly: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Will my Honourable friend insist that Local Governments must act in the way that they ought to?

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore: I have no power to insist. My Honourable friend, Dr. DeSouza, then, Sir, made a very powerful appeal on behalf of the agriculturist. I am sure, he is by now satisfied that we have done all we could and all that it was really possible for us to do on

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behalf of agriculture. But I think my Honourable friend entirely misread the recommendations of the Tariff Board when he said that the grant of protection was contingent upon certain conditions being first fulfilled.

In regard to the revision of our commercial legislation, I think I have already made the point clear in this House. The matter is a matter of first importance; it is receiving the active consideration of the Government of India and I personally hope that some definite progress will be registered during the present year.

Before I come to the Agreement between the Bombay Millowners' Association and Lancashire, I ought to refer to one or two matters that my Honourable friend, Sir Cowasji Jehangir, raised. He brought to notice the fact that the prices of Indian cotton today were far below the world parity, and I think he suggested that that was due to Japan's action. Well, Sir, I would suggest to my Honourable friend that that suggestion is not entirely borne out by the facts which we have in our possession. There are other factors at work which account for the price of Indian cotton being at the moment below world parity. I will mention one or two. The first is the size of the current cotton crop. The current cotton crop is estimated in the official forecast as 46.63 lakhs of bales as compared with 44.37 lakhs of bales last year. Then, Sir, there is another point. The amount of cotton baled up to date is no less than 26.56 lakhs of bales as compared with 20.86 lakhs of bales last year. Thirdly, Sir, the Indian mill consumption of Indian cotton for the current year is 9.6 lakhs of bales as compared with 10.5 lakhs of bales last year, and I understand that the Indian mills have been less ready buyers than usual this year due to the general lack of confidence following, it may be, the collapse of certain mills. These and other factors should be taken into account before we can definitely state what the reason is for prices of Indian cotton being below the world parity at the moment. But I would point out that prices of Indian cotton have been rising steadily since January.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir: Does my Honourable friend realise that the extent of the crop or the demand in India has nothing to do with the world parity prices?

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore: It has a great deal to do with the prices of Indian cotton.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir: No; it is the demand of the Indian cotton to be exported from India.

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore: Sir, I now come to the Agreement between the Bombay Millowners' Association and Lancashire. I had ventured to hope that the somewhat, I might almost call it, hysterical criticism which appeared in certain quarters in certain parts of the country would not have been repeated in this House, but that this House would have considered on its own merits and apart from any political considerations an agreement which, in the opinion of those who ought to know, has done an immense deal to improve relations between the two countries. That hope has been very largely justified, but I am afraid not entirely so, and I do submit that it would be something of a tragedy.

if the result of that Agreement were to be neutralised or nullified by the tone and temper of the criticism of that Agreement. Now, Sir, let us consider the criticism itself. As far as I am able to analyse it, it consists partly of criticism based on the merits, and, I must frankly say, partly on criticism based on political considerations. Let us take the merits first. The view of the Millowners' Association of Bombay, so far as we understand it, is something of this nature. They say:

"We believe that the rates which have been agreed upon by ourselves and the Lancashire Delegation are sufficient to protect the Indian industry; that those rates will ensure India and Lancashire being placed on a fair level and that they will ensure equal and fair competition."

Now, Sir, if, as I have said before, the most important, the most representative and the most widespread organisation in the Indian textile industry today comes to us and says: "We are prepared to try these rates for a limited period", is it open to Government to say: "No, you want far higher rates and greater protection". But let us go a little further and let us see what the actual difference is between the two wings of the industry. I make bold to say that the difference between that section of the industry which claims that it must have a more substantial measure of protection against Lancashire and the Millowners' Association, Bombay, is very small indeed. I claim to have a certain amount of personal acquaintance with the views of the dissentient section of the industry, and, if I am right, the difference between the section of the industry which is opposed to the Millowners' Association, Bombay, and the latter, is that the former considers that a duty of 25 per cent *ad valorem* is sufficient against the United Kingdom, whereas the latter considers that 20 per cent will be sufficient. Now, Sir, who is it that is asking for a higher rate of duty? Firstly, it is the Ahmedabad Millowners' Association. Now, what is it that they ask for? They ask for 25 per cent and they have got it in this Bill. But they are apparently worried at the prospect of that 25 per cent coming down to 20 per cent, possibly in April of next year. Now, I would ask the House to remember this that this request for a larger measure of protection against Lancashire comes from that section of the industry which, speaking generally, has done the best and made the largest profits. My Honourable friends, if they do not wish to take this from me, can take it from the next best source, my friend, Mr. Joshi. Then, again, Sir, who is it that is asking for higher protection? It is the Committee of the Federation of the Indian Chambers of Commerce. Now, what are they asking? They are asking, Sir, for the full measure of protection recommended by the Board against the unrestricted competition of Japan. They are out-heroding Herod with a vengeance, because they are going far beyond what I might call the most avid section of the millowners. Thirdly, the people, who are asking, I think by implication, for this higher rate of duty, are people like my Honourable friend, Mr. B. Das. We all know and it must be within the recollection of this House that my Honourable friend has in season and out of season inveighed against the grant of protection to the Bombay millowners. He claims, and I do not dispute his claims, to be a representative of the consumer and of the masses of the people. Now, what is the position that he is in effect assuming? Today when the Bombay millowners come and say: "We are prepared to accept a lower rate of duty", my Honourable friend, Mr. Das, in effect says; "No, you must have a higher rate of duty and you are traitors, because you are satisfied

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with a lower rate". I venture to submit that nothing shows better than that the hollowness of the criticism against the Agreement; nothing shows it better than the mental agility of my Honourable friend who can so easily pass from one position to another so diametrically opposite to it.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir: Pass from capital to labour and from labour to capital.

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore: Sir, that brings me to the Indo-Japanese Agreement. I think I may justly claim that with the exception of a limited body of adverse critics, the overwhelming bulk of public opinion in this country has accepted that Agreement. (Hear, hear.) Criticism on details there will always be. But, Sir, when I make it plain that what we say is not that there are no defects in that arrangement, but that it is the best arrangement that could have been come to under the circumstances with which we were faced, then, Sir, I hope that the voice of adverse criticism will die completely away. I would point out that the critic who takes up the position that we should have secured this or that, that we should have imposed this limit or that condition overlooks the fact that we were not dictating to a conquered enemy. We were two friendly nations attempting to arrive by agreement at a solution of our trade difficulties which would, as far as possible, adjust our differences and lead to friendly relations in the future. What we have secured is the utmost we could have secured if those friendly relations were to continue. Sir, I remember that it was once said to me by an old planter, with whom I was negotiating an agreement on behalf of the Cochin Durbar in respect of a matter concerned with the Anamalai Tea Estates: "No business is good business unless both parties to the transaction are satisfied that they have had a fair deal". Now, Sir, it is only in that way that we can secure the atmosphere which is essential if an agreement of this sort is to work successfully in practice. We felt that the key to the whole situation lay in the position of the agriculturist. We felt that if we could support him through the dark days through which he is passing, there would be every hope that he would regain the position which has been so grievously undermined in the past. If, therefore, in holding the balance we allowed it to be weighed down slightly on the side of the agriculturist, there is no one here who faces the position honestly, squarely and fairly who will deny that we were absolutely right. Both my Honourable friends, Mr. Mody and Sir Cowasji Jehangir, did admit that the rehabilitation of the masses of this country would result in the bettering of the position of the mill industry itself. But while I am extremely glad to have that admission from my Honourable friends, I would like to point out that that does not seem to be the general view of the mill-owning industry in this country; they must realise that the only hope of their prosperity lies in our being able to increase the purchasing power of the masses.

Mr. H. P. Mody: I think all millowners recognise that view.

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore: Had they realised it to its full extent, I am quite sure that their criticism of the Indo-Japanese Agreement would have been less querulous than what it has been.

Mr. H. P. Mody: Slightly different.

