

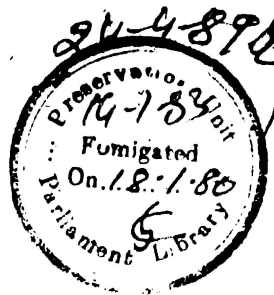
14th March 1944

THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES
Official Report

Volume II, 1944

(29th February to 27th March, 1944)

TWENTIETH SESSION
OF THE
FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
1944



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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Deputy President :

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Syed GHULAM BHIK NAIRANG, M.L.A.

Mr. GOVIND V. DESHMUKH, M.L.A.

Sardar SANT SINGH, M.L.A.

Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 14th March, 1944

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

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

COLOUR BAR IN KENYA.

391. *Mr. K. S. Gupta: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas please state if it is a fact that colour bar still exists in Kenya?

(b) Are Government aware that as a result of the colour bar, the Indian community is not allowed to share the responsibility of the administration?

(c) Is it a fact that the people of Mariakani in Kenya are prohibited from using drinking water, as it is reserved for whites only?

(d) Is it a fact that Europeans are employed as principals of Indian schools much against the unanimous opinion of Indians?

(e) Is it a fact that the opportunities of employments, rates of remuneration and chances of promotion in the civil service in the country are based on one's colour and not on one's ability or merit?

(f) Is it a fact that the Imports Control Department is entirely guided by the European Group Advisers, and there is no Indian on the Committee?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) Except for exclusion from ownership of land in the Highlands there is, so far as Government are aware, no formal colour bar in Kenya.

(b) and (e). There are no statutory restrictions on the employment of Indians; but it is understood that in actual practice Indians are not adequately represented in the higher services of the Colony.

(c) and (f). The information has been called for and will be furnished on receipt.

(d) Government have seen reports to that effect.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Has the Honourable Member taken any steps to see that equal treatment is given to them in the matter of their representation?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I shall repeat my last statement: When re-stating their views to His Majesty's Government on the Hilton-Young Commission's report in 1929, the Government of India urged that qualified Indians should be considered as eligible for higher posts in the public services in Kenya, on the same terms as His Majesty's white subjects. The Government of India took it that there was no bar to the employment of properly qualified Indians and they suggested that a public announcement to that effect should be made in England, East Africa and India. This was in October 1929. The suggestion was not, however, taken up and the matter was not pursued by the Government of India.

We have now asked the Government of India for information as to the total strength of administrative and clerical services in Kenya and the proportion of Indians in each class. When that is received, we shall consider what further representations are necessary.

I may add that Indians are represented in the local legislature and Council of Ministers.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: May I ask whether the Government asks for information only when Honourable Members ask questions?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: That is not the case.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: May I ask if the Government take steps to secure information only after Honourable Members of the House ask questions on any matter of importance to the country?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I have already answered that question.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Does the Government take the initiative in this matter or wait till questions are put by Members in this House?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: They take the initiative.

RETALIATORY MEASURES TO COLOUR BAE CONDITIONS IN KENYA.

392. *Mr. K. S. Gupta: Is the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas preparing any retaliatory measure to those conditions existing in Kenya?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I presume the Honourable Member is referring to the matters mentioned in his previous question No. 391. I shall consider what action can be taken when I receive full information as regards the conditions alleged.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if the Honourable Member is considering retaliatory measures?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I have already answered that question.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will the Honourable Member take steps in the shape of retaliatory measures?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: We must get information first.

AUSTRALIAN WHEAT CONSIGNED FOR SIND.*

393. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state if Government have received or are about to receive 5,000 tons of Australian wheat at Karachi for consumption in Sind possibly during the ration period?

(b) Why should Sind be made to use Australian wheat when the Province produces surplus of its own?

(c) Is it a fact that Sind wheat is being exported to other provinces and Australian wheat is proposed to be given to Sind? If so, why?

(d) Is it the Government of Sind which has asked for the Australian wheat? If so, for what reasons?

(e) What is the cost of Australian wheat in Australia and f.o.b. at Karachi, and what has the Sind or Central Government paid for or intend to pay for it?

(f) Who will appropriate the profit, if any, made by the sale of cheap Australian wheat at controlled prices at Karachi?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am answering this question on behalf of the Food Member who is ill. (a) Australian wheat has been received at Karachi recently, but not expressly for consumption in Sind.

(b), (c) and (d). The Sind Government have exported wheat to other provinces till lately. - 5,000 tons of Australian wheat are being loaned to them at their own request to enable them to build up adequate stocks for rationing.

(e) and (f). The transaction with Sind is a loan in kind. The Sind Government will receive 5,000 tons of imported wheat now and will place an equal amount at the disposal of the Government of India later, from the new crop. No financial transaction or profit is involved.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if the Sind Government thinks that they cannot carry on with rationing without this Australian wheat?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The Sind Government is circumspect. It wants to build up the reserve before taking up this measure.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if they have got their own surplus sufficient for the purpose?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: This is a matter about which I cannot give details but they must have some stock and they want to strengthen the stock further.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: How do the prices compare?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: That question does not arise out of this. No price question is involved.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I have asked for the price in the question.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have given the answer.

EXTENSION OF ACTIVITIES OF THE CONCILIATION OFFICER (RAILWAYS) AND SUPERVISOR OF RAILWAY LABOUR.

394. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state if any decision has been taken in the matter of extension of activities of the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour, to Railways other than those with headquarters at Calcutta, as said

in reply to my starred question No. 131, asked on the 13th November last? If not, when is it likely to be taken?

The Honourable Dr. B. E. Ambedkar: A decision on the question has been postponed pending consideration of wider proposals regarding the machinery for settlement of trade disputes in Central Undertakings generally.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will that take place after the war is over or will it be introduced now?

The Honourable Dr. B. E. Ambedkar: That is not an inference which is justified by the answer I have given.

FRANCHISE OF INDIANS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

395. ***Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh:** Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas please state:

(a) if Government carried on any correspondence with regard to the 'franchise' of Indians in British Columbia about a year ago either directly or through His Majesty's Government; if so, what the result is; and

(b) the disabilities imposed on Indians in British Columbia, and the steps, if any, taken to remove those disabilities?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) Yes; the result is still awaited.

(b) The disabilities arise mainly from the denial of franchise rights; and the Government of India have already made suitable representations on the question of conferring such rights on Indians domiciled in British Columbia.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I have learnt that the difficulty arises out of franchise rights mainly, but what are the other disabilities? Are there any? Is the Government of India moving in the matter?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: We are moving in the matter.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: What are the disqualifications which arise out of the main disqualification of the franchise?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: They are as follows:

They cannot serve as trustees at any municipal or rural school district, and hold any municipal office or serve on juries.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: That is all?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: That is all, so far as I am aware.

RELEASE OF S.S. SAN FRANCISCO XAVIER.

396. ***Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh:** Will the Honourable Member for Commerce please state:

(a) if any correspondence was carried on with Government on behalf of the Konkan Steamer Passengers' Association (Ratnagiri) in November and December of 1943 in connection with the release of S.S. *San Francisco Xavier* for steamer services on the Konkan coast; and

(b) if the steamer or any other steamer has been so released for the convenience of passengers who are undergoing great inconvenience and loss of time and money for want of facilities to travel along the coast, the busy season having commenced; if not, what steps, and when, he intends to take to give facilities of travel to these passengers along the coast?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes; the *San Francisco Xavier* was released for service on the Konkan Coast on the 2nd March, 1944.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Is this fact advertised, that it has been so released?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I think the very fact that I am giving the answer is sufficient publicity to it.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Was it ever advertised?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Between the 2nd March and now is not a very long span of life.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF INDIAN TEA CESS COMMITTEE.

