

# **COUNCIL OF STATE DEBATES**

**(OFFICIAL REPORT)**

**Volume II, 1942**

**(21<sup>st</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> September 1942)**

## **TWELFTH SESSION**

**OF THE**

# **FOURTH COUNCIL OF STATE, 1942**



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## COUNCIL OF STATE.

Wednesday, 23rd September, 1942.

The Council met in the Council Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, the Honourable the President in the Chair.

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

#### PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION FOR GOODS LOST IN ENEMY-OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.

21. THE HONOURABLE RAJA YUVERAJ DUTTA SINGH: Will Government state their proposals with regard to the question of granting compensation for goods abandoned by owners, and goods seized by the enemy in enemy-occupied territory?

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. V. PAI: The Honourable Member will appreciate that it will be for the Government of Burma in the case of goods lost in Burma and for His Majesty's Government in respect of other British colonial territories occupied by the enemy to consider the question of compensation for such losses. The Government of Burma have expressed their willingness to receive and record such claims in respect of Burma whether the goods are covered by their War Risks Insurance Scheme or not. The Government of India have also been receiving and recording claims relating to all such enemy-occupied colonial territories in order to facilitate the transmission of claims to the appropriate registering authority though they cannot of course undertake any commitment regarding their settlement.

THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU: Have the Government of India made any representations to His Majesty's Government on this subject?

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. V. PAI: No, Sir.

#### RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS FROM THE BRITISH FIRE SERVICE TO STRENGTHEN THE INDIAN FIRE-FIGHTING ORGANIZATIONS.

22. THE HONOURABLE RAJA YUVERAJ DUTTA SINGH: Is it a fact that volunteers from the British Fire Service have been imported into India to strengthen the Indian fire-fighting organisation? If so, will the expense involved fall upon the British or Indian Exchequer?

THE HONOURABLE SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA: Yes, the expense will be borne by the authorities in India who employ the officers.

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*N.B.*—Questions against the Honourable Raja Yuveraj Dutta Singh were put by the Honourable Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.

**NUMBER OF CASUALTIES IN THE INDIAN ARMY.**

23. THE HONOURABLE RAJA YUVERAJ DUTTA SINGH: Will Government state approximately the number of Indian soldiers under arrest by the enemy in various theatres of war, as well as the numbers killed and wounded?

THE HONOURABLE MR. C. MACI. G. OGILVIE: The latest figures give the total number of Indian Army casualties in all theatres of war as follows:—

Killed 2,096, wounded 8,521, prisoners of war 2,938, missing 84,833.

A statement shewing the distribution of casualties among the various theatres of war is laid on the table of the House. I may explain that the figures for prisoners of war include only those about whom official information has been received from the enemy. The figures shewn in the table as estimated missing represent those about whom no official report has been received.

THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU: Does this total of 84,000 missing include the troops in Malaya?

THE HONOURABLE MR. C. MACI. G. OGILVIE: Yes. In fact, it is largely composed of those. There are some 70,000 troops still unaccounted for in Malaya and the Far East generally and about 12,000 in Libya. The names of these will it is hoped be received in due course.

*Statement of Indian soldiers killed, wounded, missing and prisoners of war in the various theatres of war.*

	Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.	P. of W.
I.—Egypt . . . . .	608	2,275	12,158	2,475
II.—Sudan and Eritrea .	706	3,943	7	1
III.—Palestine and Syria	81	282	..	..
IV.—Iraq and Iran .	59	89	4	..
V.—Somaliland . . . .	9	28	..	..
VI.—France & U. K.	4	8	..	327
VII.—Burma . . . . .	417	1,173	3,327	1
VIII.—At Sea . . . . .	4	1	..	118
IX.—Malaya :—				16.
Official . . . . .	208	721	4,051	..
Estimated . . . . .	..	..	61,099	..
X.—Hong Kong :—				..
Official . . . . .	..	1	..	..
Estimated . . . . .	..	..	4,167	..
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>2,096</b>	<b>8,521</b>	<b>84,833</b>	<b>2,938</b>

**GRAND TOTAL of all casualties—98,388.**

**VALUE OF CONTRACTS PLACED BY THE SUPPLY DEPARTMENT.**

24. THE HONOURABLE RAJA YUVERAJ DUTTA SINGH: (a) Is it a fact that the total amount of war orders placed in India both by the Government of India and the British Government is about Rs. 300 crores only, whereas it is recorded that in Canada alone the value of similar orders placed with Canadian firms by the Canadian and British Governments since the commencement of the war amounts to over 1,100 crores?

(b) Is it a fact that Indian steel production in spite of the war remains practically where it was before the war, that is, about 1½ million tons a year?

(c) Will Government state in brief the specific fillip given to the Indian industries, as a result of the opportunity afforded by the war ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. C. MACI. G. OGILVIE :** (a) The total value of contracts placed through the purchase organizations of the Department of Supply between 3rd September, 1939, and 31st July, 1942, was Rs. 367·8 crores. These contracts were placed on behalf of the Government of India, Provincial Governments, and Overseas indentors. The total does not include local purchases, purchases made through commercial channels, or the value of goods manufactured in Government factories. Government has no official information of the value of contracts placed with Canadian firms by the Canadian and British Governments since the commencement of the war.

(b) No, the present production is about 50 per cent. more than it was before the war.

(c) I am not sure what information the Honourable Member requires. Many industries, such as the jute, cotton textiles and woollen industries, have received a great stimulus through war orders, but without necessitating an appreciable expansion of capacity. Others, such as the steel, non-ferrous metals, and leather industries, have expanded both capacity and output. Indian shipyards are building small seagoing vessels, and there has been great activity in all engineering workshops which are expanded on the production both of munitions components and of engineering stores. A complete list would be a long one, and if the Honourable Member will ask for more definite information I will see if I can supply it.

**SUPPLY OF NECESSARY CLOTHS TO THE CIVIL POPULATION OF INDIA.**

**25. THE HONOURABLE RAJA YUVERAJ DUTTA SINGH :** Will Government state what arrangements have been made for the supply of necessary cloths to the civil population of India, in case of apprehended breakdown of the normal source of supply due to War situation ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN LLOYD :** The Government of India have introduced a scheme for the production and distribution of Standard cloths, under which the Provincial Governments can indent for such quantities as they may require, either for current consumption, or for building up reasonable stocks to meet any emergency.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** How far has this scheme been successful ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN LLOYD :** Progress has been rather slow owing to certain difficulties we have experienced in connection with negotiations with the Provincial Governments on whom the primary responsibility for the welfare of their people lies. The points at issue were discussed at the recent Price Control Conference and I hope that before long we shall have appreciable progress. Certain quantities have actually been asked for by Provincial Governments. If the Honourable Member wants further information regarding those quantities I must ask for notice.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Have the mills begun producing standard cloth in the quantities which Government desire ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN LLOYD :** It is impossible to estimate the quantities which Government desire until we have cleared up the position with the Provincial Governments. It is they who will express the desire.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** Have the Provincial Governments sent any requisitions to the Central Government ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN LLOYD :** Yes, Sir.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** Has Bihar sent any requisition ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN LLOYD :** I must ask for notice, Sir.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** May I know if the mills that are manufacturing standard cloth are in working order or are there strikes there ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN LLOYD :** I cannot answer that question, Sir.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Are the requisitions sent by the Provincial Governments being honoured now ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN LLOYD :** I have no information, Sir.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Are the Local Governments expected to negotiate directly with the textile manufacturers or through the Central Government ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN LLOYD :** Through the Central Government.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Then why is it—

**THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN LLOYD :** I must ask for notice if the Honourable Member wants further information about the details.

#### SILK INDUSTRY.

26. **THE HONOURABLE RAJA YUVERAJ DUTTA SINGH :** Will Government state, so far as they can without disclosing secret information, the main details of the scheme for expanding the filature reeling of silk in India for the manufacture of parachutes in this country ? What approximately is the capital cost of the scheme, who will bear the cost, and how far the scheme has progressed ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. C. MACI. G. OGILVIE :** A scheme for installing 2,466 additional basins in Mysore, Bengal and Madras has been sanctioned. They will be put up partly by the Governments concerned and partly by selected private parties. It is expected that this will increase India's existing reeling capacity by about 7,60,000 lbs. a year. His Majesty's Government will buy all the silk that remains after meeting India's essential war requirements. The capital cost of basins to be installed by the Governments concerned is estimated to be about Rs. 7 lakhs and will be financed by His Majesty's Government. In addition loans will be granted to private parties who are selected to participate in the scheme. The source from which the loans will be advanced is still under consideration. Construction work has already started.

**EXPENDITURE INVOLVED IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF BURMA IN INDIA.**

27. **THE HONOURABLE RAJA YUVERAJ DUTTA SINGH :** Will any part of the expenditure involved in the establishment of the "Government of Burma" in India fall upon Indian revenues ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. C. E. JONES :** The answer is in the negative.

**CIVIC GUARDS.**

28. **THE HONOURABLE MR. M. N. DALAL :** (1) Will Government give detailed information of their scheme to expand and strengthen the Civic Guards ?

(2) What is the minimum size of a unit ?

(3) Is the total strength of the Civic Guards the same in every Province ?

(4) What proportion of the present strength of Civic Guards has been armed with shotguns ?

(5) Have all the guns in the hands of licensed dealers been requisitioned for the purpose ?

(6) Have Government made an appeal to the public to lend or sell their guns for the purpose ? If so, with what result ?

(7) Is it the policy of Government to arm all the Civic Guards ?

(8) What is the arrangement in rural areas and villages where Civic Guards units cannot be formed ?

(9) Have Village Defence Parties been formed ? If so, under whom are they working ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** (1) The Government of India have not prepared any regular scheme for the purpose, but Provincial Governments have been requested to take suitable steps to increase their strength and to improve their training.

(2) The matter has been left to the Provincial Governments and the unit differs from province to province.

(3) No.

(4) Exact information is not available, but I believe only a small proportion possess shotguns.

(5) No.

(6) So far as the Government of India are aware, an appeal has been made by the Government of Bombay in the sense stated, but I have no information as to the response to that appeal.

(7) No—but they have no objection to members of the Civic Guards providing their own firearms or other weapons.

(8) Provincial Governments have been advised to assist in organising Village Defence Parties in rural areas.

(9) Village Defence Parties have been formed in most Provinces. The local authorities and the National War Front assist in their organization.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** With regard to the answer to part (4) of the question, have the Central Government adopted any policy to be followed by all the Provinces with regard to the arming of the Civic Guards ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** I must ask for notice of that question, Sir.

#### ARREST OF CONGRESS LEADERS.

**29. THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Will Government state (a) whether the arrest of Mahatma Gandhi and other Congress leaders was decided upon after taking into consideration the resolution passed by the All-India Congress Committee at Bombay on the 7th August and (b) whether the offer of wholehearted co-operation made by the Congress, if freedom is conceded, embodied in the resolution was noted by them ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** Yes.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Am I to understand that the Government noted down the Congress offer of whole-hearted co-operation with the war effort if freedom was conceded and that action was taken by the Government after noting down this whole-hearted offer of co-operation ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** Government did not attach any importance to that statement, because no party which had sincerely desired to offer whole-hearted co-operation could possibly have involved the country in what has happened since the resolution was passed.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Am I to understand that the whole-hearted offer of co-operation on the part of the Muslim League with the war effort too is regarded by this Government, of which my Honourable friend the Leader of the House is an illustrious Member, as insincere ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** The question about the Muslim League does not arise.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** Next question, Mr. Sapru.

#### FORMATION OF A PROVISIONAL COMPOSITE GOVERNMENT AT THE CENTRE AND TO LIFT THE BAN ON THE CONGRESS ORGANIZATIONS.

**30. THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Will Government state whether they propose (a) to reopen negotiations for the formation of a Provisional Composite Government at the centre with Indian political parties, and (b) to lift the ban on Congress organizations ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** (a) This is a matter primarily for His Excellency the Governor General and His Majesty's Government, rather than the Government of India. I would remind the Honourable Member of repeated statements on behalf of His Majesty's Government, renewed so late as September the 10th by the Prime Minister, that the broad principles of the Declaration which formed the basis of Sir



Stafford Cripps' mission to India must be taken as representing the settled policy of the British Crown and Parliament, and that these principles stand in their full scope and integrity.