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhoré: Let me for a moment turn to the criticism which fell from the Leader of the European Group, a criticism which has been re-echoed by more than one other Member of this House. That criticism was chiefly directed towards emphasising the danger of entering a most-favoured-nation clause in our Agreement with Japan. Now, Sir, I venture to think that it is doing us less than justice to assume that we were not fully aware of all that there is to be said against the inclusion of such a clause. In the first place, I would bring to the notice of the House that we have subjected that clause to two reservations. Firstly, we have retained to ourselves the power of levying special rates of duty in the event of a further depreciation of the yen relative to the rupee. Secondly, we have derogated from that clause by fixing a quota for Japanese cotton piecegoods. But apart from that, and I only refer to those reservations in order that they may not be lost sight of, I would say to my Honourable friend, Sir Leslie Hudson, that while I fully recognise that there is a very great deal to be said about the disadvantages of unqualified most-favoured-nation terms, I would put it to him that there is a great deal to be said on the other side. Now, I have not the time to traverse all that can be said against the inclusion of such a clause, or to set out in detail all that there is to be said on the other side. But Honourable Members who would like to see the other side of the picture, presented by Sir Leslie Hudson, might with advantage read the article entitled "Trade Treaty Making" which appeared in the Trade Supplement of the *London Times* of the 21st October, 1933, and also the very clear statement made by Mr. Runciman in the House of Commons in which he set out very forcibly all that there was to be said on the other side. But apart from these theoretical considerations, it would, I submit, be well to note that foreign nations have not been able to do away with this most-favoured-nation clause even in their most recent treaties. Whatever you may say about the Government of India, I do not think there is anyone who would deny to His Majesty's Government and to the Governments of the dominions some measure of wisdom and experience in these matters. Sir, if their experience and their actions have shown anything, I submit they have shown the practical difficulties in the way of the abandonment of this most-favoured-nation clause. Then, I say, Sir, we are not justified in too lightly and hastily abandoning this clause in our commercial treaties. In conclusion, I would attempt to put quite briefly what it is that we have secured by this Agreement with Japan. We have given Japan the right to send up to 400 million yards of cloth to this country if she can find a sale for it here, in return for buying 1½ million bales of Indian cotton. The value of 1½ million bales of Indian cotton is about 2½ times the value of 400 million yards of cloth, and I would ask the House to remember that point.

My Honourable friend, Mr. Mody, said the other day that in any event Japan would have had to buy our cotton. May I suggest to him that he has overlooked some extremely significant facts? For many years in the past, Japan purchased on the average every year something like 1,600,000 bales of Indian cotton. In the last two years before the boycott, that average had fallen to 1,000,000 bales, despite the increase in Japan's textile production and despite the fact that there was no boycott. I leave it to the House to judge how much further that average would have fallen

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had a relentless boycott been persisted in. I would also leave it to the House to judge whether we have paid too high a price in finding what we have a right to consider a firm purchaser for 1½ million bales of Indian cotton. I have no doubt what the answer of this House will be. We must, however, make it quite clear that this period of the Agreement, namely, three years, we regard as merely a breathing space during which all those who are concerned with the growing of Indian cotton must do everything in their power to lessen the vulnerability of the position in which the grower of short staple cotton finds himself today. Otherwise, Sir, the position at the end of three years may be even more dangerous than it was six months ago.

Now, Sir, on behalf of my colleagues and myself, I must acknowledge with deep appreciation all that has been said about our efforts; and may I also include in the term "colleagues" the officers and the staff of the Secretariat whose magnificent work alone made it possible for us to conclude our task successfully? (Applause.) In these changing times, it is extremely difficult to prophesy in regard to the future. That this Agreement will eventually turn out to the advantage of this country, we cannot today definitely guarantee. We should be extremely disappointed if it did not. But, Sir, what we do claim is that we endeavoured to hold the balance fairly between all the competing Indian interests that were committed to our charge, and that, if we placed the interests of the agriculturist first, it was because we hold that with him lies the key to the national prosperity of this country. (Applause.)

Mr. Sitakanta Mahapatra (Orissa Division: Non-Muhamamadan): Sir, I beg to propose the names of Dr. DeSouza and Mr. Joshi to be added to the proposed names for the Select Committee.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The Chair cannot allow that motion to be made unless it is unanimously accepted. The names for the Select Committee are given with the concurrence of all Parties, and at this stage the Chair is prepared to allow this motion provided there is no dissentient voice.

3 P.M.

(Several Voices of "No, no.")

There is no unanimity about it, and so the Chair cannot allow it.

The question is:

"That the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 7th July, 1934."

The motion was negatived.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The question is:

"That in the motion moved, for the words 'ten days' the words 'three weeks' be substituted."

The Assembly divided:

AYES—32.

Abdul Matin Chaudhury, Mr.
Abdur Rahim, Sir.
Azhar Ali, Mr. Muhammad.
Bhuput Sing, Mr.
Das, Mr. B.
Ghuznavi, Mr. A. H.
Ismail Ali Khan, Kunwar Hajee.
Jadhav, Mr. B. V.
Jehangir, Sir Cowasji.
Jog, Mr. S. G.
Lahuri Chaudhury, Mr. D. K.
Lalchand Navalrai, Mr.
Mahapatra, Mr. Sitakanta.
Maswood Ahmad, Mr. M.
Mitra, Mr. S. C.
Mudaliar, Diwan Bahadur A.
Ramaswami.

Murtuza Saheb Bahadur, Maulvi
Sayyid.
Neogy, Mr. K. C.
Pandya, Mr. Vidya Sagar.
Parma Nand, Bhai.
Patil, Rao Bahadur B. L.
Reddi, Mr. P. G.
Reddi, Mr. T. N. Ramakrishna.
Roy, Kumar G. R.
Sant Singh, Sardar.
Sen, Mr. S. C.
Shafee Daoodi, Maulvi Muhammad.
Singh, Mr. Gaya Prasad.
Sitaramaraju, Mr. B.
Thampan, Mr. K. P.
Uppi Saheb Bahadur, Mr.
Ziauddin Ahmad, Dr.

NOES—58.

Abdul Aziz, Khan Bahadur Mian.
Allah Baksh Khan Tiwana, Khan
Bahadur Malik.
Bajpai, Mr. G. S.
Bhore, The Honourable Sir Joseph.
Chatarji, Mr. J. M.
Chinoy, Mr. Rahimtoola M.
Cox, Mr. A. B.
Dalal, Dr. R. D.
Darwin, Mr. J. H.
DeSouza Dr. F. X.
Dillon, Mr. W.
Dudhoria, Mr. Nabakumar Sing.
Fazal Haq Piracha, Khan Sahib.
Shaikh.
Grantham, Mr. S. G.
Haig, The Honourable Sir Harry.
Hardy, Mr. G. S.
Hezlett, Mr. J.
Hockenhill, Mr. F. W.
Hudson, Sir Leslie.
Irwin, Mr. C. J.
James, Mr. F. E.
Jawahar Singh, Sardar Bahadur Sardar
Sir.
Lal Chand, Hony. Captain Rao
Bahadur Chaudhri.
Lindsay, Sir Darcy.
Mackenzie, Mr. R. T. H.
Macmillan, Mr. A. M.
Metcalf, Mr. H. A. F.
Miller, Mr. E. S.
Mitter, The Honourable Sir Brojendra.

Morgan, Mr. G.
Muazzam Sahib Bahadur, Mr.
Muhammad.
Mujumdar, Sardar G. N.
Mukharji, Mr. D. N.
Mukherjee, Rai Bahadur S. C.
Nihal Singh, Sardar.
Noyce, The Honourable Sir Frank.
Pandit, Rao Bahadur S. R.
Rafuddin Ahmad, Khan Bahadur
Maulvi.
Raghubir Singh, Rai Bahadur
Kunwar.
Rajah, Raja Sir Vasudeva.
Rajah, Rao Bahadur M. C.
Ramakrishna, Mr. V.
Rastogi, Mr. Badri Lal.
Rau, Mr. P. E.
Row, Mr. K. Sanjiva.
Schuster, The Honourable Sir George.
Scott, Mr. J. Ramsay.
Sher Muhammad Khan Gakhar,
Captain.
Singh, Mr. Pradyumna Prashad.
Sloan, Mr. T.
Sohan Singh, Sardar.
Studd, Mr. E.
Tottenham, Mr. G. R. F.
Varma, Mr. S. P.
Wajihuddin, Khan Bahadur Haji.
Wilayatullah, Khan Bahadur H. M.
Yakub, Sir Muhammad.
Yamin Khan, Mr. Muhammad.

The motion was negatived.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Sir, will you please allow me to make a statement? It is that, in view of the attitude taken up by the Government in this matter, I very much regret to say that the three members nominated by the Democratic Party to sit on this Select Committee will be unable to do so.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): May I say this, Sir? Of course I am not in a position to

[Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad.]

make a definite statement myself without consulting my Party; but certainly I feel that ten days' time is too short. We are discussing a Finance Bill inside the House and another Finance Bill outside

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The names will in any case come as part of the motion and it is open to any Party or any Member to decide the course of action. The Chair thinks the House should get through the motion. The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Tariff Act, 1894, for certain purposes (Textile Protection) be referred to a Select Committee, consisting of Diwan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, Mr. H. P. Mody, Mr. B. Sitaramaraju, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, Mr. B. Das, Mr. K. P. Thampan, Mr. S. C. Sen, Mr. R. S. Sarma, Lala Rameshwar Prasad Bagla, Mr. Nabakumar Sing Dudhoria, Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer, Raja Sir Vasudeva Rajah, Mr. J. Ramsay Scott, Mr. F. E. James, Mr. A. H. Ghuznavi, the Honourable Sir Frank Noyce, Mr. G. S. Hardy and the Mover, with instructions to report within ten days, 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.

