

Tuesday, 29th September, 1942

# **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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# CONTENTS

	PAGES.	PAGES.
<b>MONDAY, 21ST SEPTEMBER, 1942—</b>		
Members Sworn . . . . .	1	
Death of H. R. H. the Duke of Kent, Dr. E. Raghavendra Rao and Sir Kurma Venkata Reddy Naidu . . . . .	1—5	
Questions and Answers . . . . .	5—24,	
Statements, etc., laid on the table . . . . .	24—32	
	33, 36—37, 39,	
	40—54	
Information promised in reply to questions laid on the table . . . . .	33, 33—36, 37—39,	
	39—40	
Message from His Excellency the Governor General . . . . .	55	
Committee on Petitions . . . . .	55	
Governor General's assent to Bills . . . . .	55—56	
Congratulations to recipients of Honours . . . . .	56	
Standing Committee for the De- partment of Posts and Air . . . . .	56—57	
Resolution re Amendment of the rules governing the grant of travelling and other allowances to members of the Legislature . . . . .	58—59	
Health of Sir Maneokji Dadabhoj Statement of Business . . . . .	59—60 60	
<b>TUESDAY, 22ND SEPTEMBER, 1942—</b>		
Bills passed by the Legislative Assembly laid on the table . . . . .	61	
Death of Rai Bahadur Lala Mathura Prasad Mehrotra . . . . .	61—62	
Motion re Political Situation in India— <i>To be continued</i> . . . . .	62—61	
<b>WEDNESDAY, 23RD SEPTEMBER, 1942—</b>		
Questions and Answers . . . . .	83—103	
Information promised in reply to questions laid on the table . . . . .	103—104	
Bill passed by the Legislative Assembly laid on the table . . . . .	104	
Advisory Committee for the Utili- zation Branch of the Geological Survey of India . . . . .	104—105	
Motion re Political Situation in India— <i>To be continued</i> . . . . .	105—125	
<b>THURSDAY, 24TH SEPTEMBER, 1942—</b>		
Standing Committee for the De- partment of Posts and Air . . . . .	127	
Motion re Political Situation in India— <i>concl'd.</i> . . . . .	127—155	
<b>FRIDAY, 25TH SEPTEMBER, 1942.</b>		
Advisory Committee for the Utili- zation Branch of the Geological Survey of India . . . . .	157	
Questions and Answers . . . . .	157—169	
Information promised in reply to questions laid on the table . . . . .	169	
Indian Companies (Second Amend- ment) Bill—Considered and passed . . . . .	170—171	
Indian Rubber Control (Tempo- rary Amendment) Bill—Consi- dered and passed . . . . .	171—172	
Code of Civil Procedure (Amend- ment) Bill—Considered and passed . . . . .	173—175	
Code of Civil Procedure (Second Amendment) Bill—Considered and passed . . . . .	175	
Repealing and Amending Bill— Considered and passed . . . . .	175—177	
Federal Court (Supplemental Powers) Bill—Considered and passed . . . . .	177—178	
Resolution re Allocation of Defence expenditure—Negatived . . . . .	178—193	
<b>MONDAY, 28TH SEPTEMBER, 1942—</b>		
Member Sworn . . . . .	195	
Questions and Answers . . . . .	195—199	
Advisory Committee of the Utili- zation Branch of the Geological Survey of India . . . . .	199	
Presentation of the Report of the Committee appointed to consi- der the question of the suspen- sion or the duration of the present emergency of the right to free haulage of a motor car to and from Delhi by Members of the Council . . . . .	199—200	
Delhi Muslim Wakfs Bill—Nomi- nations to Joint Committee . . . . .	200	
Resolution re United Kingdom Commercial Corporation— Adopted as amended . . . . .	200—220	
Resolution re Freedom of the Press — <i>To be continued</i> . . . . .	220—227	
<b>TUESDAY, 29TH SEPTEMBER, 1942—</b>		
Questions and Answers . . . . .	229—235	
Motion for Adjournment re the empowering of Military Com- manders to require persons to assist in doing work—Dis- allowed . . . . .	235—236	
Resolution re Freedom of the Press — <i>concl'd.</i> —Negatived . . . . .	236—252	
Delhi Muslim Wakfs Bill—Motion for continuation . . . . .	253	
Resolution re Price Control— <i>To be continued</i> . . . . .	253—262	

# COUNCIL OF STATE.

*Tuesday, 29th 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.

### MISSION ON WHICH SIR JEREMY RAISMAN WAS SENT TO ENGLAND.

**83. THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Will Government make a full statement regarding the mission on which Sir Jeremy Raisman, Finance Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council was sent to England and its results ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. C. E. JONES :** I regret that I am not in a position to make a statement. As the Honourable Member will have learned from the reports of the recent debate on this question in the Legislative Assembly, the matter is still under the Government's consideration.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Can the Honourable Member tell us what are the purposes for which he was sent ? What was the objective with which he was sent to England, even though every matter connected with it is under discussion ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. C. E. JONES :** I can do no more than refer the Honourable Member to the Press communique which was issued at the time of the Honourable the Finance Member's departure from India.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** Was it in connection and mainly for the purpose of elucidation of the agreement on the war expenditure between His Majesty's Government and the Government of India ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. C. E. JONES :** The expression used was "the application of the working of the financial settlement".

### PAY AND ALLOWANCES OF BRITISH AND INDIAN OFFICERS IN THE ARMY.

**84. THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Will Government state the rates of pay and allowances relating to the following classes of officers including those holding Staff Appointments :—

- (a) British officers recruited in England and attached to the British Army who are serving (i) in England and (ii) outside England, excluding India ?
- (b) British officers recruited in England and attached to the Indian Army who are serving (i) in India and (ii) outside India ?
- (c) British officers recruited in India and attached to the Indian Army serving (i) in India and (ii) outside India ?
- (d) Indian commissioned officers recruited in India and attached to the Indian Army who are serving (i) in India and (ii) outside India ?

**GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN HARTLEY :** I lay on the table statements giving such information as is readily available.

*I—Pay of officers holding staff appointments.*

	British officers holding permanent Commissions in the Indian Army in India.		British officers holding Emergency Commissions attached to the Indian Army in India.		Indian Commissioned officers holding permanent or Emergency Commission in India.	
	1 Single.	1 Married.	2 Single.	2 Married.	3 Single.	3 Married.
General Staff Officer—I . . .	1880	2045	1780	1945	1350	1510
General Staff Officer—II . . .	1400	1530	1300	1430	1000	1130
General Staff Officer—III . . .	1035	1165	960	1090	700	830

Officers in column 3 who go overseas, receive in addition the Colonial allowance of the country they go to.

Officers in columns 1 and 2 who go overseas, however continue to draw columns 1 and 2 rates, but they do not draw in addition Colonial allowance of the country they go to, because their pay already includes (the Indian equivalent of) Colonial allowance.

II.—Statement of pay of British and Indian Officers of the Army.

S = Single. M = Married. B. S. = British Service. E. C. O. = Emergency Commissioned officer.  
 \*B. S. rates in U. K. B. S. rates in India. I. A. rates in India. B. S. attach- ed to I. A. regular officers. (E. C. O.) Present I. C. Os. pay. over seas. Present I. C. Os. pay. Mideast. Iraq or Ferris.

Year of service.	Year of service.													
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
1st Year (2/Lt.)	370	450	405	490	480	565	445	530	405	450	440	530	520	600
2nd year (Lt.)	410	490	460	545	535	620	500	585	430	490	480	560	560	640
3rd year	410	490	460	545	535	620	500	585	430	490	480	560	560	640
4th year	410	490	460	545	535	620	500	585	430	490	480	560	560	640
5th year	410	490	460	545	535	620	500	585	430	490	480	560	560	640
6th year	440	520	530	615	605	690	570	655	460	520	510	590	590	670
7th year	440	520	530	615	605	690	570	655	460	520	510	590	590	670
8th year (Captain)	480	610	590	725	690	825	640	775	500	610	550	680	680	760
10th year	480	610	590	725	690	825	640	775	500	610	550	680	680	760
11th year	480	610	590	725	690	825	640	775	500	610	550	680	680	760
12th year	480	610	590	725	690	825	640	775	500	610	550	680	680	760
13th year	530	660	690	825	790	925	740	875	530	660	600	730	680	810
14th year	530	660	690	825	790	925	740	875	530	660	600	730	680	810
15th year	530	660	690	825	790	925	740	875	530	660	600	730	680	810
16th year	620	750	800	925	900	1,035	850	985	620	750	690	820	770	900
17th year	620	750	800	925	900	1,035	850	985	620	750	690	820	770	900
18th year	620	750	800	925	900	1,035	850	985	620	750	690	820	770	900
19th year (Major)	705	850	965	1,105	1,165	1,305	1,065	1,205	765	850	835	920	915	1,000
20th year	705	850	965	1,105	1,165	1,305	1,065	1,205	765	850	835	920	915	1,000
21st year	705	850	965	1,105	1,165	1,305	1,065	1,205	765	850	835	920	915	1,000
22nd year	705	850	965	1,105	1,165	1,305	1,065	1,205	765	850	835	920	915	1,000
23rd year	805	950	1,090	1,235	1,290	1,435	1,190	1,335	865	950	935	1,020	1,015	1,100
24th year	805	950	1,090	1,235	1,290	1,435	1,190	1,335	865	950	935	1,020	1,015	1,100

▲ 22nd year

II.—Statement of pay of British and Indian Officers of the Army—contd.

S = Single. M = Married. B. S. = British Service. E. C. O. = Emergency Commissioned officer.

\*B. S. rates in U. K. B. S. rates in India. I. A. rates in India. B. S. attach-regular officers. (E. C. O.) Present I. C. O. pay. overseas. I. C. O. rates of pay. Mideast. Iraq or Persia.

Year of service.	2		3		4		5		6		7	
	S.	M.	S.	M.	S.	M.	S.	M.	S.	M.	S.	M.

25th year	865	950	1,090	1,235	1,290	1,435	1,190	1,335	865	950	935	1,020	1,015	1,100
26th year	865	950	1,090	1,235	1,290	1,435	1,190	1,335	865	950	935	1,020	1,015	1,100
27th year	1,090	1,145	1,300	1,450	1,500	1,650	1,400	1,550	1,090	1,145	1,160	1,215	1,240	1,295

\*These represent sterling pay and allowances, higher rate of ration allowance and average of winter and summer rates of fuel and light allowance converted at 1s. 6d.

NOTE 1.—When officers in column 2 go overseas (except India) they get the same colonial allowance as the I. C. O. does.

NOTE 2.—When officers in column 2 leave India they revert to column 3 and draw the colonial allowance, (if any) of the country they go to.

NOTE 3.—When officers in column 4 or 5 go overseas they continue to draw column 4 or column 5 rates, but they do not draw in addition colonial allowance of the country they go to, because their pay already includes (the Indian equivalent of) colonial allowance.

**PAY AND ALLOWANCES OF BRITISH AND INDIAN OFFICERS HOLDING EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS.**

85. **THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** (a) What are the scales of pay and allowances and the conditions of service prescribed respectively for Indian and British emergency commissioned officers recruited in India ?

(b) Were British and Indian candidates individually shown before recruitment the terms on which they were being recruited ? If not, what was the reason for this omission ?

**GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN HARTLEY :** As regards (a) I refer the Honourable Member to Army Instructions (India) Nos. 12 and 13 of 1940 which give the pay and allowances and other conditions of service of British and Indian emergency commissioned officers respectively. The rates of pay laid down in paragraph 186, Pay and Allowances Regulations, Volume I [referred to in paragraph 6 of the Army Instruction (India) No. 13 of 1940] have since been raised and are shown in Army Instruction (India) No. 18 of 1942. Copies of these Army Instructions (India) are being placed in the Library of the House.

As regards (b) the answer is No ; but publicity has been given to these terms and the information is readily obtainable by those who require it.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Why were the individual recruits not shown the terms of the contract ?

**GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN HARTLEY :** I cannot say why the individual recruits were not shown them individually ; but the rules and regulations are available at every recruiting centre, at the Interview Boards, schools, colleges, Government headquarters and I think the fact is well known that they are readily available to all those who want to find out.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Will Government take steps to see that recruits are individually given a copy of the terms as I believe is done in other services ?

**GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN HARTLEY :** I will take note of that.

**PAY OF INDIANS IN THE INLAND WATER TRANSPORT.**

86. **THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** (a) Is it a fact that Indians employed in the Inland Water Transport, Indian Engineers, are given the rank of sappers although they draw as much as Rs. 360 p.m. as upper division head clerks and accountants ? Is their rank pay only Rs. 16, the rest of their salary being treated as " Trade pay " ? Have they been chosen from among men holding fairly good appointments in civil life ? What is the proportion of University graduates among them ?

(b) Do they get the same accommodation, food and treatment as watermen, lascars, labourers and sweepers ? Are they required to live side by side with or in the same tents or barracks with sappers including sweepers ? Are they marched with the sappers to the kitchens and required to eat their food sitting on the ground ?

(c) Are they required to parade and do fatigue work, which includes digging drains, carrying earth and stones, digging latrine trenches and even cleaning latrines although they have signed on only as clerks ?

(d) Is it a fact that they are not informed at the time of their enrolment that they will be ranked only as sappers and that their rank pay will be only Rs. 16 ?

(See reply to question No. 87.)

## PAY OF INDIANS IN THE INLAND WATER TRANSPORT.

87. THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : (a) Is it a fact that while Indian employees of the Inland Water Transport, Indian Engineers, referred to in the previous question have to eat their food sitting on the Anglo-Indian employees have their meals in tents or *pucca* room with tables and chairs and have servants to wait at the table, even though they may be stevedores and mistries drawing Rs. 50 or as little as Rs. 25 per month ?

(b) Is it a fact that while Indians are allowed rations worth only As. 8 per head per day, Anglo-Indians are allowed rations worth Rs. 1-13-0 per head per day ?

(c) Do Anglo-Indians get ration money in lieu of free food at the rate of Rs. 1-8-0 per head even when on leave, while Indians get nothing even when they travel on duty although it is provided for in the rules ?

(d) Are Anglo-Indians given better accommodation and more space per head than Indians ?

(e) Will Government state the reason for discriminating between the Indian and Anglo-Indian employees ? Do Government propose to take steps to place Indians on a footing of equality with Anglo-Indians and to redress their grievances ?

GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN HARTLEY : With your permission, Sir, I shall take questions Nos. 86 and 87 together.

The information asked for by the Honourable Member is being collected and will be laid on the table.

## PROPORTION OF BRITISH OFFICERS TO INDIAN OFFICERS IN THE INDIAN ARTILLERY, ETC.

88. THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : What is the proportion of Indian to British officers in the following services :—

(a) Indian Artillery ?

(b) Indian Corps of Engineers ?

(c) Indian Armoured Corps, and

(d) Indian Ordnance Service ?

GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN HARTLEY : The present proportion of Indian to British officers is as follows :—

With reference to (a) Indian Artillery, 1 to 6.4 (exclusive of Royal Artillery officers attached to Indian Artillery Units.)

As regards (b) Indian Corps of Engineers : 1 to 3.2 (exclusive of Royal Engineers employed with the Indian Corps of Engineers).

As regards (c) Indian Armoured Corps : 1 to 2.5.

As regards (d) In the *Indian Ordnance Service* the proportion is 1 Indian to 3.1 British and in the Indian Army Ordnance Corps it is 1 Indian to 18.3 British.

THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : With regard to the reply given about the Indian Ordnance Service, may I ask what is the character of the posts on which this calculation is based ? So far as I know, the proportion of British officers is higher than that given here.



**GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN HARTLEY :** I cannot give any other figure than the one I have given. But the Indian Ordnance Service is chiefly administrative and includes a large civilian element. The Indian Army Ordnance Corps is the military portion and the big difference (1 to 18.3) is on account of the expansion being so rapid and that has out-paced the Indian material available with technical qualifications. But plans are in hand now at this moment to try and improve the recruitment of Indian Ordnance Mechanical Engineers.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** May I assure the Honourable Member that I did not for a moment confuse the Indian Ordnance Service with the Indian Army Ordnance Corps? I know the distinction between the two. My question related only to the Indian Ordnance Service. So far as my information goes, the proportion of British officers there is higher than that given by the Honourable Member in his reply. Would he mind looking into it again?

**GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN HARTLEY :** Yes, Sir.

**MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT RE THE EMPOWERING OF MILITARY COMMANDERS TO REQUIRE PERSONS TO ASSIST IN DOING WORK.**

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** Honourable Members, I have received notice of an Adjournment Motion which runs as follows :—

“ We wish to move the adjournment of the House to consider a matter of urgent public importance, namely, the notification issued by the Government of India empowering Military Commanders to require persons to assist in doing work.”

This notification is evidently issued under rule 78A passed under the Ordinance. The rule reads thus :—

(1) Any officer of Government authorised in this behalf by general or special order of the Provincial Government may, within such area as may be specified in the order require any male person in that area to assist in the doing of work on land for such period and in such manner as the officer may direct, being work the doing of which is in the opinion of the officer necessary to meet an actual or apprehended attack, or to repair or reduce the damage resulting therefrom or to facilitate offensive or defensive operations in the area.

(2) Any person doing work in compliance with any direction under sub-rule (1) shall be paid such remuneration for doing the work as the officer giving the direction may determine.

(3) If any person fails to comply with any lawful direction given to him under sub-rule (1), he shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with fine or with both.”

Now this notification was published so far back as the 2nd January, 1942 and I fail to see how this is a matter of urgent public importance. Under rules 37 and 38 it must be a definite matter of urgent public importance. Subject to what the Honourable Mr. Hossain Imam may say as at present advised I think the Adjournment Motion is out of order. Mr. Hossain Imam may now speak but he should please confine himself to the question of the Motion being one of urgent public importance.