397. ***Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Salt:** Will the Honourable Member for Commerce please state:

(a) the average annual income of the Indian Tea Cess Committee during the last three years for which figures are available;

(b) the salary, honorarium and other emoluments paid to the President of the Tea Cess Committee for the same period; and

(c) the total administrative expenditure of the Tea Cess Committee all over India during the same period (the administrative expenditure to include all salaries, honorarium allowances, etc., paid to officials and servants of all grades and office expenditure)?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) A statement showing the income of the Indian Tea Market Expansion Board, by which name the Indian Tea Cess Committee is now known, is laid on the table.

(b) The Chairman of the Board receives no emoluments of any description from the Board.

(c) A statement is laid on the table.

Statement.

Part (a).—The average annual income of the Indian Tea Market Expansion Board during the years 1940-41, 1941-42 and 1942-43 was Rs. 51,50,797.

Details of these are—

Rs. 48,84,975 in 1940-41,

Rs. 53,15,654 in 1941-42, and

Rs. 52,51,763 in 1942-43.

Part (c).—The total of the administrative expenditure incurred by the Board all over India during the period 1940-41, 1941-42 and 1942-43 including all salaries, honorarium, allowances, etc., paid to all officers and servants of all grades, and office expenditure was Rs. 38,83,142.

Details of these are—

Rs. 11,80,674 in 1940-41;

Rs. 12,73,621 in 1941-42, and

Rs. 14,26,846 in 1942-43.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: With reference to (b), if he receives nothing from the Board, does he receive from the Government?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I do not think he receives anything from the Government either.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: With reference to the statement laid on the table, will my Honourable friend find out from that what percentage the administrative cost bears to their total income?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: It is roughly about 25 per cent.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Is it not a fact that the President of the Tea Cess Committee is an Honorary Magistrate?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I think I have answered that question.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF INDIAN COFFEE CESS COMMITTEE.

398. ***Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait:** Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) the average annual income of the Indian Coffee Cess Committee during the last three years for which figures are available;

(b) the salary, honorarium and other emoluments paid to the President of the Coffee Cess Committee for the same period; and

(c) the total administrative expenditure of the Coffee Cess Committee all over India during the same period (the expenditure to include all salaries, honorarium, allowances, etc., paid to officials and servants of all grades and office expenditure)?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) and (c). The Indian Coffee Cess Committee ceased to function as such on 21st December, 1940, when, with the addition of 3 members, it was reconstituted as the Indian Coffee Market Expansion Board, subsequently renamed the Indian Coffee Board. The figures of income and expenditure of the Indian Coffee Cess Committee for the period 1st April 1940 to 20th December 1940 are given at page 32 of the First Annual Report of the Indian Coffee Market Expansion Board and those of the Indian Coffee Board for the period 21st December 1940 to 30th June 1943 at pages 4 and 5 of the Third Annual Report of the Board. Copies of the Reports are available in the Library of the Central Legislature.

(b) No salary, honorarium or other emoluments have ever been paid to the Chairman of the Indian Coffee Cess Committee or the Indian Coffee Board.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: Is there a salaried head of this Board?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: There must be somebody who is receiving some salary.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: What is the latest year for which the report is put in the Library?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: 1942-43.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Salt: With regard to part (c) of the question, could the Honourable Member tell me the percentage that the administrative expenditure bears to the total income?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am sorry I cannot answer that question off-hand.

PRODUCTION AND SALE OF STANDARD CLOTH IN PROVINCES.

399. * { **Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal;**
Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra;
Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya; } Will the Honourable

Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) the arrangement for the production and sale of the standard cloth in the surplus and deficit Provinces;

(b) the arrangement for the supply of standard cloth with mills, whether it is through the Government of India or the Provinces direct;

(c) the amount of standard cloth supplied to each of the Provinces uptil now;

(d) how much standard cloth has been sold uptil now in the Provinces of Bengal and Bihar, and how much is lying unsold; and

(e) if it is not a fact that the services of Deputy Magistrates are utilized for the purpose of the sale of standard cloth?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Each Province is allotted a quota of Standard Cloth proportionate to its population. Where a special need arises in the case of any one Province, Government make arrangements to increase the rate of despatches to that Province. This has been done in the case of Bengal. As regards production, Provinces send indents for the types of cloth they require to the Central Government, who place orders on mills for despatch direct to the destinations specified by the Provincial Government. The manner in which sales are effected within the Provinces has been left to the discretion of Provincial Governments.

(b) The Government of India place orders on the mills in accordance with the indents submitted by Provincial Governments.

(c) I lay on the table a statement showing the amount of Standard Cloth supplied to each Province as at 25th February 1944.

(d) The quantities of Standard Cloth sold and unsold in Bengal and Bihar as at 31st January 1944 were as follows:

Bengal: Sold 20,000,000 yards, unsold 23,490,000 yards.

Bihar: Sold 22,000,000 yards, unsold 21,000,000 yards.

(e) Provinces sell Standard Cloth both through the normal trade channels and through official channels. The Government of India presume, though they have no specific information on this point that where official channels are used Deputy Magistrates are playing their part.

Statement showing the amount of Standard Cloth supplied to each Province as at 25th February 1944.

	Yards.		Yards.
1. Ajmer and Merwara	859,524	9. Delhi	1,850,894
2. Assam	15,297,384	10. Madras	62,274,354
3. Baluchistan	2,251,196	11. N.W.F.P.	7,068,928
4. Bengal	60,208,892	12. Orissa	15,986,115
5. Bihar	48,554,570	13. Punjab	48,766,579
6. Bombay	29,813,371	14. Sind	12,215,723
7. C. P. and Berar	30,409,495	15. U. P.	75,631,092
8. Coorg	235,189		

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: With reference to part (d) of the question, will the Honourable Member kindly tell the House whether any time-limit is fixed by the Central Government, for the disposal of the standard cloth which remains unsold up to a certain date?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Not that I am aware of.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: What is the reason for the non-disposal of 21 million yards of cloth in Bihar?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am sorry my ears are rather defective and I have not been able to catch the question.

Mr. K. O. Neogy: Can the Honourable Member suggest any reason why such large quantities of standard cloth have remained unsold in these two provinces?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I cannot say. It is difficult to go into the administrative difficulties of those provinces.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Will the Government make an inquiry as to why these large quantities are left unsold in these two provinces when there is such a pressing demand for it?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: We are continuously making inquiries from the Provinces.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: What is the quantity of cloth supplied to the Central Provinces?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The standard cloth supplied to the Central Provinces and Berar is 30 million yards.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: May I ask whether any reason has been given by the Bihar Government for not being able to sell such a large quantity of the standard cloth?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have made it quite clear that the question of the distribution and sale of the standard cloth in any province is a matter which has been left to the responsibility of the province and as such that question should be discussed in the province rather than here.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Why is it so?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: For the simple reason that the Government of India could not possibly cater to the needs of 400 million people in the numerous villages.

Mr. Lalchand Navairai: How much standard cloth was given to Sind and whether any portion of it is lying unsold there?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: 12·21 million yards. As I have already said, I am not prepared to answer why any portion of it is lying unsold there because it is the province which is responsible for it.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Next question.