Sir Abdur Rahim (Calcutta and Suburbs: Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I should like to say, in regard to what has been stated by my Honourable friends, Mr. Neogy and Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, that there is a feeling among a great many Members on this side of the House that in some of these Committees they have not been allowed sufficient time in order to make the investigation as complete as they would like to make, that in fact there has been a great deal of hustling of members in Select Committee. Under these circumstances, considering that we are fairly hardworked during this Session, I should like to ask Government to consider whether they cannot accommodate us in this matter. I think, as a rule, members of the Select Committees have done their best, but there is a certain point beyond which they ought not to be driven, and I should like to appeal to my Honourable friend, the Commerce Member, if he cannot see his way to accommodate the members of the Select Committee who have already given their names.

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhowe: Sir, the only point that my Honourable friend, the Leader of the Opposition, has raised is that the members of the Select Committee should not be driven in any way. So far as it lies in my power, I most certainly shall not do that. I am sure that the Chairman of the Committee—I cannot speak for him,—will also do all in his power to see that no unreasonable demand is made upon any member of the Select Committee. Beyond that I cannot say anything, nor can I make any promise.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): Under our Standing Orders, it is always open to a Select Committee, if it finds that it is unable to finish its business within the time prescribed by the House, to come to the House again and ask for an extension of time. Though, in this instance, ten days have been fixed, it is open to the Select Committee to come again before the House and ask for an extension of time. The Chair thinks that Honourable Members should decide whether they will continue on the Committee or not after seeing whether they are given a fair chance to examine the Bill in the Select Committee. That would, on the whole, be a wise course. Anyhow, the motion includes all the names, and, therefore, there is no need to take a hurried decision now.

THE INDIAN FINANCE BILL.

The Honourable Sir George Schuster (Finance Member): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill to fix the duty on salt manufactured in, or imported by land into, certain parts of British India, to vary certain duties leviable under the Indian Tariff Act, 1894, to fix maximum rates of postage under the Indian Post Office Act, 1898, to fix rates of income-tax and super-tax, further to amend the Indian Paper Currency Act, 1923, and to vary the excise duty on silver leviable under the Silver (Excise Duty) Act, 1930, be taken into consideration."

Sir, it has not been usual in the past for the Finance Member in moving the consideration of the Finance Bill to make any speech, and I do not propose to depart from that precedent. The only thing that I would like to put before the House on this occasion is this, that circumstances are rather special this year. The financial proposals of the Government by way of taxation and otherwise are contained not only in the Finance Bill, but in two excise Bills, and the really important new proposals are contained in the two excise Bills which I introduced the other day. Therefore, Sir, I hope that we shall receive the co-operation of this House in dealing with the Finance Bill as expeditiously as possible, and that Honourable Members will bear in mind that there will be other opportunities for discussing the issues, and the most important issues which have been raised in this year's financial proposals. The incident which has just occurred shows how we all of us appreciate what a difficult legislative programme we have this year and how difficult it is going to be to fit in time for everything. I am sure that we on our side will co-operate with Honourable Members, and I only wish to remind them of that simple fact that the Finance Bill this year is, I hope, going to prove a comparatively non-contentious measure. Sir, I move.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): Motion moved:

"That the Bill to fix the duty on salt manufactured in, or imported by land into, certain parts of British India, to vary certain duties leviable under the Indian Tariff Act, 1894, to fix maximum rates of postage under the Indian Post Office Act, 1898, to fix rates of income-tax and super-tax, further to amend the Indian Paper Currency Act, 1923, and to vary the excise duty on silver leviable under the Silver (Excise Duty) Act, 1930, be taken into consideration."

The House has experienced that a great many Members desire to take part in the discussions of the various measures, and one handicap for the whole House is the absence of a Standing Order prescribing the time limit for speeches with regard to legislation. If only the time can be equitably distributed, on almost every Bill, almost every Member, who wants to take part in the discussions, can take part. It has been pointed out by my predecessor that in matters covered by the scope of the Standing Orders, and in the absence of a Standing Order, the House can impose a restraint upon itself. If it is the desire of the House, for instance, that in the discussion of the Finance Bill, no speech should exceed half an hour, except with the permission of the Chair, the Chair is prepared to agree to that. It is entirely left to the House.

Several Honourable Members: We cannot agree.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): Honourable Members don't want to have a time limit?

Several Honourable Members: No, Sir, we don't agree.

Sir Abdur Rahim (Calcutta and Suburbs: Muhammadan Urban): Sir, we will try to cut short our speeches, but we don't want to lay down any precedent for the future.

Khan Bahadur Haji Wajihuddin (Cities of the United Provinces: Muhammadan Urban): Sir, the present depression has affected every class of people in the country. The persons who are affected most are the lower middle class whose income ranges between Rs. 50 and Rs. 150 per mensem. These persons have to maintain a large family. They have to maintain a number of their relatives who are unable to find employment and they have to keep their position in society. The burden of indirect taxation which the Government have imposed this year falls on this class and is felt very acutely by them. Any additional direct taxation will be a great cruelty.

Sir, I personally know a number of cases in which great hardship has been experienced during the past. It is not the fault of the Income-tax Department or any particular officer, but it is due to the policy introduced and adopted by this House. So far as the small shopkeepers are concerned, I feel very strongly that in many cases it is really not possible for them to produce such statements of their income as may satisfy the Income-tax Department on the point that they are not taxable, and so they are at the mercy of the assessment officers who go round the bazar and prepare notes for their own guidance or are left at the mercy of their neighbours and rivals in the trade from whom information is obtained in certain cases. There is some justification, no doubt, in imposing income-tax on the income of salaried servants which this class of people get regularly after a deduction of certain percentage, because they have now been profited to a great extent through the fall in prices of commodities generally, and they not only really get a certain fixed amount monthly, but most of them get their annual graded increments too. But, Sir, the case of small traders, repairers, hawkers and agents is quite different and should in no way be compared with them. This class of people is neither generally educated, nor can they afford to meet the expenses of book-keeping. Their incomes are limited and also subject to fluctuation every day, and, in these hard days, many of them are the worst victims of general depression all round the country. Sir, I assure you that last year was very troublesome for most of such people. In the absence of proper accounts of one's income, the Income-tax Officer is quite justified in making any estimate of the income as he likes of the assessee which no doubt is based on any information, right or wrong, received by him. I, therefore, submit that this class of people is subjected to very great hardship and is in a really helpless position, and their case fully deserves to be considered favourably.

Sir, I also find no justification in imposing a higher rate of taxation in the case of "registered firms" than on "unregistered firms" or "individuals". I think registered firms should be entitled to have certain advantages and facilities over the others, but here I find the reverse is the case. The Partnership Act has only been passed last year, and, under the said Act, thousands of private firms, consisting of two or more partners, are now being registered throughout the country. Irrespective of the fact as to

what capital they have or what their annual output is, they are now bound to pay a higher rate of taxation. May I ask, Sir, whether this has been imposed on them by way of penalty for having themselves "registered"? If this is not the case, as I believe it is not, then there should be no difference between registered and unregistered firms, and the scale of rate fixed for various figures of income should be equally applied to all. I do hope, the Honourable the Finance Member will consider my point and give relief to those who do not come under the category of well-to-do people and who are very much helpless nowadays. I suggest, Sir, that this last Finance Bill of the Honourable Sir George Schuster should not be a source of further difficulties to the traders in these hard and difficult times.

Sir, I am very much disappointed to find that the postage on book packets and samples has been proposed to be increased from April next. This will no doubt hit a great deal all the traders of this country who are already suffering from general depression in the business. In the year 1931, I suggested a quarter anna postage for a packet weighing two tolas or fraction thereof and I raised the point through an amendment, not only with a view to reducing the postage merely, but to increase the revenue as well. With the exception of Mr. K. Ahmed, who opposed me on that occasion—he has now ceased to attend this Honourable House for a long time and so he is not present today,—all Honourable Members who spoke on my motion were in support of the reduction proposed by me upon which my Honourable friend, Mr. Sams, the then Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs, stood up and said:

"Sir, I do not propose to controvert any of the arguments that have been urged in favour of this motion, because I am prepared to look into the question and see what my Department can do. In the short time that I have had at my disposal since receiving notice of the amendment, it has been impossible for me to look carefully into so delicate and intricate a matter as rates. I would deprecate the House taking any decision on the question and if my Honourable friend, Khan Bahadur Haji Wajihuddin, will withdraw his amendment, I shall be most happy to go into the whole question."