**\*THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM (Bihar and Orissa : Muham-madan) :** As regards the question of urgency and of public importance the thing is this that the rule did exist from 2nd January, 1942 but it had not yet been applied. The application has been made only now and therefore the rule becomes operative only from the time of this notification. Another thing which has compelled us to bring this Motion up is, Sir, that whereas this right under the rules was given to individual Provincial Governments to

\*Not corrected by the Honourable Member.

[Mr. Hossain Imam.]

apply it to areas where they desired, now the Government of India, by this notification, has made it applicable to entire India and therefore it has really controverted and over-ridden the Ordinance.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: But how is the matter of urgent public importance? The rule has been there for the last so many months—say, nine months at least.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM: I say that under the rule<sup>s</sup> this notification has been *ultra vires* because the power has been given to the Provincial Governments and my point of view is that Government should have restricted its applicability not only to those areas where the occasion arose whereas I have grave fears—

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: We do not want to go into the merits of the case.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM: I am not going to say any thing about the merits of the case but my contention is that it is *ultra vires* of the rules.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: That does not arise under the rules.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM: It will arise in this case, Sir, because it has been made under the Defence of India Act and therefore that would not be applicable. That is a point of urgent public importance.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: I do not think it is admissible under the rules. I therefore disallow the Motion.

#### RESOLUTION RE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Discussion will now proceed on the Resolution of the Honourable Pandit Kunzru. Before I ask Honourable Members to speak I would ask them to remember that this is the last day of the session and everybody is anxious that we should rise at 2 P.M. Moreover, there is another Resolution also on the agenda and therefore I would ask Honourable Members to confine themselves to their remarks as briefly as possible, because it is not very pleasant for the Chair to have to tell Honourable Members that their time is up. I would therefore ask Honourable Members to restrain themselves as much as possible and confine their attention to the important points raised.

THE HONOURABLE MR. M. N. DALAL (Bombay: Non-Muhammadan): Mr. President, this debate is in fact a corollary to the discussion of the political situation we had in this House. As the Press plays such an important part in reflecting the situation in the country we cannot ignore the difficulties under which it has to labour. It is recognized that some restrictions are necessary on the liberty of the Press during the war and in times of disorder such as that through which we have been passing today, but the limit should not exceed what is necessary for military purposes, and there is substance in the demand that there should be no pre-censorship of news reports and statements. News reports are of various kinds and relate daily to several matters and their publication in the long run are for public good. There is, however, a class of cases of sabotage, like, for instance, the cutting of telegraph wires and telephone wires, on which there may be a certain amount of censorship, provided, of course, there is an understanding between Government and the Press as to the extent of its publication. But, the Government apparently wish to have

a wider field of scrutiny and hence the deadlock between Government and the Press. Instances have been given of the rather severe censorship imposed on foreign cables by foreign correspondents and Indian correspondents in India. In the face of such severe control over the happenings in India how can the public gauge the situation! The newspapers today contain no more than a 5-minute perusal and the editorial comments refer more and more to foreign countries than to India. When we can do nothing to prevent the Axis countries from continuing their propaganda, their mischievous propaganda, of lies and mis-statements about this country, we should at least ensure publication of the factual information of the actual happenings in this country and when even this is forbidden the only party that gains is the enemy.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM:** Which enemy, outside or inside?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. M. N. DALAL:** Outside, of course. It is neither in the interest of Government nor of the people that misleading and one-sided picture of the actual situation in the country should be forced both on the Government and the public, as its consequences would be fatal to both.

A more ominous aspect of the situation is the tendency on the part of some Provincial Governments to start their own newspapers, as for instance in Bihar, where, if my information is correct, there is a complete black-out of all private newspapers. I fail to see, Sir, how the Government of India could permit such a development in any part of the country and I hope the mischief will be nipped in the bud.

Sir, to humiliate the Press and to attempt to enslave it as some Local Governments desire, to do everything to make it sullen and increase the hostility, by fettering the Press without there being any effort to diminishing secret and revolutionary propaganda is a very unwise policy to adopt. The political situation requires both from the point of view of Government and from the popular point of view that responsible newspapers should be given the utmost freedom and be encouraged to co-operate in the task of restoring peace in the country.

With these words, Sir, I support the Resolution.

**THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS (Punjab: Non-Muhammadan):** Sir, I rise to support this Resolution. The present mentality of the people is such that it is advantageous to the Government to give the fullest information they can of the news connected with disturbances and with the breaches of the peace. The general impression among the public is that as Government is daily losing ground they are not publishing the full information and therefore, Sir, it is in the interests of all concerned that news should be given to the Press, except such news as the Government consider will lead to further breaches of the peace. Yesterday my Honourable friend Dr. Kunzru gave two instances the publication of which would not have effected breach of the peace at all were not allowed to be published. I think under the present circumstances when the people have become suspicious, as the Government have also become suspicious, it is much better to give the public as much news as is possible in order to impress upon their minds that the Government is not losing ground but that measures are being taken to restore and maintain peace and order.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU (United Provinces Southern: Non-Muhammadan):** Sir, perhaps you will allow one who is intimately associated with the newspaper world to say a few words about this most important Resolution. Lord Morley once wondered whether a free Press was possible

[Mr. P. N. Saprú.]

in a bureaucratically controlled State. The events that have happened during the last few weeks show that the answer must be in the negative, that is to say, a free Press is not possible in a bureaucratically controlled State. Sir, the history of the system of press control and Press Advisory Boards has been traced by the Honourable Dr. Kunzru, and I do not wish to traverse the ground which has already been covered by him. But you have now gone, after the mass movement started, much further than you ever went before, and there is today almost a system of pre-censorship. Now, Sir, what is the position? The newspaper world can get its news either from the Associated Press or from the United Press or from the Orient Press, or from correspondents who have to be registered with District Magistrates and who must be residents of the district in which they are correspondents. Therefore this system of registration of correspondents with the District Magistrate means that the news is censored at the very source. Sir, it is true that the District Magistrate advises; but the advice has to be followed. It is possible, Sir, to attack the Viceroy of India or to attack the Secretary of State: but such is the state of terror in towns and districts in this country that it is not possible to attack the mighty District Magistrate of a town or the even mightier fifth wheel in the administration, the Commissioner of a Division. I know, Sir, these things from personal experience. Things have appeared in papers which are not situated in Allahabad which the *Leader* cannot publish. The *Pioneer* can publish some news which the *Leader* cannot. (*Hear, hear.*) The *Hindustan Times*, which unfortunately is not functioning today, could publish news which the *Leader* could not because there was somewhat stricter censorship in Allahabad than in other places. Sir, even a most moderate organ of Indian opinion like the *Pioneer* has had to condemn this system of this very wonderful Government which has a wonderful number of supporters in this most wonderful of lands. Sir, the person criticized has an outlook which is entirely different from that of a journalist. Certainly Government has been able to open very successfully a second front in this country. It has not been able to open a second front elsewhere even though Mr. Wendell Willkie would like it to open a second front. Even though the Government has been able to open a second front, it has not been able to convince the people of India that they are getting news written objectively and correctly. If the source is tainted, if the people know that the Press is muzzled and that newspapers cannot write then new rumours spread and people do not believe anything that is written in the Press: and what happens is that people think that the disturbances have been of a much greater magnitude than Government wants them to believe, and all sorts of rumours are afloat. Even from the point of view of the Government itself, I think, Sir, that the present system is defective.

Sir, Local Governments often give confidential instructions to an editor. They are never allowed to be published. Those instructions are of a mandatory character. They are all instructions, but really they are of a mandatory character, and the poor editor does not know the limits to which he may or he may not go. Cases have occurred in the United Provinces where the Press Advisory Committee has been entirely ignored. Sir, I was not present when the Honourable Dr. Kunzru was speaking yesterday; but I know that in the case of the *National Herald* and the *Sainik* the Standing Advisory Committee was not consulted at all. Now, Sir, it cannot be said that the Indian Press is irresponsible? I think, Sir, we have produced very great editors; and it must be said in fairness to the Indian Press that it has conducted itself in a most responsible manner. Sir, why is there this desire to muzzle the Press? Well, I think, Sir, that like the fraudulent directors of a bankrupt company

the Government of India is anxious to suppress the truth not only from this country, but from the world which is interested in India, from the democratic world, from the United Nations who are as much interested in the defence of this country and in the peace that will follow as the Government of India itself. Therefore, Sir, from our point of view it is absolutely essential that the United Nations who are fighting this war, whose success we ardently desire, and with whom we are prepared to co-operate on equal terms, should know exactly the truth and nothing but the truth about this country. I have been told that American and Chinese journalists have had to fly to Chungking to cable to their respective papers the truth about this country. Sir I may refer to Fisher, a very distinguished journalist. I think he has written a book on Russian foreign policy. He wrote some articles in the *New York Weekly*. They were published in the Ceylon papers, but a cable was sent to the *Hindu* of Madras regarding those articles, and that was not allowed to be published. Sir, it is a scandal that such things should be suppressed or such writings should be suppressed by the Home Department. We are only supplied with anti-Indian cuttings from the American Press. Writings which are in our favour are never sent to us. It is curious that barring one Chinese comment which was not unfavourable to us, no Chinese comment has been allowed to appear in the Indian Press on the Indian situation. I read the American Press, and I can say that the American Press is not as friendly to the policy that Britain is pursuing in this country as Britain would make it out to be in this land.

Sir, I now come to a most extraordinary example of press censorship. Mahatma Gandhi, speaking at the All-India Congress Committee meeting before he was arrested, made a most friendly reference to the respected head of the Indian Government. He spoke of him in the highest terms. He said that the Viceroy was his personal friend. He also said that his personal relations with him were of an even more cordial nature than his relations with Lord Halifax. I am told, Sir, that he spoke for nearly half an hour about Lord Linlithgow. Even these portions of Mahatma Gandhi's speech were not allowed to be published fully in the newspapers. They had to be censored. Possibly, Sir Richard Tottenham did not think that this compliment to the Viceroy should be broadcast in this country.

Sir, according to the *Hindu* of Madras, the documents which were seized from the All-India Congress Committee office at Allahabad at the end of May were supplied in full to the British and American Press with comments and annotations which did not appear in India. I do not wish to comment upon the ethics of publishing the documents of a shadow cabinet. If the documents of the British Cabinet were published, they would reveal some differences which would embarrass the British Government. If the documents of the shadow cabinets of the Labour and Liberal opposition were published, they would reveal some differences which would embarrass those oppositions. The object, Sir, of that procedure was obvious. It was to convince the allied world that Mahatma Gandhi and the Hindu community in particular was either pro-Axis or pro-Japanese or at all events defeatist. This has been the preparation which the Home Department of the Government of India has been making for full self-government in this country. Sir, I should also like to know why there is this reluctance to appoint an Information and Broadcasting Member. It was nearly seven months after the death of Sir Akbar Hydari that Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, who had the courage to leave this Government—I do not accept the explanation that he had no differences—was appointed. I think Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer resigned on the 13th or 14th of August. Nearly seven weeks have elapsed since his resignation and no

[Mr. P. N. Saprú.]

Member for Information and Broadcasting has yet been appointed. The other day there was a complaint in the House that no Standing Committee of the House has yet been associated with this Information and Broadcasting Department. Why? Is it because the Home Department of the Government of India wishes to retain a tight control over the Press? Is it because it wants to muzzle the Press? You have already muzzled the Press. A number of newspapers are not appearing. I do not blame them. They can appear only if you allow them to appear in a self-respecting manner. Some of the newspapers are still going on, doing their duty. But it is only right to suggest that they are not at all happy with the conditions under which they have to work.

Sir, as the House knows, there will be a plenary session of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference at an early date in Bombay. For two years Indian papers have submitted to a system which was at times irksome. Even the *Pioneer* has said, as pointed out, that so far at all events as the United Provinces Government is concerned, it has no use for the advisory system inaugurated two years ago as the result of the Delhi agreement. Does the Government want more newspapers to shut down in this country or is it going to allow them to perform their functions without fear or favour? I should like to say one word more about the criticism of the measures of Government to suppress this movement. Originally, when the whole thing appeared in the Press, the newspapers were in a dilemma. Were they to support every conceivable measure, good or bad, taken by this all-knowing, all-powerful, all-wise Government to suppress the mass movement or could they, howsoever mildly, criticize these measures? Afterwards some statements were made which to a slight extent modified the first impression created by the Government *communiqué* regarding the limits of criticism. In any case, the time has come when the position should be further clarified and the newspaper world ought to be allowed freedom to criticize the policy which the Government are following. It ought also to be allowed to criticize freely the measures which Government take—any particular steps in any particular situation—to combat the movement. I do not see how the newspaper world can discharge this duty effectively if this is not done. Remember, Sir, that in six or seven provinces we have no Legislatures today and we have autocratic regimes in these provinces. There is not the slightest contact there between the Governors, their Advisers and public men. You should not, therefore, suppress this *Fourth Estate* which will enable you to view the situation objectively and which can let you understand what the people are feeling in the absence of the Legislatures and other bodies of public opinion. I do not think we can expect anything from this Government, but hoping against hope, I do hope, Sir, that the Honourable the Home Member will make a more reassuring statement than he has done so far.

\* THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM (Bihar and Orissa : Muhammadan) : Mr. President, the Press is now regarded as essential and it is important in every country which professes to be democratic yet and it is not possible for any Government, which calls itself democratic, to suppress or get the ill-will of the Press. I for one am in a difficult position. I appreciate fully the difficulties of the Government. They are anxious that every method which they can adopt should be adopted in order that this fire may not be fanned. This is a desirable object and I think most of the thinking people of India would like to help the Government in this object, that this fire should not spread far and wide. Conceding that point, Sir, I cannot go so far as to say that no

\*Not corrected by the Honourable Member.

restriction should be placed on the Press. I concede the right of the Government that in these difficult times to put some restraint on the Press and I think the Press would be wrong if it were to fight for its liberty in these days when greater liberties are at stake. To have the greater liberties, it is essential that the small liberties should be given up for the time being. Many of our cherished rights have been denied to us in this way. But there must be a limit beyond which it is not just and proper that either the Government or the Press should go. While I cannot think that the Home Department and Sir Richard Tottenham are personally responsible for all the actions which have been taken by the Press Advisers and the Press Censors, I do feel that if they turn a blind eye to the complaints, if they do not try to reform or even if they remain inactive, the responsibility would fall on the Home Department. But at the moment they cannot be held responsible for all the actions which have been taken. But a wise man would frame rules and regulations which would restrict the individual misdeeds to its minimum. The examples that have been cited before the House by Pandit Kunzru and my friend Mr. Sapru show that this right has been used in a very improper manner by the Press Censors. I concede also this point, that whatever the rules might be, the actual position is that it is difficult for any Press representative to go against the advice of the mighty District Magistrate. In addition to the present rules which have been framed the District Magistrate has another power which is even bigger than this. That power is derived from the Posts and Telegraphs Act by means of which he can stop the transmission of any telegram which he thinks is improper. That is the residuary power which the District Magistrate possesses. This has been used very often by the post office in order to guard its own interests. It is so afraid of being hauled up for having helped the enemy inside the country that it always in doubtful cases refers the matter to the District Magistrate. So the Government has got the reserve power which it can utilize in special cases and that power of withholding telegrams would remain even after you have given up this press censorship. My point is that at this juncture when there is so much alienation of public feeling against the Government the Government should try and get the support of the Press and if it is not possible to get their support, the least that they can do is to avoid a conflict as much as they can. In this connection I have not been able to understand how it comes about that when the Press complained of certain restrictions, the old rules of press advice, they have been thrown from the frying pan into the fire of pre-censorship. They wanted to get rid of the smaller control when you wanted registration of the correspondents. That being so, how has it come about that they have consented to a new restriction? This is where the rub comes in. If the Government say that they have imposed this new restriction as they did not find the former press advice system as sufficient, I could not support it; but I can understand it. The Editors' Conference has denied that they came to any agreement with the Government on this issue and the Government continues to say that this is the result of an agreement. I should like Sir Richard Tottenham to enlighten the House how this impossible position has come about and I would advise the Home Department to meet the Editors' Conference representatives and come to some settlement which will remove their grouse. I think to some extent their grouse at the moment is justified, because it is not possible probably for the Home Department to lay down rigid regulations which would give the discretion to the Censor as well as restrict his powers to do mischief. I therefore think that the Government would be well advised to accept the spirit of this Resolution.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM (Home Secretary):**  
 Sir, when I received notice of this Resolution I assumed—and I think from its

[Sir Richard Tottenham.]

wording I was entitled to assume—that it was mainly concerned with restrictions imposed by or under the law on the Press in India. That is strictly a Home Department subject and my Department is responsible. The Honourable mover, and various speakers have referred to certain other matters which go beyond the immediate province of the Home Department, but as I am answering on behalf of Government I will do my best to begin with to deal shortly with those matters. In the first place, the Honourable mover referred to press advice and he gave one or two examples of what I must admit appeared to me to be rather unintelligent press advising. Press advising is not the concern of the Home Department. It is the concern of the Information Department; and all I can say is that nobody is compelled to ask for press advice and nobody is compelled to accept that advice when it is tendered. But in so far as those particular examples may be indicative of, shall I say, undue zeal on the part of Press Advisers, I have no doubt that the Information Department and my friend, Sir Frederick Puckle, will be prepared to look into the matter and to issue such instructions as he considers necessary. Then, Sir, in the next place, the Honourable mover and other members have referred to the restrictions on foreign correspondents. That again, Sir, is not a Home Department matter. We have no power whatever to control the messages of foreign correspondents. The only power that does exist for that purpose is the military censorship and it is a rule, which is observed here and elsewhere, that the operations of the censorship must for very good reasons be kept secret and not be discussed. I would, however, remind the House that all press messages which leave this country do so by "Beam" wireless. That is to say, they can all be overheard by the enemy, and that is a particular aspect of the matter that the military censors must naturally bear in mind when they are dealing with out-going messages. The Honourable mover, I think, suggested that an assurance had been given to foreign correspondents that their messages would not be altered without their consent. That is not true. No such assurance has been, or could have been, given, because that would completely nullify the operations of the censorship. What is done is that press correspondents are invited to bring their messages, discuss them with the authorities concerned and get alterations made as far as possible by consent; but in the last resort naturally the censor must be able to say "This cannot go".