(b) No.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** Do we take it that the formation of the Central Government is not a matter for the Governor General in Council but that of the Governor General acting in his discretion ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** It is a matter for His Excellency the Governor General and His Majesty's Government, and not for the Executive Council.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Are we to understand that the Government of India has no concern with the subject and that it does not consider itself called upon to make recommendations on the subject for the consideration of His Majesty's Government ? If this is its view, what is it for ? What are these wise and patriotic men in the Viceroy's Executive Council for ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** It does not fall within the normal jurisdiction of the Executive Council.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Am I to understand that the sole responsibility for advising His Majesty's Government as regards the nature of the constitution that should be worked in the interim period rests exclusively with the Governor General and that the Governor General in Council has no voice whatever in regard to this matter ? Is that the position which the Indian Members of the Council have accepted ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** If the Governor General consults his Executive Council, he gets its opinion.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Am I to understand further that the Indian Members of the Executive Council have no desire to offer on their own initiative any advice to His Excellency the Governor General in regard to the manner in which the future Government of India should be composed ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** The Government of India Act does not recognize the position of Indian Members of Council as such.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Am I to understand that by becoming Members of the Executive Council Indian Members of the Executive Council have ceased to be Indians ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** We have not ceased to be Indians ; absolutely not.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Is it the accepted view that the Governor General in Council has got nothing to do with questions of policy, particularly those relating to constitutional changes ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** The functions of the Executive Council are described in the Government of India Act.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Disgraceful !

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** We were told the other day in the other House that the Executive Council had all the powers that its critics desired it to possess.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** Certainly ; if the Governor General brings any subject before the Council, we tender our advice.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Are you at liberty or not to initiate discussion on a subject ? Is the Government of India competent to consider proposals relating to constitutional changes or the character of the interim Government or not ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** If the subject is brought before the Executive Council by His Excellency the Viceroy.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** I want to know if the Members of the Executive Council can bring up such a subject ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** I have nothing to add.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Am I to understand that they cannot ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** The Honourable Member can infer anything he likes.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** The Honourable Member should elucidate the policy of Government and not leave us to imagine what it is.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** May I clarify the situation ? Could the Leader of the House enlighten us under what particular section of the Government of India Act is the question of policy of expansion debarred from the Governor General in Council ? It should be included in a specific list of subjects which are the exclusive jurisdiction of the Governor General acting in his discretion. As far as I remember, Sir, it is not so included.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** It is a matter primarily for His Excellency the Governor General and His Majesty's Government.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** Quote to us the section of the Government of India Act.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** I must ask for notice.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** The decision may rest with His Majesty's Government, but cannot you set the ball rolling ?

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** Go on to the next question, please.

**TOTAL NUMBER OF ARRESTS EFFECTED IN CONNECTION WITH THE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE CAMPAIGN AND THE RECENT DISTURBANCES.**

**31. THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Will Government state the total number of arrests so far effected in connection with (a) the civil disobedience campaign and (b) the recent disturbances ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** Government have not yet received complete information, nor is there any hope of obtaining this information before the end of the present session.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Am I to understand that the Honourable the Leader of the House made a statement to the House in the absence of complete information ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** No, Sir. I was able to give the figures that were available in the records. Therefore I cannot say more than what I have said yesterday.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** You could have repeated those figures.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** I do not think I have given figures about arrests.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** Is it a fact that Provincial Governments are arresting people on their own initiative or under the orders of the Government of India ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** The maintenance of law and order is a Provincial Subject.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Has the Government of India anything to do with law and order ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** Under the Government of India Act the maintenance of law and order is a Provincial Subject.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Do the Government of India have ultimate control over the Provincial Governments ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** Yes, the Government of India have, under the Defence of India Act.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** That is the sort of Leader we have !

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Under which section of the Defence of India Act do the Government of India supervise the Provincial Governments ?

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** The Honourable Leader is not sitting for an examination. Next question, Mr. Sapru.

**EXTENT AND NATURE OF DAMAGE DONE TO PUBLIC PROPERTY AND OBJECT OF SYSTEM OF COLLECTIVE FINES.**

**32. THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Will Government state (a) the extent and nature of the damage done to public property by the recent

disturbances, (b) the object of the system of collective fines, and (c) the basis on which calculation is made in imposing the fines ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** (a) Government's information on this subject is as yet incomplete. I would, however, refer the Honourable Member to the reply given to Mr. Hossain Imam's question No. 10 on the 21st September, 1942.

(b) The imposition of collective fines is aimed particularly at crimes, such as sabotage, the difficulty of preventing which and of detecting and apprehending those actually concerned in their commission is greatly increased if the inhabitants of the area in which the offence is committed do not fully co-operate with the authorities. It is the duty of every citizen to resist mob outrages against the public peace and property, and the public must realize their collective responsibility in this matter. In areas where the public have failed in this duty, and have allowed sabotage to be committed and mob outrages to take place, Government are justified in bringing home to them their responsibility by the imposition of collective fines.

(c) The relevant section in the Ordinance is :

“ The District Magistrate, after such enquiry as he may deem necessary, shall apportion such fine among the inhabitants who are liable collectively to pay it and such apportionment shall be made according to the District Magistrate's judgment of the respective means of such inhabitants ”.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** As no collective fine has been imposed in the Centrally Administered Areas, do we take it that in the Centrally Administered Areas people are co-operating with the Government in accepting collective responsibility ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** That is asking for my opinion.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** No, Sir. I mean in the Centrally Administered Areas no collective fine has been imposed. I want definite information whether the people in the Centrally Administered Areas are co-operating with the Government and accepting the position of collective responsibility.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** I must ask for notice of that question, Sir.

#### STRIKE AT TATANAGAR.

**33. THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Will Government state whether it is a fact that there was a strike in Tatanagar as a protest against the policy of Government towards the Congress and whether in order to force the workers to get back to work, the water supply of that town was cut off ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. H. C. PRIOR :** It is not in public interest to name or particularize industrial undertakings in which cessation of work occurred as the result of the present political situation in the country. So far as Government are aware no case has occurred in which stoppage of water supply has been used for the purpose of persuading labour to return to work.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Is the Honourable Member aware that the news relating to the strike at Tatanagar was published in some newspapers in the country ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. H. C. PRIOR:** I have not myself seen any such publication.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU:** May I inform him that it was published in the *Madras Mail* and also in the *Tribune*?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU:** May I inform him that as a matter of fact telegrams were received by newspapers and that they were subsequently cancelled by the Censor?

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT:** That is another question.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU:** The Honourable Member refuses to answer this question because it is not in the public interest to say whether a particular strike took place or not. It is within public knowledge that the strike did take place in Tatanagar. The question that I have asked is whether that strike was broken by denial of water supply to the workers in Tatanagar. That is the plain question that I have asked.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. H. C. PRIOR:** I have nothing to add to my answer.

**PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR GOVERNMENT'S ACTION AGAINST THE CONGRESS AND POLITICAL SETTLEMENT BY A CONFERENCE.**

**34. THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU:** Will Government state the names of persons and organizations that have supported them in their policy of taking action against the Congress, and whether they had made any effort through a conference convened by the Government of India to arrive at a settlement of the political issues facing the country?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN:** That Government had, in their action against Congress, the support not only of those large classes in the country who consider the waging of the war to a victorious conclusion to be India's prime objective, not only of those many members of the minority communities who considered the Congress demand for immediate independence to be in reality a demand for Congress hegemony, but also of a large majority of honest and God-fearing people throughout the country, is shown by the very large areas of the country representing persons of all castes and creeds who have remained virtually or entirely unaffected by the recent disturbances and by the growing revulsion of public opinion against the disturbers of the peace in the affected areas.

The second part of the question concerns the Governor General and His Majesty's Government rather than the Government of India. The policy of His Majesty's Government was stated in the Prime Minister's speech in the House of Commons on the 10th September.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU:** Sir, my question has not been answered. I did not want a rhetorical answer and a lecture on the duty of Indians. I wanted, Sir, a plain answer to a plain question. What are the organizations, if any, which are supporting Government in their present policy? I wanted the names of those organizations. Is the Hindu Sabha supporting it? Is the Liberal Federation supporting it? Is the Muslim League supporting it? That was my question and surely for this a lecture on what India's attitude was not necessary by the Leader of the House.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN:** The Muslim League is supporting it because Mr. Jinnah has made a public statement asking the Muslims not to take part in the disturbances.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Does that amount to support ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** Yes.

**PARTICULARS OF EUROPEAN EVACUEES FROM COUNTRIES OCCUPIED BY JAPAN  
EMPLOYED BY THE CIVIL DEFENCE DEPARTMENT.**

**35. THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Will Government state the names and number of European evacuees from Burma and other countries occupied by Japan employed by the Civil Defence Department together with their qualifications and lay on the table a statement showing the salaries they were previously drawing before evacuation and are now drawing under the Government of India ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA :** A statement is laid on the table of the House.

*Statement showing names and numbers of European evacuees from Burma and other countries occupied by Japan employed by the Government of India, Civil Defence Department.*

Serial No.	Names.	Service or indication of profession previous to evacuation.	Salary drawn prior to evacuation.	Present scale of pay.
			Rs.	Rs.
1	Mr. J. S. Vorley, C.B.E., I.F.S.	Deputy Conservator of Forest (November, 1922 to December, 1941), Civil Evacuation Commissioner and Control of Labour. In charge feeding of civil population of Mandalay. Was in touch with all Civil Defence matters whilst in Burma.	3,000 plus O. S. P. of £13-8-6.	1,750
2	Mr. C. B. Rennick	Head of Taxation and Revenue Department, Corporation, Rangoon. Acted as Deputy Commissioner, Rangoon. Appointed Civil Defence Officer in charge Civil Defence organization, Rangoon. Later in charge, Civil Defence organization in Maymyo. Experienced over 100 air raids while in Burma. Total service 20 years.	2,700 . . .	1,750
3	Mr. R. DeG r a f f Hunter.	Senior Officer, Training Branch, Central Organization, London. Compiler of A. R. P. Training Manuals. In charge Civil Defence War Room and Controller, Intelligence Centre, London. Chief of Staff to Inspector General, Civil Defence, London. Civil Defence Commissioner, Burma, for 8 months with practical experience of many raids there.	2,000 plus S. Alloe. Rs. 150.	1,750
4	Mr. E. G. D. Robertson, I. P.	Assistant Superintendent of Police, Burma. Received training as instructor in matters of Civil Defence in Home Office Staff College, Faldfield, England. Appointed Deputy Director, A. R. P., Rangoon, and Chief Instructor for Burma. Had practical experience of air raids in Rangoon, Mandalay and other towns in Burma.	950 . . .	500

**INDIANIZATION OF TECHNICAL POSTS IN THE SUPPLY DEPARTMENT.**

**36. THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Will Government lay on the table a statement showing the progress, if any, made in Indianizing the superior technical services connected with the Supply Department ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. C. MACI. G. OGILVIE :** I place on the table a statement giving the necessary information for the period 1st April, 1941, to 31st March, 1942.

*Statement showing progress made in the Indianisation of Technical Posts during the period 1st April, 1941, to 31st March, 1942.*

Office.	No. of technical gasetted posts on 1st April, 1941.			No. of technical gasetted posts on 31st March, 1942.		
	Indians.	Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians.	Europeans.	Indians.	Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians.	Europeans.
	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>A.—Directorate General, Munitions Production.</i>						
1. D. G. M. P.	8	2	62	21	4	98
2. C. C. P. (M.)	15	..	2	25	..	2
3. Ordnance Factories.	4	..	78	7	..	123
<i>B.—Directorate General, Supply.</i>						
4. D. G. S.	20	..	17	70	1	39
5. C. C. P. (S)	15	1	..	30	..	6
6. Clothing Factories.	..	..	13	2	1	15
7. Ordnance Factories, under Leather Manufacture Directorate.		1	11	5	1	17
Total D. G. M. P. (1—3).	27	2	142	53	4	223
Total D. G. S. (4—7)	35	2	41	107	3	77
GRAND TOTAL (1—7)	62	4	183	160	7	300

**NUMBER OF INDIAN WOMEN TYPISTS AND STENOGRAPHERS EMPLOYED BY GOVERNMENT.**

**37. THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Will Government state (a) the number of Indian women typists and stenographers employed by Government and (b) their ratio to European and Anglo-Indian women typists and stenographers ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** The information asked for is not readily available and its collection would involve an amount of time and labour that would not be justifiable in war time.