You will find it at page 2621 of the Assembly Debates of the 24th March, 1931. I may remind the House that on this my Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Yakub, proposed that consideration of my amendment be adjourned for a day, but Mr. Sams said in reply that he required "adequate time" for consideration of the question. I now find with regret that, as a result of consideration for a long period of three years, instead of reducing the rate from half an anna to quarter of an anna, it has been increased to three quarters of an anna. In his speech delivered the other day, in introducing the Budget, my Honourable friend, the Finance Member, said that this change has been proposed "as the book packet method of transmission is undoubtedly being abused and a change is urgently necessary to stop the diversion, with consequent loss of revenue that is occurring of postcard traffic to the book packet category". In the circumstances explained by my Honourable friend, I would say that the remedy suggested by him cannot solve the problem in the true sense. He should have proposed half anna postcard instead of three quarter anna packet, and this, I say from the business point of view, would be a source of increase to a great extent rather than a decrease in revenue. Sir, I find no justification in allowing quarter anna rate for "newspapers", "monthly journals" and "advertisers" and denying same concessions to "packets" of *bond fide* trade circulars catalogues, printed matters and samples. Perhaps the Government are quite unaware of the fact that many business houses have already curtailed

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their expenses by reducing the number of trade circulars by post and have adopted newspaper advertising scheme which costs them cheaper than post circulars, and further increase in the proposed postage rate is bound to make further reduction in the number of packets to be transmitted through post resulting in loss to the Postal Department. Let me say, Sir, that without all the facts in view the Department cannot expect to increase its income simply by raising the rates. I would earnestly advise the Government to start a "reduced rate" policy only as a trial for a year, and watch the consequent good result thereof, which, I am sure, would be quite satisfactory to all concerned. I may say that the Postal Department is proposing to cut the branch on which they are resting, and they do not care to see which way the wind is blowing. They must remember that business is the soul of life and they should run the Department on commercial lines. Nothing is impossible to a willing mind. Do not calculate only the loss by reduction of postage, but add the extra volume of business which will be done as a result of reduced rate; unless the officials concerned consider the point in this light, they will not be able to come to the right conclusion. Anyhow, I have done my duty and I do not wish to say more in this matter.

I must congratulate the Commerce Member for his timely action of removing the duty from hide, but, Sir, may I ask why the duty from skin has not been removed? Is it not a fact that the export of both raw and tanned skin has been decreasing from year to year? Do Government want to see this trade totally collapse and ruined like the hide trade, and then come forward with a proposal to remove the duty from skin? Sir, I think the Government are labouring under a wrong notion that India has a monopoly of the skin, and no matter if there is a duty, the importing countries will have to buy. The position is not such. India comes fourth in order of export of skin, and America, the chief buyer of skin, has reduced its quota of purchase. The chief importing countries for skins are the United Kingdom and America, and both these countries offer competitive prices for Indian skin. The South African Government have sanctioned a bounty of £39,000 to the hide and skin export trade of that country, and it has become very difficult for the Indian exporter to compete with the other countries which receive half from their Government. I hope the Government of India will, if not this year, surely next year, remove the duty from skin also.

[At this stage, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty) vacated the Chair which was then occupied by Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury).]

As the new Constitution is under preparation, I take this opportunity to draw the attention of the Government to certain important points which I could get no proper chance to discuss on previous occasions. Sir, I desire to appeal for safeguard in the new Constitution for one of the first and foremost principles of our liberty, namely, the immunity of the personal law of each and every community of India from interference by the State, which, though no doubt guaranteed by Parliamentary Statute, has been jeopardised by the passage of the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929. In spite of the fact that the Government consistently held the fundamental principle of religious neutrality, they took part in this particular matter four years ago, simply on the plea to alleviate human suffering, which is a very good intention and I appreciate it warmly. But I find that Indian masses consider such alleged reforms as an interference in

religious matters which no doubt have excited the greatest resentment. I may say, Sir, that Indians individually are perfectly at liberty to believe or practise according to their own religion, and I am also satisfied that the Government had no intention to impose any restriction by means of legislation unless it was perfectly in harmony with the views of confirmed religious leaders of each community in India. It is no doubt an admitted fact, that so far as the Muslim marriage is concerned, it is a religious sanction, and the Muslims are governed by their personal law. Under the circumstances, the Government on the last occasion adopted a policy which was considered as an interference with our personal law. I, therefore, feel that it is now absolutely necessary that some clear provision should be made in the proposals of His Majesty's Government for the Indian Constitutional Reforms. The fact is this that when I introduced in 1933 my Bill to exclude Muslims from the operation of the Sarda Act on religious grounds, the Honourable Member of the Government declared on the floor of the House that when the Government supported the Sarda Bill in 1929:

"It was felt that it would tend to alleviate human suffering and to promote the welfare of the race and that it was not from any wanton desire to interfere with the religious practice or beliefs of any community in this country."

Hence, the Government were not able to even accept my motion for circulation of the amending Bill for eliciting Muslim public opinion thereon. I was very much disappointed with this unexpected answer and I cannot understand how the Government can claim that they supported the Sarda Bill simply to better the lot of the suffering humanity, for the institution of early marriages is not the solitary evil under which the Indian nation groans. The Government can take credit to themselves for such a humanitarian principle, and I think it is their duty to realise that they had supported the Sarda Bill in the face of almost united Muslim opposition and thus unintentionally wounded their religious susceptibilities. Sir, the least that they should have done was to support my motion for circulation of the Bill whole-heartedly. May I ask, Sir, what justification the Government had in taking part in a matter which conflicts with the religious code of Muslims and inflicting a piece of legislation on them under the pious garb of humanity when the Government themselves admit that:

"It is the fixed principle of the Government of India not to interfere in any way whatsoever with the personal laws and customs of the different peoples of India unless they have very strong and conclusive evidence that the change is desired by the people who are affected."

Now, the question naturally arises as to what extent have the Government adhered to that principle in this particular matter and on what authority they decided to improve the lot of the unwilling people? In my last year's speech in this House, I already quoted certain references from the speech delivered in the Assembly on the 3rd February, 1931, by my esteemed friend, the Leader of the House, the Honourable Sir Brojendra Mitter, which clearly shows that so far as the Muslims and this Bill are concerned, the Government had adopted a policy which was disapproved throughout the country. I may be pardoned, Sir, if I ask the Government in what other spheres have they acted upon their professions of humanity. Was it not real humanity to fight against the intoxicating drink evil? Is it not a fact that for the sake of 20 crores of rupees in revenue, the Government opposed the Prohibition Resolution moved by me in 1925? May I ask, Sir, is it not real humanity to put to an end the shameless evil of prostitution? The whole country is clamouring against this, but I am doubtful whether the Government have ever done anything to eradicate

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this. Will they be prepared to accept a Bill if I may bring it tomorrow to that effect? I say, Sir, where there is a will, there is a way. Have Government ever shown sympathy for those Muslim ladies who today find themselves in great distress being unable to claim *Khula* or dissolution of marriages for want of *Sharai Qazi*, which post has long since been abolished by the Government of India for no valid reason. I think I must point out quite frankly that it is not my intention to charge the Government with having intentionally adopted the policy of supporting the Sarda Bill, nor do I charge them with having intentionally wounded the Muslim sentiment by opposing my motion for circulation of my Amendment Bill, but what I wanted at the time of moving for circulation was not to seek an immediate exclusion of the Muslim community from the operation of the Sarda Act, but to urge that an overwhelming majority of the Muslim community considers the Sarda Act as an interference in their religion. If the majority of Muslim public opinion turns out in favour of my Amendment Bill, then and there alone I would have requested the permission to bring the consideration motion before the House, otherwise not. This being the whole situation, I do not see any reasonable ground on which the Government opposed this very modest request since the Government themselves seek to be guided by public opinion. I may remind the House that the motion for the circulation of the Khaddar Bill to elicit public opinion last year came from the Government themselves. I now urge the Government for the revival of the post of Kazi in India. According to my information, up to the year 1846, there was a post of Kazi appointed by the Government which was very much helpful in disposing of cases of dissolution of marriages, restoration of conjugal rights, etc., among the Muslims. According to the Muslim Law, such cases cannot take proper course unless the judge is a Muslim. If a man becomes unable to discharge the duties of a husband towards his wife, on account of insanity, leprosy, etc., etc., the wife is fully entitled to apply to a court for legal separation. A man leaves his house without any information to his wife and remains absent from home for many years and no news are heard about him and his wife has no other means of livelihood and cannot remarry any other man until a legal separation is effected, and this can in no way be carried out unless the Judge is a Muslim. So, in the absence of such a Judge, what will be the consequences? She appeals to a Court of which the Judge is a non-Muslim and he effects the legal separation. Now, if she becomes satisfied with his decision and marries another man, this second marriage will be an invalid one in the eye of her religion and thus she would be leading an immoral life. If she is not satisfied with the decision of that Judge, she does not marry on grounds of religious prohibitions. How is she then to lead her life? How is she to provide for her little children? Is it not a picture worth pitying? Is it not the duty of the Government to do the needful in the matter? This is not a new demand, and we are inviting the attention of the Government for many years, but to no effect. Sir, in the year 1917, on the occasion of the visit of the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India, just before the introduction of the Montford Reform scheme, a deputation of Ulemas and leading Muslims, attending upon them at this Imperial City, put forth in an item of their address a proposal to the same effect. No doubt it is a most discouraging thought that since then it has not received the least attention on the part of the Government. Representations, which were made from time to time by Muslim Conferences and meetings, remain no doubt a dead letter. I, therefore, invite the immediate attention of the Government of India, and, through them, of His

Majesty's Government to the effect that it is absolutely necessary that clear provisions should be added on these important matters in the forthcoming Constitution. It is never too late to mend. All is well that ends well.