IMPORTS, ETC., OF NEWSPRINT AND OTHER PAPER.

400. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state (i) newsprint imported into India during 1939-40, 1940-41, 1942-43, 1943-44; (ii) newsprint manufactured in India during 1939-40, 1940-41, 1942-43, 1943-44; (iii) newsprint imported on Government account and on account of private and public use? What was the output percentage of the newsprint manufactured in India and imported during the aforesaid years, showing increase and decrease?

(b) Will the Honourable Member be pleased to state the quantity of writing and printing paper (i) imported and (ii) manufactured in India during the years 1939-40, 1940-41, 1942-43 and 1943-44, separately? What was allotted in each of the aforesaid years (i) for the normal official use, (ii) for ordinary and regular propaganda, (iii) for propaganda against Congress activities and other political activities, and (iv) for war propaganda for the (i) British, (ii) American, (iii) Chinese, and (iv) other allied nations, within and outside India?

(c) What was allotted to publishers—

(i) British in general (books and pamphlets),

(ii) books and pamphlets regarding war (British),

(iii) monthlies and periodicals (British),

(iv) educational books (British), and

(v) British business houses and commercial houses during the aforesaid years?

(d) What was allotted to publishers—

(i) Indians in general (books and pamphlets),

(ii) books and pamphlets regarding war (Indians),

(iii) monthlies and periodicals (Indians), and

(iv) Indian business houses and commercial houses during the aforesaid years?

(e) What was consumed by the publishers referred to in parts (c) and (d) in India before the war?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (u) and (b). A statement showing the imports and manufacture in India of newsprint and other writing and printing paper during each of the years referred to by the Honourable Member is placed on the table of the House. Except 36 tons of newsprint which was received in February 1944, no newsprint was received on Government account during the years referred to. The information asked for regarding allocation of printing and writing paper other than newsprint is not readily available, and in any case, it would not be in the public interest to disclose it.

(c) and (d). Writing and printing paper other than newsprint is not rationed by the Central Government. Information asked for is not available.

(e) This information is not available..

	<i>Statement.</i>							
	Newsprint.				Other printing and writing paper			
	1939-40	1940-41	1942-43	1943-44	1939-40	1940-41	1942-43	1943-44
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Quantity imported from abroad.	36,714	30,731	11,237	8,244*	16,725	8,538	1,596	933*
Quantity manufactured in India.	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	59,574	65,598	65,500	48,465*

* During April—December 1943.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Have the Government of India also fixed certain quotas for the Provincial Governments with regard to the newsprint?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I do not think so.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Do I take it that in regard to part (d) of the question, the Honourable Member's answer was that no such rationing system obtains? Is that the answer?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Yes.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Has the Honourable Member received any complaint from the Indian Publishing Houses as regards the difficulties in the matter of obtaining printing paper?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have been receiving complaints about the difficulties of printing paper from all sections of the public and we are considering the question as to what we can do in the circumstances.

BLACK MARKET PAPER TRANSACTION.

401. ***Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** Is the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies aware of the fact that black market transaction in papers is still being carried on? If so, what steps has he thought of taking to stop it?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Yes. The remedies are control on price and distribution and reduction in the gap between demand and supply by increased production, economy in use and larger imports. Some steps have already been taken and others are being taken to achieve these objects as far as it is practicable to achieve them under the existing conditions.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Can the Honourable Member give us some figures about the production of paper in India?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I can say that as between the average of 1936-37 to 1938-39 the production in 1942-43 is almost nearly double.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: And what about the figures of imports?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The import figures are certainly less as compared with the pre-war figures.

ESSENTIAL PUBLICATIONS LISTED FOR ALLOTMENT OF PAPER.

402. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to make a list of "essential publications" for which paper will be allotted by the Paper Control Committee appointed by Government?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The Central Government have not appointed any "Paper Control Committee" and the question of making a list of "essential publications" to which paper might be allotted by such a committee does not, therefore, arise.

DOLLAR EXCHANGE FACILITIES FOR REMITTING SUBSCRIPTIONS TO AMERICAN MAGAZINES.

403. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state whether Government have issued any instructions to the Reserve Bank in respect of affording facilities to people in India requiring dollar exchange for the purpose of remitting subscriptions to American magazines? If so, will the Honourable Member indicate the precise nature of those instructions? Does he also contemplate any relaxation in the terms of these instructions in the near future?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Yes. Remittances by private persons, firms, clubs, scientific, technical, and educational institutions (provided they are not regular booksellers) in payment of individual subscriptions have been permitted freely since December 1943. In the case of regular booksellers, imports of periodicals and the remittance of exchange to pay for them, are permitted only in accordance with such licences as may be issued to them under the Import Trade Control system.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Do I understand the Honourable Member aright when he says that the relaxation was made in December 1943?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Yes, they have been permitted free.

SALT SHORTAGE IN BENGAL.

**404. * { Dr. Habibur Rahman:
Mr. Muhammad Hussain Ohoudhury: } Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state:**

(a) if he is aware—(i) that there has been acute shortage of salt in Bengal since January last, and (ii) that the price of ordinary salt has gone up enormously, that in some districts of Bengal the price has gone up to Rs. 2 per seer, and that many people and cattle are going without salt for days; and

(b) the steps, if any, he proposes to take to relieve this shortage?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The Honourable Member is referred to my reply to Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra's starred question No. 246 on the 25th February, 1944.

Mr. K. O. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member in a position to indicate the present state of affairs in regard to this matter?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: So far as the stocks on 22nd February are concerned, they amount to 13.6 lakhs of maunds which appear to be sufficient for seven weeks consumption. Other steps are being taken to expedite the supplies for the Province.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Is the Honourable Member aware that in the Bengal Legislative Assembly towards the end of last month, this question was raised and the reply was given that Bengal was passing through a shortage of salt and that steps were being taken to ask the Central Government to provide the supplies? What is the exact position now?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have given the figures as up to 22nd February.

COMPLAINTS REGARDING RICE SOLD BY RATION SHOPS IN CALCUTTA.

405. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Is the Honourable the Food Member aware of the fact that in Bengal outside Calcutta, i.e., in the Districts of Bengal, rice is still being sold in the black market at the rate varying between Rs. 20 and Rs. 25 per maund? If not, does the Honourable

Member propose to make enquiries about the matter through public press, prominent individuals and public institutions, like Chamber of Commerce and the Social Service League?

(b) Is the Honourable Member aware of the nature and quality of rice sold at Calcutta at present under the Rationing System through shops fixed by Government for selling such rationed foodstuffs? Has the Honourable Member received complaints regarding rice sold to public by ration shops which are not fit for human consumption? If so, has he taken any step to stop such supply?

(c) Is it a fact that Central Government have taken charge of feeding the Calcutta people, numbering about thirty lakhs, and the foodstuffs sent by the Central Government will feed Calcutta including suburbs and industrial area? Will the Honourable Member be pleased to clear up the position by making a statement regarding the system of purchase of foodstuff and fixing up thereby the responsibility for such supply?

(d) Is it not a fact that Provincial Government has appointed four or five Chief Agents to purchase crop for supply of foodstuff to Bengal? Are these agents responsible for supplying such rice?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) According to information, rice is available throughout the greater part of North and West Bengal at or below the maximum wholesale prices fixed by the Bengal Government, which are Rs. 13-4-0 for surplus districts and Rs. 14-4-0 for deficit districts. In East Bengal prices have ranged generally between Rs. 11 and Rs. 20. The highest price quoted has been Rs. 24 at Chittagong.