Now, Sir, I think it may interest the House if I were to read to them the views of an eminent American Press Correspondent in an interview which he gave on All India Radio only a few days ago. He is the correspondent of *International News* and a very well-known man. He was asked in this interview: "How about Government censorship here?" And he replied:—

"That's a tough question. Not because there's anything unusual about the censorship in India, but because few reporters have ever been known to have a good word to say for any censor. And yet in all fairness your question forces me to admit that our particular brigands of the blue pencil here are not such a wicked lot as they are sometimes painted. For instance, take the recent All-India Congress Committee meeting in Bombay and the subsequent days of rioting. The censorship during these trying days was as intelligent and as liberal as I have ever seen it in any country".

That comes from a responsible American Press Correspondent. He was then asked "Did America get a full and accurate story of these disturbances?" He went on:—

"I know that America did get a complete and accurate picture of happenings, during the opening days of the disturbances, but don't ask me to give these or any other censors full marks. That is like asking a ball player to kiss the umpire".

Well, Sir, that comes from one of the men on whose behalf the Honourable Member has been complaining.



Then there is one further point to which I must refer in this connection. The Honourable the mover alleged that some message, some speech, by President Roosevelt had been interfered with by the authorities in this country so as to omit a reference to India and to the Atlantic Charter. That allegation was made some time ago. It was very carefully investigated and I can assure this House positively and categorically that no utterance by President Roosevelt—either that utterance or any other utterance—has ever had even a single word altered by any authority in this country.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** When was this investigation made ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM :** I cannot give the exact date but it was made some time ago. We made every attempt to find a basis for the allegation and we were quite unable to discover it. I can repeat absolutely positively that no cutting of any speech or statement by President Roosevelt has ever been done by any authority in India.

Now, Sir, I will turn to what I may call my own Home Department subject. I realize that any question affecting the treatment of the Press is apt to be controversial. I should therefore like to begin by asking the House to take it from me that any action that we or any Government in India may have felt ourselves compelled to take against the Press has not been taken lightly, but only after weighing most carefully what we regard as the public interest on the one hand and what we admit to be the rights of the Press on the other. If the Honourable Members who have spoken could have sat alongside us during the long discussions that we in the Home Department and the Information Department have had from time to time with editors and representatives of the Press—discussions which I can assure the House have almost invariably proceeded in a most friendly spirit—I think they would agree with me that we have consistently tried our best to respect the rights of responsible editors and to appreciate their point of view. I claim, Sir, that that is a view that would be endorsed by a very large number of editors themselves, although they have had their differences with us and we have not been able to see eye to eye with them on many occasions.

After all, Sir, everybody knows the importance of the Press and the very great influence that the Press possesses ; and Government are not so unintelligent as to ignore the expediency—I put it no higher than that—the expediency of maintaining good relations with the Press, especially in time of war. I do honestly maintain, whatever anyone may say, that our policy has been, and always will be, to maintain and, if possible, to improve those relations. I do also honestly believe that ever since the Advisory Committee system was introduced nearly two years ago, whatever difficulties and setbacks that system may have encountered—and those difficulties have not been entirely the creation of Provincial Governments—I do claim that that system has produced one result at least of outstanding value to both parties. It has brought representatives of Government and representatives of the Press into personal contact with each other across the table. Closer and more intimate personal relations have thus been established than was ever the case before. Indeed, Sir, I should like to take this opportunity to pay a tribute to the very great help and understanding that we have received from many eminent editors—Mr. Srinivasan of the *Hindu*, his two namesakes of *Swadesamitran* and the *Free Press Journal*, Mr. Francis Low of the *Times of India*, Mr. Brelvi of the *Bombay Chronicle*, and others. I feel, Sir, that we have got to know each other and to respect each other's points of view ; and that, I maintain, is a result of great value and importance. Moreover, Sir, the Government of

[Sir Richard Tottenham.]

India have had the benefit of having had since the beginning of the war two gentlemen as their Chief Press Advisers—first, Mr. Desmond Young and then Mr. Kirchner—both of whom are newspaper men who, I believe, are liked, respected and trusted by all editors in this country.

Now, Sir, there is another general remark I should like to make and that is that the House must realize that the subject “ Books, Newspapers and Presses ” occurs in Part I of the Concurrent Legislative List in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution Act, which means that both the Central Legislature and also a Provincial Legislature is competent to make laws on that subject, but that the administration of those laws is a provincial concern. The Central Government may and do suggest policy to Provincial Governments but we are not in a position to execute that policy ourselves in a Province and we must leave Provincial Governments discretion to carry out their responsibilities. Moreover, Sir, the responsibility of a Provincial Government in deciding what may be published or may not be published is different in kind from the responsibility of an editor. An editor conceives it to be his duty to give facts to the public and his views about those facts. A Provincial Government must see that the publication of those facts and those views does not offend against the law and, when it is a question of disturbances of the peace, a Provincial Government must also judge the effect on the law and order situation of the publication of such news or views.

Now, Sir, with these preliminary observations I turn to the Resolution itself and what the Honourable the mover and those who followed him said about it. In the first place, let me express my gratitude to him and them for admitting that some censorship of news is necessary for military reasons. That, Sir, is a fact that we all recognize, but it does very considerably narrow the field of possible criticism. That is to say, I take it that their position is not that censorship in itself is necessarily an unwarrantable interference with the liberty of the Press but that censorship for certain purposes is wrong. Let us then consider the purposes for which any kind of restriction was placed on news connected with the Congress movement and the disturbances that followed. The Honourable the Home Member, speaking in another place, explained that our purposes were two-fold.

We had to deny publicity to a good deal that occurred, at the time when it occurred, first because, if it had been known, it would have provided the Japanese with a direct invitation to invade this country : and secondly, because disturbances are infectious and news of what has occurred here or there may produce a repetition or imitation of those events in other parts of the country which otherwise might have remained quiet. As to the first of these two objects, I take it that the Honourable Member agrees with me that some restriction of news was necessary : but perhaps he does not realize quite how much news, and what kinds of news, may be of interest or value to the enemy. I admit, Sir, that I myself was most anxious to publish a great deal more news of this movement, for I felt—and I think it is obvious— that the more news we could put out, the better and the more advantageous it would be from the Government's own point of view as showing what we were up against and as justifying the measures that we had to take. But the military authorities came to us and said no : and when we discussed the matter with them we had to admit that they were right. There were many things—interruption of communications and others—which the military authorities pointed out it would be of great value to the enemy to know; and the House realizes of course that a very large part of the disturbances themselves consisted in interruptions

of communications of one kind or another. Now, Sir, as regards the second object—what I may call the imitation object—I admit that two views are possible. There are those—I am not sure whether the Honourable the mover is one of them—who hold that these disturbances were spontaneous and not organized. Well, Sir, if that were so, surely the danger of imitation was a very grave one. In any case the view that was represented to us from many different quarters—Provincial Governments, military authorities and others—was that the amount of news published was having a very bad effect in other parts of the country. Then, Sir, the second view—and that is the view which we ourselves have now held for some time—is that these disturbances were not spontaneous but organized. In that view it might be argued that the imitation danger did not exist. But assuming that things were happening according to plan, surely it would have been of immense value to the authors of that plan to know from the newspapers exactly how their plan was proceeding in different parts of India. In fact, Sir, we come back to argument No. 1. We start by saying that we must not give information that may be of value to the enemy; but the question on this occasion was who was the enemy? Was it only the Japanese outside? Was there not another enemy in India, and did we not have a duty and a right to prevent him from receiving information of value in exactly the same way as we should try to prevent the Japanese? I do strongly maintain, Sir, and I hope that the House will support me in this that from both these points of view some control of the news was absolutely necessary.

Now, Sir, let me turn to the nature of that control. So far as the Central Government is concerned, there has only been one general order issued under the Defence of India Rules. It was issued on August 8th, the day on which the All India Congress Committee sanctioned a mass movement. That order prohibited the publication of any factual news relating to that movement except what was derived from Government sources or from recognized Press agencies or from recognized Press correspondents, who, for the purpose of obtaining that recognition, were required to register themselves with District Magistrates. Now, Sir, the House will observe that that order imposed no kind of restriction on the publication of any particular category of news. It merely secured control over the origins of news, and it was designed to secure that whatever news was published came from reputable and reliable sources. The Press agencies themselves willingly agreed to submit their messages on this subject for press advice to the authority best qualified to give it, that is to say the man on the spot where the events took place. We hoped that Press correspondents would do the same: but they were under no legal obligation to do so. Of course, if they did not and if they sent messages to their papers which contained unauthenticated news or news of a definitely objectionable kind, we had our remedy. We could cancel the registration of that correspondent with the result that all messages from him on that particular subject would in future be illegal. Now people may say that this was merely a roundabout way of imposing precensorship; and I agree that there is some weight in that criticism. On the other hand the order to which I have just referred did not impose precensorship directly on any editor or correspondent. It did give discretion to all responsible editors and all responsible correspondents; and there are a number of papers which have found it quite possible to comply with the order, and at the same time to publish a very fair amount of news connected with the movement. Indeed, Sir, I have yet to hear of one single item of news about these disturbances which has been suppressed and which it really would have been in the public interest not to suppress. The Honourable Mr. Kunzru referred to the case

[Sir Richard Tottenham.]

of the Benares University. Sir, that is a matter of opinion. I personally believe that it would not have been in the public interest at the time to publish the reasons why certain drastic action had to be taken. But the news was not suppressed. A full account has already appeared in the Press,—I think I am right in saying in the *Hindu* of Madras about the 15th September. The Honourable Mr. Sapru also referred to the speech of Mr. Gandhi. Well, that of course did not come under the order to which I have just referred concerning factual news relating to the mass movement. It may have been submitted for press advice by a Press agency and it may have been the Press agency themselves—I am not sure about this—I have not had time to verify it—who decided not to publish the whole of that speech in the papers.

Now, Sir, the House will also note another point about this order of ours. It refers only to factual news. It imposes no kind of restriction on editorial comment. In that most important respect we did leave entire discretion to the editors. But we held a Press Conference at which the position was explained and it was made clear that if any editor did overstep the limit of legitimate criticism, naturally he would have to accept liability for the consequences. That Press Conference was presided over by Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar in the regrettable absence of the Home Member who was at the time ill. If he had not been ill, he would have attended. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar made it perfectly clear at that conference that there was no ban of any kind on the expression of political views as such. Indeed, Sir, I venture to think that any impartial observer coming to this country and reading our newspapers would agree that the Press in this country enjoys a very wide latitude in the nature of the political views and criticisms of Government that they publish.

Now, Sir, apart from this general order issued by the Government of India, I am well aware that a number of supplementary orders have been issued from time to time by various Provincial Governments, a few against individual papers—I believe not more than four in the whole of India—and a certain number of a more general nature limiting the size or character of headlines or the amount of news on this topic that could be published. I do not know the exact circumstances in which each of these orders was passed by the Provincial Governments and therefore I cannot say here and now whether each one was fully justified. But, judging from our own experience in Delhi, I have no reason whatever to believe that these orders were not necessary. What, Sir, can one think of a paper in Delhi which not only published entirely false allegations about the behaviour of troops without taking any trouble whatever to verify them, but also went out of its way to issue a leader complaining that the Press was being gagged and that news was being suppressed and yet, in the very issue which contained this leader, devoted more than half of its news columns to sensational and highly coloured accounts of the disturbances that were taking place in the country? I am afraid, Sir, the plain fact is that a certain section of the Press in India—and I am glad to think it is not more than a very small section—have made up their minds to support this movement at all costs. We have in our possession a Congress circular issued in the United Provinces towards the beginning of August which definitely instructed Congressmen, if the leaders were arrested, to look to certain papers, which were named, for further instructions as to how to carry on. That is to say, certain papers were specified as the agents of the Congress Party for the purpose of pursuing this movement. That particular section of the Press, making an excuse of the restrictions imposed,

but really, I have no doubt whatever, as a political move designed to bring pressure on, and to embarrass, the Government, decided to suspend publication. I am glad to think that they have failed in their attempt to embarrass the Government. At present I understand that not more than 50 papers or so are out of publication out of a total of several thousand newspapers in India, and, as far as I can see, the absence of these papers has not made any very great difference. The only effect I can imagine it has had, unless the papers have been subsidized by political funds, is that they have put out of employment a number of people whose living depended on the work they were doing for these papers. That small section of the Press is a section with whom we have found it impossible to do business. On the other hand, when at the Editors' Conference held the other day the more responsible and reasonable editors approached us and said that they took exception to that part of our general order which affected the relations between an editor and his correspondents, we said that we were quite prepared to meet them in every way we could; and it was they, not we, who suggested that, if they could not be left with complete freedom to publish anything they liked, it would be better for Government to arrange for all matter on this subject to be submitted for scrutiny by a specified authority and also to arrange for representatives of the Press themselves to be associated with that authority in carrying out that scrutiny. I do not mean to say that the Press volunteered to accept precensorship. What they did say was, "If we cannot be allowed to publish everything at our own wish—and some of them agreed that that was impossible—then we think this is a more direct and more satisfactory method of doing it than your method". We accepted that proposal. I admit that personally I have never been very much in favour of precensorship, but that was what we were asked to do and we accepted the proposal so far as the Chief Commissioners' Provinces were concerned, and we recommended it to all Provincial Governments. The present position, I understand, is that certain Provincial Governments have accepted it and in those provinces we have cancelled our original order. Certain other Provincial Governments are considering it, and certain further Provincial Governments in consultation with their editors have decided that they do not want to change the system. They prefer to remain under our original order which they have not found irksome or in any way unworkable. As regards Delhi itself, it is perfectly true that the new system has not yet come into full operation, but that is not our fault. So long ago as September the 6th the Advisory Committee here was asked to nominate representatives of the Press to be associated with the scrutinizing officer and the Chief Commissioner tells me that he has not yet received any reply.

Well, Sir, I am conscious that within the time at my disposal I may not have been able to deal fully and completely with this very intricate subject, but I do hope I have said enough to convince the House that we are not unreasonable, although we are not in a position to accept this Resolution. We cannot accept it for two reasons. First, because most of the restrictive orders now in existence are orders passed by Provincial Governments and we cannot accept the cancellation of those orders on their behalf. That must be done by consultation with them. In the second place, we cannot accept the Resolution because I believe that, if all restrictions were withdrawn immediately, a certain section of the Press would take advantage of that to endeavour to work up enthusiasm and popular feeling for this movement, which I think would be most regrettable. On the other hand I do maintain that the restrictions that have been imposed are no more than have been necessary to meet an entirely exceptional situation, and as soon as that exceptional

[Sir Richard Tottenham.]

situation ceases to exist, no one would be better pleased than ourselves to see these special restrictions disappear also. I am fully prepared, Sir, to send the whole of this debate to Provincial Governments and ask them to consider what reduction of restrictions would now be possible, but I am afraid I cannot do more than that. We are prepared to co-operate with any section of the Press which is prepared to co-operate with us, but equally we are determined to resist any section of the Press that attempts to stimulate or encourage a revolutionary movement which I believe this House as a whole deprecates and condemns. And, Sir, if I may be allowed to end by expressing a purely personal opinion, I do think that there is one word which has done more harm to India and India's cause than anything else. It is not an English word. It does not occur, so far as I know, in any English dictionary. It is the word "non-cooperation". If that ugly word and all that it stands for could be banned, censored, suppressed and abolished by every class and community in this country, including my own, I believe, Sir, what is called the Indian problem would soon cease to exist. *(Applause.)*

\*THE HONOURABLE SAYYED MOHAMED PADSHAH SAHIB BAHADUR (Madras : Muhammadan): Sir, I am glad to learn from the Honourable Sir Richard Tottenham that the contact recently established between the Government and the Press representatives has tended to improve relations between the authorities and the Press in the country. I am glad also to know from him that the discussions that have taken place between them have been characterized by a very friendly, free and frank spirit. I am glad also to have this assurance from Sir Richard Tottenham that he is prepared to co-operate with such section of the Press as is willing to co-operate with the Government and help to restore a better atmosphere in the country. But there are some portions of the Government reply which I have not been able to understand. I understood Sir Richard Tottenham to say that press advice was not the concern of the Home Department. From his remarks I gathered that if the press advice was given in a manner which was against the spirit of the instructions issued by the Home Department, the Home Department was not responsible for it. If I am right in the interpretation which I am putting on the Government reply, I should like to know whether the policy of the Government is not the policy which is followed by every branch of the Government of India and whether what is considered to be right and proper by the Home Department is not considered right and proper by the Information Department also. As I said, Sir, I am utterly at a loss to know how the Information Department could do a thing which goes against the spirit of the instructions issued by the Home Department. If it is open to the Information Department to do a thing like that, such a thing ought to be put a stop to at once. The policy of the Government should be a united policy, a policy which represents the views of the whole of the Government of India. So far as pre-censorship is concerned, I have not been able to gather from the reply that there was any categorical reply as regards the agreement that is contended by the Government to have come to between the Government and the Standing Committee of the Editors' Conference. I should have liked very much to know whether it is a fact that pre-censorship which is now being resorted to in the country by the Government has had the consent, full and free consent, of the Editors' Conference? If it has not, as is contended by the convener and President of the Editors' Conference, that fact also should be known; but if it is a fact that the Standing Committee or its representatives had given their consent, then this should

\*Not corrected by the Honourable Member.

be made quite clear to the public. As regards the right of the Press, we will have to concede that the liberty of the Press is co-extensive with the right of the citizens of the country to know what is actually happening in the country. But at the same time I concede that there may be occasions when this liberty of the Press could not be allowed to be exercised in its entirety. There are occasions when the rights of individuals also has to be curtailed in the light of their repercussions on society in the same way as the liberty of the Press can with justification be curtailed on occasions when it is required in the interest of the public. I also admit that if the liberty of the Press degenerates into license, it ought to be stopped at once. If there is no such tendency, if there is no such effect to be apprehended, I plead for the Press that it should be allowed to have its own way.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU** (United Provinces Northern: Non-Muhammadian): Mr. President, the spokesman of the Government has made a clever speech. He has chosen a few statements to which he could make a plausible reply and has left the question of pre-censorship where it was. I shall deal with some of the points which he urged in his speech, though it is quite impossible for me in the course of a short reply to traverse all that he said. My Honourable friend first referred to the question of military censorship. My Resolution is perfectly general one relating to both external and internal censorship. When I referred to the question of military censorship it was not by accident. We know that Government are assiduously carrying on propaganda in favour of their point of view in America. Mr. Ranganathan, one of the Advisers to the Secretary of State, has been recently sent to America. I understand that the British Government are trying to send some more persons there who would express views which would be palatable to them. In these circumstances it is of the utmost importance to us that the true state of things in India, nationalist opinion and the nationalist point of view, should be fully known abroad in order to enable outsiders to realize the discontent prevailing in the country. Now, my Honourable friend, in replying to what I said on this subject yesterday, quoted, Sir, a certificate which he had received from the correspondent of the American International News. He is entitled to use any opinion that is in favour of Government, but the opinion expressed by the correspondent he referred to cannot do away with the fact that some time ago Indian, British and American journalists combined to make representations to the Viceroy regarding the severity of the present restrictions. They complained of the manner in which the in-coming and out-going messages were being treated. There is only one valid defence that the Honourable Member has made of the action of the Government of India and that is that messages sent by wireless can be picked up by the enemy. Now, so far as one can gather from the enemy radios there is hardly anything happening in India that is not known in countries outside. If anything happens in Delhi or in Bombay or in Allahabad or in Poona we get news of it first from the Berlin, Tokyo or Saigon Radio. It is idle for Government to contend in these circumstances that things of value would come to be known to the enemy only if messages relating to the conditions prevailing in this country were sent by Chinese and American correspondents to their papers. If there is anything that would obviously be of military advantage to the enemy prevent its transmission by all means but do not let there be a complete black out of news, of comments favourable to India appearing in the foreign Press, and do not make it difficult for foreign correspondents to give their papers a true picture of what is happening in this country.

[Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.]

Dealing, Sir, with the question of the advice given by the Press Censor, my Honourable friend took shelter behind a formal plea. He said that Press-advising was under the Information Department and that no one was compelled to seek Press advice or having sought it to accept it and so on. It is all very good for my Honourable friend enjoying the security of the Home Department to expound to us the theory of the matter. I wish he were a correspondent of some paper to whom those restrictions applied and whose living depended on his journalistic work and I wonder if he would then argue with the same equanimity about the permissive character and innocuousness of the Government restrictions.

Information has reached me that some correspondents have been asked by the District Magistrates to show their messages before they are sent to the newspapers. This may be unbelievable to my Honourable friend—he seems hardly prepared to believe anything that is uncomplimentary to Government—but I have received this information from an editor whose veracity I have faith in. Apart from this, I brought to my Honourable friend's notice—the case of an editor who is known both to him and to me, who was practically asked by his Government to seek Press advice or beware of the consequences. Now, that is a matter which is not one in which I have relied on information supplied to me by outsiders. I have told him what the source of my information was. When these things are happening what is the good of my Honourable friend coming forward and merely making technical pleas in defence of Government?

Sir, the third point which my Honourable friend made was that whatever complaints might be made against the Press Advisers and although some of the complaints against them might be justified yet it remained to be proved that even the Press Advisers had held back any information relating to the disturbances which should have been allowed to go through. Now, how am I to satisfy the Honourable Member in this respect? There should be some common standard which he and I can accept, but if there is no such standard, no number of instances that I may cite will ever convince the spokesmen of Government that I have established my case. I referred to several cases yesterday, one of which related to the Hindu University. Now, my Honourable friend boldly comes forward and says that he thinks that it was right that the news relating to the action taken against the Hindu University should not have been allowed to be published at the time when the action was taken. The Honourable Member is quite within his rights in saying whatever he likes—it is not criminal to be dogmatic, or even to say manifestly absurd things—but he has not said one word to show that the public interest would have been injured in the slightest degree if this news had been passed. Then my Honourable friend said that this news had been published in a Madras paper. If it is so, I suppose it reached the Madras paper in the same way as the information relating to the statement issued by certain members of the Society of Friends reached that paper, that is through the post, but the fact remains that no paper in the United Provinces was allowed to publish that news. To the best of my knowledge there was not a word about it either in the *Leader* or in the *Pioneer*.

If my Honourable friend wants some other illustrations of the manner in which the censorship is working at present I can easily give him some which he will find as difficult to defend as some cases that I referred to yesterday. I referred yesterday, Sir, to a speech delivered by Sir Venkatasubba Rao. I can today refer to a statement issued by the Right Honourable Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru about the middle of August last regarding the present situation,



line in which was omitted by the Censor. Why that line was taken away nobody knows. I have seen the whole message and when I read that message in the *Leader* I felt that the construction of the sentence from which that line had been taken out was not what it should be, but perhaps that did not trouble the Censor at all. He thought perhaps that if a mistake occurred in the sentence it would be to the discredit of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. This is another instance of the vagaries of the Censor, though the Censor in this case was the local Censor.

Another instance, Sir, relates to Delhi. A number of persons who picketed the houses of Sir Homi Mody and Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava were prosecuted. They pleaded not guilty and said that they only wanted to see the Honourable Members concerned. The Censor allowed the Press to state that the accused pleaded not guilty but did not allow them to say anything about the plea which they put forward. Can absurdity go farther? It is not enough for my Honourable friend to say that these instances, even if true, do not prove that information of any value has been withheld from the Press. I think, Sir, they prove a great deal. They show the mentality of the Censors. They show how little the Censors are prepared to give to the public and how dangerous it is to leave things to the discretion of such men.

If he wants another instance I can give him one which relates to my own city of Allahabad. A procession of students was fired on. One of the students died but, although information of this character, relating to other cities was allowed to be published in the local paper, the *Leader*, the news of this incident was suppressed. Now my Honourable friend will say I am quite sure that the action of the authorities was justified.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT:** The Honourable Member has reached his time-limit.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU:** The moment it is 15 minutes I will sit down. I will not take a minute more.

The Honourable Member's confidence in the authorities is more than that of any non-official. All that we can do is to give instances of a fairly convincing nature, and if they do not satisfy him I say so much the worse for him.

Sir, my Honourable friend, dealing with the question of precensorship, left it where it was. While he was good enough to say that he was prepared to send a report of the debate that had taken place to Local Governments he has held out no hope that the action taken with regard to the establishment of precensorship will be cancelled or modified in any essential respect. The plea that he made was in my opinion not worthy of him. He said that action was taken on an agreement that was previously arrived at. I said yesterday, and I repeat today, that no agreement was arrived at between the Standing Committee and Government on this point. I do not charge the Honourable Member with telling an untruth, but I am faced on the other hand with the denial of Mr. J. N. Sahni and Mr. Srinivasan. Apart from this, Sir, when it was known that this decision had created serious dissatisfaction, why did not the Honourable Member wait and ask the Local Governments to stop taking action till they received a further communication from the Government of India? It would have been quite easy for him to do it. Why did he allow them to—

**THE HONOURABLE SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM:** If I may say so, it was because the President of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference urged us to take immediate action by telegram.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU:** Well, Sir, I read the telegram of Mr. Srinivasan: but he himself said that he did not want there should be a censorship of news of all categories. I understand from the convener of the Newspaper Editors' Conference that a reply was sent to Sir

[Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.]

Richard Tottenham's letter after Mr. Srinivasan's telegram in which it was stated that the view of the Government of India that all news should be censored was not acceptable to the Standing Committee. Again, Sir, my Honourable friend has trotted out the question of the autonomy of the Provinces. I am well aware of the powers of the Provincial Governments under the existing constitution: but what about those provinces where there are no ministries, which are governed under section 93 and which therefore are under the complete control of the Governor General? The Home Department can take any action only when it has the support of the Governor General; and if they want to change the present system they can easily, with the consent of the Governor General, not merely ask but compel recalcitrant Local Governments to follow the instructions of the Government of India.

Sir, I cannot but regard the reply that has been given by my Honourable friend as wholly unsatisfactory. He tried to be as conciliatory as he thought he should be, but the sum and substance of his speech is that the system of pre-censorship has been introduced and will continue to be introduced into Provinces where it is accepted by the Local Governments; and that the Government of India are not prepared to take any steps either to gain the goodwill of the Press or the public on this point. The only course that we can adopt for giving expression to our feelings and our resentment to the attitude of Government in this House is to ask that the votes of the House should be taken on the resolution.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Resolution is:

"This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that the restriction imposed on the Press which have given rise to serious dissatisfaction should be modified so as to take fuller account of the rights of the press and the public and that, in particular, pre-censorship of news reports and statements should be abolished except in so far as it may be necessary for military purposes."

Question put: the Council divided:

AYES—9.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dalal, Hon. Mr. M. N.</li> <li>Das, Hon. Mr. N. K.</li> <li>Hossain Imam, Hon. Mr.</li> <li>Kunzru, Hon. Pandit Hirday Nath.</li> <li>Muhammad Hussain, Hon. Haji Syed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Padshah Sahib Bahadur, Hon. Saiyed Mohamed.</li> <li>Ram Saran Das, Hon. Bai Bahadur Lala.</li> <li>Sapru, Hon. Mr. P. N.</li> <li>Sinha, Hon. Kumar Nripendra Narayan.</li> </ul>
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NOES—23.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ataullah Khan Tarar, Hon. Chaudhri.</li> <li>Charanjit Singh, Hon. Raja.</li> <li>Das, Hon. Rai Bahadur Satyendra Kumar.</li> <li>Haddow, Hon. Mr. R. R.</li> <li>Hissamuddin Bahadur, Hon. Lt.-Col. Sir.</li> <li>Hartley, General the Hon. Sir Alan.</li> <li>Jogendra Singh, Hon. Sir.</li> <li>Jones, Hon. Mr. C. E.</li> <li>Khurshid Ali Khan, Hon. Nawabzada.</li> <li>Lal, Hon. Mr. Shavaz A.</li> <li>Lloyd, Hon. Sir Alan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Menon, Hon. Sir Ramunni.</li> <li>Muhammad Usman, Hon. Khan Bahadur Sir.</li> <li>Mukherjee, Hon. Sir Satya Charan.</li> <li>Nihal Singh, Hon. Sirdar.</li> <li>Ogilvie, Hon. Mr. C. MacI. G.</li> <li>Pai, Hon. Mr. A. V.</li> <li>Parker, Hon. Mr. R. H.</li> <li>Patro, Hon. Sir A. P.</li> <li>Prior, Hon. Mr. H. C.</li> <li>Sobha Singh, Hon. Sardar Bahadur.</li> <li>Srivastava, Hon. Sir Jwala Prasad.</li> <li>Tottenham, Hon. Sir Richard.</li> </ul>
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The Motion was negatived.

## DELHI MUSLIM WAKFS BILL

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM** (Bihar and Oriassa : Muham-  
madan) : Sir, I rise to move :—

“That the Bill to make better provision for the administration of Masajid and the Endowment of the Jama Masjid, Fatehpuri Masjid and Kalan Masjid of Delhi be continued.”

Sir, I was unable to make any specific motion on this Bill which has been referred to a Joint Select Committee of the two Houses and therefore, in order to keep the Bill alive, I make this formal Motion.

The Motion was adopted.

### RESOLUTION *RE* PRICE CONTROL.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU** (United Pro-  
vinces Northern : Non-Muhammadan) : Mr. President, I beg to move :—

“That this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that the present system of price control which has proved inadequate and ineffective should be replaced by another system which will be controlled more largely and directly by the State, cover the supply, distribution and prices of all essential commodities and pay due regard to the interests of the producer, consumer and middleman.”

Sir, I am conscious that the system that I am suggesting has never been tried in this country before. I may, therefore, be asked to explain why I am proposing the adoption of a method which might appear to some persons to be very drastic. I have stated in my Resolution that the present system of price control has proved inadequate and ineffective. I may therefore be asked why I ask Government to persist in a course which has in some degree already proved ineffective. I shall answer this question very briefly and I hope in such a way as to convince all impartial men that there is need for control of the kind that I have advocated. Sir, there is no doubt that generally speaking the production of food-grains in the country is enough for its internal needs. Rice, however, is an important exception. But, apart from this, I think the statement that I have just made holds good. I may, therefore, be asked why there should then be any price control at all. The experience of the last war supplies us with a fairly convincing answer. At that time the dealers were left free to make their own arrangements and Government hardly ever intervened between the dealer and the consumer. But there were several causes which operated in such a way as to make all thinking men realize that some action must be taken in order to protect the interests of the public. In the first place, Sir, the purchases that were made for the army had a disturbing psychological effect on the market. They may have been small compared with the total production in the country but they were enough to induce the dealers to withhold certain foodgrains from the market and thus to force up their prices. Again, Sir, there was want of adequate railway transport. Owing to these two causes there was frequently scarcity of the essential commodities in many places. The prices of wheat and salt in particular rose very high and in consequence Government were forced to give high dearness allowance to their servants. What effect this allowance had on the finances of the Government is well known. I need not, therefore, enlarge on it. It may, however, be said that a rise in prices is in the interests of the agriculturist, particularly at this time, as they have been hard hit by the depression that has been prevailing more or less during the last 10 or 12 years. Honourable Members

[Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.]

will, I am sure, remember that this House did not in the beginning want to control prices. It left them uncontrolled for a pretty long time for this very reason. It wanted to give the agriculturist an opportunity to earn some money before preventing the prices from rising. Apart from this, Sir, the interests of the urban areas have to be looked after. Only 10 per cent. of the population may live there, but Government cannot ask this percentage of the population to be content with things as they are, to put up with whatever hardships they may have to bear, and this consideration gains ground when it is borne in mind that the workers on whose loyalty and willingness to work depends the production of war materials live in urban areas. Again, Sir, not all rural areas are self-sufficient. There are some areas known as deficit areas for which food must be imported from outside. Consequently, if no control over supply and distribution is exercised, these deficit areas, which include the rural population, will be hard hit in common with the urban areas. One more plea will probably be urged to prevent action on the lines that I have suggested. It might be suggested that dearness allowance might be given both to the workers and the employees of Government. This method was tried during the great war and what effect it had we all know. I hope that Government having become wiser by their past experience will not depend solely on this method any more. This is not a proper method of controlling prices. On the contrary this would be an ideal way of getting involved in a vicious circle, in a circle of rising prices and higher dearness allowances from which it will be impossible to get at. Sir, I hope the arguments that I have urged will show to doubters that some control must be exercised. It will then be asked what should be the policy of the Government in the present situation and what is the form that the control should take. I say that in the first place Government should take action to increase the production of foodgrains. This is a policy which the Government are already following. They are going to bring 100,000 acres under the plough and increase the quantity of food stuffs by about 21 lakhs of tons. In regard to rice, however, it seems to me that the action taken by them is not adequate, particularly if we bear in mind that there has been a chronic shortage of rice in this country and that we shall have to give something out of the little that we possess to Ceylon. I think therefore that more energetic steps should be taken to increase the production of rice. As regards the form the control should take, I should like to state at the very outset and as emphatically as I can that the first object of the Government should be to make the agriculturists feel that the measure is in their interest, for without their co-operation they cannot obtain the increased supply of food stuffs which they urgently desire. I am of the view therefore that after taking the cost of production and the increased cost of living into account, Government should fix a price which will prove attractive to the agriculturists. Even if Government fix a price which by some people may be regarded as excessive, the money will go into the pockets of the most deserving class in the country and will in the end benefit all producers—even the mill-owners who are engaged in the production of cloth. Then, Sir, as, in the past, owing to want of unification between the machinery of purchase for the army and civil purposes an unfortunate effect was produced on the public mind, I suggest that there should be one agency to make purchases on behalf of the Army and the Civil Departments concerned. This agency should not be concerned merely with wheat as is the case at the present time. It must be concerned with other competitive foodgrains also. What are these competitive foodgrains? They are *jowar*, *bajra*, gram and all the other

things that can be used in place of wheat. The result of the present policy has been exceedingly harmful. We all know how high the prices of *jowar* and *bajra* have gone up and *bajra* is actually dearer than wheat. At Allahabad some time ago while we could get from  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to  $4\frac{3}{4}$  seers of wheat for a rupee, we could not get more than 4 seers of *bajra* for the same amount. This shows, Sir, the need for making the control more comprehensive. We must also bring under control wheat flour, that is *atta*, and *maida*, in addition to *jowar*, *bajra*, barley, gram, etc. This having been secured, Sir, a small number of dealers should be chosen to purchase the essential commodities. I do not want that all the stock in the possession of the primary producers should be taken hold of by Government. But what I desire is that a sufficient stock should be acquired for the needs of the deficit areas and for the formation of reserves both at the Centre and in the Provinces. If this is done, when there is a local scarcity in a place, the Government concerned can supply any foodgrain that may be in deficiency from its own reserve and thus prevent prices from rising unduly. If action is taken on these lines, its scope will be of a limited character and the objections that are urged on the score that it is dangerous to ask Government to undertake a vast commercial operation covering the whole country will be considerably obviated. Indeed they will lose all their force. If the method that I have suggested is agreed to, the next step will be to control the importation of the essential quantities in every province. The Local Governments must have their own agents, their own wholesale dealers, whom they would license and who would be able to get their stocks from the buying agencies approved by the Central Government. But this will not be enough. It will be necessary in the provinces to go further. We shall have to see how the quantity that is received in a province is used, whether it is hoarded or consumed. This is not an easy thing to do. But I think that if a limit is set on the quantity which a dealer may sell in a day or which any particular individual may receive, the difficulties can be largely overcome. I cannot deal at length with this difficult question because it is obviously impossible to do so fully in the course of a few minutes. But what I have said will be sufficient to give Honourable Members an idea of what I mean and the control which in my opinion Government should exercise over the distribution of wheat.