Sir, I also wish to refer to another case of unsympathetic treatment of the Government with some of the house-owners in some of the cantonments, that is, the land policy of the Government recently inaugurated in the name of reform in the cantonment administration. So far as I have been informed, I can say that the house-owners have millions invested in bungalows built by them in the cantonments, for the residence of military officers. Time there was when the military officers of the old days induced people to invest their money in building houses for military officers in the cantonments. It is said that the Government then approached the people if they would come to the help of the Government and build the houses they needed for the residence of their military officers. It is also said that all sorts of facilities, concessions and inducements were offered. One such inducement was the grant of plots of land required for building such houses free of all rent in perpetuity. I understand that there were no leases then. The Government wanted houses to be built and the officers commanding the station, the Brigade and the District gave free grants of land for this purpose. I understand there is no record of such grants with the Government. For several scores of years, these people were recognised to be the owners of the land and the house for all practical purposes. They had a free right to sell, mortgage the property or to give it away as a gift, if it was built on an old free holding. In 1924, the Government enacted the New Cantonments Act, with the object of introducing the spirit of reform in cantonment administration and from that date began an era of some harassment and loss to the house-owners and the gradual destruction of their cherished rights and interests in property. The Government created a land department and this department has found out some old rules and regulations which bear the name of Bengal Regulations. These regulations are said to have been made between the years 1789 and 1899 and are said to give the Government a right to resume the land given away 80 or 100 years back as a free grant, if they choose to do so, by paying the cost of the material of the property standing thereon. So far as I can understand there is no record to show that these grants were made under those regulations. It is not asserted on behalf of the Government that those regulations were ever mentioned to the house-owners when they were granted land to build bungalows thereon. I think, Sir, that in 99 cases out of 100, the owners did not know if these regulations at all existed and, if so, under which old discarded record they lay buried. But, Sir, the land department of the Government has now disclosed these regulations and the Government claim, on the basis of these, that there is a legitimate presumption that all land in the cantonments belongs to the Government and that the grants which were made in old days to house-owners were subject to those regulations for the mere reason that those regulations governed such grants of land and existed in some corner of the Government office. I am speaking with regard to bungalows for military officers only and not for other houses of the cantonments. Sir, I leave it to you to judge how far such a presumption can be justified and what its moral value can be. To frame some regulations, to keep them hidden from the public at the time when grants of land were made to induce the people to invest their money in building bungalows for military officers and then, after the passing of scores of years, when the property built on these sites has perhaps changed hands several times, to come out with a claim that the land was given away

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subject to Bengal Regulations which gave the Government a right to resume the land and to take possession of the property on payment of some nominal compensation—I am putting this matter before the House with a view to be enlightened if my information is in any way wrong. Sir, I know that the land in private occupation in a cantonment is of three definite descriptions. Either it is Government land, given away in old ways as a free grant, or given on lease, or it is a privately-owned land never acquired on payment of price by the Government, but simply included in the cantonment as a sanitary measure necessary in the interests of troops. The Bench of two Honourable Judges of the High Court of Calcutta exploded this theory of the Government and held in the well-known Barrackpore case that such a presumption was wrong and that the Government should produce evidence of their being the owner of the land, before they could be legally recognised as owners. But this view was not accepted by the Privy Council and on the merits of the case the Privy Council held the presumption to hold good in that case. This, I think, has given Government a handle to make claims of land. I understand demands are being made from the house-owners to admit Government ownership of land and the apprehension is this that, when this is secured, the next step would be a demand for lease and rent. On the score of this presumption, a large number of bungalows in the cantonments of Peshawar, Nowshera, Kohat and Rawalpindi were resumed last year. Out of the houses that have already been resumed, some were such as were occupied by the owners themselves. I think that the Government plea is that they want more houses and, therefore, they are having them by resuming sites, but I have reason to believe that the Peshawar and Rawalpindi house-owners had made it clear that, if more houses were needed, they were willing to construct them, on vacant portions of their large compounds and reserve them for military use. There were building sites also available in those cantonments, and if those sites were leased to them, they would have built new bungalows thereon for the exclusive use of military officers. It is also a fact that most of the houses already resumed were in occupation of military officers. May I ask, Sir, what was the meaning of resumption in the case of those houses? I think the only change is that instead of a private person, the Government are the owners of the house. The right of an owner to live in his house has been recognised by Statute, and when the Government brought an amending Bill to withdraw this right in 1930, this House disapproved the Government attempt by rejecting the Bill. But what could not be achieved in the Legislature is now being achieved by executive proceedings under cover of a right to resume. Sir, this procedure has created an impression in the minds of people that the so-called resumption is nothing but a desire to become owners of valuable houses by paying nominal amounts as compensation. I, therefore, ask, Sir, is it strengthening co-operation, or destroying the one that exists? Sir, I hope you will excuse me for saying that the Government may use their powerful agency, but it is not a good policy to sow discontent where there is good-will and mutual regard at present. They must remember that contentment is a great gain,—and no doubt the blessings are not valued till they are gone. If, Sir, the Government want houses, the house-owners should be given a chance to provide the number of bungalows required; and, without good and strong reasons, the policy of resumption should be stopped in the interest of both the rulers and the ruled.

In conclusion, I may be permitted to say a few words with regard to the question of the separation of Sadar Bazaar from the Cantonment of

Ambala. Since the last few months, I am receiving repeated representations from responsible quarters against the said proposal. Out of them I would like to read at least one signed by hundreds of prominent gentlemen of all castes and creeds, which runs as follows:

"We the undersigned residents of Suddar Bazar, Ambala Cantonment, strongly oppose any scheme of separating Suddar Bazar from the Military Area on the following grounds:

(1) It will adversely affect the trade, which is mainly dependent on the support of the military troops.

(2) It will considerably decrease the value of landed property.

(3) It will affect the sanitation of the Suddar Bazaar, as the proposed Municipal Committee will have no sufficient funds to spend on this item.

(4) By the creation of the New Municipal Committee women of ill-fame and other bad characters will come to reside in this area, which will seriously affect the morals of the troops.

(5) The proposed New Municipal Committee will be a hot-bed for communal politics and personal disputes.

(6) It is requested that the people will gladly submit to the rule of a corporation, a sole or nominated Board, rather than suffer separation."

Under the circumstances, I would appeal to the Government to reconsider their decision in the matter or at least postpone further progress in this direction until the residents of Sadar Bazar, Ambala, may submit their unanimous demand in this matter. The residents of Ambala would be well advised to remember that; "United we rise; divided we fall" and "Haste makes Waste". They should come to an agreement amongst themselves and then should press their demand in this direction. Sir, I must apologise for the time I have taken today and I now resume my seat.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa: Muhammadan): Sir, I congratulate my Honourable friend, Haji Wajihuddin, on his catching the eye of the Honourable the President on opening the debate today on the Finance Bill: Sir, I hope I should be excused if I take some time on different subjects today, because, during the Budget discussion, I did not get a chance and I could not catch the eye of the Honourable the President and was thus not in a position to express my views on that occasion on any subject.

First of all, I want to say that we on this side of the House seriously object to this attitude of the Government which they have adopted today about not allowing sufficient time to the Select Committee to consider the Textile Protection Bill. Sir, this is not the first time that we are feeling this trouble. This is a long-standing grievance, a sort of what may be called a chronic disease, that the Government attitude in this connection always is that they do not give sufficient time to us to consider their different measures. You will find, Sir, that the Government do not realise as to what difficulties we are in. They think that just as they have so many Secretariats, so we have a large Secretariat to back us, or they think that just as they have such a large number of clerks sitting in the galleries, so also we have got a gallery here of clerks who may help us in all these measures. An Honourable Member of the Executive Council is responsible for a particular portfolio or for a particular work, just as you will find from the fact that as soon as the motion about the reference of the textile protection measure to a Select Committee was passed, my Honourable friends, Sir Joseph Bhoré and Sir Frank Noyce, both left the House, because they have not got sufficient interest in the general Finance