(b) I am aware that there have been complaints about the quality of some of the rice sold in Calcutta, but I am not aware that any rice has been sold which is not fit for human consumption.

(c) The Government of India have allotted to Bengal from surplus areas a quantity of foodgrains equivalent to the requirements of Calcutta for 13 months. The arrangements for purchase, inspection before and after despatch and distribution of the foodgrains so allotted are the responsibility of the Bengal Government.

The Honourable Member is also referred to the reply given in this House to part (c) of Mr. Neogy's starred question No. 286 on the 1st March, 1944.

(d) The Government of Bengal have appointed four Chief Agents for the procurement of the *Aman* crop. The reply to the second part of the question is in the negative.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member in a position to suggest any reason as to why the price is higher in eastern Bengal than western Bengal, I mean with reference to ceiling prices?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: It will not be possible to enter into an economic argument in reply to a supplementary question.

Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: Do I understand the Honourable Member to say in reply to part (a) that the price ranged between Rs. 20 and Rs. 25? I may tell the Honourable Member that it is much more.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have answered the question on my information that it is not so. It may be so in certain parts.

(It was observed that Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya was standing while the Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque was answering the question.)

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. When the Honourable Member has put his question, he ought to resume his seat.

Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: With reference to the answer to part (b), I have got some samples of rice sold in Calcutta. Will the Honourable Member kindly see them to find out the quality of rice?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I do not think this House is the proper place for samples to be exhibited before Honourable Members.

(Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya then went to the seat of the Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque and tried to put the samples into his hand.)

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. The Honourable Member must go back to his seat. This is not allowed.

PERMITS FOR IMPORT OF PADDY OR RICE FOR OWNER'S USE IN CALCUTTA.

†406. ***Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state if permit for import of paddy or milled rice belonging to one's own grown stock, to be transported from station to station by rail or by lorry or by boat or by any other possible conveyance to Calcutta, is still required, in case the owner of such stock does not purchase rice for his own use from ration shops? In case it is so required, will the Honourable Member be pleased to advise the Controller of Rationing in Calcutta to issue such permit without delay?

(b) What remedy is there against unnecessary delays in granting such permit, by the Controller of Rationing in Calcutta, as many families have to suffer on account of such delay in issuing permits applied for? Can Regional Commissioner issue such permit?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) According to my information permits are required. The Controller of Rationing, Calcutta, is not an officer of the Government of India and I regret that I am unable to adopt the Honourable Member's suggestion.

(b) The Regional Food Commissioner is not authorised to issue such permits. They are issued on the authority of the Government of Bengal, to whom complaints of delay in any specific case should be addressed.

RE-EMPLOYMENT OF MR. AMAR NATH, OVERSEER, PUNJAB IRRIGATION DEPARTMENT AFTER CONVICTION.

†407. ***Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Piracha:** Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state:

(a) if it is a fact that a Government servant who has been dismissed on conviction by a criminal court cannot be re-employed in Government service; and

(b) if it is a fact that one Amar Nath, Overseer of the Punjab Irrigation Department, who was sentenced to rigorous imprisonment, has been re-employed as an Overseer in the Central Public Works Department; if so, why?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) A person who is dismissed from service is not ordinarily eligible for further employment under Government.

(b) Yes. The fact that he had been dismissed by the Punjab Government was not known at the time of his employment in Central Public Works Department.

DESIRABILITY OF APPOINTING HIGH COURT JUDGES FROM THE BAR.

†408. ***Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state if he received any copies of the resolutions passed by the High Court Bar Associations at Lahore and Madras regarding the desirability of appointing Judges of the High Court from amongst the eminent members of the Bar? If so, what action has been taken on those resolutions?

(b) Do the Government of India propose to convey to His Majesty their approval of the principles underlying those resolutions?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) and (b). The Governor General in Council is in no way concerned with appointments to High Courts, which are made under Sections 220 and 222 of the Government of India Act 1935.

FEEDING OF THEIR OWN TROOPS IN INDIA BY THE UNITED NATIONS.

409. ***Sardar Mangal Singh:** Will the Honourable the Food Member please state:

(a) whether the Government of India have through His Majesty's Government suggested to the United Nations that they should feed their own troops stationed in this country; and

(b) what decision has been taken thereon?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) No, Sir, but the quantity of foodgrains imported into India during the last four months already exceeds the

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner having exhausted his quota.

‡Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

total annual requirements of United Nations troops, other than Indian troops, in this country.

(b) Does Not arise.

Sardar Mangal Singh: My question was:

“Whether the Government of India have through His Majesty's Government suggested to the United Nations that they should feed their own troops stationed in this country”?

The Honourable Member, instead of replying to this question has given only the quantity imported.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have answered in substance, namely, that the quantity which has been imported at the instance of the Government of India during the last four months exceeds the total annual requirements of the United Nations troops.

Sardar Mangal Singh: But that was not what I wanted in the question.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: It is a very straight question.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have also given a straight reply, namely, that it was at the instance of the Government of India that these quantities of foodgrains have been imported into this country and this exceeds the total annual requirements of the United Nations troops. I have said that the whole import programme was arranged at the instance of the Government of India and if at any time the Government of India feel that anything more is necessary, they would be prepared to take that step.

Sardar Mangal Singh: The whole speech is irrelevant. My question is different. I wanted to know whether the Government of India have through His Majesty's Government suggested to the United Nations that they should feed their own troops in this country.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask what is the total quantity of foodgrains imported by the Government of India during the last four months?

Sardar Mangal Singh: What about my question? It has not been answered.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: It will be impossible for me to answer that question.

Sardar Mangal Singh: I rise to a point of order. The Honourable Member is evading to answer my question which was admitted by you, Sir.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member ought to know by this time that the Chair cannot compel any Government Member to answer a question in any particular way.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I know if these foodgrains were imported from Great Britain or from all the United Nation countries?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I cannot say offhand. I take it that it must be, at least some of them must be from United Nation countries, but if any one is excluded or not, I cannot say.

Sardar Mangal Singh: May I ask if this import of foodgrains is in pursuance of that policy that the United Nations troops should be fed by them or it was because there was a shortage of food?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: It is in pursuance of the policy recommended by the Foodgrains Enquiry Committee and in pursuance of the whole economic situation in India which includes civil consumption as well as military requirements. The one cannot be detached from the other. The Government of India have to take the picture as a whole and it is as a result of that that they arrange for imports from time to time.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Would the Honourable Member read my question aright again and answer?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has already answered the question.

Sardar Mangal Singh: But why should he give irrelevant answers?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I cannot compel any Honourable Member to answer a question to the satisfaction of the questioner.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: What is the quantity of foodgrain required for Defence forces in India?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I cannot answer that without notice.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Were foodgrains imported after the suggestions were made by the Government of India that the United Nations should make provision for feeding their own forces?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have already said that the whole policy of the Government of India was based, so far as the import programme was concerned, as a result of the civil consumption needs of this country as also their defence requirements.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Apart from the grain required to meet the feeding of the forces, what is the quantity required for other needs?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I want notice.

PROTEST AGAINST THE PROCEDURE FOR IMPORTING HEAVY CHEMICALS.

410. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please state:

(a) whether he has received representations from commercial bodies, amongst others, a telegram from the Indian Merchants Chamber, Bombay, dated the 19th February, 1944, protesting against the new procedure sought to be laid down for the importation of heavy chemicals, like Hydrosulphite of Soda, Zinc Chloride;

(b) if the answer to part (a) is in the affirmative, the chemicals involved in this scheme; and whether the trade interests affected were consulted;

(c) whether the new arrangement will have the effect of making the trade a monopoly for a few non-Indian concerns;

(d) whether the Honourable Member is aware of the names of the firms who will benefit thereby, and whether he will be pleased to state the names of these firms; and

(e) whether Government propose to amend the arrangement, in view of the strength of feeling amongst the Indian interests affected?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) The answer is in the affirmative.

(b) (i) Hydrosulphite of Soda, and (ii) Zinc Chloride. The trade interests affected were consulted.

(c) The answer is in the negative. Moreover the distribution within the country would be made through those normally engaged in the trade.

(d) Yes. (i) Hydrosulphite of Soda:

1. Imperial Chemical Industries (India) Limited.
2. Excelsior Finishing Products Company Limited.
3. Sheth & Company, Baroda.
4. Shivchand Amritlal & Company Limited.

(ii) Zinc Chloride:

Messrs. Sizing Material Company Limited.

(e) The arrangement is only temporary and will be reviewed in the light of experience gained before the end of June, 1944.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: With reference to part (c), may I know whether the Honourable Member really referred to the distribution of chemicals in this country or did he refer to the import into this country of chemicals?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Distribution within the country.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: With regard to the import of chemicals into this country, will the Honourable Member confine himself to those firms which are interested in imports into this country?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: That was not the question.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: I refer the Honourable Member to part (c).

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Part (c) refers to trade monopoly. It was not a question of import. If the Honourable Member will give me notice, I shall answer the same.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: In the case of Hydrosulphite and Zinc Chloride, will the Honourable Member see that a monopoly does not pass into the hands of European firms, namely, the Imperial Chemical Industries and the Sizing Materials Co., Ltd.?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: As I said, so far as the import side is concerned, I did not look into the question. If my Honourable friend wants I will look into the matter.

CHARGE OF DOUBLE SCHOOL FEES IN DELHI ON FATHERS PAYING INCOME-TAX.

411. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state if it is a fact that the students of the Middle English and High Schools, whose fathers pay income-tax, are required to pay double the ordinary rate of the school fee? If so, why does this practice obtain in Delhi when it does not exist anywhere else in India?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I should prefer to say that parents who are not assessed to income-tax are charged fees at half rates. This is based on the practice adopted in the Punjab.

NON-OFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY RECEIVING SALARIES OR PERMANENT ALLOWANCES.

412. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state:

(a) the names of the non-official Members of the Central Legislative Assembly who are receiving salary or permanent allowance in any shape from the public exchequer for doing work not entrusted to them by the Central Legislature; and

(b) the amount paid to each Member monthly by way of remuneration, office expenses, travelling allowances, halting allowance or other similar purposes?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) There are no such cases.

(b) Does not arise.

GRIEVANCES OF LEATHER MERCHANTS, ETC.

413. *Mr. Piare Lall Kureel: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) whether he has received any complaint from Mr. T. A. Sonavane, Advocate, President, Dhor (Tanner) Samaj Sudharak Mandal, Bombay, Mr. G. D. Tapase, Pleader, Secretary, Leather Merchants' Association, Satara, and several other gentlemen representing the leather industry, regarding the Notification No. F. 22 (18)-C. S. (C)/43, dated the 27th January, 1943; and

(b) if the answer to (a) above be in the affirmative, what steps the Honourable Member proposes to take to redress the grievances of the leather merchants, dealers, producers and tanners of the Bombay Presidency and other parts of the country?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Yes. The date of the notification is 27th November, 1943, and not the 27th January, 1943.

(b) The question is under consideration.

Mr. Piare Lall Kureel: Is the Honourable Member aware that the delay in deciding the matter is causing great hardship to the tanners and leather producers of the country?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I cannot say off-hand as to what the representation is, but it must have involved quite a number of points to require the necessary time that has elapsed.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: Are these people given the same attention as those of the textile industry?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The Government of India do not make any distinction between the rich and the poor.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: Then, does the Honourable Member admit that they are poor?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I do not say that; they may be rich.

GRIEVANCES OF LEATHER MERCHANTS, ETC.

414. *Mr. Piare Lall Kureel: With reference to Notification No. F. 22 (18)-C. S. (C)/43, dated the 27th January, 1943, issued by the Department of Industries and Civil Supplies, Government of India, fixing maximum prices of certain leathers and hides, is the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies aware that:

(a) the above Notification has caused much confusion in the market, and has resulted in a considerable loss to tanners and leather producers of the country;

(b) prior to the Notification, the representatives of tanners and leather dealers were not consulted and were kept in dark till the end of December, 1943, even though the Notification was to operate on the 1st January, 1944;

(c) controlled prices are not even equivalent to the prices of raw buffalo and cow hides prevailing in the market;

(d) no distinction has been made in the Notification for the purpose of purchase and sale between wholesale dealers and producers, and retail dealers and producers, as it has been done in various controlled commodities;

(e) no distinction has been made in the Notification between the slaughtered and unslaughtered, salted and unsalted, wet or dry, buffalo and cow hides; and

(f) hides and materials for tanning come from various provinces of India and they differ in quality and prices; and that it would, therefore, be most unjustifiable to take into consideration one Province or two and fix the controlled rate for the tanned buffalo and cow leathers and hides for the whole of India?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) No.

(b) The representatives of tanners were consulted by the Supply Department. The Notification fixing maximum prices was published in the *Gazette of India* on the 27th November, 1943.

(c) No. This is incorrect.

(d) Yes. The possibility of fixing separate maximum prices at different stages in the distribution is under examination.

(e) Does not arise as the Notification does not fix prices for raw hides.

(f) Yes. But prices were fixed in consultation with representatives of the tanning industry from all the principal leather producing areas of the country.

Mr. Piare Lal Kureel: Were the representatives of the leather producers and tanners themselves consulted in the matter?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Yes. So far as I have seen the proceedings of the Supply Department Conference, I find that they were consulted.

Mr. Piare Lal Kureel: But I am told that the representatives of the tanners and leather producers were not consulted and that they were kept in the dark till the end of December 1943, even though the notification was to operate from January, 1944?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have answered that question.

SCHEDULED CASTE COMMISSIONED OFFICERS IN THE UNITED PROVINCES CIVIL PIONEER FORCE.

415. ***Mr. Piare Lal Kureel:** With reference to his answer to starred question No. 111 regarding Commissioned Officers in the Civil Pioneer Force, asked by Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu on the 15th February, 1944, will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state the names of the Schedule Caste Commissioned Officers in the United Provinces Civil Pioneer Force?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: A statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement showing particulars of Scheduled Caste candidates appointed as commissioned officers in the United Provinces Civil Pioneer Force Units.

Name of Scheduled Caste Officer.	Date and Rank of first appointment.	Present Rank.	Total No. of Officers appointed.	No. of Scheduled Caste Officers appointed.
1. Nand Lal Kureel	19-5-43	2nd-Lieut.	2nd-Lieut.	28
2. S. K. Mulick	3-7-43	do.	do.	4
3. K. B. Bhale Rao	19-11-43	do.	do.	
4. Kshetra Pal Singh Sagar	29-1-44	do.	do.	