**TOTAL NUMBER OF CASUALTIES CAUSED BY FIRING IN THE RECENT DISTURBANCES.**

**38. THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Will Government state (a) the total number of places where firing has been resorted to in various parts of

the country since the 9th of August, 1942, (b) the reasons for resorting to it in each case, and (c) the total number of killed and wounded as a result of it ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** (a) and (b). The information asked for is not available.

(c) I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given to Mr. Hossain Imam's question No. 10 on the 21st September, 1942.

**PROPORTION OF INDIAN OFFICERS TO BRITISH OFFICERS IN THE LAND FORCES, ETC.**

**39. THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Will Government state the proportion of Indian officers to British officers in the land forces, the naval forces, the air forces and the technical forces connected with the War Department ?

**GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN HARTLEY :** I presume the Honourable Member is referring to Indian Armed Forces. The proportions are approximately as follows :—

Indian Army—1 Indian to 4·75 British.

Royal Indian Navy, Royal Indian Naval Reserve and Royal Indian Naval Volunteer Reserve—

Commissioned Officers—1 Indian to 2·4 British.

Warrant Officers—1 Indian to 0·25 British.

Total—1 Indian to 1·8 British.

Indian Air Force.—There are no British officers in the Indian Air Force.

These proportions include the technical arms of the services.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Are there any Indians in the Royal Air Force ?

**GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN HARTLEY :** I should like to have notice of that question.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** May I ask why the Honourable Member has counted warrant officers along with commissioned officers in the Navy ? Warrant officers form a class between the non-commissioned officer and the officer. I mean they correspond to the Viceroy's commissioned officer. Why should they be counted along with the commissioned officers ?

**GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN HARTLEY :** In the Navy they are counted as commissioned officers.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Whose commission do they receive ?

**GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN HARTLEY :** I should like to have notice of that question.



FOOD POSITION.

40. **THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Will Government make a statement as regards the efforts made by them to improve the food position in India ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIRDAR SIR JOGENDRA SINGH :** Agriculture is primarily the concern of the Provinces. The Government of India, however, called a conference in April, 1942, to ensure co-ordinated action and to stimulate food production. The recommendations of the conference were communicated to the Provincial Governments and I understand that they are endeavouring to the best of their powers to implement them. A Central Food Advisory Council has been set up consisting of officials and non-officials and its functions are

- (i) to pool, study and disseminate all available information regarding food and fodder production ;
- (ii) to plan on an all-India basis the food and fodder production programme for the different regions and tender advice in regard to its execution : and
- (iii) to advise the authorities responsible about the equitable distribution of the available food products.

The first meeting of this Council was held on the 24th and the 25th August, 1942. A copy of the summary of its recommendations is available in the Library of the House.

2. The Government of India have conveyed an assurance to the cultivators through a press note of the 25th May, 1942, that in case of a slump in the prices of principal foodgrains, they will step in and buy sufficient quantities both in the provinces and in the Indian States to prevent a serious fall in their prices.

3. From the Cotton Fund created by a levy of additional duty on raw cotton, the Government of India have sanctioned grants to some Provincial Governments and States to enable them to give financial help to cotton growers to divert their lands from cotton to food crops. As a result of the various measures taken by the Central, Provincial and State Governments, an increase of 96 lakh acres is expected under food crops, 46 lakhs released from cotton, and 50 lakhs of new land brought under cultivation.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** Has the Government considered taking any step to bring down food prices where the prices go up too high owing to scarcity ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIRDAR SIR JOGENDRA SINGH :** As Member in charge of Food Production I am not interested in bringing down food prices. (Laughter.)

TOTAL NUMBER OF CASUALTIES IN DELHI CAUSED BY FIRING IN THE RECENT DISTURBANCES.

41. **THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Will Government state (a) the number of times firing had to be resorted to in Delhi from the 7th August to 11th September, 1942, and (b) the numbers of wounded and killed as a result of it ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** (a) Either the police or the troops opened fire on 47 occasions.

(b) Sixteen persons are known to have been killed and 45 wounded. In addition, some dead and injured persons were probably removed from the scene of the occurrence by their friends, and even taking this into account, it is believed that the total number killed was probably below 30.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM: Can the Honourable the Leader of the House give the numbers of Hindus, Muslims and others who were wounded or killed?

THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN: I should like to have notice of that question.

DESIRABILITY OF HOLDING INQUIRIES INTO OFFICIAL EXCESSES IN DEALING WITH THE RECENT DISTURBANCES.

42. THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU: Has Government considered the desirability of holding independent enquiries in cases where there is strong reason to believe that there have been official excesses in dealing with the recent disturbances?

THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN: There is no strong reason to assume that official excesses have been committed, but, as the Honourable Member is no doubt aware, the whole matter will shortly form the subject of discussion in another place in the course of which the attitude of Government will be explained.

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU: Am I to understand that even in cases where there is a strong *prima facie* reason to believe that official excesses have been committed, Government is not prepared to hold independent enquiries?

THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN: There is no use my answering the question as the whole question will shortly be before the Legislative Assembly.

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU: We are not the Legislative Assembly. We are the Council of State, and I am entitled to ask what the attitude of Government is in this Council. I am not supposed to know what you say in the Legislative Assembly. I am only supposed to know what you say in this House.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The subject is going to be discussed in another place. After the discussion is over there, you can put questions if you like. That is all he says.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM: Will he accept a short notice question, Sir?

THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN: No, Sir. But I have already given a reply saying that there is no strong reason to assume that official excesses have been committed.

THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU: Is that a *prima facie* assumption or are you in touch with the facts?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** That is the view of the Government. The Government have come to the conclusion that there is no strong reason to assume that official excesses have been committed.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** May I draw his attention to a particular incident, Sir,—the shooting of a woman and child in New Delhi at night time ?

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** How can that be a question ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** The Honourable the Leader of the House said that no official excesses have been committed. I cite that as an official excess.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** The Honourable Member should give notice of the question.

#### EMPLOYMENT FACILITIES FOR INDIAN EVACUEES.

**43. THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Will Government state the steps, if any, taken by them to find suitable employment for refugees of Indian origin from Burma and other enemy-occupied territories ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. A. V. PAI :** Government had addressed all Provincial Governments with a view to their setting up employment bureaux or some system of registration by which evacuees seeking employment can be put in touch with prospective employers, and such organisations now exist in all provinces concerned. Those possessing technical qualifications, such as doctors, electricians, carpenters and others belonging to skilled trades, for whom there is great demand, have been invited to register themselves with the National Service Labour Tribunals which are functioning in all Provinces. For clerical workers there is great scope for finding employment with the Defence Services. For unskilled workers also, apart from relief works instituted by certain Provincial Governments, openings are available in new camp, aerodrome and road constructions and building works. One of the main functions of Zonal Refugee Officers, who have recently been appointed, is to assist evacuees in obtaining employment.

It is Government's policy that while every effort should be made to absorb evacuees in useful employment, evacuees *qua* evacuees should not be given any preference over other Indian candidates in the matter of Government employment, but a communication has been addressed to all Departments of the Government of India and to Provincial Governments suggesting that in the matter of employment of evacuees Indian evacuees should be given preference over other classes of evacuees. Government have also under consideration the question of amending the rules so as to make evacuees eligible for appearing in the examinations and selections conducted by the Federal Public Service Commission.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** What are the provinces which have taken steps to register the evacuees ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. A. V. PAI :** All the provinces concerned, principally Madras—

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Can the Honourable Member give me any information with regard to the United Provinces ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. A. V. PAI :** I could not say offhand.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** The Honourable Member said that all the provinces were following the system laid down.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. A. V. PAI :** All the provinces except two or three have set up registration bureaux.

**REPRESENTATION FROM THE NEWSPAPERS CONFERENCE IN REGARD TO THE CENSORSHIP AND CONTROL OF FACTUAL PRESENTATION OF NEWS.**

**44. THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Will Government state whether they have received any representation from the Standing Committee of the Newspapers Conference in regard to the censorship and control of factual presentation of news and the modifications, if any, they have made in their original orders ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** The original orders of the Government of India under Defence Rule 41 (1) (b) referred to by the Honourable Member, which were issued on the 8th August, 1942, prohibited the publication of news relating to the Congress movement or to the measures taken by Government against that movement, unless such news was derived from official sources, from certain recognized press agencies, or from a regular correspondent whose name was registered with the District Magistrate of the district in which he worked. The Standing Committee of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference, which met in Delhi on the 24th and 25th August, 1942, protested against the nature of these restrictions, especially in so far as they affected the relations between the editor and his correspondents. Government's sole aim in imposing the restrictions was to ensure that the news published came from reliable sources and that matter was not published which would encourage the movement or be of assistance to the enemy. So long as these basic aims were assured Government were not particular about the methods employed and a revised procedure was accordingly evolved in consultation with members of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference whereby all news relating to the movement should, before publication, be subjected to scrutiny daily and be passed or rejected by a selected Press Adviser acting in consultation with an editor chosen from a panel of editors willing to serve in this capacity. In order to provide legal sanction for such an arrangement it was of course necessary that an order should be passed under Defence Rule 41 (a) directing that news of the kind referred to should be submitted for scrutiny before publication. The Government of India have recommended the revised procedure to Provincial Governments, to whom it has been left to issue the necessary orders. The new procedure has already been introduced in Delhi. I may add that the correspondence on the subject between the Home Department and the President of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference has been published.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Are Government aware that the new procedure has given rise to serious dissatisfaction, and that owing to that the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference is going to meet soon in Bombay ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** Government have no information.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Does the Honourable Member read newspapers or not ?

May I ask another question, Sir ? Will Government ask Provincial Governments to stay their hands for a while, that is, till the resolutions passed by the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference are known to the Central Government and they have had time to consider them ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** Government do not propose to take such action.

**SPEECH BY THE HONOURABLE SIR FEROUZ KHAN NOON.**

45. **THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Has the attention of Government been drawn to a speech of the Honourable Sir Feroz Khan Noon (a) criticizing His Majesty's Government for sending out Sir Stafford Cripps to this country and (b) adumbrating a scheme for five dominions with a central authority with power to secede or rejoin at option ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** I have seen Press reports of the speech referred to.

**INDIVIDUAL EXPRESSION OF OPINION BY MEMBERS OF GOVERNMENT.**

46. **THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Will Government state whether it is open to a member of the Government of India to criticise His Majesty's Government and to advocate solutions of the constitutional problem, while retaining his position as a member of Government ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** The Honourable member is asking for an expression of opinion.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Am I to understand that it is open for my esteemed friend, the Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava, to make a speech criticizing the Cripps' proposals on the ground that they attacked the unity of India and that they would partition this country into two or three Dominions ? He was associated with the Hindu Sabha and I see no reason why he should have changed his opinion after he became a Member of the Government. Am I to understand that it is open to him to criticize the policy of His Majesty's Government ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** The Honourable Sir Feroz Khan Noon was speaking for himself alone and Government are not in any way committed to his speech. These high constitutional matters lie outside the normal official purview of the Government of India and its corporate responsibility to the Executive Council is not, therefore, involved. I cannot understand the attitude of my Honourable friend, who a few minutes ago was asking the Indian Members to discuss political questions and yesterday he said : " Why was the suggestion that Mr. Amery should encourage the idea of a round table conference, why was the suggestion that the Viceroy should convene a round table conference, why was the suggestion that the Indian Members, failing the Viceroy, should convene a round table conference, ignored by this wonderful Government ? " According to the Honourable Member, the Indian Members can ignore the Viceroy and discuss political questions. I do not know how my Honourable friend can find fault with Sir Feroz Khan Noon for expressing his opinion.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Am I to understand that it is open to Indian Members of the Executive Council, who have under the Statute no responsibility for the execution of the policy of repression by the Provincial Governments, to criticize in open the policy of repression? Because, if you admit a departure from the principle of collective responsibility in one sphere logically you cannot refuse it in another.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** That is an argument.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** Was the telegram sent by Mr. Aney to the President of the Congress at the time of the Bombay meeting of the All-India Congress Committee sent with the concurrence of the Viceroy's Executive Council or was it in his individual capacity?

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** That question does not arise.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** I must ask for notice.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** That question need not be answered. It does not arise out of this question.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** May I know as a question of fact whether it is the policy of the Government of India to allow all the Members of the Viceroy's Executive Council to express any opinions they like on constitutional questions?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** I have already answered the question saying that Sir Feroz Khan Noon was speaking for himself alone and the Government are not in any way committed to his speech and I further said that these high constitutional matters are outside the normal purview of the Government of India and that its corporate responsibility to the Executive Council is not, therefore, involved. I have nothing further to add.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** May I take it that any Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, in his individual capacity, can express any opinion he likes on high constitutional questions?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN :** That is asking for my opinion, Sir.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** I am not asking for your opinion. I want to know whether it is the policy of Government that any Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council can express his own individual view on high constitutional questions?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR MOHAMED USMAN :** I have nothing to add to what I have already said.

**SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES OF BRITISH OFFICERS AND INDIAN OFFICERS IN THE INDIAN ARMY.**

**47. THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS :** (a) Will Government lay on the table of this House a comparative statement showing the salaries and allowances payable to British commissioned officers and other personnel of various defence units and those payable to Indian commissioned officers and other personnel?

(b) Has the attention of the Government of India been drawn to the statement of the Right Honourable Mr. Churchill regarding the increase of salaries and allowances of British commissioned officers and personnel serving in the defence units? Do these increases apply to the Indian commissioned officers and personnel or not? If not, why not?

GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN HARTLEY : (a) I have not the slightest desire to withhold this information from the Honourable Member, but its compilation, covering as it does the pay and allowances of the entire Defence Services, would involve an amount of time and labour incommensurate with the result. I regret, therefore, that I am unable to lay a statement on the table. The information is contained in the Pay and Allowance regulations of the three Services, and steps are being taken to place copies of those regulations in the Library of the House as early as possible. In addition, if the Honourable Member wishes to have information regarding pay and allowances in a specific case, I shall be very glad to make it available to him.

(b) The answer to the first part is in the affirmative. As regards the remaining parts, the question of giving a similar increase is under consideration.

NUMBER OF SQUADRONS IN THE INDIAN AIR FORCE.

48. THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS :

(a) How many Indian Air Force Squadrons are in India?

(b) How many of these squadrons have King's Indian commissioned officers as commanding officers and adjutants?

(c) How many King's Indian commissioned officers have been appointed as wing commanders? If not, why not?

GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN HARTLEY : (a) At present there are four Indian Squadrons, 1 Squadron which is half Indian and half British and five Coast Defence Flights of the Indian Air Force.

(b) There are no King's Indian commissioned officers in the Indian Air Force. All regular and emergency commissioned officers of the Indian Air Force are termed Indian commissioned officers.

There are four Indian commissioned officers commanding Indian Air Force squadrons and four squadron adjutants. Besides this, there are four adjutants of the Coast Defence Flights.

(c) One Indian commissioned officer has been promoted Acting Wing Commander.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS : Does that officer hold the rank of Wing Commander now?

GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN HARTLEY : Yes.

INFORMATION PROMISED IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS LAID ON THE TABLE.

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. V. PAI : Sir, I lay on the table the information promised in reply to (1) parts (d) and (e) of question No. 75 asked by the Honourable Mr. G. S. Motilal on the 26th February, 1942, and

(2) question No. 114 asked by the Honourable Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru on the 6th March, 1942.

INDIANS IN BURMA, MALAYA AND THE FAR EAST.

- (1) Burma . . . . . Between 75,000 and 80,000 Indians were evacuated to India by sea, and about 4,000 by air. About four lakhs of Indians are believed to have come to India by the land routes.
- (2) Malaya . . . . . The number of Indians evacuated to India is estimated at 4,500.

EVACUATION OF INDIANS FROM MALAYA.

The number of Indians evacuated to India from Malaya is estimated at 4,500.

BILL PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY LAID ON THE TABLE.

SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL: Sir, in pursuance of rule 25 of the Indian Legislative Rules, I lay on the table copies of the Bill temporarily to amend the Indian Rubber Control Act, 1934, which was passed by the Legislative Assembly at its meeting held on the 22nd September 1942.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE UTILIZATION BRANCH OF THE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA.

THE HONOURABLE MR. H. C. PRIOR (Labour Secretary): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this Council do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct, two representatives of the Council to serve on the Advisory Committee constituted by the Government of India to advise on problems connected with the work of the Utilization Branch of the Geological Survey of India."

Sir, as this is the first time on which this House has been asked to elect members for this Committee I may just briefly explain the functions of the Committee. The Geological Survey has for many years been engaged on research in India for various types of minerals. From 1846 when it first came into existence, and when it was largely responsible for the development of the coal industry in Bihar and Bengal, it has been surveying India, preparing geological maps showing where minerals are to be found. The information it has given has in many cases been sufficient to enable commercial bodies to go in and develop those minerals. In other cases, however, the information is not sufficient for their purpose. This is particularly the case in the case of base minerals where considerable capital is necessary in order to develop. In those cases it is necessary for somebody to go somewhat further than the Geological Survey has gone in the past and to prove the existence of the ore and to prove the assayability and payability of that ore. It is for that purpose that this Utilization Branch has been formed and it is to assist in the working of that Branch that we are forming the Advisory Committee. The duties of the Utilization Branch expressed in the Resolution are to carry out the necessary field work for proving mineral deposits, to initiate where necessary preliminary mining operations and to conduct such experimental work as may be necessary to solve problems in ore dressing and smelting and other problems of production. In that work we need experts and we are getting experts: but we need also the assistance and the advice of experts in the country who have not full time to devote to this matter and for that reason we are appointing this Advisory Committee. This consists largely of experts, representatives of mining associations, representatives of metallurgical institutes, representatives of the steel industry, and representatives to be selected by the Labour Member. But in addition to that we want representatives of



[Mr. H. C. Prior.]

the public who may watch what we are doing and may give us their advice. It is for that reason that we are asking this House to elect members to serve on this Committee.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM** (Bihar and Orissa : Muhammadan) : May I ask a question, Sir ? Will the Utilization Branch have any control on the future development of our geological survey ? Are these things to be nationalized or are settlements with the people to be under certain regulations or is it going to be left open for anybody who comes in ? I should like the Honourable Member to enlighten us on that issue.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. H. C. PRIOR** : On that point, the Utilization Branch itself is to prepare the information. It will go into the matter and search for information. At that stage when the information is fully developed, a decision will have to be taken whether we shall ask for the assistance of commercial bodies or whether we shall carry on under Government control. Our present intention is that we do not want to run it under Government control. We shall give the fullest information and we shall invite commercial bodies to take a lease from us of anything that we can give them.

The Motion was adopted.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT** : With reference to the Motion which has just been adopted by the Council, I have to announce that nominations to the Committee will be received by the Secretary up to 11 A.M. on Friday, the 25th September, 1942, and the date of election, if necessary, will be announced later.

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#### MOTION *RE* PRESENT POLITICAL SITUATION IN INDIA—*contd.*

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT** : Discussion on the Motion of the Honourable Sir Mahomed Usman will now proceed. I would only request Honourable Members to remember that there are a number of Honourable Members who wish to speak on the subject and therefore I would ask them to be as brief as possible. I myself do not want to enforce a time-limit, but I leave it to their good sense not to repeat themselves but to save as much time as possible, so that everybody who wishes to speak may have a chance.

**THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR SRI NARAIN MAHTHA** (Bihar : Non-Muhammadan) : Sir, in the world of human affairs, as in the physical world, the laws of cause and effect work, and in order to be able to understand the present situation in India we have also to understand the background against which the situation is manifesting itself, the issues of the current world war and their bearing on India. The origins of the present war lie in the frustration of the ideals for the defence of which the war of 1914-18 had been fought. It was then professed that the world was being made safe for democracy ; but all that Britain and France did after Versailles only made Hitler possible. The present war was inevitable in Europe, because even there Britain and France had gambled away Abyssinia and Spain, Czecho-Slovakia and Poland. The tragic fall of France, however, shook England out of her insular arrogance and capitalistic prejudice into an alliance with the hitherto hated Bolshevik and,

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when England realized that Japan had her eyes on her eastern possessions, she entered into an alliance with those whom she had spurned as the contemptible heathen Chinese.

The situation in India is the natural result of Britain's attempt to arrest the progress of those forces which have been at work, slowly it may have been, but none the less steadily since the last war. India fought in 1914-18 unconsciously as it were, almost in a fit of absence of mind, without any definite realization of what she was fighting for. There might have been, in the minds of a politically-minded minority perhaps, a dim hope that in the newer world India may have the blessings of a democratic and popular government, free from control by an unsympathetic India Office, and freer still from the influence of a bureaucracy serving in the interests of alien capitalism. The Act of 1935 satisfied none, for it ingeniously multiplied every protective device discoverable of reaction, and British politicians, who love self-deception, acclaimed it as a real measure of freedom. Even then in the Provinces the Congress agreed to work the Act of 1935 and to press for advancement, pointing out their needs as the needs arose. When the storm that had long been brewing in Europe finally burst in 1939, India would have still been satisfied with nothing more than a categorical declaration about her own independence. When that was not forthcoming, in seven of the Provinces of India Congress Ministries went out of office, and the Government merrily reverted to the autocratic rule of fifty years ago. You cannot profess to fight for democracy when your own system of government in India is a negation of it. Thus a situation quite naturally arose which exposed thoroughly the nature of British rule in India. The country insistently called on Britain to act up to her professions so freely made, but all that Britain did was to play off one party against another and to represent to the world that self-rule was impossible in India. Even those who had for years clung to a pathetic faith in the professions of British politicians were crudely disappointed, and a sense of despair intensified the sense of frustration. Out of this has arisen the situation that faces us today.

For what after all is the real inwardness of the situation? Disrespect for law and order, disregard of authority, and the attempt to show that disrespect and disregard by acts of violence directed primarily against the symbols of British authority in India. It has, in some form or other, manifested itself throughout India; somewhere more and somewhere less, but manifest everywhere. One might well ask, why should it have been so? Why should it so happen in India where, the world has so often been told, the British have governed so wisely and so well; why should the people have arisen almost in revolt against a rule that professes to do them untold good? If at all it has been the work of "pestilential agitators", why should people have been led away so easily from the most perfect of all governments, from the paternal guidance of a government that parades its own benevolence, and from the control of an Executive that boasts of its super-efficiency? On their own showing the Government stands self-condemned, they have been able neither to carry the people with them, nor to hold them against those who are alleged to have misled them.

And why? Simply because the Government has not moved with the times, has not progressed to meet the growing aspiration of the people, has failed to

satisfy their elementary demands for recognition of human democratic rights. It had not had the sense to realize that the masses were getting tired and weary of the inefficiency and arrogance of the bureaucracy ; that the classes were getting weary of petitions and prayers, and the time was, therefore, ripening for some sort of direct action that would strike at its very foundation. The Government would not listen to reason, it would not pay any heed to the voice of its best friends : it would learn nothing and forget nothing. It would cling to its delusions as if they were the only realities. Thus only can the August offer be explained ; thus only could the Cripps proposals have been thought of. For after all what did these amount to ? Nothing more than a larger association of Indians in the actual work of administration, retaining effective control all the while in British hands. My friend the Honourable Mr. Sapru in his eloquent speech yesterday exposed the nature of the August offer and the Cripps proposals and it would be superfluous to add to his lucid analysis. I shall content myself with Sir Stafford's own words. He said in the House of Commons :

“ I had from the outset made it clear to all those whom I saw that it was not possible to make any constitutional changes except of the most *insignificant* kind prior to the new constitution which would come into operation as a result of the labours of the constitution-making assembly.”

Naturally, therefore, as he wanted to part with nothing immediately, his proposals met the fate they deserved.

I am not one of those, Sir, who hold an individual or an organization responsible for the present situation. To my mind, forces there are that work in human affairs, influencing men's actions, individual and collective. And the statesman is he who reads correctly the direction and objective of those forces and canalises them along safe and fruitful channels, using the energy for creative purposes. The mere politician, cursed with the ignorance that myopia breeds and obstinacy aggravates, merely seeks expedients to neutralise those forces, and in practice does actually seem to succeed until the inevitable crash comes. The present situation is an illustration in point. It is futile to seek to hold Mahatma Gandhi or the Congress entirely responsible for the present disturbances. These are to a very large extent the necessary results of the forces that you have driven underground all these long years. And what is worse, your methods of dealing with the present situation are as antiquated and will in their ultimate effect be as futile as Britain's attempt to coerce America in the eighteenth century. Against America, bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh, you employed the Red Indian savage with his scalping knife. Against the Indian mob you now boast of your collection of white forces, largest in India at present than at any time of its history. Have you collected them in India to fight Japanese aggression or to assert your strength against the millions that do not get a square meal from year's end to year's end, and to cow down those that merely ask you to act up to your own vaunted professions ?