Sir, I am strengthened in my views by the fact that the Food Advisory Council at its last meeting supported the course that I have recommended. The Honourable the Commerce Member also in his speech at the last Price Control Conference took the same point of view. He admitted that the present price control system had proved ineffective owing to various causes. I think they were partly the experience of Government, partly the unwillingness of certain Local Governments to help and partly the entry of speculators into the wheat market and the action of the permit-holders in charging from the buyers the prices prevalent not at the centres of production but at the centres of consumption to which the buyers belonged. Sir, the Honourable the Commerce Member having in the course of his presidential Address to the Sixth Price Control Conference expressed views which are similar to mine, which are virtually identical with mine, I hope that the course that I have suggested here will find favour with Government.

I have spoken, Sir, so far only of the foodgrains, but my Resolution refers to all essential commodities. Now those commodities are sugar, salt, kerosene and cloth. Sugar is already controlled, but—

**THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN LLOYD:** Will the Honourable Member kindly read his list of commodities again?

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Sugar, salt, kerosene and cloth.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN LLOYD :** Thank you.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** Now sugar is controlled but its distribution has been as defective as that of wheat. The United Provinces are the largest producers of sugar, yet in many places in the United Provinces, including Allahabad, there was some time ago practically a sugar famine. I hope my Honourable friend opposite will explain how such a phenomenon occurred, why there are difficulties in the distribution of a commodity of which the supply is more than adequate. Perhaps the difficulty is that of transport though I do not know whether that is the whole of the case but the difficulties relating to transport are real. You may control the supply and you may try to control the price but unless you can bring about a proper system of distribution, which depends on a proper control of the transport arrangements, no system that you may devise will ever work successfully. It is of the utmost importance therefore that there should be the fullest co-operation between the Commerce Department, the War Department and the Railway Department in regard to the use of the available transport in such a way as to keep the civil population supplied with necessaries of life. This will not be an easy matter but if proper attention is given to it, if the importance of the matter is more fully recognized than has been the case hitherto I feel that the position may soon be easier than it is at present. Sir, I have no time to deal with the remaining commodities but I must point out that the production of standard cloth is far from being an accomplished fact and that the high price of cloth is a source of great hardship to the poor. As regards kerosene, there is a serious shortage of it in the Country. No control short of rationing will I think suffice to bring about its equitable distribution.

I shall now state, Sir, one or two instances which have been mentioned to me and which, if true, require to be carefully considered by Government. I have been told that at the present time when a certain percentage or number of wagons is set aside for the use of the military authorities they are allowed to be used only for the transport of goods required for military purposes. A wagon may be only half full, and it may be desirable to utilize the remaining space for the transport of goods needed for the civil population but I have been told that the practice at present is to refuse to book non-military goods in a wagon, in a part of which even there are military goods.

Again, Sir, even in an emergency wagons set apart for the use of the military authorities, it is said, are not allowed to be used for civil purposes, even though they may not be required by the military authorities. I am rather disinclined to believe this but I have been told that responsible merchants have brought such difficulties to the notice of their organizations. I have no personal knowledge of the matter but as it is an important one I have considered it necessary to bring it to the notice of Government.

There are two other complaints which also I should like to bring to the notice of Government. I understand that the agent who makes purchases on behalf of the Army has been allowed to purchase wheat at a higher price than the regulation price. There may be some reason for it; for instance the Army authorities may take delivery of it not at the centre of production but somewhere else and this may give rise to a difference in prices.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN LLOYD :** I should like to say, if I may, that this has been investigated and has not been found to be true.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** I am very glad to hear that, but I hope the Honourable Member will explain the matter a little more fully. I was not, even the commercial public is not, aware of what the Honourable Member has said. I said myself that there might be a difference in the control price and that paid by the military authorities on the ground that they want delivery not at the centre of production but somewhere else, maybe at the railway station. If the position has been investigated and the allegation not found true this should be publicly stated.

Another thing, Sir, that I wish to bring to the notice of Government is that 20,000 bags of Java sugar were allowed to be purchased by the Mill-owners' Association at the price of Rs. 35 a bag that is at practically two and a half times the price applicable to Indian sugar. Now it is true that Java sugar is not controlled.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN LLOYD :** It also pays a protective duty.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU :** It does pay protective duty undoubtedly but we were told that Java sugar was much cheaper than the sugar produced in this country and that even after the imposition of a very high protective duty it could sell profitably at the ports. Why is it then that its price has risen to Rs. 35 a bag and in any case why were the Millowners' Association allowed to buy so much Java sugar? Perhaps I shall be told that there were difficulties with regard to transport. I say again that there ought to be better collaboration between all the authorities concerned in this matter so that a commodity which is produced in this country and which can fully provide for its needs should be sold everywhere in preference to a foreign commodity. An incident like the one I have referred to gives rise to legitimate uneasiness and apprehension, and it has, I know, created considerable feeling in the commercial community.

Sir, these are most of the points that I wished to urge on the attention of the authorities. But before I sit down I should like to say that a heavy duty rests in this matter both on the commercial community and on the Government. Even when the course I have suggested has been accepted by Government, it will probably be necessary for them to have some retail shops under their own control so that they may have effective means of preventing the prices from rising unduly and the black market from existing for any length of time, at any rate in any important place. The commercial community, too, should follow a similar method. A strong appeal was made to them by the Honourable Mr. Sarker at the Price Control Conference of which I have already spoken. I do not know what the result of his appeal and of his subsequent conversation with commercial representatives has been. Perhaps my Honourable friend Sir Alan Lloyd will give us information on that subject. But in any case they should understand that in the opinion of the public a heavy duty rests on them to offer their fullest co-operation to the Government and to do the utmost that they can to prevent prices from rising and profiteers from taking undue advantage of the necessities of the poor people.

Lastly, Sir, I should like to have information with regard to the regional Supply and Price Boards. I should in particular like to know whether there are such Boards in the United Provinces, and if there are, how they are working? We hear of Supply Boards in many provinces, but I have not yet come to know anything about such Boards in the United Provinces or about their activities if they exist.

I should also like to know what is the position of the Indian States in this respect? Any system that Government may adopt can be successful only when there is full co-operation between the various authorities involved. I have already spoken of the important part that the Government of India and the provincial authorities have to play in connection with this matter. But the States, and particularly the Punjab States, also occupy a very important position in regard to it. Till recently I understand they considered themselves free to adopt any course that they liked. Of course constitutionally no pressure can be put on them; nor do I suggest such a course. But I hope that Government will enter into negotiations with them if they have not already done so, and use their influence and good offices in order to bring about a complete and friendly understanding between themselves and the Rulers of the Indian States.

Sir, I move.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR JOGENDRA SINGH** (Education, Health and Lands Member): Sir he on whom his fond parents bestowed the sovereignty of hearts has spoken with his usual earnestness. I am glad that he is now leaving the field of pure political polemics which he frequented and is entering into more fruitful fields of production, trade and economics. I wish he could walk with me into a village in the United Provinces or the Punjab, and observe the crumbling mud walls in which the people live, lanes littered with refuse, children walking about ill-clad and ill-fed, and then come along again into the rice fields when the rain is heavily falling and men and women are weeding. Has he ever been sauntered into the villages and seen how crops are produced? The labour of six months is sometimes, when a hailstorm comes, destroyed in half an hour. The invasion of locusts may also ruin thousands of acres. Perhaps he is aware that in every five years, you may have two years of average crops, two of bad crops and one of good crop. I think he and his friends will be wiser, if they make further inquiries, before they sit down and say, that the price of wheat has been high and the price of *bajra*, a competitive grain, has been higher still. I may also tell them that wheat does not occupy the largest area in India. Rice is the premier crop which occupies the first place. Then, Sir, I am not going into the details—I am only trying to put the agricultural side before this House, because I am anxious that this House should acquire an agricultural bias, and unless it acquires an agricultural bias, it cannot do justice to the millions of people whose prosperity and living depends on the measures regarding prices which this House decides to take. In this connection, Sir, it would be interesting if members ascertained the average holding of a cultivator in a village, the net produce he gets at the end of six months from his field, and from the small amount of grain, which he can save from consumption he has to meet not only such fixed demands as Land Revenue and rent, but all his other meagre requirements. If the cost of the ordinary articles of production rises, it is fair that the price of the produce of this poor man should also rise. Indeed it should not be said of this House that everyone combines to reduce the price of the poor man's stock in trade.

"Sub ghata dete hain mufis ke magar mal ka mol".

There is only one more matter I wish to speak about. We should not take the counters coined in other countries and accept them as applicable to this land of millions of poor agriculturists. When we talk of inflation, we must determine what inflation means. Does it mean inflation when you have Rs. 100 per head of the population or Rs. 1,000 per head of the population? When you compare with countries like England and America, I should like you to take



into account the money that has been in circulation in those countries before the war and the money that is now in circulation. Then compare the money in circulation in India. The contrast will throw clear light on the problem of inflation. You will thus get some idea how far you were starved of money in pre-war days and how much that vacuum has been filled by the increase on note circulation. Remember if there is silence in the villages there is bound to be silence in the towns. If the countryside prospers, the whole of India prospers; there are more industries, more trade, better wages, better fees for professional men, in short prosperity all round. Before you touch this very difficult problem you must take into account the fate of the millions, and not talk lightly of control of prices and control of trade. My Honourable friend said that even in the distribution of sugar there has been a great deal of dissatisfaction. It is a single commodity under the control of a syndicate, a syndicate that has been well organized. If such a syndicate fails, what hope is there that the whole trade of India could be properly controlled and distributed by a state agency.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS (Punjab: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I rise to support the Resolution so ably move by my Honourable friend Dr. Kunzru. My Honourable friend Sir Jogendra Singh has advocated the cause of the agriculturist.

THE HONOURABLE SIR JOGENDRA SINGH: Your class, Sir.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: I agree with him there. There are two aspects of this question which we have to consider. One is that the agriculturists are about 85 per cent. of the Indian population. Have we to safeguard their interests and the interests of those poor people who do not live on agriculture or whose income from the small holdings they have is not sufficient enough to feed all the members of their family? As the time at my disposal is short I will not cover the same ground as my Honourable friend has covered. But I must say that the present system of control has failed. My Honourable friend Sir Alan Lloyd said that he did make inquiries and found that control price was not being exceeded by the agencies of the Government. With due deference to him, I must say that as far as the Punjab is concerned, it seems to me that Sir Alan Lloyd has not made any inquiries there. I can give you an instance. At Abohar Mandi the agency which was buying for the United Provinces Government paid higher prices than the control price and the difference in price was adjusted privately as *salami* or *nazarana*. I hope my Honourable friend Sir Alan Lloyd will go into this matter deeply. I say that so far as the present system of control of prices is concerned, it is a failure. As a business man I know that a lot of transactions are going on in which a higher price is being paid but control prices are shown in the books and the excess taken privately as *nazarana* or *salami*. The only successful way of dealing with it is that Government should buy stocks of food-stuffs and store them and whenever they find that the price is rising beyond their control limit, they come into the market and sell the stored produce at control rates. My Honourable friend Dr. Kunzru perhaps did not inquire what the conditions were in Kashmir. In Kashmir, for some time past the State has introduced a system of *shali* (rice) purchases. Although this did not prove of much benefit or good to the zemindar class, as far as the general public was concerned, it was a boon to them. They bought all the *shali* that Kashmir Province produced and sold them departmentally at the prices fixed by authorities. That is the only way to bring control into effect. I was doing a big railway construction work in Rajputana (Kotah State) and I was employing more than 10,000 labour. There was adequate price control in Bandi

[Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das.]

State. The price of *jowari* there was cheaper and my labour in Kotah used to cross the Chambal river to the other side in Bundi State and have their food there. The present system of control has failed and it must be substituted by another system which is workable and profitable. The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh asked how we can serve the interests of the agriculturists when we deprive them of the excess profit that they can now make. In the last Great War there was no price control. I as a zemindar and as a manufacturer and industrialist knew that it was advantageous for me to buy goods at a higher price and thus get my percentage of profit on bigger outlay. The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh says that at present the cultivator, the producer, is the root of all the prosperity of the commercial and industrial people and that in case he prospers, others also prosper. My humble suggestion to the Government is that they must come forward and like businessmen give an extra allowance to their employees. They are one of the biggest employers of labour. The commercial concerns with whom I have been connected as director have given great concessions to their labour to buy foodstuffs at cheap rates. I might say that in Cawnpore, in one of the big concerns with which I am connected, we were preparing food for the labour and feeding them luxuriously. By "luxuriously" I mean that we were feeding them with more nutritious and better food than they used to get at their homes. You introduced rent control in Calcutta, Bombay and other places. What was the result? The practice of *salami* or *nazarana* came into existence. You know just as well as we do that this practice has been established. Everybody knows what the *rent* is. Therefore, I say that the present system of control needs change. Sir, I have heard —, if I am wrong, the Honourable Sir Alan Lloyd will put me right—that it has been decided that some of the Provincial Governments will buy wheat and other foodstuffs whenever there is any likelihood of the control price rising. That is a good measure, but I do not agree with my Honourable friend Dr. Kunzru when he says that only one agency should be employed for purchase.

THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU: I did not say that. I said that a small number of dealers should be employed to purchase wheat and other commodities. All I said was that there should be a unified agency for purchases for the army and civil needs. That is all that I said.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: I am glad, Sir, that I was under a misunderstanding and that Dr. Kunzru has put me right. What he means is that there should be no monopoly given to one firm for Government purchases. The Government has asked the people to grow more foodstuffs. Have they given any concession in the form of reduction of revenue or *reduction* in water rates? Simply crying "Grow more food" without giving people concessions is not of much help.

THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN LLOYD: Concessions have been given.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: May I know in what form?

THE HONOURABLE SIR JOGENDRA SINGH: Some States are supplying seeds free; others have given a concession in rates; in some places the water rate has been reduced. But I do not think there is any general concession in the matter of reduction of revenue or reduction of water rate. When a cultivator replaces cotton by wheat, he also receives a special subvention.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: My Honourable friend has observed that some States supply free seeds.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR JOGENDRA SINGH :** Some States.

**THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS :** What are those States ? But seeds are only issued when any zemindar wants to put in any improved crop. I myself have been supplying cotton seeds of various sorts of long staple cotton. But that concession is not enough for the cultivators. I am myself a zemindar and my own experience is that the yield per acre from the American cotton is less than that from the indigenous Punjab cotton.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR JOGENDRA SINGH :** There you are wrong, Sir. American long staple cotton at present is fetching a premium from Rs. 90 to Rs. 100 a candy.

**THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS :** I do not dispute about the price. I am disputing about the yield. We all know that the price is better. As a big zemindar yourself in the Punjab, you know that the yield from long staple American cotton is not the same as that from indigenous cotton and I hope my Honourable friend will not dispute what I say now. I was one of those who took a prominent part as a pioneer in sowing long staple cotton in my zemindaris in the Punjab. So I know the difficulty I had to face and I know how I succeeded in the end. I tried sowing Egyptian cotton, but experience has shown that in the Punjab, Egyptian cotton was a failure and therefore it was practically given up. However, I need not dwell on this point. The only point which I want to raise is that by giving free seed you are not making a gift which will induce zemindars to grow more American cotton. A tempting impetus should be given to the zemindars. Concession in water rates is the concession that the poor peasants need.

Then I come to the question of the entry of speculators in the produce markets and raising the price of foodstuffs. This is rather inconsistent with the argument that my Honourable friend has been able to advance. Speculators cannot buy produce over the control rate. But what do we see in practice ? The Government fixed the control price of wheat at Rs. 4 and some annas in the beginning. Now its control price ranges from Rs. 5 to Rs. 5-4-0. Why have Government raised the price ? Because they could not get wheat at the price fixed from the zemindars. My own impression is that this is due mainly to want of transport as my Honourable friend Dr. Kunzru has observed. On the N. W. R., I know that once for 20 days there was no booking of private goods. The result was that the markets which fell short of any commodity had to raise its price. People dealing in piece-goods found that their stock of piece-goods ran short and there was no chance of new arrivals and they therefore charged higher prices. If Government is so helpless when the war has not come into the country as to fail to give transport facilities to the public what can you expect from them during the war ? This is a question on which Government must come to some decision. At least one day in the week should be allotted for the public to book goods and foodgrains. When Government felt the pinch, they came out and said that concession should be given to those who want to transport foodstuffs. That is not quite enough. The same concession ought to apply to cloth, kerosene oil, ghee and other foodstuffs. I will not take much time of the Council because I am reaching my time limit.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** You have come to your limit.

**THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS :** One thing which I say is that my Honourable friend observed that the price of *jowar* and gram was higher than the price of wheat. This is quite abnormal. How can

[Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das.]

you stop that? Government should introduce a new system. I have already suggested a system which has proved a success in the Indian States and I hope, Sir, that Government will practically come to the aid of their employees by giving them a larger increase in allowance in salaries and letting the agriculturist enjoy the higher prices than he gets nowadays. The agriculturist has passed through very bad times. I know that in the Punjab we sold wheat at Re. 1 a maund some time back although our revenue was based on a much higher price.

Why did not the Government then come to help them? With these words, Sir, I support the Resolution moved by my Honourable friend Dr. Kunzru.

(The Honourable Mr. Hossain Imam rose in his place.)

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT** (to the Honourable Mr. Hossain Imam): Before you begin, I would like to know whether you could finish your speech by 2 P. M. Otherwise I would adjourn the Resolution to the next session.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM**: It will be very difficult to finish by 2 P. M.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN LLOYD**: If I am to answer, there is no prospect of finishing by half past two.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU**: Will not my Honourable friend, Sir Alan Lloyd, give some expression of his opinion on the subject before we adjourn?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR ALAN LLOYD**: No, Sir. I would rather reserve my remarks till other speakers have spoken.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU**: The Honourable Member will have the right of speaking again.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT**: Nobody can compel him to do so.

**THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU**: It is only ten minutes to two.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT**: This will be carried over to the next session.

The Council then adjourned *sine die*.

# Index to the Council of State Debates

Volume II, 1942.