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Bill. And the burden now is on the shoulders of my Honourable friend, Sir George Schuster. But what is the case for us? Just now we have finished one measure, and the other measure is before us and we are asked to express our views on it. Sir, we take one Bill in the morning and another late in the evening. It is very difficult for us, after giving so much time and after reading so many papers, to get sufficient time to discuss measures in the Select Committee at 10 A.M. and after 5 P.M. I have been in several Select Committees, and on several occasions I have found that the meetings of the Select Committee have taken place before 10 A.M. and sometimes even after 5 P.M. Tomorrow, there is a meeting of the Standing Haj Committee at 10 A.M. How is it possible for us to study in the night the papers which are supplied by the Department and see what questions are there and what supplementary questions should be asked on them and, then, in the morning, at 10 A.M., attend a meeting of the Select Committee, and from 11 A.M. sit in the Assembly and make its quorum. Even at the present moment, all the Members of the Treasury Benches have left the House and we are making the quorum of it. If the Non-Official Members leave the House, I am afraid there will be no quorum. Now, Sir, the Bill that has been referred to the Select Committee contains several different items and it is really impossible to do any justice to them in the Select Committee even if it were to sit for ten days continuously. There are so many different subjects and there are the two reports of the Tariff Board and the two Agreements to be considered, and then there are volumes of evidence to be gone through. So, where is the time to discuss that Bill in the Select Committee in ten days only? Further, we are sitting even tomorrow, and during all these ten days there are only two Sundays and my friends in the Committee are to sit in the Assembly for the remaining eight days. I hope that my friends opposite will not be willing to sit on a Sunday though they sit on Fridays. If Government say that they are willing to sit on Sundays also, I say, Sir, we have other works to do. Then, Sir, where is the time to consider various points and how will it be possible for them to prepare the report unless the report is already printed and typed to be placed before the Select Committee after 5 P.M. any day and the Members may be asked to sign it.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury): Order, order: The House has decided to allow ten days for the Select Committee and the Honourable Member has got no right to criticise that decision of the House except on a motion for rescinding that decision.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: I bow to your ruling, Sir, but I want to criticise the action of Government which they take on such occasions. I am not saying this with reference to this particular Bill only, but my criticism is with regard to the attitude of Government generally. (Hear, hear.) Whenever any measure comes before the House, they do not think whether it is reasonable or unreasonable. They always come and say: "Come and decide it by means of votes". They are aware, of course, that they have got 26 Nominated Official Members and 13 Nominated Non-Official Members and also they have got ten Members of the European Group. Apart from that, there are many Yamin Khans and similar others to support them. (Laughter.)

*"Agar shah roze ra go-ed shub-ust in
Ba Ba-ed goft inak mah parvin."*

Then, there are Anglo-Indians who are Indians and Europeans at the same time. These men sometimes put a garb of an Indian and take their seats as an Indian, but when the time of supporting the Government comes, they become Europeans and blind supporters of the bureaucracy. If the Government term the day time as night, they will shout that it is night and the moon and stars are shining in the sky. I cannot understand their mentality and no one can ever understand them.

Sir, though I have got many grievances, at present I will restrict myself to the question of agriculture. The condition of the agriculturist nowadays is so bad that it cannot even be imagined. There is none nowadays who can purchase even their land. Not only have they not got sufficient clothing, but they, zamindars and tenants, are starving. They are not half-clothed, but they go rather naked nowadays. Even if they want to sell their lands, there is no one willing to purchase them at any price and the Government Members are sitting tight on their Benches and they always give the lame excuse that the subject of agriculture is a provincial subject. My experience is that the Government are really doing nothing for these agriculturists and they do not want to do anything for them. They shirk their responsibility. Whenever we raise any question about the betterment of these agriculturists, they say they have done something for the wheat and that the subject is a provincial one. But I wish to say now that the agriculturists really deserve some sympathy from the Central Government and Provincial Governments cannot do anything for them with regard to many questions. (Hear, hear.) Apart from this, Provincial Governments have limited resources, they cannot do more than what they are doing. Whatever they are realising from zamindars and tenants is in itself a cruelty. Sir, I cannot understand this lame excuse of transferred or provincial subjects. All the milk which is in the cow is being taken by the Central Government, and then the Provincial Governments are asked to feed the cow. Is it, Sir, just and proper? All the money which the agriculturists earn and all the troubles which they undergo in producing the agricultural products are for the benefit of the Central Government. Whatever they earn, they give to the Central Government. Whatever they get, they give to my Honourable friend, Sir George Schuster, for maintaining a big Army in this country. Their last drop of blood is to quench the thirst of the Army. But when the question comes to help them, my Honourable friends, Mr. Bajpai and Sir George Schuster, stand up and say that this a provincial subject and they cannot do anything for them. I want to know really who pays these 77 crores of rupees under the head "Revenue"? Is it not true that it is the agriculturists who pay all these 77 crores, 32 lakhs and 88 thousand rupees?

Sir Cowasji Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban):
What about income-tax?

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: I am coming to income-tax presently. Who pays the income-tax? I want my Honourable friend to inform
4 P.M. the House who pays the income-tax really. Out of whose money does Sir Cowasji Jehangir pay the income-tax? It is the agriculturist who enables men like Sir Cowasji Jehangir to pay their income-tax. These gentlemen invest their money in industrial mills in which they produce cloths, and, by selling these cloths to the agriculturists, they get money and by this way they make huge profits and, out of these profits, they pay income-tax to Government and keep a large portion of

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the profits to themselves. If the agriculturist does not purchase their cloth, how can the industrialist get money to pay his income-tax? In this way, Sir, it will be seen that the entire revenue which the Government get is really the money of the agriculturists. If you will see the expenditure side, it will be found that only five lakhs and 59 thousand are to be spent this year on irrigation. This is the nominal amount which it to be spent for the benefit of the agriculturists while 77 crores are taken from the agriculturists. The great trouble which we feel is that Government interest themselves only in those subjects in which my Honourable friends of the European Group, who are all absent now—and none of them are present in this House,—are interested. As the Members of the European Group have no interest in agriculture, so also Government do not take any interest in agriculture. But I want to warn them, though they are not here, and I hope my Honourable friend, Colonel Gidney, who is an Anglo-Indian and who can represent the Europeans as well, will inform them that they cannot get any profit unless they improve the condition of the agriculturist in this country. If they want to benefit themselves, they must do something to increase the purchasing power of the agriculturists, otherwise they will be nowhere.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney (Nominated Non-Official): I must ask for very long notice of that message.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Twenty hours notice is quite sufficient. (Laughter.)

I want to tell my friends that it is only the agriculturist who can purchase the articles manufactured in their industries and so they must be sympathetic to this poor class of people. I have already shown that 95 per cent of the revenue of the Government really comes from the agriculturists, but the Government in these days do not spend even one per cent for the improvement of the agriculturists in the country. In this connection I want to make certain suggestions.

Firstly, there must be a Minister for Agriculture in this country. I hope, Sir, you will excuse me if I say something on this question now, because I was not able to catch the eye of the President when the question of re adjustment of portfolios was discussed. At present, this Department is a kind of hctch-potch Department. Whatever has been left out from the different Departments are entrusted to my Honourable friend, Mr. Bajpai. Sir, clerks keep important papers in separate files and when they find some minor papers which they cannot keep in any particular file, they start a new file for it and call it the miscellaneous file, and so this is the miscellaneous Department of the Government of India. Luckily my Honourable friends, Sir Brojendra Mitter, Sir George Schuster and Sir Harry Haig are each responsible for one Department only, but my Honourable friends, Sir Joseph Bhole, Sir Frank Noyce and Sir Fazl-i-Husain are responsible each for more than one Department. You will find that the Commerce and Industries Department are Departments just like a husband having three wives, while the Department of Education, Health and Lands is like a wife with three husbands who cannot do justice to anybody. (Laughter.) That is the case. There is some relation between Commerce and Railways, there is some relation between Industries and Labour, but if you will look into the Department of my Honourable friend, Mr. Bajpai

Mr. G. S. Bajpai (Secretary Department of Education, Health and Lands): I think the suggestion of polyandrous practice levelled against me or against Sir Fazl-i-Husain will not be appreciated by a true Muslim like him.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: If you find the Department of Education, Health and Lands, you will see that sometimes the question of emigration is dealt with, sometimes the question of health, and sometimes the question of pilgrimage, and all sorts of questions are dealt with in this Department, and I think it is very difficult to do justice to any of these questions by the Department which administers them. I suggest, therefore, that there must be a Minister for Agriculture at the Centre and a Minister for Agriculture also in the Provinces. In the Provinces it is often found that the Ministers are called the Ministers for Local Self-Government or the Ministers for Education, and so on, but I do not find at least in my Province any separate Minister for Agriculture.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir: There is a Minister who looks after agriculture in every Province.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: In my Province, the Minister for Education is also in charge of the Department of Agriculture. I want a separate Minister for Agriculture. In the Government records, the Minister is called the Minister for Education, and because the importance of agriculture is not present in the minds of the Government, they call this in this way. I want that there should be a separate Minister in charge of only the Department of Agriculture in the Centre and in Provinces. Some of my Honourable friends may say that the creation of a separate Ministry for Agriculture in every Province will involve certain expenditure, but I say that this question of expenditure should not stand in the way of the creation of separate Ministries of Agriculture, because this will benefit the agriculturists in every way and because almost the entire revenue of the Central and Provincial Governments really comes out of the pocket of the agriculturists. India is an agricultural country, 95 per cent of the population live on agriculture, and so their interests must be foremost in the eyes of the Government.