Speaking of the methods of putting down disturbances brings me to the tragic events in my own province of Bihar. Up to the evening of the 11th August nothing at all serious had happened anywhere in the Province. But on that fateful afternoon, in front of the Secretariat at Patna a mob that had begun to disperse was fired upon. As if this was just the spark necessary for the movement to blaze out, events moved with incredible speed ; acts of sabotage and violence culminated in the roasting alive of some policemen

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and the tragic murder of a sub-divisional magistrate. It appeared as if anarchy born of mob violence would stalk supreme. I well realize that no Government could for a moment tolerate such lawlessness ; but the measures taken have been such that the average citizen found himself placed in the most perilous situation, midway between the violence of the mob and the infinitely better organized violence of those who seek to assert the majesty of law. Troops and police were let loose on the countryside, and in the course of my tours in the villages as a leader of the National War Front for my native district, I had reports made to me of the oppression of the police and of the troops, of vandalism, of wanton destruction and loot of private property, of whole villages burnt, of extortion of money on threat of arrest, and in some cases of actual physical torture. I have placed in the hands of my District Magistrate and of the Chief Secretary of my Province a statement of instances of such brutal oppression. This statement has been signed by me and by the Secretary of the District War Committee and Chairman of the District Board, perhaps the only one in India whose employees have bought war bonds of the value of nearly four lakhs. I have also related to the Chief Secretary and to the Adviser to His Excellency the Governor of Bihar what these eyes of mine have seen in the villages : all wealthy shops in the bazaar looted ; entire villages burnt, not by the mob but by the soldiers and by the police ; and I must confess that these sights would haunt me to my dying day. Indians in Bihar have by now been taught that there is very little difference between shooting down a pariah dog and a pariah nigger. As the train I was travelling by to attend this session was passing Bamrauli aerodrome, I noticed a European in military uniform aiming a rifle at a pie dog about a hundred yards away : he fired but missed : but those who wear the King's uniform in my part of the country are better marksmen, and they find their targets much closer.

Were I to narrate all that my hapless province has been passing through, I would take up much more time than has been allowed to me. I shall, therefore, content myself with a few general observations about the nature of the movement, and the measures that should now be adopted to restore public confidence. The extent, depth and import of this movement has not been properly understood or realised. It is neither a students' movement nor a Congress movement, nor even a Fifth Column attempt to sabotage India's war effort. It is the desperate gesture of a nation before whom you have dangled the offer of political freedom, a nation exasperated beyond the limits of human patience, a nation that has seen the anomaly of having to protect a freedom that it does not enjoy.

It is not my purpose to extenuate the excesses of the mob nor to exaggerate the repressive measures of the Government, but I must say that while mob violence had a clear line of action, Government measures seem to have proceeded on no plan or method, except that of striking terror throughout the entire countryside. The net result of this has been an impression that the Government has become panic-stricken and has consequently aroused in the minds of the people a feeling that if this is to be the Indians' lot under British rule, to be shot on suspicion, to be hanged on evidence inadequate in law, to be arrested on the whim of a policeman, the average Indian may well be pardoned if he thinks of the Axis occupation of the conquered country as different only in degree. The war in India may, therefore, be said to have already begun on the moral plane, and even the simple-minded villager has begun to compare British methods of maintaining law and order with what he has heard old about Axis methods in occupied countries, and to him the comparison may

appear to be flattering. What is then the remedy? Statesmanship demands that the root causes be eliminated, and the people conciliated, so that India takes her rightful place as a free and equal partner in the comity of the United Nations. You can repress, with the power that you now have, any popular movement, but you will merely drive it underground, where it will wait its time and burst forth at a more perilous hour. Conciliation should be the motto, and you can very easily conciliate Indians if you only consent to part with power. Free your mind from the suspicion that India will not stand by you once she is independent. It is common wisdom that a good friend is a better ally than a disgruntled slave. The events of the last few years should have taught you the lesson that imperialistic domination cannot last. Only in March, 1931 Mr. Churchill in a Liverpool bye-election speech asked, "Is there any other country in the world which would tamely submit to be pushed out of its rights and duties in the East? Would France be chattered out of Indo-China? Would the Dutch give up Java to please the Javanese? Would the United States be hustled out of the Philippines?" Since these would not, Mr. Churchill went further to say, "we alone seem afraid of our own shadow". That was Mr. Churchill eleven years ago. He does not seem to have changed much, but whither have gone the Eastern possessions of France and of Holland?

In times like these it is the essence of strategy to keep up the morale of the people. The National War Front, conceived in this spirit, seemed in my Province to be capable of infinite good. If you pardon a reference to what may be considered a personal achievement, I would like to tell you that in my District of Muzaffarpur, the Congress, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League agreed to work with the National War Front in order to maintain internal security and internal self-sufficiency. Dr. Rajendra Prasad who held the meeting at my house was a party to the agreement. I was chosen as the Executive Officer of this Co-ordination Board, and it seemed to promise well for the good of the country. Only one week before the disturbances began, Muzaffarpur was chosen as the venue, and my house as the place, of a conference of all the leaders of the National War Front for the Province of Bihar, and His Excellency the Governor of Bihar did us the honour to inaugurate the conference. Nothing could have been more auspicious for a movement designed to maintain the morale of the people, and we all had high hopes that whatever comes we shall be able to hold our own. Unfortunately the indiscriminate repressive measures of Government have created an atmosphere in which our ideals cannot be adequately realized, for as I have already said the war on the moral plane seems to have begun in India, and our difficulties are correspondingly greater.

It is, however, not yet too late. If only statesmanship would look a little beyond the immediate, if real power is transferred to the people, all will yet be well. The finest anti-Nazi material is to be found in India and it will be a tragedy if India remains unreconciled. I realise that there are difficulties, but these have to be overcome. I shall close with a quotation from Professor Harold Laski's book published only in 1940. Speaking of the situation in India, Professor Laski says:

"The point I am making is the simple one that an Empire is a handicap to freedom whenever its subjects deny the validity of its maintenance. At that stage it must either become a partnership or degenerate into a tyranny. And it is particularly dangerous to permit that degeneration if it offers to our enemies an opportunity of reproach to which we have no adequate response. The plea made by our enemies that the real nature of our dominion is shown by the way in which we maintain our rule in India we cannot answer by reference to a single Indian representative able freely to secure the full

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support of his own people. We can answer that plea only by saying that we are satisfied with our achievement there. But we have, in truth, no more right to constitute ourselves judges in our own cause than the Fascist leaders possess; less even, since we deny them that right so soon as its attempted application touches ourselves. A nation can justly stand as trustee of another people when it can be shown that no vested interest of its own is safeguarded by that trusteeship, and when a detached observer would admit first, that the people so ruled do not claim freedom from trusteeship and, second, when the objective results of its exercise are clearly and mainly for the benefit of that people. Judged by these standards, it is clear, I think," (continues Professor Harold Laaski) "that the sooner we end our paramountcy over India the better for Indians and for ourselves. And there is no moment more fitting to end it than in a war where we declare ourselves to be the world defenders of democracy and freedom".

(Applause).

THE HONOURABLE SIR RAMUNNI MENON (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, no person who reflects on the happenings in this country during the past six or seven weeks, and particularly in the light of the information which the Honourable the Leader's impressive statement now makes available to the public, can help feeling a sense of relief that this country has successfully emerged from a grave crisis. But for the swift, courageous and firm action of the Government of India, that crisis might very easily have developed into a disaster of great magnitude. I think the Government of India by their action have earned our gratitude, and their policy and action deserve the support of all law-abiding and peace-loving sections of the people of this country. No thinking person can evince anything but utter abhorrence for and the strongest disapproval of the civil disobedience movement which has been the cause of the recent disturbances. One could wish that more frequent public expressions of condemnation were in evidence than unfortunately seem to have been the case so far, because it is only in some such way that we can build up a healthy public opinion which will discourage subversive movements of the kind which we have been witnessing. There is one feature of these disturbances, and I think it is a very deplorable feature as all sensible people will agree, to which I would like to refer. The point that I have in mind is the fact that school boys and college students of both sexes have been, it is very sad to observe, unscrupulously exploited by the organizers of disorder. I quite admit that the trouble which prevails among the students is one which should be dealt with primarily by their parents and teachers. But, unfortunately, in the existing disturbed state of the political atmosphere in this country, they are practically powerless to control the evil; and I would venture to suggest that all public men, and; in particular, political leaders, should by some convention create a volume of public opinion which would be sufficient to eradicate it. I am glad to admit that in the last few weeks political leaders and other public men, not excluding leaders whose sympathies are known to be with the Congress, have advised the students not to take part in strikes and picketing, but to no purpose. The malady which afflicts the students is a legacy from the long past, when the Congress openly exhorted them to leave their colleges and to boycott all educational institutions. It is perfectly true that a later generation of Congress leaders gave very sound advice—the opposite advice—that students should not take part in active, controversial politics. But, as so often happens in life, the bad advice is remembered and followed, the good one has been buried and forgotten.

The evil that men do lives after them;  
The good is oft interred with their bones.

In connection with this aspect of the discussion on the political situation, namely, the measures taken by the Government to control the situation, I

cannot help making a passing reference to the part which the Indian Members of the Executive Council have played in the recent crisis. I realize that I am treading on extremely controversial ground, a clear indication of which was given this morning by the slight breeze which was provoked at question time. The attitude of the Indian Members—the Governor General's Indian Eleven—has been severely criticized in certain quarters, and in this Council it has been subjected to very strong criticism by my Honourable friend, Mr. Sapru. It is no concern of mine to defend the Indian Members of the Executive Council. Every one of them is able to look after himself. But I am concerned, as an impartial student and observer, in giving expression to my appreciation of the part which they have played in connection with the recent events. With the full knowledge that they will incur extreme unpopularity among certain sections of the public and that they will be exposed to the most hostile criticism, they never for one moment allowed their courage and sense of duty to falter and gave their unstinted support to the policy and action of the Government of India. I consider that no impartial critic can withhold from any one of them his due share of appreciation and praise. Further, I think, by their conduct, they have fully justified the recent process of Indianisation of the Executive Council.

Discussion of the present political situation generally assumes a two-fold aspect, one aspect dealing with the measures taken to suppress the subversive movements and the other offering or purporting to offer constructive suggestions for improving the present situation. I confess that, in approaching any aspect of the discussion and more particularly the constitutional or constructive aspect of it, I feel I am approaching a region where the prevailing atmosphere is surcharged with mutual distrust and suspicion, bitterness and communal tension. This may be a very unpalatable observation, but I do not think its truth will be seriously disputed. Unfortunately, the statements issued by political parties, the utterances of political leaders and other public men, and the comments in the political press have done nothing to improve matters; on the contrary, they have generally served to intensify these qualities. I fear the solution of a question, difficult and complicated as it is intrinsically, is not rendered any the easier by the prevailing atmosphere. The major political parties have made their own pronouncements on the situation. There seems to be a certain set fashion in the pronouncements of these parties. Each party expresses its anxiety to take part in the defence of the country, throws the blame for the existing state of affairs on the other parties, puts forward its own minimum demands the acceptance of which is a condition precedent to its co-operation, and winds up with a denunciation of the British Government. Those who have bestowed any thought on recent political developments will think it somewhat unfair that the blame for the present *impasse* should be made to rest on the British Government. Whatever sins of omission and commission may be attributed legitimately to the British Government, one thing is quite clear. During the last four or five months that Government did present a very fair—I should say a liberal and comprehensive—scheme of political advance, the scheme embodied in the Cripps proposals, which should satisfy the legitimate aspirations of all sections in this country and at the same time meet the emergent needs of the war situation. We may have desired certain modifications of the scheme in details, but it was a scheme which found a fair measure of public approval. But most unfortunately the major political parties, whose agreement was vital to the adoption of any scheme, rejected it. I do not know what we can do now. But one thing we should realize is that the difficulties which confront us are difficulties which exist in this country. They are not difficulties created by

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Great Britain, nor have they had their origin outside this country. It is the duty of all sections of the public in this country to co-operate and try and remove these difficulties, with a view to securing the fullest co-operation in the war effort. No human problem is insoluble, given time and the necessary good-will; and there is no reason to imagine that, if all the parties who are in the public eye today, throw in their best in a co-operative effort, a solution could not be found. But I must confess that in the prevailing atmosphere and with a realistic appreciation of the attitudes of the major political parties in this country, I can find no promise of a speedy settlement. In the meantime, while hoping for the best, let all people who are interested in the progress of this country do everything in their power to support the great effort which this country is making to win the war.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS (Punjab : Non-Muhammadan) : Sir, the course of the debate has shown that there is a fundamental difference of outlook between the Government and this side of the House regarding the origin of the disturbances and the requirements of the situation. The reason for this diversity is that the Government is to my mind suffering from propaganda complex. Having made up its mind not to part with power, it realised that it must one day come into clash with the Congress. It prepared itself for that clash in the convenient belief that the Congress could be crushed at a stroke. There is no doubt that it was in this belief that the Government acted on 9th August. Having assumed that the Congress movement would have no backing, it gave to the world a daily picture of "All quiet on all fronts". For some weeks we were told that there were hardly any disturbances worth mentioning and the All-India Radio even ceased mentioning the matter after the first few days following the arrests of Congressmen. Suddenly the Government appears to have changed its propaganda angle. It has now let loose an account of arson, loot, murder and sabotage to show that it had been faced with "an open rebellion" and that but for the loyalty of the military, the police and the Government servants the rebellion might have paralysed the machinery of Government. At the same time we are given the assurance that the general public has remained steady and has not supported the rebels.