## A

- ACT—**  
Destructive Insects and Pests —  
Statement (laid on the table) re further amendments in the rules framed under sections 4A and 4D of the —, 1914. 33.
- ADEN—**  
See "INDIANS".
- ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE UTILIZATION BRANCH OF GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA—**  
Motion for election of members. 104-05.  
Nomination of members. 157.  
Election of members. 199.
- AGREEMENT—**  
Question re financial implications of the — between the Udaipur Durbar and Government. 168-69.  
See "ANGLO-AMERICAN —".
- AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE (GRADING AND MARKING) AMENDMENT BILL—**  
See " — " under "BILL".
- AIR—**  
Question re machine-gunning of mobs from the —. 163-64.
- AIR-CONDITIONED WARDS—**  
Question re — in military hospitals. 166.
- AIR FORCE—**  
See "INDIAN —".
- AJMER-MERWARA—**  
See "MOTOR VEHICLES RULES".
- ALLAMA MASHERQUI —**  
Question re restrictions imposed on —. 21-22.
- ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE—**  
Question re instructions to — members in Bombay advocating sabotage. 19.
- ALLOWANCES—**  
Question re—  
Discriminatory treatment in the grant of — etc., to evacuees. 13.  
Salaries and — of British officers and Indian officers in the Indian Army. 102-03.  
See "PAY AND —".
- AMENDMENTS TO THE AUDIT REPORT, DEFENCE SERVICES, 1942—**  
Statement (laid on the table) re —. 37.
- ANDAMANS—**  
See "PRISONERS".
- ANGLO-AMERICAN AGREEMENT—**  
Question re publication of the —. 162.
- APPRAISING SERVICE—**  
Information (laid on the table) re list of officers recruited to the — since 1935. 36.
- APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS (CIVIL), 1940-41 AND THE AUDIT REPORT, 1942—**  
Statement (laid on the table) re —. 36.
- APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS (DEFENCE SERVICES), 1940-41—**  
Statement (laid on the table) re —. 36.
- APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS (POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS), 1940-41 AND THE AUDIT REPORT, 1941—**  
Statement (laid on the table) re —. 36.
- APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS (RAILWAYS), 1940-41, PART I—**  
Statement (laid on the table) re —. 36.

- APPROPRIATION (ACCOUNTS (RAILWAYS), 1940-41, PART II—**  
Statement (laid on the table) re —. 37.
- ARMED FORCES—**  
Question re manufacture of medical supplies and stores for the —. 159.
- ARMY—**  
Question re—  
Pay and allowances of British and Indian officers in the —. 229-32.  
Training of Indian officers for the —. 19-20.  
See "INDIAN —".
- ARREST (S)—**  
Question re—  
— of Congress leaders. 88.  
Total number of — effected in connection with the Civil Disobedience Campaign and the recent disturbances. 91.
- ARTILLERY—**  
See "INDIAN —".
- ASSAM—**  
See "POPULATION".
- AUDIT REPORT—DEFENCE SERVICES, 1942—**  
Statement (laid on the table) re —. 36.
- AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY—**  
Question re establishment of an —. 13-14.

## B

- BALANCE SHEETS OF RAILWAY COLLIERIES AND STATEMENTS OF ALL-IN-COST OF COAL FOR 1940-41—**  
Statement (laid on the table) re —. 37.
- BALLAST—**  
Information (laid on the table) re —, etc. purchased by the E. B. R. and E. I. R. 37-38
- BAR—**  
Question re—  
Formation of a provisional composite government at the centre and to lift the — on the Congress organizations. 88-90.  
Relaxation of — on emigration to Ceylon. 166.
- BILL—**  
Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Amendment —  
Assent of the Governor General. 54.  
Cantonments (Amendment) —  
Assent of the Governor General. 56.  
Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) —  
Passed by the Legislative Assembly. 61.  
Considered and passed. 173-75.  
Code of Civil Procedure (Second Amendment) —  
Passed by the Legislative Assembly. 61.  
Considered and passed. 175.  
Coffee Market Expansion —  
Assent of the Governor General. 55.  
Cotton Ginning and Pressing Factories (Amendment) —  
Assent of the Governor General. 55.  
Delhi Muslim Wakfs —  
Motion for nomination of members to serve on the Joint Committee. 200.  
Motion for continuation. 263.

**Federal Court (Supplemental Powers)** —  
 • Considered and passed. 177-78.

**Indian Boilers (Amendment)** —  
 Assent of the Governor General. 55.

**Indian Companies (Amendment)** —  
 Assent of the Governor General. 56.

**Indian Companies (Second Amendment)** —  
 Passed by the Legislative Assembly. 61.  
 Considered and passed. 170-71.

**Indian Finance** —  
 Assent of the Governor General. 55.

**Indian Limitation (Amendment)** —  
 Assent of the Governor General. 56.

**Indian Medical Council (Amendment)** —  
 Assent of the Governor General. 55.

**Indian Merchant Shipping (Amendment)** —  
 Assent of the Governor General. 55.

**Indian Patents and Designs (Extension of Time)** —  
 Assent of the Governor General. 55.

**Indian Penal Code (Amendment)** —  
 Assent of the Governor General. 55.

**Indian Rubber Control (Temporary Amendment)** —  
 Passed by the Legislative Assembly. 104.  
 Considered and passed. 171-72.

**Indian Tolls (Army) Amendment** —  
 Assent of the Governor General. 56.

**Industrial Statistics** —  
 Assent of the Governor General. 56.

**Indus Vessels (Amendment)** —  
 Assent of the Governor General. 55.

**Motor Vehicles (Amendment)** —  
 Assent of the Governor General. 56.

**Multi-unit Co-operative Societies** —  
 Assent of the Governor General. 55.

**Protective Duties Continuation** —  
 Assent of the Governor General. 55.

**Repealing and Amending** —  
 Passed by the Legislative Assembly. 61.  
 Considered and passed. 175-77.

**Weekly Holidays** —  
 Assent of the Governor General. 56.

**Workmen's Compensation (Amendment)** —  
 Assent of the Governor General. 55.

**BOILERS (AMENDMENT) BILL**—  
 See "Indian ——" under "BILL".

**BOMBAY**—  
 See "ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE".

**BRADSHAW**—  
 See "NEWMAN'S INDIAN ——".

**BRITISH FIRE SERVICE**—  
 Question re recruitment of volunteers from the — to strengthen the Indian fire-fighting organizations. 83.

**BRITISH OFFICERS**—  
 Question re—  
 Pay and allowances of Indian and — holding emergency commissions. 233.  
 Pay and allowances of Indian and — in the army. 229-32.  
 Proportion of — to Indian officers in the Indian Artillery, etc. 234-35.  
 Proportion of Indian officers to — in the Indian Signal Corps. 165.  
 Proportion of Indian officers to — in the Land Forces, etc. 96.  
 Salaries and allowances of — and Indian officers in the Indian Army. 102-03.

**BURMA**—  
 See "INDIANS".  
 See "TAXES".

**BURMA NOTES**—

Question re encashment of —. 10-12.

**BURMA SUPERIOR SERVICES**—  
 Question re employment of officers of the —. 164.

**BUSINESS**—

Statement of — by the Hon. the Leader, etc. 60.

**BUSINESS**—

See "OFFICIAL ——".

**C****CABLEGRAMS**—

Question re censorship of — sent by foreign correspondents of newspapers. 162.

**CANTONMENTS (AMENDMENT) BILL**—

See "—" under "BILL".

**CAPITAL STATEMENTS, BALANCE SHEETS AND PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNTS OF STATE RAILWAYS IN INDIA FOR 1940-41**—

Statement (laid on the table) re —. 37.

**CASUALTIES**—

Question re—

— and damage to properties in the recent disturbances and collective fines imposed in this connection. 15-16.

Number of — in the Indian Army. 84.  
 Total number of — caused by firing in the recent disturbances. 95-96.

Total number of — in Delhi caused by firing in the recent disturbances. 97-98.

**CENSORSHIP**—

Question re—

— of cablegrams sent by foreign correspondents of newspapers. 162.

Representation from the Newspapers Conference in regard to the — and control of factual presentation of news. 100-01.

**CEYLON**—

See "EMIGRATION".

**CHAIRMAN, PANEL OF**—

Message from His Excellency the Governor General nominating the —. 55.

**CHARANJIT SINGH, HON. RAJA**—

Nomination of the — as Chairman of the Committee on Petitions. 55.

**CHINYOY, HON. SIR RAHIMTOOLA**—

Nomination of the — to the Panel of Chairmen. 55.

**CHUNKING**—

See "INDIAN AGENCIES GENERAL".

**CIVIC GUARDS**—

Question re —. 87-88.

**CIVIL DEFENCE DEPARTMENT**—

Question re particulars of European evacuees from countries occupied by Japan, employed by the —. 94.

**CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE CAMPAIGN**—

Question re total number of arrests effected in connection with the — and the recent disturbances. 91.

**CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT**—

Question re number of persons arrested in connection with the —. 163.

**CLERICAL CADRE**—

Question re — of the Posts and Telegraphs Department. 197-98, 198-99.

**CLOTHS**—

Question re supply of necessary — to the civil population of India. 85-86.

**CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL**—

See "—" under "BILL".

**CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE (SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL—**  
 See "—" under "BILL".

**COFFEE MARKET EXPANSION BILL—**  
 See "—" under "BILL".

**COLLECTIVE FINES—**  
 Question re—  
 • Casualties and damage to properties in the recent disturbances and — imposed in this connection. 15-16.  
 Extent and nature of damage done to public property and object of system of—. 91-92.

**COLOURED SEAMEN—**  
 Question re improvement of service conditions of — including Indian seamen. 168.

**COMMERCIAL APPENDIX TO THE APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS (CIVIL), 1940-41 AND THE AUDIT REPORT, 1942—**  
 Statement laid on the table) re —. 36.

**COMMERCIAL APPENDIX TO THE APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS OF THE DEFENCE SERVICES FOR 1940-41—**  
 Statement (laid on the table) re —. 36.

**COMMISSIONS—**  
 See "EMERGENCY —".

**COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS—**  
 Constitution of the —. 55.

**COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL—**  
 See "Indian —" under "BILL".

**COMPANIES (SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL—**  
 See "Indian —" under "BILL".

**COMPENSATION—**  
 Question re payment of — for goods lost in enemy occupied territories. 83.

**CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS—**  
 Question re — between His Majesty's Government and the Government of India. 195-96, 197.

**CONGRATULATIONS—**  
 — to the Hon. Sir Satyendra Nath Roy on his Knighthood. 56.

**CONGRESS—**  
 Question re public support for Government's action against the — and political settlement by a conference. 93-94.

**CONGRESS LEADERS—**  
 Question re arrest of —. 88.

**CONGRESS ORGANIZATIONS—**  
 Question re formation of a provisional composite government at the centre and to lift the ban on the Congress —. 88-90.

**CONSCRIPTION—**  
 Question re — of Indians in Hong Kong. 161.

**CONSTABLES—**  
 See "POLICE —".

**CONTRACTS—**  
 Question re value of — placed by the Supply Department. 84-85.

**COORD—**  
 See "MOTOR VEHICLES RULES".

**CORRECTIONS TO THE APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS (CIVIL), 1940-41 AND AUDIT REPORT, 1942—**  
 Statement (laid on the table) re —. 37.

**CORRECTIONS TO THE APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS (POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS) FOR 1940-41—**  
 Statement (laid on the table) re —. 37.

**CORRECTIONS TO THE APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS (RAILWAYS) FOR 1940-41, PART II—**  
 Statement (laid on the table) re —. 37.

**COTTON GINNING AND PRESSING FACTORIES (AMENDMENT) BILL—**  
 See "—" under "BILL".

**D**

**DADARROY, HON. SIR MANMOHJI—**  
 Health of —. 59-60.

**DALAL, HON. MR. M. N.—**  
 Motion re political situation in India. 69-70.  
 Nomination of the — as a member of the Committee on Petitions. 55.  
 Nomination of the — to the Panel of Chairmen. 55.  
 Question re—  
 Civic Guards. 87-88.  
 Elimination of non-essential business during the war and the policy of Government with regard to official business to be placed before the Legislature. 161-63.  
 Instructions to All-India Congress Committee members in Bombay advocating sabotage. 19.  
 Payment of interest on Malaya and Hong Kong Government Municipal dollar loans. 18.  
 Training of Indian officers for the army. 19-20.  
 Resolution re freedom of the press. 236-37.

**DAMAGE—**  
 Question re—  
 Casualties and — to properties in the recent disturbances and collective fines imposed in this connection. 15-16.  
 Extent and nature of — done to public property and object of system of collective fines. 91-92.

**DAS, HON. MR. N. K.—**  
 Election of the — to the Advisory Committee of the Utilization Branch of the Geological Survey of India. 199.

**DEATH—**  
 Expressions of regret in connection with the — of Dr. E. Raghavendra Rao. 2-3.  
 Expressions of regret in connection with the — of H. R. H. the Duke of Kent. 1-2.  
 Expressions of regret in connection with the — of Rai Bahadur Lala Mathura Prasad Mehrotra. 61-62.  
 Expressions of regret in connection with the — of Sir Kurma Venkata Reddy Naidu. 3-5.  
 Question re — in England of the family of Dr. W. H. H. Sera Singhe. 159.

**DECLARATIONS OF EXEMPTION—**  
 Statement (laid on the table) re — under section 6 of the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939. 40-41.

**DEFENCE—**  
 Question re daily expenditure on —. 196.

**DEFENCE EXPENDITURE—**  
 Question re allocation of —. 160-61.  
 Resolution re allocation of —. 178-93.

**DELHI—**  
 See "CASUALTIES".  
 See "MOTOR VEHICLES RULES".

**DELHI MUSLIM WAKFS BILL—**  
 See "—" under "BILL".

**DEPARTMENT OF POSTS AND AIR, STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE—**  
 Motion for election of members. 56-57.  
 Election of members. 127.

**DESTRUCTIVE INSECTS AND PESTS ACT—**  
 See "—" under "ACT".

**DISCOURTESY—**  
 Information (laid on the table) re — shown to Mr. J. S. Khare while attempting to enter a first class compartment. 39.

**DISTURBANCES—****Question re—**

• Casualties and damage to properties in the recent — and collective fines imposed in this connection. 15-16.

Desirability of holding inquiries into official excesses in dealing with the recent —. 98-99.

Effect of the recent — on recruitment to the Indian Army. 161.

Restoration of railway stations and post offices destroyed in the recent —. 17.

Total number of arrests effected in connection with the Civil Disobedience Campaign and the recent —. 91.

Total number of casualties in Delhi caused by firing in the recent —. 97-98.

Total number of casualties caused by firing in the recent —. 95-96.

**E****EASTERN BENGAL RAILWAY—**

See "—" under "RAILWAY(S)".

**EAST INDIAN RAILWAY—**

See "—" under "RAILWAY(S)".

**EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS—**

Question re pay and allowances of British and Indian officers holding —. 233.

**EMIGRATION—**

Question re relaxation of ban on — to Ceylon. 166.

**EMPLOYMENT—**

Question re—  
— facilities for Indian evacuees. 99-100.  
— of officers of the Burma superior services. 164.

— of police constables for the protection of railway track in Bihar. 160.

**ENEMY-OCCUPIED TERRITORIES—**

Question re payment of compensation for goods lost in —. 83.

**EUROPEAN EVACUEES—**

Question re particulars of — from countries occupied by Japan, employed by the Civil Defence Department. 94.

**EXCESSES—**

Question re desirability of holding inquiries into official — in dealing with the recent disturbances. 98-99.

**EXPENDITURE—**

Question re—  
Daily — on defence. 196.  
— involved in the establishment of the Government of Burma in India. 87.  
See "DEFENCE —".

**EXPRESSION OF OPINION—**

Question re individual — by members of Government. 101-02.

**EVACUATION—**

Information (laid on the table) re — of Indians from Malaya. 103-04.

Question re — of the population of certain areas in the United Provinces. 158.

**EVACUEES—**

Question re discriminatory treatment in the grant of allowances, etc., to —. 13.  
See "EUROPEAN —".  
See "INDIAN —".

**F****FAR EAST—**

See "INDIANS".

**FEDERAL COURT (SUPPLEMENTAL POWERS)****BILL—**

See "—" under "BILL".

**FEROZ KHAN NOON, HON. SIR—**

Question re speech by the —. 101.

**FINANCE ACCOUNTS, 1940-41 AND THE AUDIT REPORT, 1942—**

Statement (laid on the table) re —. 36.

**FINANCE BILL, 1942—**

See "INDIAN —" under "BILL".

**FINES—**

See "COLLECTIVE —".

**FIRE-FIGHTING ORGANIZATIONS—**

See "INDIAN —".

**FIRST AND SECOND CLASS COMPARTMENTS—**

Question re reservation of seats, etc., in —. 165.

**FOOD—**

Question re — position. 97.

Statement (laid on the table) re alleged transfer of some engineer troops from Calcutta without supply of — during the journey. 39.

**FOODSTUFFS—**

Question re export of —. 14, 158-59.

**FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS—**

Question re censorship of cablegrams sent by — of newspapers. 162.

**FREE HAULAGE—**

Report of the Committee appointed to consider the question of the suspension for the duration of the present emergency of the right to — of a motor car to and from Delhi by members of the Council. 199-200.

**G****GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA, ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE UTILIZATION BRANCH OF THE—**

Motion for election of members. 104-05.

Nomination of members. 157.

Election of members. 199.

**GOVERNMENT OF BURMA—**

See "EXPENDITURE".

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA—**

See "CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS".

**GVERNOR GENERAL, HIS EXCELLENCY THE—**

Message from — nominating the Panel of Chairmen. 55.

**GRADY MISSION—**

Question re recommendations of the —. 195.

**GUARDS—**

See "CIVIC —".

**H****HADDOW, HON. MR. R. R.—**

Motion re political situation in India. 116-17.

**HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT—**

See "CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS".

**HISSAMUDDIN BAHADUR, LT.-COL. SIR—**

Motion re political situation in India. 79-81.