COMMUNAL COMPOSITION OF CIVIL PIONEER FORCE CLERKS.

416. ***Mr. Piare Lal Kureel:** Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of clerks in the Civil Pioneer Force in various Provinces; and

(b) how many of these clerks are Hindus, Muslims, Scheduled Castes, Christians and Anglo-Indians, separately, in various provinces?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Many units are in a war area and others are with the Army at outstations and that, therefore, it is not possible in these circumstances to collect the information asked for.

USE BY GOVERNMENT OF A DEHYDRATION FACTORY AT AMRITSAR.

417. ***Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari:** Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Food Department was using a dehydration factory at Amritsar;

(b) whether the Department has now stopped using this factory; if so, for what reasons; and

(c) whether any compensation was paid to the owners of this factory for such stoppage; and if so, the amount of the compensation, and how much Government have lost in the whole transaction?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) The Honourable Member presumably refers to a meat dehydration factory under the Food Department. On that assumption the answer is YES.

(b) Production has had to be suspended owing to the unforeseen infestation of the premises and the finished product by a small beetle (*Dermestis Vulpinus*). As a result of expert investigation, it has been decided to remodel the factory and the work is now in hand.

(c) The matter is now under consideration and the amounts cannot be stated.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Has any compensation been paid in this matter?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: As I have said, a substantial sum has already been paid and the contractors' claims have not yet been finally adjusted.

Sardar Mangal Singh: May I know whether this factory is being built by Government themselves or by the contractors?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I shall require notice of that question.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable Member tell us what that substantial sum is?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: That I am not prepared to say because the matter is still being considered for adjustment.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it 25 lakhs?

PROPOSED CONFERENCE OF DOMINION PREMIERS IN LONDON.

418. ***Mr. K. S. Gupta:** (a) Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state when the Conference of Dominion Premiers is to meet in London?

(b) Will India be represented in that Conference? If so, who is to represent India? Will he be an official or a non-official? Will he be an Indian or non-Indian?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) The Conference is likely to be held in the next few months, but the exact date is not known.

(b) This is to be a meeting of the United Kingdom and Dominion Prime Ministers and not a full Imperial Conference, but the representatives of India at the War Cabinet will be in London at the time and will be available for consultation on matters of interest to India.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: What will be the position of the representatives of India *vis-a-vis* the Prime Ministers of the Dominions?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: They are not members of the Conference.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: What is the meaning of "available"?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I would refer my Honourable friend to the Oxford Dictionary which is in the Library of the House.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Does that mean that they will be present there by invitation or in their own right?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: They will not be there by right.

FUTURE STATUS OF INDIA IN REGIONAL COUNCILS.

419. *Mr. K. S. Gupta: (a) Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state if there is any correspondence between the Government of India and the British Government about the future status of India in the Regional Councils? If so, would it be placed on the table?

(b) Would this House be consulted if any arrangement is to be affected in the constitution of Regional Council for East Asia?

(c) Does Sir Henry Craik voice the sentiment of the British Government or the Government of India when he makes the Indian States the pretext for Britain's remaining in India "to hold the ring"?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) There is no such correspondence.

(b) The proposal is still unofficial and nebulous. The matter can be considered when it assumes a more definite shape.

(c) Sir Henry Craik was expressing his own personal opinion. The policy of His Majesty's Government with regard to India, including the Indian States, is quite well understood and I need not elaborate it here.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Did the Government of India express their own views contradicting the view which has been referred to in this question?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: No, Sir.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Why not?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Because they did not want to.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Is this not misleading?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: No, not at all.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

RETIRED POLICE OFFICIALS REEMPLOYED UNDER DELHI RATIONING SCHEME.

136. Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Will the Honourable the Food Member please state the total number of police officials (retired) now re-employed under the Rationing Scheme, Delhi? Were any enquiries from the Heads of Departments as regards their suitability for such appointments made before these retired officials were appointed?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: One, a retired sub-inspector of police. The appointment was made after an inquiry from his former Department.

REQUISITIONING OF SCINDIA STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY AND MOGUL LINE SHIPS.

137. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state:

(i) the total number of ships of the Scindia Steam Navigation Company, Limited, registered in India on the 3rd September, 1939;

(ii) the total number of ships of the Mogul Line, Limited, registered in India on the same date;

(iii) the total number of ships of the Scindia Steam Navigation Company, Limited, requisitioned during each of the calendar years 1941, 1942 and 1943, and the average number of days for which they were requisitioned in each of the three years; and

(iv) the total number of ships of the Mogul Line, Limited, requisitioned during each of the calendar years 1941, 1942 and 1943, and the average number of days for which they were requisitioned in each of the three years;

(b) whether it is a fact that, while only one-sixth of the fleet of the Mogul Line, Limited, was requisitioned in the years 1941, 1942 and 1943, over 33 per cent., 50 per cent. and 75 per cent. of the fleet of the Scindia Line was requisitioned in the years 1941, 1942 and 1943, separately;

(c) if the answer to (b) be in the affirmative, why a proportionately larger number of ships of the Scindia Line was requisitioned, as compared with the ships of the Mogul Line, Limited; and

(d) if the answer to (b) be in the negative, whether he will be pleased to give the relative proportion of the fleet of the two Companies requisitioned during each of the last three years, 1941, 1942 and 1943?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) (i) 25, (ii) 7.

(a) (iii), (iv) and (b) and (d). I regret that the information asked for cannot be disclosed for security reasons.

(c) Ships are requisitioned after taking into consideration their suitability for the purpose in view. This may result in a proportionately larger number of vessels of one company being requisitioned than of another.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION AND ANSWER.

DEATHS IN BENGAL IN 1943.

Sir F. E. James: Has the attention of the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands been drawn to a press *communiqué* issued by the Government of Bengal and published in the *Statesman* of Saturday, the 11th March, 1944, to the effect that the deaths in Bengal from all causes in 1943 totalled 1,873,749 or 58 per cent. above the average number of deaths in the Province during the last five years? If so, is he in a position to confirm this report or add any further information?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Yes. The vital statistics given in the Bengal Government's *communiqué* are in accordance with those received by the Public Health Commissioner from the Director of Public Health, Bengal. According to the figures received, the reported deaths from all causes exceeded the average for the previous five years by 688,846. In the first six months the reported deaths exceeded the average for the corresponding period of the previous five years by 10,536; the excess over average in the second six months was 678,310. The total of reported deaths from cholera during the year was 214,175, which exceeded the five year average mortality from this disease by 160,909. The total of reported deaths from malaria during the year was 674,330, which exceeded the five year average by 285,792. Mortality from smallpox was 22,005 or 14,075 in excess of the average.

Sir F. E. James: May I ask if the machinery for the collection of statistics was approximately the same in 1943 as in previous years?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Yes, Sir; it was exactly the same.

Sir F. E. James: Would that, therefore, mean that the margin of error in 1943 would be approximately the same as in previous years?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Yes, I think it would be so, approximately.