What can be the motive of publishing now these blood-curdling accounts of hooliganism? I suspect that the motive is to keep the Congress leaders locked up in jail for the period of the war and to carry on the administration on the existing pattern. The refusal to allow Dr. Mukerjee to see Mahatma Gandhi is a pointer in the same direction. I am not here to plead for the Congress. I have all my life had differences with the Congress programme and I unreservedly condemn the outburst of violence which followed the arrest of Congress leaders. But what I wish to know is whether the Government feels satisfied that after imprisoning the Congress leaders it has done its job and that it can take a complacent view of the situation in the country.

I have a stake in the country and during my long public life I have been a supporter of ordered progress. I am pained to find today that the Government stands friendless. Even those classes such as the Taluqdars of Oudh, who were Government's most loyal supporters, are not without misgivings as to the policy Government is pursuing. The sectional interests which opposed to the nationalist movement are not afraid of the Government either. They are only out to promote their narrow interests. At a time like this when public opinion is becoming more and more divorced from



Government it is the path of wisdom to adopt the policy of conciliation. If the Congress is irreconcilable, the other parties are not. How is it that there is no party in India which is satisfied with the manner in which the Government is responding to the demand for real power so that the country may find its emotion roused to support the war effort ?

No one denies that there has been mob violence and that the Government has done well by putting it down at once, but the whole basis of Government and the psychology of its agents convert the instrument of force into a weapon of repression. It is the lesson of history that extreme repression leads to extreme reaction. I have no hesitation in saying that the Defence of India Act is being misused. I have heard from my Bihar friend an account of the loot in which the police and army are alleged to have indulged. Some day the facts will become known when there will be no censor to stop their publication. A friend of mine who came from Bihar told me that the shop of one Madan Lal at Pupri Bazar was looted and as many as half a dozen iron safes were broken open and it is alleged that this was done by the police. I was informed by my friend that on the representation of the sufferers and of the Leader of the Bihar National War Front and some of its members, the Government is holding an inquiry into the matter and that the result of that inquiry may be published very soon.

What is the position of Government today ? The Government tells us that it is improving, but, Sir, it is difficult to reconcile oneself to this statement when the train services on the E. I. R. and the B. N. W. R. since about a month remain scanty and night running of passenger trains on certain sections is still prohibited, and when every day brings in accounts of mob violence, besides shooting. Are we then to draw consolation from the fact that Mr. Churchill has told that there are more white troops in India today than ever before ? Are we to take it that this increase in the army of occupation is meant to ensure that India shall remain loyal to the Imperial cause ?

I travel a lot, Sir, and I find that on certain sections of the E. I. R. there are no night trains and trouble in those sections, notwithstanding stringent measures, has not stopped. In face of all these facts how can Government say that the position has not deteriorated ?

Both Mr. Churchill and Mr. Amery have made the situation worse by their recent utterances. I wish they had not spoken but now since they have, it is up to the Government of India to convey to them the true reaction in India to those speeches.

What I say, then, is that you have completely misjudged the situation and that you will continue to do so at your peril. The Congress Party which held the reins of Government in seven provinces is not so unimportant as you wish to make out. But conceding that it has put itself out of court by making the demand for "Quit India" why not transfer power to those who represent that steady public opinion which you say is behind the war effort ? There never was a time when this country was governed more autocratically than today ; when British officials had such supreme control and had such utter contempt for Indian opinion and sentiment. My information is that in a number of districts in Bihar where Indian I. C. S. officers were in command, (i.e., Collectors or Deputy Commissioners) European I. C. S. officers were also appointed in joint charge ; so confidence in the Indian I. C. S. officers according to my information has been lost. Collective fines are being imposed without discrimination. There are people who have done nothing and even they are to pay fines. It is alleged properties were burnt by police. My information

[ Rai Bahadur Lal Ram Saran Das. ]

is that sometime back—I mean about 20 or 30 years ago—in tribal areas in the Frontier Province—if I am wrong in my information General the Honourable Sir Alan Hartley will kindly put me right—the villages which were not friendly to the British were burnt down and people in them were burnt alive, and the feeling of Muslims has been, as you all very well know, one of disgust on account of the burning of the dead bodies in those areas. I am sorry, Sir, that such like things are being repeated now in times when every country condemns such action.

I should like to say, Sir, that no efforts are being made by the Government of India to put down the discontent. Some time ago I mentioned in this House that the mentality of the masses is entirely changed. You cannot compare the mentality of the masses during the last Great War and the present war. I am telling you a fact when I say that whenever there is any British victory the masses do not believe it and whenever there is any defeat or retreat people rejoice. Have Government taken any pains to find out the reasons which have led to this change of mentality and the remedial measures that they should adopt? After all everybody can realize that in a police station the police force ordinarily consists of a sub-inspector, two head constables and six constables who controls 50 to 100 square miles of area and people hold them in respect but that in case of any change in mentality that force is infinitesimally small to resist mob violence. It is the *Iqbal* itself which has made the Government to rule and I wish that loyal sentiments of the masses should not be spoiled. I can tell you that when you commit excesses the minds of the friends and that of the victims and their relatives and of the other people are embittered and the consequential result when the masses are swayed are discontent and history can tell you what then happens. I will ask you and earnestly request you to learn some lessons from the happenings in Malaya and Burma and not to repeat the blunder here in India. According to my information—I do not know whether I am right or wrong, but in case I am wrong General Hartley will kindly put me right—during the recent warfare in Burma the rumour was—and that rumour came from a person on whom I could place reliance—that a contingent came from Australia to reinforce the British forces in Burma and that when that contingent of troops was nearing Rangoon an order came from the Premier of Australia that because in Australia trouble was brewing that contingent must immediately return and the result was that the people thought that because that contingent did not arrive the British Government had suddenly to evacuate Burma and to clear out without their bag and baggage.

Well, Sir, another reason of discontent among the Defence forces is—and I think General Hartley is very well aware of it—the proportion of Indian officers to British officers in Defence Units. From the statement that the General Sahib has made today in this House we find that in the Indian Army 4.75 British officers have been recruited against one Indian. I know that there are a lot of suitable Indian officers available, but even in the time of war this disproportion which has not been set right is to be deplored. Why are you creating discontent among those who are ready to sacrifice their lives for the sake of the Empire? My information is, Sir, that experienced Indian officers holding honorary commissions—I mean Viceroy's commissioned officers who have been re-employed and are holding ranks, some of them as Majors and Captains—are being put under planters newly recruited who know nothing about the art of tactics, and there is consequently discontent among those officers. I do not want to mention names.

but in case General Hartley wants I can mention instances. It is not in the public interest, nor in the interest of the officers serving to give their names. I understand that at Dimapur there was an Indian contingent which is commanded by a planter officer and orders that the planter commander gives are in contravention of the relative army manuals. I hope General Hartley will kindly see to this and remove the discontent. Now when the proportion of Indian officers was increased it was announced on the floor of this House that in future there would be agreed increases in the proportion of Indian commissioned officers to British commissioned officers. Now, Sir, what do we find? We find that even the recommendations of the Skeen Committee, which were accepted by the Government and declaration made on the floor of this House and the other House, were totally violated and so the Government failed to fulfil its pledge. Such like things, Sir, injure the feelings of Indians who are prepared to sacrifice their lives for your sake. Is that not sheer injustice, particularly in these days of war? Instead of creating happier feelings in the public mind or in those who are serving for you in the field that differentiation, that breach of pledge, is something which cannot be tolerated to continue. It is time that Government should make up that proportion now and fulfil its pledge. What are the proportions which General Hartley has given us today? He says that in the Indian Army there is one Indian to 4.75 British among King's Commissioned officers; in the Royal Indian Navy one Indian to 2.4 British. Regarding warrant officers which were to replace Viceroy's Commissioned officers in the Indian Army, I am not concerned. There was a time when the Indian Government had decided to abolish the Viceroy's commissions which step I regarded as a blunder and in this House I advocated that such commissions should be revived for those people who had been serving you loyally for practically a century and had done well and had been a proper link between the soldiers and the officers. I am very glad to learn that the Government realized this mistake and revived the Viceroy's commission, but I can tell you that in those Viceroy's commissioned officers you find men who have done well but now some of them are being put under command of planters who have been given ranks of Majors and Colonels in spite of incompetency in staff duties and want of knowledge of Army Manuals. For Military discipline practically they are killing their conscience in following orders of such commanders.

The salaries and allowances of the British King's commissioned officers are different from those of the Indian commissioned officers and racial discrimination still exists in the Navy, in the Air Force and in the land forces. Why is that so, Sir? When Indians can do quite as well as the British officers, why should there be increased recruitment of British officers? I do not want to dwell long on this subject because most of the ground I wanted to cover has already been covered by my colleagues. But I want to make an appeal to the Government because I am a firm believer that India's destiny lies with the nations which stand for democratic progress. I would ask the Government, as one of the well-wishers of the country, to give up their present attitude and face the realities of the situation in India today. If the Government does not change its policy and give up repression, it will bring about a state of affairs which I shudder to contemplate. May I end with an appeal to the President of the United States and to Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek to put an end to the present disorders in India by their intervention? I hope that the Government will now find its way to put the matter right soon.

Before I sit down, I must say that the people suspect that the visit of Mr. Wendell Willkie to India is not taking place at the instance of British

[Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das.]

Government. People are at a loss to know why his visit to India has not been included in his programme. There are misgivings in the minds of the people, and I would like Government to make it clear whether it was at their instance that Mr. Wendell Willkie has not included his visit to India. If he had come here, he would have been most welcome and helpful in removing the deadlock and in maintaining and restoring peace in this country.

THE HONOURABLE MR. R. R. HADDOW (Bengal Chamber of Commerce) : Mr. President, Sir, during the debate last week in another place, the views of the British community were ably expounded by three representative members of our Group and surely no one who listened to or has read those speeches can, for one moment, doubt the sincerity of our desire to see the early fulfilment of the broad intentions of Sir Stafford Cripps' proposals.

At the same time I confess to considerable concern at the "quit India" demand expressed by the Fuehrer of the Congress Party. It is true that the Congress have for the present fallen from grace, but I have no doubt that they will rise again and create further mischief with the financial backing of certain Indian business magnates. Let it be clearly understood that we do not wish to leave India and we ask for no special treatment or concessions not granted to the citizens of the country. We hope to continue to assist the country to further advancement in all respects.

At the present time the European commercial community in the urban areas is doing most valuable service in keeping the working classes contented by providing them with food at reasonable prices. The scope of our community in this respect however is definitely limited. We must look to Government both at the Centre and in the Provinces to remedy the food difficulties of the masses. Shortage there may be in certain commodities but the main troubles are transport facilities, hoarding and profiteering. I know the Ministers responsible are alive to the necessity of solving the problem, but I would ask that consideration be given to the advisability of creating a special portfolio or strengthening the organization within one of the present Departments which I feel is the better course. There must, however, be no undue usurping of the powers vested in the Provincial Governments.

From recent utterances by responsible Indians, it is obvious whilst they naturally are anxious to gain self-government, they deprecate the methods adopted by the Congress Party. What is even more satisfactory is the attitude of the silent masses who have stuck to their posts and have continued to add their bit towards the ultimate victory of the United Nations which of course include India. It is true that there have been instances of workers downing tools, but not always have they been without encouragement from employers or members of the senior staff. On the other hand the employees of a concern in which I personally am interested asked for but were not granted permission to stage an anti-Congress procession.