**HONG KONG—**

See "INDIANS".

**HOSPITALS—**

See "MILITARY —".

**HOSSAIN IMAM, HON. MR.—**

Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Bill—  
Motion to consider. 173-74.

Delhi Muslim Wakfs Bill—

Motion for nomination of members to serve on the Joint Committee. 200.

Motion for continuation. 253.

Election of the — to the Advisory Committee of the Utilization Branch of the Geological Survey of India. 199.



Indian Rubber Control (Temporary Amendment) Bill—  
 Motion to consider. 171-72.  
 Motion for election of two members to serve on the Advisory Committee for the Utilization Branch of the Geological Survey of India. 104-05.  
 Motion re political situation in India. 74, 79, 131, 133, 134, 137-46, 147, 151.  
 Notice of a Motion for Adjournment by — re the empowering of Military Commanders to require persons to assist in doing work. 235-36.  
 Question re —  
 Arrangements for the settlement of Kazaks. 16-17.  
 Casualties and damage to properties in the recent disturbances and collective fines imposed in this connection. 15-16.  
 Measures taken against the Hurs. 20, 20-21.  
 Number of candidates of different communities who applied for admission to the I. C. S. examination. 22-23.  
 Ordinances issued since September, 1939, during the session of the Legislature. 23-24.  
 Restoration of railway stations and post offices destroyed in the recent disturbances. 17.  
 Restrictions imposed on Allama Mashriqui. 21-22.  
 Question (supplementary) re —  
 Civic Guards. 87-88.  
 Clerical cadre of the Posts and Telegraphs Department. 197-98, 198-99.  
 Confidential communications between His Majesty's Government and the Government of India. 195-96.  
 Daily expenditure on defence. 196.  
 Desirability of holding inquiries into official excesses in dealing with the recent disturbances. 98-99.  
 Extent and nature of damage done to public property and object of systems of collective fines. 81-92.  
 Food position. 97.  
 Formation of a provisional composite government at the centre and to lift the ban on the Congress organizations. 88-90.  
 Individual expression of opinion by members of Government. 101-02.  
 Instructions to All-India Congress Committee members in Bombay advocating sabotage. 19.  
 Mission on which Sir Jeremy Raisman was sent to England. 229.  
 Supply of necessary cloths to the civil population of India. 85-86.  
 Total number of arrests effected in connection with the Civil Disobedience Campaign and the recent disturbances. 91.  
 Total number of casualties in Delhi caused by firing in the recent disturbances. 97-98.  
 Repealing and Amending Bill—  
 Motion to consider. 175-76.  
 Consideration of clauses. 177.  
 Resolution re—  
 Allocation of Defence expenditure. 178-82, 187, 190-93.  
 Freedom of the press. 223, 237, 240-41.  
 Price control. 262.  
 United Kingdom Commercial Corporation. 203, 207-11, 218.

HURS—

Question re measures taken against the — 20, 20-21.

I

INCOME-TAX ASSESSMENT—

Information (laid on the table) re — 169.

INCOME-TAX OFFICERS—

Information (laid on the table) re—  
 — in the Bihar and Orissa Circles. 36.  
 Rules and orders applicable to right of appeal by —. 33-35.

INFORMATION (laid on the table) re—

Ballast, etc., purchased by the E. B. R. and E.J.R. 37-38.

Discourtesy shown to Mr. G. S. Khare while attempting to enter a first class compartment. 39.

Evacuation of Indians from Malaya. 103-04.  
 Income-tax assessment. 169.

Income-tax Officers in the Bihar and Orissa Circles. 36.

Indians in Aden. 39-40.

Indians in Burma, Malaya and the Far East. 103-04.

List of officers recruited to the Appraising Service since 1935. 36.

Postponement of the collection of taxes on income that has accrued or arisen in Burma, etc. 35.

Rules and Orders applicable to right of appeal, by Income-tax Officers. 33-35.

Telephone operators. 33.

INDIANS—

Information (laid on the table) re—

Evacuation of — from Malaya. 103-04.

— in Aden. 39-40.

— in Burma, Malaya and the Far East. 103-04.

Question re—

Conscription of — in Hong Kong. 161.

Pay of — in the Inland Water Transport. 233.

INDIAN AGENCIES GENERAL—

Question re — in Washington and Chungking. 162-63.

INDIAN AIR FORCE—

Question re number of squadrons in the — 103.

INDIAN ARMY—

Question re—

Effect of the recent disturbances on recruitment to the —. 161.

Number of casualties in the —. 84.

Recruitment from new classes for the —. 164.

Salaries and allowances of British officers and Indian officers in the —. 102-03.

INDIAN ARTILLERY—

Question re proportion of British officers to Indian officers in the —, etc. 234-35.

INDIAN BOILERS (AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "—" under "BILL".

INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION—

Question re number of candidates of different communities who applied for admission to the —. 22-23.

INDIAN COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "—" under "BILL".

INDIAN COMPANIES (SECOND AMT.) BILL—

See "—" under "BILL".

INDIAN EVACUEES—

Question re employment facilities for —. 99-100.

**INDIAN FINANCE BILL, 1942—**  
*See* "—" under "BILL".

**INDIAN FIRE-FIGHTING ORGANIZATIONS—**  
 Question *re* recruitment of volunteers from the British Fire Service to strengthen the —. 83.

**INDIANIZATION—**  
 Question *re* — of technical posts in the Supply Department. 95.

**INDIAN LIMITATION (AMENDMENT) BILL—**  
*See* "—" under "BILL".

**INDIAN MEDICAL COUNCIL (AMENDMENT) BILL—**  
*See* "—" under "BILL".

**INDIAN MERCHANT SHIPPING (AMENDMENT) BILL—**  
*See* "—" under "BILL".

**INDIAN OFFICERS—**  
 Question *re*—  
 Pay and allowances of British and — holding emergency commissions. 233.  
 Pay and allowances of British and — in the army. 229-32.  
 Proportion of British officers to — in the Indian Artillery, etc. 234-35.  
 Proportion of — to British officers in the Indian Signal Corps. 165.  
 Proportion of — to British officers in the Land Forces, etc. 96.  
 Salaries and allowances of British officers and — in the Indian Army. 102-03.  
 Training of — for the army. 19-20.

**INDIAN PATENTS AND DESIGNS (EXTENSION OF TIME) BILL—**  
*See* "—" under "BILL".

**INDIAN PENAL CODE (AMENDMENT BILL)—**  
*See* "—" under "BILL".

**INDIAN RUBBER CONTROL (TEMPORARY AMENDMENT) BILL—**  
*See* "—" under "BILL".

**INDIAN SEAMEN—**  
 Question *re* improvement of service conditions of coloured seamen including —. 168.

**INDIAN SIGNAL CORPS—**  
 Question *re* proportion of Indian officers to British officers in the —. 165.

**INDIAN TOLLS (ARMY) AMENDMENT BILL—**  
*See* "—" under "BILL".

**INDIAN TROOPS—**  
 Question *re* exploits of —. 5-10.

**INDIAN WOMEN TYPISTS—**  
 Question *re* number of — and stenographers employed by Government. 95.

**INDUSTRIAL STATISTICS BILL—**  
*See* "—" under "BILL".

**INDUS VESSELS (AMENDMENT) BILL—**  
*See* "—" under "BILL".

**INLAND WATER TRANSPORT—**  
 Question *re* pay of Indians in the —. 233.

**INQUIRIES—**  
 Question *re* desirability of holding — into official excesses in dealing with the recent disturbances. 98-99.

**INSURANCE RULES, 1939—**  
 Statement (laid on the table) *re* further amendments to the —. 42-54.

**INTEREST—**  
 Question *re* payment of — on Malaya and Hong Kong Government Municipal dollar loans. 18.

**J**

**JAPAN—**  
*See* "EUROPEAN EVACUEES".

**JOGENDRA SINGH, HON. SIR—**  
 Motion *re* political situation in India. 127-28.  
 Oath of Office. 1.  
 Resolution *re* price control. 258-59, 260, 261.

**JONES, HON. MR. C. E.—**  
 Oath of Office. 1.

**JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA, HON. SIR—**  
 Oath of Office. 1.

**K**

**KATOL—**  
*See* "LOOTING".

**KAZAKS—**  
 Question *re* arrangements for the settlement of —. 16-17.

**KHARE, MR. G. S.—**  
 Information (laid on the table) *re* discourtesy shown to — while attempting to enter a first class compartment. 39.

**KENT, H. R. H. THE DUKE OF—**  
 Expressions of regret in connection with the death of —. 1-2.

**KUNZRU, HON. PANDIT HIRDAY NATH—**  
 Motion for election of two members to serve on the Standing Committee for the Department of Posts and Air. 57.  
 Motion *re* political situation in India. 120, 128-37, 139, 147, 152, 153.  
 Nomination of the — as a member of the Committee on Petitions. 55.  
 Question *re*—  
 Employment of officers of the Burma superior services. 164.  
 Machine-gunning of mobs from the air. 163-64.  
 Mission on which Sir Jeremy Raisman was sent to England. 229.  
 Number of persons arrested in connection with the civil disobedience movement. 163.  
 Pay and allowances of British and Indian officers holding emergency commissions. 233.  
 Pay and allowances of British and Indian officer in the Army. 229-32.  
 Pay of Indians in the Inland Water Transport. 233.  
 Proportion of British officers to Indian officers in the Indian Artillery, etc. 234-35.  
 Proportion of Indian officers to British officers in the Indian Signal Corps. 165.  
 Recruitment from new classes for the Indian Army. 164.  
 Question (supplementary) *re*—  
 Confidential communications between His Majesty's Government and the Government of India. 195-96, 197.  
 Desirability of holding inquiries into official excesses in dealing with the recent disturbances. 98-99.  
 Employment facilities for Indian evacuees. 99-100.  
 Formation of a provisional composite government at the centre and to lift the ban on the Congress organizations. 88-90.  
 Individual expression of opinion by members of government. 101-02.  
 Number of casualties in the Indian Army. 84.  
 Payment of compensation for goods lost in enemy occupied territories. 83.  
 Proportion of Indian officers to British officers in the Land Forces, etc. 96.  
 Representation from the Newspapers Conference in regard to the censorship and control of factual presentation of news 100-01.

Strike at Tatanagar. 92-93.  
 Supply of necessary cloths to the civil population of India. 85-86.  
 Total number of arrests effected in connection with the Civil Disobedience Campaign and the recent disturbances. 91.  
 Training of Indian officers for the army. 19-20.

Resolution re—  
 Allocation of Defence expenditure. 185-88.  
 Freedom of the press. 220-27, 243, 249-52.  
 Price control. 253-58, 260, 262.  
 United Kingdom Commercial Corporation. 211-14, 217.

KURMA VENKATA REDDY NAIDU, SIR—  
 Expressions of regret in connection with the death of —. 3-5.

**L**

LAL, HON. MR. SHYAM A.—  
 Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Bill—  
 Motion to consider. 173, 174.  
 Motion to pass. 175.  
 Code of Civil Procedure (Second Amendment) Bill—  
 Motion to consider. 175.  
 Motion to pass. 175.  
 Motion for election of two members to serve on the Standing Committee for the Department of Posts and Air. 57.  
 Repealing and Amending Bill—  
 Motion to consider. 175, 176.  
 Consideration of clauses. 177.  
 Motion to pass. 177.

LAND FORCES—  
 Question re proportion of Indian officers to British officers in the —, etc. 95-96.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS—  
 Question re India and the League of Nations. 160.

LEASE-LEND—  
 Question re — aid. 166-68.  
 LIMITATION (AMENDMENT) BILL—  
 See "Indian —" under "BILL".

LOYD, HON. MR. A. L.—  
 Indian Companies (Second Amendment) Bill—  
 Motion to consider. 170.  
 Motion to pass. 171.  
 Indian Rubber Control (Temporary Amendment) Bill—  
 Motion to consider. 171, 172.  
 Motion to pass. 172.

Repealing and Amending Bill—  
 Consideration of clauses. 177.  
 Resolution re—  
 Price control. 255, 256, 257, 260, 262.  
 United Kingdom Commercial Corporation. 209-10, 211, 214-18, 219.

LOANS—  
 See "MUNICIPAL DOLLAR —".  
 LOOTING—  
 Statement (laid on the table) re — of oranges by soldiers in Katol. 40.

**M**

MACHINE-GUNNING—  
 Question re — of mobs from the air. 163-64.  
 MAHOMED USMAN, HON. SIR—  
 Motion for election of two members to serve on the Standing Committee for the Department of Posts and Air. 56-57.  
 Motion re political situation in India. 62-64, 152-55.  
 Oath of Office. 1.

Resolution re amendment of the rules governing the grant of travelling and other allowances to members of the legislature. 58, 59.

MAHTHA, HON. MR. SRI NARAIN—  
 Motion for election of two members to serve on the Standing Committee for the Department of Posts and Air. 57.  
 Motion re political situation in India. 65, 105-10, 130.

MALAYA—  
 See "INDIANS".  
 MALAYA AND HONG KONG GOVERNMENT—  
 See "MUNICIPAL DOLLAR LOANS".  
 MEDICAL COUNCIL (AMENDMENT) BILL—  
 See "Indian —" under "BILL".

MEDICAL SUPPLIES—  
 Question re manufacture of — and stores for the Armed Forces. 158.

MEHROTRA, RAI BAHADUR LALA MATHURA PRASAD—  
 Expressions of regret in connection with the death of —. 61-62.

MEMORANDUM CONTAINING EXPLANATIONS OF VARIATIONS IN THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS (CIVIL), 1940-41 AND THE AUDIT REPORT, 1942, UNDER THE SUB-HEADS OF ACCOUNTS PERTAINING TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR INDIA AND THE COMMENTS OF THE AUDITOR OF INDIAN HOME ACCOUNTS—  
 Statement (laid on the table) re —. 36.

MEMORANDUM SHOWING EXPLANATIONS OF VARIATIONS BETWEEN THE GRANT AND ACTUALS UNDER EXPENDITURE IN ENGLAND FOR 1940-41 OF THE INDIAN POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT—  
 Statement (laid on the table) re —. 37.

MENON, HON. SIR, RAMUNNI—  
 Nomination of the — as a member of the Committee on Petitions. 55.  
 Motion re political situation in India. 110-12.  
 Resolution re allocation of Defence expenditure. 181.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (AMENDMENT) BILL—  
 See "Indian —" under "BILL".

MESSAGE—  
 — from His Excellency the Governor General nominating the Panel of Chairmen. 55.

MILITARY COMMANDERS—  
 Motion for Adjournment re empowering of — to require persons to assist in doing work—Disallowed. 235-36.

MILITARY HOSPITALS—  
 Question re air-conditioned wards in —. 166.

MISSION—  
 Question re — on which Sir Jeremy Raisman was sent to England. 229.

MOBS—  
 Question re machine-gunning of — from the air. 163-64.

MOTILAL, HON. MR. G. S.—  
 Question re—  
 Muslim and non-Muslim population of each district of Bengal and Assam. 14-15.  
 Muslim, Sikh and non-Muslim population in certain districts of the Punjab. 14.  
 Reservation of seats, etc., in first and class compartments. 165.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT re—  
 Empowering of military commanders to require persons to assist in doing work—  
 Disallowed. 225-26.

**MOTION re—**

Political situation in India. 62-81, 105-125, 127-155.

**MOTOR CAB—**

Report of the Committee appointed to consider the question of the suspension for the duration of the present emergency of the right to the free haulage of a — to and from Delhi by members of the Council. 199,200.

**MOTOR VEHICLES (AMENDMENT) BILL—**

See "—" under "BILL".

**MOTOR VEHICLES RULES—**

Statement (laid on the table) re amendments to the — of Coorg, Delhi and Ajmer-Merwara. 24-32.

**MURAMMAD HUSAIN, HON. HAJI SYED—**

Election of the — to the Standing Committee for the Department of Posts and Air. 127.

**MUHAMMAD HUSAIN, HON. HAJI SYED—**

Motion re political situation in India. 117-21.

**MULTI-UNIT CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES BILL—**

See "—" under "BILL".

**MUNICIPAL DOLLAR LOANS—**

Question re payment of interest on Malaya and Hong Kong Government —. 18.

**MUSLIM—**

Question re—  
— and non-Muslim population of each district of Bengal and Assam. 14-15.  
—, Sikh and non-Muslim population in certain districts of the Punjab. 14.

**N****NEWMAN'S INDIAN BRADSHAW—**

Question re — and Railway time tables. 14.

**NEWS—**

Question re representation from the Newspapers Conference in regard to the censorship and control of factual presentation of —. 100-01.

**NEWSPAPERS—**

Question re censorship of cablegrams sent by foreign correspondents of —. 162.

**NEWSPAPERS CONFERENCE—**

Question re representation from the — in regard to the censorship and control of factual presentation of news. 100-01.

**NEW YORK—**

See "UNITED NATIONS DAY PARADE".

**O****OATH OF OFFICE—**

Jogendra Singh, Hon. Sir. 1.  
Jones, Hon. Mr. C. E. 1.  
Jwala Prasad Srivastava, Hon. Sir. 1.  
Mahomed Usman. Hon. Sir. 1.  
Ogilvie, Hon. Mr. C. M. G. 1.  
Pai, Hon. Mr. A. V. 1.  
Prior, Hon. Mr. H. C. 1.  
Roy, Hon. Sir Satendra Nath. 1.  
Tottenham, Hon. Sir Richard. 195.  
Sahay, Hon. Mr. Vahnu. 1.

**OFFICERS—**

Information (laid on the table) re list of — recruited to the Appraising Service since 1935. 36.

Question re employment of — of the Burma superior services. 164.

See "BRITISH —".

See "INCOME-TAX —".

See "INDIAN —".

**OFFICIAL BUSINESS—**

Question re elimination of non-essential business during the war and the policy of Government with regard to — to be placed before the Legislature. 161-62.

**OGILVIE, HON. MR. C. M. G.—**

Oath of Office. 1.