My second suggestion is this. The Imperial Council of Agricultural Research should be converted into the Imperial Council of Agriculture. At present the work done by this Department is to make researches. What is that research work? I have got here before me several reports, but I do not want to waste the time of the House by reading them. It is said in these reports that at such and such a time the paddy and wheat grow and the length of the flower is so much and the breadth of the leaf is so much, and so on. What is all this nonsense? What have we got to do if the leaf of the paddy or the wheat is two inches in width or one inch in width? What have they done for improving the condition of the agriculturist and to improve the productive capacity of the land? What have they done for improving irrigation in this country? What have they done to dig good wells in the country? At what rate they supply electricity? What have they contributed to the agriculturists when they wanted some help for improving the irrigation system of the land? They have not done anything in that direction. They have only done some research work. I submit that this Department should not restrict itself to research work alone, rather it should see to all other aspects of the case.

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Another complaint that I have to bring to the notice of the House is this. It is well known that all the representatives of the people are in the Central Legislature and yet this Imperial Council of Agricultural Research have taken only two Members from this Assembly to serve on their Council. Is it not shameful that, in spite of there being so many Members in the Assembly, they have taken only two? How is it possible then for Members, who come from different Provinces and who really know the condition and the situation of their Province, to express their views? What they have done in that connection is that last year there was one meeting of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research held in one of the rooms of the Assembly Sector of the House. But as yet we do not know whether such a meeting will again be held or not. I think at every Session of the Assembly they should have two sittings, one at the beginning and one at the end, so that Members from the different Provinces may attend the meetings and express their views. About three years have passed, but these two gentlemen, who were elected three years ago, are still there and no motion has been made to elect new members to that Council. We find motions for fresh elections for all Standing Committees and other Committees being made either every year or every three years, but I do not know whether these members of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research are life members or whether there will be any change.

Mr. G. S. Bajpai: They are members for the life of the Assembly.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: If so, Government should change the order or circular, and there should be an election every year. And, in future, it should be called the Imperial Council of Agriculture.

My third suggestion in this connection is that there must be a Standing Committee for Agriculture as there are other Standing Committees for other Departments. There must be a sufficient number of members there to advise Government, and their meetings should be more frequent than at present. At present you find that the Standing Committee for Education, Health and Lands meet about once a year and that meeting also takes place for only an hour or two. How is it possible for all-India questions, connected with Education, Health and Lands, to be discussed in one or two hours once in a year?

My fourth suggestion is that whenever Government appoint a Tariff Board to discuss any question, they must nominate at least one such member who has some experience and who is aware of the agricultural conditions in the country and can advise the Government and his colleagues on the many questions that are placed before them. This will ensure that the interest of the agriculturists is not overlooked.

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

My fifth suggestion in this connection is that at present there are agreements with the Indian States and with the foreign countries, and some of these agreements are against the interests of the agriculturists. You will find, Sir, that under the present agreement, Hyderabad has got the right to impose an import duty on British Indian rice, and there are many other such agreements which are detrimental to the interests of this

country. Now that the States are coming into a Federated India, the time has come when this question must be examined. About this agreement I want to say one thing more that Government have practically decided to separate Burma from India now and there is a rumour that some sort of agreement is very imminent and in that agreement they want to decide that for certain periods no taxation will be possible on the imported articles from Burma, or something of that kind. But I want to say that this will be very harmful to India and there should not be any such agreement. The hands of the future Governments of both countries should be open in this matter. Any such agreement should be made after the separation of Burma and should not be used as a price for the separation of that country.

My sixth suggestion in this connection is that at present the freights are very different on different agricultural commodities and excessively high too. It should be at the minimum rate of 01 pie per maund per mile. Today I asked some questions, and the replies show what the difference is. When wheat goes from Delhi to Patna, the rate is five annas a maund, but when we want to send our rice from Patna to Delhi, Government charges ten annas a maund. This is very unjust. What right have they got to fix different rates? If they are giving chances to the Punjab and the United Provinces to send their wheat to Bengal and Bihar, certainly Bengal and Bihar also must be given a chance to send their rice to those Provinces on the same terms. My Honourable friend said that special rates were given for the reason that Calcutta and Karachi were port towns, that export may be possible and the agriculturists may gain. I am sorry that no one representing the Railway Department is present here now, but I hope my Honourable friend, Mr. Bajpai, will find out from Sir Joseph Bore and tell me whether wheat is exported from Patna as well. How can it be possible? It is not a port town. That is my grievance that if you give special rates for Karachi and Calcutta on the ground that it can be exported, why do you give special rates for Patna, where agriculturists are themselves dying, and if you give special rates for wheat that goes to Patna, why should you not give the same special rate for rice that is sent from Patna to Delhi and other places in the west? My Honourable friend said that the rice in Delhi was of a better quality than the Bihar rice. But I think he has not gone to Bihar and taken Bihar rice. Patna rice is famous in the world. My Honourable friend has not seen the *kalibank* variety or the *shamsira* variety of Bihar. You cannot produce any variety of rice in the Punjab and the United Provinces which can be compared with those varieties. So, Sir, my suggestion in this connection is that Government should do justice to all parts of the country, whether men live in the north or south or the east or the west. The same rate that has been given for wheat should also be allowed for rice, and we should be provided the same facilities, so that we may be in a position to send our rice to these Provinces. Specially in these days, when the earthquake has devastated my Province, and several towns have been ruined and when even the people of South Bihar are in great trouble, they must consider this point, and at least for a few years they should show the same sympathy with rice as they are showing at present with regard to wheat. Further I suggest, Sir, that the freight for sending rice to Mughalsarai and upwards should be at the minimum possible rate which has been fixed for carriage of coal.

In this connection, you will find, Sir, that Bihar stands second in the production of rice. Some people are under the impression that it is

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Burma where the greatest amount of rice is produced. But I say that Bengal comes first where 21 million acres are under rice and about nine million tons are grown. Bihar comes second with 15 million acres under rice and a production of seven million tons: Burma comes third only, with five million acres under rice and a total production of about four million tons.

An Honourable Member: What about Bombay and Madras?

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Madras comes fourth—I am quoting this from the figures of principal crops in India—1931-32.

I suggest one thing more: The Bihar rice cannot come to Bengal, because Bengal herself produces rice in large quantities and so we have to sell our rice only in these parts. Further, the Burma rice comes to Bengal and other parts of India by ships at cheap rates, and it is not possible for us to send our rice to Bengal or any of those places: we can send our rice only to these parts of the country like Cawnpur, Delhi, Lucknow, Jubbulpore, etc. If our rice is not taken in larger quantities in these parts, it is not because it is an inferior commodity. What becomes of the rice that is grown in Indo-China, Siam, Burma, Bengal and Bihar? Some one takes it; and up till now the intellectual power of the Bengalees is sufficient proof that rice is a better commodity than wheat. Japan also is a rice-eating country and no one can deny that. The main reason why rice is not taken in these parts is that they have fixed a high freight for bringing rice from Bihar to these parts, and so it is sold here at a very high rate and so it is not possible for the people in this part of the country to take rice and they have got no other alternative but to take cheap wheat.

In this connection, I want to say from personal experience that an inferior quality of rice is sold at present in Delhi at six to seven seers to the rupee, while finer qualities of rice are sold in Bihar at the rate of 14 to 16 seers to the rupee. I myself have sold about 1,000 maunds of rice, and so I can claim to be an authority on this point. I am ready to supply any Honourable Member who may want rice from my part of the country. I have said that the prices for rice are going down and we are suffering very much and I will suggest that Government should reduce the freight for rice being sent to these parts beyond Mughal Sarai.

I now come to my seventh suggestion. If they really want to help the agriculturists, they must do something to reduce their indebtedness. This is a very important question for the agricultural classes, and that cannot be done merely by making legislative enactments. You can do it only by making money available to them at cheaper rates. In certain Provinces, some measures are under consideration with the idea of keeping the interest rate within certain limits: that is the idea of the Central Government as well as far as I know, but, I say, that is not going to do any good, because, whatever percentage of interest may be fixed, these *mahajans* will lend a small amount and take a document for a larger amount. You can reduce the indebtedness by making money available at a cheaper rate. Unless all the debts are once paid and prohibited for future, this undebtedness will not be extricated.

My eighth suggestion, and the last, is that the export duty on agricultural produce must be abolished. Some say in this connection that export

duty is not really a duty on the home producers, but a duty on the foreigners. I will in this connection say that it is not correct: the result of an export duty is that either it increases the prices in the foreign market or it keeps the prices at the same level: if it increases the prices in foreign markets, then, of course, it is a tax on the foreigner; but if it does not increase the prices in the foreign markets, but keeps them at the same level, then certainly it is a tax on the producer and not on the foreigner. Here I want to quote a paragraph from the Fiscal Commission's Report which also agrees with this view: this Commission says at page 100 (Chapter XI):

"Now, this increased cost may raise the price of the commodity in the world's markets, in which case it falls on the foreign consumer: or the world's price may remain the same in which case the increased cost simply reduces the profit of the home producer."

Further on, they say:

"Which of these two results is the more likely to occur depends on the extent to which the world price is fixed by the cost of production in the country which imposes the export duty."