I would here like to associate myself with the complimentary remarks made by the Honourable the Leader of the House regarding the police, the troops, railway and other Government officials. No praise is too high for the loyalty and devotion to duty displayed by all sections of these services. The great regret is that they do not receive the support of the middle classes who, although protesting, would meekly get out of a tram car at the bidding of two unarmed irresponsible students who would then set the car on fire. Surely they must have realized that they would in the long run be the sufferers if they were deprived of the cheapest form of transport. Even the war effort was not being hampered. It was sheer wilful and thoughtless destruction of property.

So long as the Congress followers show so little commonsense and their leaders will accept nothing but their own complete and absolute dictatorship, it is surely most unfair to place the blame for the present state of affairs on the Government of India who have worked so earnestly to bring about a settlement. There is in fact too great a readiness to expect the much maligned Government to appease all parties and by a wave of a magic wand make them sink their communal and other differences and accept Congress rule. We all know how that rule was exercised during the early stages of Provincial Autonomy when each Congress Minister before being allowed to take office had to sign and hand over to the Congress Gestapo an undated letter of resignation which could be used at any time with or without the individual's permission.

The European community during Sir Stafford Cripps' visit assured him of its readiness to assist in every way possible in the hope that if a permanent settlement was not possible, at least a temporary settlement would be attained although they realised that to introduce drastic reforms and turn out of office during a life and death struggle tried and experienced legislators, not on account of inefficiency, but for political reasons, was not furthering India's ultimate claim for freedom. To change horses in midstream is always a hazardous operation and should never be attempted except when, if successful, the result justifies the risk. Only if a truly National Government is the result would the risk be warranted. But with one allegedly representative party showing no desire to join with others in presenting a united front against the common enemy and the other major party standing aloof, it is impossible to form a truly National Government. This being the case then, I can see no possible advantage in any change at the present juncture. That does not mean that when peace once again prevails Indians will not have the right to carve out their country's destiny. In the interim I would beseech all Indians of whatever religion, caste or creed to forget their differences and prejudices and to exert every effort to the gaining of an early and complete victory over our common foe, Nazism or life long servitude.

**THE HONOURABLE HAJI SYED MUHAMMAD HUSAIN** (United Provinces West : Muhammadan) : Sir, the debate on this Motion in the other House as well as in this has been, in my estimation, a very pathetic drama. At the present juncture, when India is passing through a most critical time, what good has it done to the Government or the people ? One group standing up and supporting the Government measures and another group standing up and condemning the Government in the strongest possible language they could find ! I personally put the whole responsibility for the futility of this debate upon the Indian Members of the Viceroy's Council. These are the gentlemen who are being proclaimed from the house tops by the British Government in every corner of the world as members of a Government which is Indian. Have they discharged their duty to India in this debate ? Is it sufficient for them to support the measures of repression for counteracting the present subversive movement ? If they did that, I think they certainly discharged only one of their duties, but that duty was only to the Government. Have they come out with any constructive proposal ? Have they done anything to remove the present deadlock, and to ease the Indian situation, or have they merely joined hands with the Government in repression ? I should have expected something better from the Indian Members at least. They are men of integrity and experience. They are of all types—feather weight, light weight, middle weight and heavy weight. They have had experience in their life. But they have utilized their intellect and experience in favour of the Government and nothing in favour of the Indians. When I first learnt of the session of the Central Legislature, and when I further learnt that this particular item was to be on the programme,

[ Haji Syed Muhammad Husain. ]

I thought that in co-operation with such of the members of the Central Legislature who are willing to co-operate the Indian Members of the Executive Council would evolve a formula which, if it would not entirely remove the deadlock, would at least ease the situation. The last suggestion that I heard was from the Honourable the Law Member who said in the other House that it was for the Members of the Central Legislature now to come together and tell them something. If the Indian Members of the Executive Council want to keep the reputation of their being Indian, and to enjoy the position that is being given to them in other countries of being members of a Government which is predominantly Indian and with which India is satisfied, even now, at the eleventh hour, they can very well take into confidence those Members of the Central Legislature whom they think they can consult, and try to evolve some proposition which would ease the present political situation. The situation should not be underestimated. It is a very serious situation. The hour of test has not yet come, but it is approaching very fast. It is true that this movement, which everybody has condemned on account of its method and which certainly deserves condemnation, is causing injury even to the cause of the Congress, the people of India, the Government and the war effort, which is so necessary to the country. But I hope the Government realize the present atmosphere in the country. A formula ought not to be applied under all conditions, in all atmosphere and in all seasons. In this country, since the last 30 years there have been public and popular movements against the British Government. The fight for freedom which was confined some time ago to within the four walls of a certain room or to drawing room politicians came into public and popular movements started a few years ago. This movement openly created an atmosphere in the country which was wholly *anti*-Government or *anti*-British; they were repeated time after time. Nothing was done to counteract those agitations and establish good-will among the people of India by the British. Why? Because they did not bother their head to create good-will among the Indian people and wanted to rule so long as they could. The result is that in India today—I hope I am not very wrong—there is not one single Indian, whether he is a Government servant, a man in the street or whether he is a member of any institution of the Government, even of the Executive Council, who is enamoured of the present administration. It is only natural. No Indian today, having realized what slavery has been and what freedom means, can possibly be a supporter of the system of Government which exists today. Among the masses there is very great *anti*-British feeling. If officials want to know the mass mentality—which they never care to know and I am quite certain that they do not know correctly—let me tell them. Now I am going to tell them how best to act in a manner which would be beneficial to everybody. The mass mentality is anything but pro-British—not because of the present movement which is only accelerating and accentuating the thing which already existed. The methods which are employed in suppressing the movement are helping a good deal in that direction. It is true that everybody has supported and I am also supporting the measures taken to stop the subversive movement. No Government worth the name could sit quiet at what is happening. A challenge was thrown out to the Government. What could the Government do? Either they had to accept the demand and surrender or to accept the challenge. The Government did what any other Government would have done. At the moment there was no chance of any settlement. I am prepared to say that the Congress took a decision which was not likely to succeed and was likely to create confusion and chaos in the country. The Congress did not seek the co-operation of any party in this country which was so essential for a popular mass movement. The Congress went ahead on its own

responsibility. The Congress took the decision to create a situation in India which would affect every Indian solely and entirely on its own responsibility treating itself as the representative of all the people of India. Now, when no party was consulted, no effort was made to come to a settlement on the future activity of the Congress with any party in this country, how can the Congress or anybody blame that people are not supporting the Congress? Voices have risen from every quarter when the final decision was taken and even before that the step they intended to take was wrong. They paid no attention and they took a plunge. The Government also decided that activities which were not only illegal but which would destroy not only the administrative machinery but the whole daily life of the people in this country ought to be stopped. No one has got up to condemn that decision. There was no necessity for support for that to have come from Indian Members in this debate. What we expected was something more than that. Unfortunately there is no suggestion in any speech made in the Assembly or in the opening speech of the Honourable the Leader of our House as to how best we can act now; but I hope I will find something in the closing speech of the Honourable Leader of the House and in the speech of other Indian members who are likely to speak tomorrow to indicate what steps should at once be taken to ease the present situation. It is very very difficult to find a solution even for the most experienced politician. So far as the major parties are concerned, they have taken a firm stand from the very beginning that they will not budge an inch. Well, what is to be done? That is the question and something must be done as quickly as possible. Now in the country, whether your repressive measures are justified or not, they are creating an atmosphere which would be exceedingly dangerous at the hour of test, namely, when an attack is launched on India. We have had experience of Malaya and Burma. There is a shout that in India forces of Fifth Columnists are working. I do not believe it. If you merely extend and elaborate the definition of a Fifth Columnist a little more the mentality of an Indian today is such that every one can be called a Fifth Columnist. The action of the Government, even if justified, is making even their friends enemies. Now what would be the result of that? You may be able to stop mob violence, demonstrations; you may be able to shoot down people like dogs who bark at you, but what is the ultimate result? You are creating a deep rooted spite and anger in the minds of those people whose association and co-operation you would require in the nearest possible future. No thinking Indian, sensible Indian, I am sure wants to have a change of masters. No Indian wants to encourage Japanese or any Axis Power to come to this country as slavery of Indian people, which has now reached almost to the stage of X or Y, will begin again from A and B. They do not want the change of masters but what they want is freedom and it is wrong to say that Indians are in any way encouraging Japanese. What is happening is a thing which happens in the ordinary every-day life, namely, sometimes a person loses his sound sense of judgment on account of spite, anger and desperation. Is it not true that, however justifiable the repression may be, the use of it and such use of it as is being made will ultimately drive the Indians so desperate that their feeling of anger and spite might very well overpower their sound judgment. There is a story which a friend of mine related to me yesterday that God became pleased with a person. He said, "Look here, you will get whatever you want. Ask what you want". Now this man had an enemy in his neighbour. He said "Please God, tell me what will my neighbour get?" Then God told him "Your neighbour will get the double of what will be given to you". The man said, "All right, take out one of my eyes", simply because that his neighbour should lose his both! Now that is the feeling of spite and anger which sometimes works the mind of a person. It is not a question of Fifth Columnists or

[ Haji Syed Muhammad Husain. ]

encouraging Japanese. It is merely the question of what is the present condition of the people's mentality and under what atmosphere we are working. Now that again, as I said, is a criticism and that alone will not do. We must find some constructive thing to remove the distrust. My idea had always been and is that the methods that the Government is employing, namely, the brutal force, might ultimately prove to be very dangerous. What they could do at the present time was to have mutual trust and confidence with the people who are prepared to co-operate, but it should not be like this: "What will you bring me when you come to my house and what will you give me if I go to your house?" It must be a question of give and take. Government must necessarily be prepared to part with power, (*Applause*) and must trust Indians; Create a goodwill. India is a sub-continent. The people of India when they will be ready to work shoulder to shoulder with the British people I am quite certain could provide an Army which will absolutely wipe off continents. India is a huge thing. It has enormous martial races who have proved their merits on not one but many battlefields. Secure it, try and get the co-operation and goodwill of those people and then the winning of the war is certain, and without this, if the Government wants to win the war by terrorising people, by threatening people, by bluffing people, I am afraid that will not do now. We have seen the result of America trying to bluff Japan. While they were bluffing Japan was active and Japan has taken the whole of the American eastern possessions.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT:** The Honourable Member has already taken half an hour.

**THE HONOURABLE HAJI SYED MUHAMMAD HUSAIN:** Well, may I have another five minutes?

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT:** All right, but not lawyer's five minutes!

**THE HONOURABLE HAJI SYED MUHAMMAD HUSAIN:** Well, I happen to be a lawyer.

Well, Sir, my definite proposal is—and I would like to hear some reference to this when the Indian Members of Council deliver their speeches tomorrow—that they should at once, without losing a moment, call and sit in conference with important members of the Central Legislature and, with their help, should try and reach some conclusion which, even if it does not entirely satisfy all parties, at least would ease the situation, and they should submit their proposals or recommendations to His Excellency the Viceroy and ask him to act upon them.

There is another little thing—I have just four more minutes—and it is that they must try and remove the discontent not only from the minds of the people but from their own Departments. I am afraid whatever Department you may like to touch you will find racial discrimination. Take the Government of India Directory, or the list of any Department so far as the high officials are concerned, and you will find that there is racial discrimination. Some of the Departments are almost like asylums for certain classes of people and particularly I say about military which is the most important thing, and I join with my Honourable friend Lala Ram Saran Das in what he said and pointed out about the treatment to the Indian officers. I wish the heads of the Army Department knew what is the feeling among the Indian Commissioned officers.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU (United Provinces Northern: Non-Muhammadan):** They know this feeling already.

**THE HONOURABLE HAJI SYED MUHAMMAD HUSAIN:** I am not quite certain. If they had known they would have in their own interests tried to



remove it. They may be knowing something but not to the extent it is there. Even socially of two Captains, one Indian and one Englishman, or between any officer of the same rank, the Indian has a great grievance. The differences in the treatment are there. I should like His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief and the Honourable General Hartley to find out how many Indians there are in Army Headquarters in various Commands, and whether it is a fact or not that demi-officials come saying, "We do not want Indians in the high command". Remove these discontentments also, as well as racial discriminations, and I am sure we shall be able to do something to remove the present discontentment in the Government Departments.