**ORANGES—**

Statement (laid on the table) re lboting of — by soldiers in Kato]. 40.

**ORDINANCES—**

Question re — issued since September, 1939, during the session of the Legislature. 23-24.

**P****PADSHAH SAHIB BAHADUR, HON. SAIYED MOHAMED—**

Election of the — to the Standing Committee for the Department of Posts and Air. 127.

Motion re political situation in India. 121-25.

Question re clerical cadre of the Posts and Telegraphs Department. 197-98, 198-99.

**RESOLUTION re—**

Amendment of the Rules governing the grant of travelling and other allowances to members of the Legislature. 59.  
Freedom of the press. 248-49.

**PAI, HON. MR. A. V.—**

Oath of Office. 1.

**PANEL OF CHAIRMEN—**

Message from His Excellency the Governor General re nomination to the —. 55.

**PARKER, HON. MR. R. H.—**

Motion re political situation in India. 150-52.

**PATENTS AND DESIGNS (EXTENSION OF TIME) BILL—**

See "—" under "BILL".

**PATRO, HON. SIR A. P.—**

Motion re political situation in India. 64-69, 139.

Nomination of the — to the Panel of Chairmen. 55.

Resolution re allocation of Defence expenditure. 184-85.

**PAY—**

Question re — of Indians in the Inland Water Transport. 233.

**PAY AND ALLOWANCES—**

Question re—  
— of British and Indian officers holding emergency commissions. 233.  
— of British and Indian officers in the army. 229-32.

**PENAL CODE (AMENDMENT) BILL—**

See "Indian —" under "BILL".

**PETITIONS, COMMITTEE ON—**

Constitution of the —. 55.

**POLICE CONSTABLES—**

Question re employment of — for the protection of railway track in Bihar. 160.

**POLITICAL SETTLEMENT—**

Question re public support for Government's action against the Congress and — by a conference. 93-94.

**POLITICAL SITUATION—**

Motion re — in India. 62-81, 105-125, 127-155.

**POPULATION—**

Question re—  
Evacuation of the — of certain areas in the United Provinces. 158.  
Muslim and non-Muslim — of each district of Bengal and Assam. 14-15.

Muslim, Sikh and non-Muslim — in certain districts of the Punjab. 14.

**POST OFFICES—**  
 Question re restoration of railway stations and — destroyed in the recent disturbances. 17.

**POSTS—**  
 See "TECHNICAL —".

**POSTS AND AIR DEPARTMENT, STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE—**  
 Motion for election of members. 56-57.  
 Nomination of members. 127.

**POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT—**  
 Question re clerical cadre of the —. 197-98, 198-99.

**PRESS—**  
 Resolution re freedom of the —. 220-27, 236-52.

**PRICE CONTROL—**  
 Resolution re —. 253-62.

**PRIOR, HON. MR. H. C.—**  
 Motion for election of two members to serve on the Advisory Committee for the Utilization Branch of the Geological Survey of India. 104-05.  
 Oath of Office. 1.

**PRISONERS—**  
 Question re — in the Andamans. 159-60.  
 See "SECURITY —".

**PROPERTY—**  
 See "PUBLIC —".

**PROTECTION—**  
 Question re employment of police constables for the — of railway track in Bihar. 160.  
 See " — " under "BILL".

**PROTECTIVE DUTIES CONTINUATION BILL—**  
 See " — " under "BILL".

**PROVISIONAL COMPOSITE GOVERNMENT—**  
 Question re formation of a — at the centre and to lift the ban on the Congress organizations. 88-90.

**PUBLICATION—**  
 Question re — of the Anglo-American Agreement. 162.

**PUBLIC PROPERTY—**  
 Question re extent and nature of damage done to — and object of system of collective fines. 91-92.

**PUBLIC SUPPORT—**  
 Question re — for Government's action against the Congress and political settlement by a conference. 93-94.

**PUNJAB—**  
 See "POPULATION —".

**R**

**RAGHAVENDRA RAO, DR.—**  
 Expressions of regret in connection with the death of —. 2-3.

**RAILWAY (S)—**  
**Eastern Bengal —**  
 Information (laid on the table) re ballast, etc., purchased by the — and E. I. R. 37-38.  
**East Indian —**  
 Information (laid on the table) re ballast, etc., purchased by the E. B. R. and —. 37-38.

**RAILWAY AUDIT REPORT, 1942—**  
 Statement (laid on the table) re —. 37.

**RAILWAY STATIONS—**  
 Question re restoration of — and post offices destroyed in the recent disturbances. 17.

**RAILWAY TIME TABLES—**  
 Question re Newman's Indian Bradshaw and —. 14.

**RAILWAY TRACK—**  
 Question re employment of police constables for the protection of — in Bihar. 160.

**RAISMAN, HON. SIR JEREMY—**  
 Question re mission on which — was sent to England. 229.  
 Resolution re allocation of Defence expenditure. 182, 184, 188-90, 191, 192.

**RAM SARAN DAS—**  
 Motion re political situation in India. 112-16, 140.  
 Question re—  
 Number of squadrons in the Indian Air Force. 103.  
 Salaries and allowances of British officers and Indian Officers in the Indian Army. 102-03.  
 Resolution re—  
 Freedom of the press. 237.  
 Price control. 259-62.  
 United Kingdom Commercial Corporation. 205-07, 215, 216.

**RECRUITMENT—**  
 Question re—  
 Effect of the recent disturbances on — to the Indian Army. 161.  
 — from new classes for the Indian Army. 164.

**REPEALING AND AMENDING BILL—**  
 See " — " under "BILL".

**REPORT—**  
 — of the Committee appointed to consider the question of the suspension for the duration of the present emergency of the right to free haulage of a motor car to and from Delhi by members of the Council. 199-200.

**REPRESENTATION—**  
 Question re — from the Newspapers Conference in regard to the censorship and control of factual presentation of news. 100-01.

**RESERVATION—**  
 Question re — of seats, etc., in first and second class compartments. 165.

**RESOLUTION re—**  
 Amendment of the rules governing the grant of travelling and other allowances to members of the Legislature. 58-59.  
 Defence expenditure. Allocation of —. 178-93.  
 Press. Freedom of the —. 220-27, 236-52.  
 Price control. 253-62.  
 Travelling and other allowances. Amendment of the rules governing the grant of — to members of the Legislature. 58-59.  
 United Kingdom Commercial Corporation. 200-20.

**RIGHT OF APPEAL—**  
 Information (laid on the table) re rules and orders applicable to — by Income-tax Officers. 33-35.

**ROY, HON. SIR SATYENDRA NATH—**  
 Congratulations to the — on his Knighthood 56.  
 Oath of Office. 1.

**RUBBER CONTROL (TEMPORARY AMENDMENT) BILL—**  
 See "Indian — " under "BILL".

**RULES AND ORDERS—**  
 Information (laid on the table) re — applicable to right of appeal by Income-tax Officers. 33-35.

- S**
- SABOTAGE—**  
Question *re* instructions to All-India Congress Committee members in Bombay advocating — 19.
- SAHAY, HON. MR. VISHNU—**  
Oath of Office. 1.
- SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES—**  
Question *re* — of British officers and Indian officers in the Indian Army. 102-03.  
Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Bill—  
Motion to consider. 173, 174.  
Federal Court (Supplemental Powers) Bill—  
Motion to consider. 177.  
Motion to pass. 178.  
Motion for election of two members to serve on the Standing Committee for the Department of Posts and Air. 56.  
Motion *re* political situation in India. 70-79, 128, 152, 153, 154.
- SAPRU—**  
Nomination of the — to the Panel of Chairmen. 55.
- Question re—**  
Arrest of Congress leaders. 88.  
Censorship of cablegrams sent by foreign correspondents of newspapers. 162.  
Desirability of holding inquiries into official excesses in dealing with the recent disturbances. 98-99.  
Employment facilities for Indian evacuees. 99-100.  
Extent and nature of damage done to public property and object of system of collective fines. 91-92.  
Food position. 97.  
Formation of a provisional composite government at the centre and to lift the ban on the Congress organizations. 88-90.  
Indian Agencies General in Washington and Chungking. 162-63.  
Indianization of technical posts in the Supply Department. 95.  
Individual expression of opinion by members of Government. 101-02.  
Number of Indian women typists and stenographers employed by Government. 95.  
Particulars of European evacuees from countries occupied by Japan, employed by the Civil Defence Department. 94.  
Proportion of Indian officers to British officers in the Land Forces, etc. 96.  
Public support for Government's action against the Congress and political settlement by a conference. 93-94.  
Representation from the Newspapers Conference in regard to the censorship and control of factual presentation of news. 100-01.  
Speech by the Honourable Sir Feroz Khan Noon. 101.  
Strike at Tatanagar. 92-93.  
Total number of arrests effected in connection with the Civil Disobedience Campaign and the recent disturbances. 91.  
Total number of casualties caused by firing in the recent disturbances. 95-96.  
Total number of casualties in Delhi caused by firing in the recent disturbances. 97-98.  
Question (supplementary) *re* —  
Clerical cadre of the Posts and Telegraphs Department. 198-99.
- Confidential communications between His Majesty's Government and the Government of India. 195-96.  
Daily expenditure on defence. 196.  
Measures taken against the Hurs. 20-21.  
Repealing and Amending Bill—  
Motion to consider. 176.  
Resolution *re*—  
Allocation of Defence expenditure. 182-84.  
Amendment of the rules governing the grant of travelling and other allowances to members of the Legislature. 58, 59.  
Freedom of the press. 237-40.  
United Kingdom Commercial Corporation. 200-05, 214, 218-20.
- SCORCHED EARTH POLICY—**  
Question *re* —. 165.
- SEAMEN—**  
See "COLOURED —".  
See "INDIAN —".
- SECURITY PRISONERS—**  
Question *re* number of — in different provinces and the number released by the special tribunal. 159.
- SERA SINGHE, DR. W. H. H.—**  
Question *re* death in England of the family of —. 159.
- SETTLEMENT—**  
See "POLITICAL —".
- SIGNAL CORPS—**  
See "INDIAN —".
- SIKH—**  
Question *re* Muslim, — and non-Muslim population in certain districts of the Punjab. 14.
- SILK—**  
Question *re* — industry. 86.
- SOBHA SINGH, HON. SARDAR—**  
Motion *re* political situation in India. 121.
- SPECIAL TRIBUNAL—**  
Number of security prisoners in different provinces and the number released by the —. 159.
- SPEECH—**  
Question *re* — by the Honourable Sir Feroz Khan Noon. 101.
- SQUADRONS—**  
Question *re* number of — in the Indian Air Force. 103.
- SRIVASTAVA, HON. SIR J. P.—**  
Motion *re* political situation in India. 148-50.
- STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF POSTS AND AIR—**  
Motion for election of members. 56-57.  
Nomination of members. 127.
- STATEMENT OF BUSINESS—**  
— by the Hon. the Leader, etc. 60.
- STATEMENT (laid on the table) re—**  
Alleged transfer of some engineer troops from Calcutta without supply of food during the journey. 39.  
Amendment of Education, Health and Lands Notification No. F. 33/39-Overseas, dated the 1st August 1939. 39.  
Amendments to the Motor Vehicles Rules of Coorg, Delhi and Ajmer-Merwara. 24-32.  
Amendments to the Audit Report, Defence Services, 1942. 37.  
Appropriation Accounts (Civil), 1940-41 and the Audit Report, 1942. 36.  
Appropriation Accounts (Defence Services), 1940-41. 36.  
Appropriation Accounts (Posts and Telegraphs), 1940-41 and the Audit Report, 1941. 36.

Appropriation Accounts (Railways), 1940-41, Part I. 36.  
 Appropriation Accounts (Railways), 1940-41, Part II. 37.  
 Audit Report—Defence Services, 1942. 36.  
 Balance Sheets of Railway Collieries and Statements of all-in-cost of coal for 1940-41. 37.  
 Capital Statements, Balance Sheets and Profit and Loss Accounts of State Railways in India for 1940-41. 37.  
 Commercial Appendix to the Appropriation Accounts (Civil), 1940-41 and the Audit Report, 1942. 36.  
 Commercial Appendix to the Appropriation Accounts of the Defence Services for 1940-41. 36.  
 Corrections to the Appropriation Accounts (Civil), 1940-41 and Audit Report, 1942. 37.  
 Corrections to the Appropriation Accounts (Posts and Telegraphs) for 1940-41. 37.  
 Corrections to the Appropriation Accounts (Railways) for 1940-41, Part II. 37.  
 Finance Accounts, 1940-41 and the Audit Report, 1942. 36.  
 Memorandum containing explanation of variations in the Central Government Appropriation Accounts (Civil), 1940-41 and the Audit Report, 1942, under the sub-heads of accounts pertaining to the High Commissioner for India and the comments of the Auditor of Indian Home Accounts. 36.  
 Memorandum showing explanations of variations between the grant and actuals under expenditure in England for 1940-41 of the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department. 37.  
 Railway Audit Report, 1942. 37.  
 Declarations of Exemption under section 6 of the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939. 40-41.  
 Further amendments in the rules framed under sections 4A and 4D of the Destructive Insects and Pests Act, 1914. 33.  
 Further amendments to the Insurance Rules, 1939. 42-54.  
 Looting of oranges by soldiers in Katol. 40.  
**STENOGRAPHERS—**  
 Question re number of Indian women typists and — employed by Government. 95.  
**STORES—**  
 Question re manufacture of medical supplies and — for the Armed Forces. 155.  
**STRIKE—**  
 Question re — at Tatanagar. 92-98.  
**SUPERIOR SERVICES—**  
 See "BURMA —".  
**SUPPLY DEPARTMENT—**  
 Question re—  
 Indianization of technical posts in the — 95.  
 Value of contracts placed by the — 84-85.

**T**

**TATANAGAR—**  
 See "STRIKE".  
**TAXES—**  
 Information (laid on the table) re postponement of the collection of — on income that has accrued or arisen in Burma, etc. 35.

**TECHNICAL POSTS—**  
 Question re Indianization of — in the Supply Department. 95.  
**TELEPHONE OPERATORS—**  
 Information (laid on the table) re —. 33.  
**TIME TABLES—**  
 See "RAILWAY —".  
**TOLLS (ARMY) AMENDMENT BILL—**  
 See "INDIAN —" under "BILL".  
**TOTTENHAM, HON. SIR RICHARD—**  
 Oath of Office. 195.  
 Resolution re freedom of the press. 224, 225, 241-48, 251.  
**TRAINING—**  
 Question re — of Indian officers for the army. 19-20.  
**TRAVELLING AND OTHER ALLOWANCES—**  
 Resolution re amendment of the rules governing the grant of — to members of the Legislature. 58-59.  
**TRIBUNAL—**  
 See "SPECIAL —".  
**TROOPS—**  
 Statement (laid on the table) re alleged transfer of some engineer — from Calcutta without supply of food during the journey. 39.  
 See "INDIAN —".  
**TYPISTS—**  
 See "INDIAN WOMEN —".

**U**

**UDAIPUR DURBAR—**  
 See "AGREEMENT".  
**UNITED KINGDOM COMMERCIAL CORPORATION —**  
 Question re —. 12.  
 Resolution re —. 200-20.  
**UNITED NATIONS DAY PARADE—**  
 Question re — in New York. 157.  
**UNITED PROVINCES—**  
 See "EVACUATION".

**V**

**VOLUNTEERS—**  
 Question re recruitment of — from the British Fire Service to strengthen the Indian fire-fighting organizations. 63.

**W**

**WAR—**  
 Question re elimination of non-essential business during the — and the policy of Government with regard to official business to be placed before the Legislature. 161-62.  
**WARDS—**  
 See "AIR-CONDITIONED —".  
**WASHINGTON—**  
 See "INDIAN AGENCIES GENERAL".  
**WEEKLY HOLIDAYS BILL—**  
 See " — " under "BILL".  
**WOMEN TYPISTS—**  
 See "INDIAN —".  
**WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION (AMENDMENT) BILL—**  
 See " — " under "BILL".

**Y**

**YUVERAJ DUTTA SINGH, HON. RAJA—**  
 Question re—  
 Air-conditioned wards in military hospitals. 166.  
 Allocation of Defence expenditure. 160-61.

Confidential communications between His Majesty's Government and the Government of India. 195-96, 197.

Conscription of Indians in Hong Kong. 161.

Daily expenditure on Defence. 196.

Death in England of the family of Dr. W. H. H. Sera Singhe. 159.

Discriminatory treatment in the grant of allowances, etc., to evacuees. 13.

Effect of the recent disturbances on recruitment to the Indian Army. 161.

Employment of police constables for the protection of railway track in Bihar. 160.

Encashment of Burma Notes. 10-12.

Establishment of an automobile industry. 13-14.

Evacuation of the population of certain areas in the United Provinces. 158.

Expenditure involved in the establishment of the Government of Burma in India. 87.

Exploits of Indian troops. 5-10.

Export of foodstuffs. 14, 158-59.

Financial implications of the agreement between the Udaipur Durbar and Government. 168-69.

Improvement of service conditions of coloured seamen including Indian seamen. 168.

India and the League of Nations. 160.

Lease-lend aid. 166-68.

Manufacture of medical supplies and stores for the Armed Forces. 158.

Newman's Indian Bradshaw and Railway time tables. 14.

Number of casualties in the Indian Army. 84.

Number of security prisoners in different provinces and the number released by the special tribunal. 159.

Payment of compensation for goods lost in enemy-occupied territories. 83.

Prisoners in the Andamans. 159-60.

Publication of the Anglo-American Agreement. 162.

Recommendations of the Grady Mission. 195.

Recruitment of volunteers from the British Fire Service to strengthen the Indian fire-fighting organizations. 83.

Relaxation of ban on emigration to Ceylon. 166.

Scorched earth policy. 165.

Silk industry. 86.

Supply of necessary cloths to the civil population of India. 85-86.

United Kingdom Commercial Corporation. 12.

United Nations Day Parade in New York. 157.

Value of contracts placed by the Supply Department. 84-85.