Sir F. E. James: May I also ask my Honourable friend whether his attention has been drawn to the sample survey of the University of Calcutta, as a result of which rather alarming figures were produced, and whether he knows on what data they based this survey and their subsequent conclusions?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Yes, Sir, we saw the announced results of the survey and we have asked Professor Chattopadhyaya to supply us with the statistics on which his figures were arrived at. I may, however, add that the figures which I have now quoted to the House are based not on any sample survey but on statistics drawn from the whole province.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: In view of the gross suspicion about the accuracy of these figures in public mind, will the Government order census of the Bengal population?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I am afraid census is not the business of my Department.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member aware that in Bengal there is a feeling that the figures read out by the Honourable Member represent a very clever piece of cookery?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Figures were only put out on Saturday by the Bengal Government and I do not know what the people in Bengal think about it.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: May I ask the Honourable the Leader of the House whether, in view of this vital question, Government will order census of the people of Bengal?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: That is not the business of my Department, either.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am asking you to do this in your capacity as the Leader of the House.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Is it nobody's baby?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Is it anybody's duty?

An Honourable Member: May I know whose business it is?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order.

Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Is the Government ready to introduce a new . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order.

THE GENERAL BUDGET—LIST OF DEMANDS—*contd.*

SECOND STAGE—*contd.*

DEMAND No. 12—EXECUTIVE COUNCIL—*contd.*

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The House will now proceed with the further consideration of Demands for Grants.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): If you will permit me, Sir, I would like to substitute Anna one for Rupee one in cut motion No. 73 standing in my name. This will give an opportunity to other Members also to reduce the amount still further under this Demand.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Leader of the House): We object to that amendment, Sir. We would like to keep it as it is.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: All right, I don't mind if other Members are left with anything or not. Sir, I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Executive Council' be reduced by Re. 1."

To discuss the need of immediately appointing a Committee of the elected members of the Central Legislature, assisted by suitable permanent officials to scrutinise the expenditure, for which Government of India is responsible, and suggest where economies can be effected.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman (Finance Member): With your permission, may I point out that the Honourable Member also gave notice of a cut under the Head 'Finance Department' for the same purpose and that if he were to move the cut under that Head, no question would arise of completely extinguishing the amount under the head 'Executive Council'.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: If that suits the Honourable Member, I have no objection. I will move cut motion No. 129 on the final list which is exactly the same as No. 73, but before I can do that the Honourable the Finance Member shall have to move his demand first.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Why is the Honourable the Finance Member so anxious to retain one rupee under the head 'Executive Council'?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If the Government have no objection, you can move that.

DEMAND No. 21—FINANCE DEPARTMENT.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 8,49,000, be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1945, in respect of 'Finance Department'."

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 8,49,000, be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1945, in respect of 'Finance Department'."

Appointment of Committee for scrutinising Government Expenditure and suggesting Economies.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Sir, I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Finance Department' be reduced by Re. 1."

To discuss the need of immediately appointing a committee of the elected Members of the Central Legislature, assisted by suitable officials to scrutinise the expenditure, for which Government of India is responsible, and suggest where economies can be effected.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): Will it be an *ad hoc* committee or a permanent committee?

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: *Ad hoc* committee will be better. Sir, I move this cut in order to discuss the financial position of the country at present. At present we have got two committees which scrutinise the expenditure—one is the Standing Finance Committee of this House, and the other is the Public Accounts Committee. As far as the Public Accounts Committee is concerned, it can only do the *post mortem* examination, and we are told every time 'what is the good of talking or criticising this now because the expenditure has already been incurred'. Sometimes it so happens that we can only discuss the matter two years after the huge expenditure has been incurred. Then, it may be said that there is the Standing Finance Committee. As far as this committee is concerned, I am told that now-a-days it meets during the Assembly Session, and the excuse given for that is that by holding the committee during the Session it saves expenses to the public. But the result of this saving is that because the Members are over-worked, they have to attend the Session day after day, they do not find sufficient time and the work of the committee is done in a hurry. They do not get enough time to scrutinise the expenditure which is brought before them every now and then for sanction.

I will give you a glaring example: Expenditure incurred in respect of evacuees from Burma and Malaya. The Honourable the Finance Member says that he provided for rupees ninety-two lakhs in the current year's budget, but we find that the expenditure has gone up to something like, two crores and ninety-two lakhs, that is to say two crores over and above what was originally provided for in the budget. Two cores is not a petty sum which can be ignored by us. I would not mind if the excess is to the extent of a few hundreds or even thousands, but when we find that the actual expenditure is three times as much as originally provided for and the actual expenditure runs into crores of rupees, I think it becomes our duty to take into consideration all that is happening in the country. This House cannot ignore such huge expenditure incurred in such irresponsible manner. May be the Honourable the Finance Member will bring forward a supplementary demand of two crores at the end of the Budget, but you have ruled that supplementary grants do not involve any question of policy. It has either to be accepted or rejected. The Honourable Member will say that I have already incurred the expenditure and if you do not sanction it I will go to His Excellency the Governor General and get that cut which the House refused restored.

Sir, this is a position which the country and the representatives of the country cannot tolerate any longer. The expenditure of the Government of India should be scrutinised from the very beginning before it is incurred, and I think that unless we devote sufficient time we cannot reduce this expenditure. There is no reason why we should tax our poor people in order to allow the Government to squander away money in the manner in which they are doing. I do not doubt that the money is required and that the different departments have put up these demands on the Finance Department. They may be under obligation to give them or they may be forced to accede to their requirements. But it is for this House to agree whether these rupees, three crores, should be paid to the evacuees of Burma and Malaya and whether our people should have a tax on their *Biri*, their *suparee*, their coffee and tea in order to provide this money. Are we going to be asked that with the reduced incomes of many people, as far as purchasing power of their money is concerned, they should be requested to contribute for these runaway people in such huge quantities? I had asked my Honourable friend in my speech at great length the reason for this and how much is given, and although my friend spoke for more than an hour, he never said a word about the evacuees of Burma and the expenditure incurred on them.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I have already told the Honourable Member that they are Indians. I hope the Honourable Member will not gloss over that fact.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Will he produce anything to show that there was any reference to this in his reply?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I explained it in some length in the Budget speech last year.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: My Honourable friend says last year. I am talking of this year. How has it gone up from Rs. 72 lakhs to Rs. 2 crores 72 lakhs and without the sanction of this House? Has this House just to give its votes to tax the people or must the people be taken into consideration and must we not scrutinise this expenditure. Our people are being taxed and we do not know. This is one example out of very many. The expenditure is increasing from day to day and large amounts are asked for sanction at the end of the year, which are shown in supplementary demands, for which we feel that there is no justification. They ought to be scrutinised by the committee of the people who are responsible on this side of the House to see whether the expenditure is justified or not. I do not think that my Honourable friend can have any objection to satisfy the people of this House and the elected Members of this House that the amounts which are demanded from different quarters are really just and they must be met from the Indian Exchequer.

Sir, I find that military expenditure has gone up by Rs. 78 crores and these Rs. 78 crores he is proposing this year. I am not saying that we should ignore our defences, or that we should not provide everything which is required for the military defence of this country. At the same time I do not want to attach any sanctity to the word 'war' and the defence of the country and that in the guise of all this huge sums of money should be spent irresponsibly. That I cannot allow. We are people who have greater interests in this country. We will not allow our country to be run over by any foreigner and destroy our home-lands. But at the same time I want to scrutinise every penny that is being spent, whether it is being spent for the defence of India or whether it is going into the pockets of those people who are put in charge of expenditure.

My Honourable friend knows that there have been many glaring cases where officers have been found guilty for taking bribes and the money has been recovered from their houses. In one case that came to light, a Major was caught in Connaught Place and Rs. 70,000 recovered from his flat. Well, this is only one case where the Government or the C.I.D. was vigilant enough to capture one man. But there may be thousands like this, which never come to light and who are not caught.