They conclude with the following words:

"Our general conclusion, therefore, is that ordinarily an export duty tends to fall on the home producer and consequently to discourage production except in the case of monopoly; that even monopolies are endangered."

Rice, as we know, is not our monopoly. Indo-China and Siam also nowadays export rice. Japan also exports rice, and if you will see the figures, you will find that their production is increasing. Here is a chart at page 54 of the Estimates of Area and Yield of Principal Crops in 1931-32, which shows that the yield in Bulgaria was 6,000 tons from 7,000 acres of land in 1921, while her yield was 16,000 tons from about 17,000 acres of land in 1930: Egypt has increased from 324,000 to 359,000 acres with an yield from 3,42,000 tons to 4,42,000 tons. Indo-China has increased from 1,19,79,000 acres to 1,43,37,000 acres with an yield from 57,24,000 tons to 57,65,000 tons. Siam also has increased from 64,12,000 acres to 71,87,000 acres with an yield from 4,15,700 to 4,77,000 tons; while Japan has increased from 76,75,000 acres to 79,35,000 acres with an yield from 98,01,000 to 1,18,68,000 tons; and Korea as well has increased from 37,52,000 acres to 40,71,000 acres with an yield from 25,44,000 tons to 34,06,000 tons in the same period of 1921 to 1930; but if we turn to the figures of yield of rice in India in the same period, we find, while all other countries are increasing their acreage and yield, India has decreased in the same period. India in 1920 had an yield of 3,20,17,000 tons from 7,95,19,000 acres of land, and, in 1930, it came down to 3,11,32,000 tons and to 8,06,22,000 acres. In this way, Honourable Members will find that in the same period, when other countries have increased their yield, we have decreased our yield and are losing the ground. Therefore, I want to point out that it is not possible for us to have a command on the foreign markets, rather we are at the mercy of others. If we could have secured a monopoly, then our case would have been quite different. Here, again, this is what the Fiscal Commission says:

"But only in the case of an absolute monopoly for which the demand is stable, can it be asserted generally that the world price will be raised by the full amount of the export duty and that therefore the whole export duty will be paid by the foreign consumer and none of it by the home producer."

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But this is not the case with us. Then comes the question of the export duty which has really decreased our production. The Fiscal Commission says:

"When an export duty falls on the home producer it naturally has a tendency to reduce the production of the commodity on which the duty is imposed."

Sir, referring to the condition in the United States of America, which was more or less the same as it is in India today, I want to say that they specially have inserted an article to this effect in their Constitution. I read an article from Mr. J. M. Beck's Book, called the "Constitution of the United States". At page 333 of this book, reference is made to Article I, clause 9 of the Constitution, which reads as follows:

"No tax or Duty shall be laid on articles exported from any State."

Thus, the House will see that the American people considered this point very carefully and they came to the conclusion that any article which may be exported from any State should not be liable to any export duty at all, but, Sir, I do not know why our Government have levied this export duty on rice. Now when the Constitution for India is in the melting pot there must be a definite provision in the Statute that there shall be no export duty on any commodity for revenue purposes of the Federal Government.

The first principle of all central taxation is that it should not be levied on any particular class of people. All people, whether they live in Bombay, Madras or Bengal, must bear a proportion of the burden of the Central taxation, irrespective of the colour, caste, creed, class or community to which they belong for the benefit of the Central Government.

I submit, Sir, that this export duty on rice affects a particular class of people inhabiting the Provinces touching the Bay of Bengal and those Provinces where rice is produced. I want to point out that only 15 crores of people pay this tax to the Government, and the income from this duty which the Government get is not from the whole of India; they get it only from a particular class and from particular areas.

Now, you are to see what are the Government getting from this export duty? They get nearly 470 lakhs, and, out of this amount, they get only about 75 lakhs from rice alone. So this amount is really a tax on those who happen to live in Bihar, Burma, Madras, Bengal, and Assam only

Mr. B. Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadian): Not Orissa?

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: You are still with us. When you are separated from us, then we shall consider your case separately.

Now, Sir, a friend will say that the removal of the export duty will not help the rice growers or the agriculturists, and my reply to this is, if this export duty will not help the rice producers, then what other duty will help them. Can he suggest any other means by which they can be helped? What is the source that can be suggested from which the rice growers can be helped? Unless and until my friend can suggest some other alternative method of helping the rice growers, I think I have got a right to suggest that only by the removal of the export duty on rice we can help the rice producers. I know my Honourable friend, Sir George Schuster, will stand up and say that at present only three countries

are exporting and all have got this export duty, and those countries are Siam, Indo-China and India. I admit they are the principal exporters of rice, but I ask if they will remove this duty, what will happen? The result will be that Indo-China and Siam will also abandon the export duty on rice, with the result that the market for rice will be open to everybody, the agriculturists, living in Indo-China and Siam and India, all will be in a position to send their rice to foreign markets. The prices in the foreign markets will be the same and the increased profits will go to the producers in all three countries. What is harm in it?

Then, the other suggestion was that if this export duty was abolished, then the Governments of Indo-China and Siam will suffer, and they will adopt retaliatory measures. I submit, Sir, that we need not in the least be afraid of their retaliatory measures. Now, what do we export to those countries? We export to those countries jute and opium, both of which are our monopolies. They will have no other alternative but to buy these two commodities from us. If you will look at the figure of export to Indo-China and Siam, you will find that 80 per cent. of our export is restricted to gunnies and opium. Therefore, Sir, there is absolutely no danger of any retaliation from those two countries.

Now, Sir, I want to make a suggestion about this matter. Hitherto, this matter has not been examined by any Tariff Board. This point was considered only by the Fiscal Commission years ago, and the situation has changed since then. Even then I say that the Members of the Commission had committed a great mistake in not abolishing this export duty. Their argument for not abolishing the duty was this:

"The duty is certainly moderate, and, with the rise in the price of rice, has become increasingly moderate."

I say that the situation has changed now. The price of rice is not increasing nowadays; rather it has decreased and has a decreasing tendency. Further, I say that even at that time the Fiscal Commission committed a mistake. They said:

"It is noteworthy that in Burma, which is the source of nearly all the rice exported from the Indian Empire, no objection at all was raised before us to the continuance of the export duty; and it appears to be generally believed in Burma that the duty is so small that it is not felt by the cultivator. In these circumstances we consider that there is no necessity to recommend an abandonment of this long standing source of revenue."

Is it sound argument that, because a child is not weeping, therefore milk need not be given to it? If Government only want that there should be a demand, then the situation has now changed. For the last two years, myself and my friends are putting forward our demands. If the argument is that Burma did not press the point at the time, and, therefore, the duty was allowed to remain, I say, now, Burma is against this duty, and I may remind my Honourable friend of the Budget debates in 1927 and 1928 when year after year the Members from Burma moved a cut motion that the export duty on rice should be abolished. Burma is wanting that this export duty should go, Bengal is pressing for the same, Madras is going to be ruined on account of this export duty, and, as for Bihar, we do not have any market on account of higher freight and this export duty. What more do you want us to show that there is a demand in this country for the abolition of this duty? Why don't you follow the American Constitution that there should be no export duty on any commodity produced in the country? In this connection . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The Chair proposes to adjourn in five minutes today.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Must I finish my speech also today?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The Chair leaves it to the Honourable Member.

An Honourable Member: Try.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Better finish your speech today.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Sir, I am ready to accommodate my friends, and will finish my speech very soon.

There must be a five-year plan as they have in Russia, Japan and in other parts of the country, and I want that the Government and the representatives of the people should sit together and devise some means for the purpose.

I want to suggest to my Honourable friend, Mr. Bajpai, to have another meeting of the informal conference on rice which was held before. We sat together and suggested certain things, and on that basis my Honourable friend collected the necessary information and he has supplied us with figures. And when I ask my Honourable friend to have another meeting to go through the figures and the information which has been given, the reply is that the Government do not think that any useful purpose will be served. When there was no useful purpose to be served, what for did the Government supply all those items of information to us? When you have circulated a Bill, you have got no alternative but to refer it to a Select Committee. Similarly, when you have supplied us with some information, you have no alternative but to have another meeting of the informal conference on rice and to discuss the information given.

Let me now make two or three suggestions as regards other matters. Government should spend some money on hospitals for the agriculturists. For every distance of three miles there must be a hospital in the rural area. Medical relief is very difficult for them, and hence these hospitals are a necessity.

As regards primary education, I suggest that it should be compulsory and free. Nowadays, when there is no money in the pockets of the agriculturists and they are not getting sufficient return on their produce, education should be free at least to this poor class of people. In this connection, I want to submit that a Resolution was moved on the floor of this House that there should be an Advisory Board here, and Sir Frank Noyce, on behalf of the Government, assured the House that there would be an Advisory Board very soon. But I find that that Advisory Board has not yet been set up. I am not developing that point now, but I request my Honourable friend, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, when he gets up to speak, to develop that point, because he has got a great interest in education. Keeping your suggestion in mind, I have finished the last portion of my speech in four minutes instead of five, Sir.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Saturday, the 17th March, 1984.