Sir, my time is over. I have some other important points but I make room for others to speak.

**THE HONOURABLE SARDAR BAHADUR SOBHA SINGH** (Nominated Non-Official): Mr. President, Sir, I wonder if it is a compliment to my community that the Leader of the House has refrained from mentioning the name of the Sikh community and the part we have played in the Punjab in the present crisis. He has been very generous to say that the Punjab and the North West Frontier Province have kept aloof from this movement, and I can assure him that the Sikh community has played a very important part in helping to secure these conditions. The protection which a Sikh temple offered to certain British officers shows the heart of the community, and the efforts in the recruitment and training of young men for Emergency Commissions that the community is making through the Sikh Defence of India League are well known. I would like, as the names of Honourable Members of the Viceroy's Executive Council have been mentioned, to mention the name of the Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh who represents the Sikh community. I can say with confidence, not of my own but of the whole community, that the Sikh community is behind him. In fact moderates or extremists, Akalis or non-Akalis, everyone felt so proud on his nomination and I think His Excellency the Viceroy knows about it; and Sir Jogendra Singh also knows that his community is behind him. It will not be out of place, Sir, to mention here the desire and determination of the Sikh community to merge itself in the nation as a whole and to stand for the integrity of India as a nation and to claim for non-Muslims the right of self-determination in areas where they are in a minority and the same treatment as will be given to any other minority. The Sikh community in Delhi, I can say, have surely played their humble part as well as loyal citizens can do in any other city, and I am sure that Government is realizing the seriousness of the situation—not the situation that has passed, but the situation which is about to come.

**THE HONOURABLE SAIYED MOHAMED PADSHAH SAHIB BAHADUR** (Madras: Muhammadan): Mr. President, I should have very much liked to be called on to speak tomorrow, but now that there seems to be no other Honourable Member to speak, I should like to go on with my remarks.

Sir, I would restrict my remarks to the points which have not been mentioned in the debate except perhaps in respect of those features of the debate which have got to be dealt with by every speaker on the floor of the House. Sir, as we have all observed, two features have been common to every speech that has been made on the floor of this House despite the differences in views—and the differences have been very many and very sharp. One is the condemnation in the strongest terms possible of the disturbances which are defacing the country: the other is the necessity which has been felt by every Honourable Member here for trying to improve the situation, even though there have been differences in the methods suggested by different speakers, differences as regards the measures to be adopted to bring about a better atmosphere in the country.

[Saiyed Mohamed Padshah Sahib Bahadur.]

Now, Sir, as regards the disturbances, as I said, everyone has expressed disapproval of the orgy of arson, pillage and plunder that is going on in the country, which is neither to the good of the rioters themselves nor to the advantage of the people or the country. But, Sir, one question which crops to one's mind when one considers these aspects of the situation is, what are the measures that have been adopted to quell the disturbances—whether the measures that have so far been taken have proved effective in stopping these disturbances, or in discouraging people from taking part in acts of mischief and destruction of life and property. I am sorry to state, Sir, from what I have come to know that I feel that the measures that have been adopted have been far from adequate. This inadequacy of the measures in trying to put down these rioters has given rise to two evils. One disadvantage is that the forces of law and order which go to quell the disturbances are so insignificant that they are not at all in a position to overawe the rioters. They are not at all in a position to prevent any mischief being done, and if at all any real prevention has been possible, it has been mainly due to the help given by the people, by the public. It is these villagers who have a sense of responsibility about them, villagers who have their civic conscience alive that have helped the police to quell the disturbances. On every other occasion when there was no such help forthcoming from the people at large, the police proved completely powerless in putting down disturbances. As I said, Sir, one great disadvantage of this has been that the mischief-makers have been encouraged to commit acts of mischief and destruction. The second is that this is also responsible for some possible excesses committed by the police themselves. What could you expect of a handful of police, half a dozen or a dozen constables, all of them unarmed, and one or two officers with revolvers? How could you expect them to have the power to face a furious mob, a mob numbering hundreds and some times even thousands? That is the real reason which has possibly been in many cases responsible for the acts of excesses committed by the police. I am not here to defend the Police. I condemn every act of excess committed by them. I hold no brief for the Police. I merely wish to bring this matter to the notice of the Government with a view to make them understand that whatever they do, they should do it in the right manner, with all the pros and cons in view.

In passing I should like to say just one word about the nature of these movements. It has been attempted by some people, both in the Legislatures and in the press, to make it appear as though these movements have been mass movements and have the sanction of the people behind them. Certainly not. Those who have seen things through and who know these things correctly and have the courage of their conviction have to admit that these movements have no sanction at all from the people, and that the real people, who form the bulk of the population, simply detest and abhor these disturbances. For, no man wants that his life and property should be endangered for no fault of his, for things about which he is not quite sure and for which he is not over-anxious. Just at the moment when the country is engaged in a deadly struggle nobody is anxious that there should be any overhaul of the whole constitution. I say this even though I belong to a party which wants that there should be an overhaul at the earliest possible moment. I belong to a party, the Muslim League, which more than anybody else wants that every body in India should be a free man. But, Sir, as I said, these movements have no popular sanction and as such they are bound to be a passing phase. May be that they are a little more persistent than ordinarily but they have no deep roots in the country. But there are some things which Government will have to consider. It is not

merely this movement which is disturbing the country, and which has to be taken notice of and remedied. There is a general feeling existing in this country of discontent and disaffection. Somehow or other it seems to have come to stay in the minds of the people in this country. Something has got to be done to try and allay doubts and misgivings which exist in the minds of the people of this country about the *bona fides* of the British Government, about the promises they have made and about their solicitude for the various sections of the people. They have to try and see that matters are adjusted in this respect and that a better atmosphere comes to prevail in this country. I do not want to enter here into the various reasons which have given rise to this kind of mistrust. Everybody knows what those reasons are. I will simply concern myself with those very simple and obvious reasons which have gone to aggravate feelings in this respect. It is the duty of every Government to see that the bare necessities of life are made available to the people. After all, the man in the village, the man in the street, the ordinary man, is more concerned about his food and other necessities of life for himself and his family than other things about which he is said to be hankering. It is very disappointing to find that the measures taken by the Government have simply proved perfectly ineffective. For instance, Sir, in Madras there is plenty of firewood, but you will be surprised to hear complaints from the common people that they do not get firewood enough to cook their simple food. Should not Government try and see that this firewood is made available? Would it not be irksome to people to find that in spite of abundance, they could not get what is wanted by them for their daily life? I know that attempts are being made by the Government to try and stock food. It is not merely stocking that is required. It is the distribution that matters much to the public at large. The Government might have tons and tons of rice or flour or other articles, but unless they are made available to the man who wants it, unless they are put within the reach of the poor man, it is no use. He does not have much influence with the co-operative societies, with the people who are entrusted with the doling out of these things. Unless the man gets what he wants, he is bound to be discontented. The Government should try and see that there is improvement in this respect, and this the Government should do without any delay.

I would also join my Honourable friends who have voiced their complaints against the invidious distinction which is made between an Indian and a European in the ranks of the army. It is impossible to see how the military authorities, in an hour of trial, when all the forces of law and order should be mobilized, when all patriotism and loyalty that they can secure should be got for strengthening their hands to resist the enemy, could still have that obsession that there is a superior race and an inferior race. This is very dangerous. You expect these people to lay down their life. Is there any difference between Indian blood and European blood, between white blood and black blood? So, there should be a serious attempt, not merely a promise, to assuage feelings in this respect. There should be sincere and honest attempt to make good this difference in the treatment meted out to the two forces. You have been giving them all that praise lavishing encomiums on the bravery and courage of the Indian people. But after all what is it that you actually do? You give them only a stone when they are clamouring for bread.

Sir, as I said, a very unhappy feature of these disturbances has been that students have been very fully exploited. Of course, this attempt to drag students into active politics was begun sometime ago. As my friend Sir Ramunni Menon said, the people responsible for this act of folly were our Congress friends who with a view to reinforce their non-co-operation movement called upon students in 1919-20 to abandon their colleges. Sir, this was one of the most

[Saiyed Mohamæd Padshah Sahib Bahadur.]

fatal blunders that the Indian politicians made. I think this is one of the greatest mistakes which will have far-reaching consequences. As my friend Sir Ramunni Menon has said—and his word must carry great weight in our respect—even though he said attempts have been made to dissuade students from these political activities—the evil has continued because, as he said and as the adage goes, the evil lives longer than the good. Students naturally prefer a life of roaming about and doing mischief to a life of hard study. It is a reprehensible thing and I join my friend Sir Ramunni Menon in making an appeal to all politicians to try and wean away the students from politics. There is no greater disservice done to a nation than making students dabble in politics. Those immature youths cannot be expected to take a sober and calm and dispassionate view.

Just one word about the communal question. I am glad there has been no recrimination. I just want to tell the Government that in a measure Government themselves are responsible for the troubles in this country. The reason is this. In August, 1940 the Declaration was made that besides the majority communities, there were other communities also who were to be taken into account, that no decision would be arrived at which had not the willing consent of all important elements in the country. But what was the actual conduct of the Government? Every time an attempt was made to frame a new constitution, to make changes within the frame-work of the present constitution, the only anxiety that the Government showed was to try and placate and please one party. If the Congress refuses to co-operate with you, you simply drop the other people like a hot potato. You do not want the co-operation of the other people. Sir Stafford Cripps comes here. And whom does he really think of? Merely as a matter of grace, courtesy, he stoops down to consult other leaders. But the one concern that he has shown was to placate the Congress. If he runs from house to house, from residence to residence, it was to the houses of those personages who are members of the Congress. That is how you conduct yourself, how you give the lie direct to your own pronouncement. The result has been that the party whom you try to placate has come to think that they are the only one party that matters in the country and that they could dictate. That is how they have now dictated. But for this kind of cajoling and coaxing I am sure, sir, the Congress would have realised the imperative necessity of trying to come to terms with other parties in the country—I do not say the Muslim League Party only, there are also the Scheduled Classes—.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** May I remind the Honourable Member that there are only five minutes more.

**THE HONOURABLE SAIYED MOHAMED PADSHAH SAHIB BAHADUR :** I am speaking unprepared and I have got to mention a few points. I hope you will not kindly interrupt me ; I will not take an unduly long time.

Some friends wish the best of intentions have suggested that the Muslim League should try and solve the problem. We have been ready for it all along. No party will be more happy and no leader will be more happy than Mr. Jinnah and his League to solve this deadlock. Ever since the war began the Muslim League has been anxious that it should co-operate with the other parties in the country and strengthen the hands of the people who are resisting the enemy, who are trying not only to save India but also to save elementary rights of humanity. Even though our offer was summarily and unceremoniously rejected, it should be admitted by all in fairness, as was done yesterday by Sir A. P. Patro, that the offer of the Muslim League stands—the offer which

Mr. Jinnah made some time back still stands. The offer is that the League is ready to co-operate on reasonable terms like a respectable body, on reasonable terms—.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** I have given you some latitude. How is this all relevant to the question ? I allowed you to refer to it, but you cannot dilate on it, because it has nothing to do with the present question.

**THE HONOURABLE SAIYED MOHAMED PADSHAH SAHIB BAHADUR :** It has everything to do, because the Government are now anxious that there should be some way out of the present difficulty. The way out would be that we should accept the hand of friendship that is being offered by the Muslim League and by the other minorities who are willing to co-operate with you and will help you in solving the present problem. I would, in the end, appeal most earnestly to my Congress friends to be just and reasonable and come to an understanding with the League and resolve the present stalemate. In the end I would simply say to my Congress friends to see the world of realities. I would make an appeal to them to try and see things in their proper perspective, to realize this that after all we are living in a world of realities, stern facts and ugly realities, where we are not simply to be carried away by ideologies. This is a world where, whether a member of the greatest party in the world or a humble individual, nobody can have all to his own. People have got to act in a spirit of give and take. That what I consider is good for me I should know, I should realize, I should have the sense of fairness to admit that it is good for another also. So I appeal to my Congress friends to see things in their proper perspective and to try and save the present situation by trying to come to terms with other parties in the country, by giving to the Muslim League four annas in the rupee and having all the twelve annas to themselves.

Sir, I feel—I have said this very often in this House and am not going to dilate upon it—that the key to the solution of the deadlock lies in the country and not outside. It is not the British Parliament which can solve it. It is the Hindus and the Muslims, the Scheduled Classes and other classes in our own country which should come together and come to a settlement.

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The House then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, the 24th September, 1942.