In the beginning the Honourable the Finance Member said that his income from taxes would be Rs. 102 crores but this year he says that he will realise Rs. 138 crores. With regard to excess profits tax, he thought that would bring in Rs. 40 crores, but he now thinks it will be Rs. 62 crores and 25 lakhs. Apart from those people who are going to pay this tax, there are lots of them below Rs. 30,000 who have escaped the excess profits tax and have made huge gains from the public exchequer. Most of these people come from the Contractor class, who have not only made huge profits but they are the people dealing with the Government.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's cut motion is to reduce expenditure.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: To appoint a committee to reduce expenditure.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): But there is no question of excess profits tax?

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: I am saying that the excess profits have been taken out of the income, which the Government of India has earned.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That is a different matter.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: They have increased very much and therefore they should be scrutinised properly in the departments which are the expending departments. My Honourable friend is vigilant and his department scrutinises to a certain extent but their scrutiny is not satisfactory because they cannot do it so properly as the body of the elected Members of this House, since we are in the know of many things which can never reach the Department which is presided over by my Honourable friend, the Finance Member. We are in touch with the public, we know where the money is being squandered and how and at what rates the contracts are being given and at what prices the articles are being purchased.

Some time ago, I know that in one of the factories supplies came in and about one lakh of shoes of one foot was found lying in Cawnpore or some other place and they could not be touched because they had been purchased by the Government. If a thing like this can happen without it reaching the ears of my Honourable friend, how then are these things to be carried on from day to day and who has to pay?

I think, it is high time that this House must have a Committee to go through all the expenses of the Government—I do not say that you should
12 Noon. not have the military, you have asked for 2 millions this year, and if you require three millions next year for the defence of India, I will vote for it, but you should not put it off simply because there is a sanctity attached to the word Army and no person should check the expenditure. That thing must be stopped. A scrutiny must be exercised to bring the expenditure, where possible, on proper lines and under proper control. There are many examples, which within the course of 20 minutes at my disposal is not possible for me to bring before the House: and I do not think it necessary to go into greater details to show how money is spent, rather squandered. It is only sufficient to say that this House is not satisfied by the way in which the money is being spent. Now, Sir, the military is given 73 crores this year, and I do not know if it will be 100 crores next year or even more may be added to the expenditure, and if the war continues 200 crores may be further added to the expenditure. Betel nuts has been taxed, coffee and tea are being proposed to be taxed. God knows what other things the Honourable the Finance Member has in his mind which he will tax next year. The Honourable the Finance Member has taxed things which are of daily use. A man cannot find money to buy a cup of milk, even if it is required to feed his child. This is the condition of this country on account of rise in prices and there is, therefore, no justification for us to over-burden such men as are not able to meet their expenses which are absolutely essential. On the other hand, we are increasing our expenditure. We should learn lesson from the businessman like Sir Richardson, who, finding that the expenditure is unnecessary, would try to cut it down—he would much prefer to purchase a thing from the market at a lesser price, if he thinks that such a thing is necessary.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has got only one minute more.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: I will finish. This being the condition, I think, economy must be effected and a Committee of this House be appointed immediately which will go thoroughly into all these matters, I do not propose the names of the people who should be members of this committee. I simply suggest that they should be elected Members and such Members who criticise the way in which the Government spend the money. I do not want members who simply say that the budget presented by the Government is excellent and that the way in which the money is spent by the Government is all right.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: With these words I commend my cut motion to the House, and I hope that every Member will support this and will not like his own people to be taxed further, when every thing can be met from the huge budget which has been presented before this House.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Cut motion moved:

“That the demand under the head ‘Finance Department’ be reduced by Re. 1.”

Sir F. E. James (Madras: European): Sir, my Honourable friend Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan has raised a very important question relating to the control of the Government of India's expenditure, particularly, as I understood him, during the war. Some years ago, in 1938, there was a discussion on a motion moved by one of the Members, I think, of the Congress Party, recommending the appointment of a Retrenchment Committee. I gather that my Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, now wishes a Retrenchment Committee of this House to be appointed to go into the whole range of Government expenditure at the earliest possible moment.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: The words of my cut motion are quite clear. I want a committee for the purpose of scrutinising the expenditure for which Government is responsible and it will also suggest where economies can be effected.

Sir F. E. James: In other words, that is retrenchment.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: To stop extravagance.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member should not interrupt, he has made his speech.

Sir F. E. James: Sir, I am in some difficulty to know precisely what my Honourable friend really does mean.

An Honourable Member: Oxford dictionary is available in the Library.

Sir F. E. James: When we were discussing this matter some years ago, I had the honour to suggest the appointment of an Estimates Committee, then I found that my Honourable friend was objecting to that proposal in favour of an *ad hoc* Retrenchment Committee. Therefore, if he proposes an *ad hoc* Retrenchment Committee. I am afraid, he will not be able to carry us with him, for now is not the time for such a committee. We are now in the fifth year of the war and the time is not the proper occasion for the appointment of a committee whose work is bound. . . .

(At this stage there were many interruptions.)

My Honourable friends do not wish to hear anybody expressing his views if they are not exactly in accord with their own. Their absence has not improved them in that direction. I very much regret to say that. I beg them to listen to what I have to say just in the same way as I do when they speak.

I was saying it is not the proper time for a general review of Government expenditure. On the other hand, it is important to know what steps the Government themselves are taking to control the expenditure of their main spending departments. I have had some experience of the method of control of expenditure adopted by the Finance Department in the case of one or two departments of the Government of India. I know that to a far greater extent than in the last war the Treasury exercises in some of the great spending Departments today a very close and constant check. In fact, I have occasionally irked the control which the Finance Department exercise in some of the spending Departments. Honourable Members, I think, sometimes do not appreciate the strain under which the administrative departments of the Government of India are working. I was shocked to find in the paper this morning the news of the death of Mr. Chapman, one of the most loyal and competent officers of my Honourable friend the Finance Member's Department, who was working until only the other day in the Supply Department as his representative. I would like to pay a tribute to his work. I know from my personal association with him in that department that there was no more zealous watch-dog of the interests of the country than Mr. Chapman.

So much for the Treasury control over the spending departments. I would like to ask the Honourable the Finance Member to be good enough to explain the control he does now exercise over some of these great departments. But my Honourable friend, the Mover of the motion, is really dealing with the control of the Legislature over the expenditure of the Government of India, and that, I agree, is an extremely important matter. He referred to the Public Accounts Committee and the Standing Finance Committee. The Public Accounts Committee's examination is, of course, a *post mortem* examination. As regards the Standing Finance Committee the examination is pre-natal. All proposals for new expenditure come before that Committee, but once those proposals have received the sanction of that Committee, further expenditure relating to those items do not come back to that Committee for further examination. That is why in 1938 we suggested to the House that an Estimates Committee would be a much more effective check over the spending departments of the Government than the present Standing Finance Committee or the Public Accounts Committee. I would remind the Honourable the Finance Member that in 1938 his predecessor was

prepared to accept as an alternative to the Standing Finance Committee, an Estimates Committee. It was to be composed of 15 non-official Members elected by the Assembly for the year. The Committee was to have its own Chairman; the Deputy Secretary in the Finance Department dealing with the budget would be the Secretary of that Committee. The terms of reference of the Committee would be to suggest any changes in the form in which the estimates might be presented to the Legislature and to report what, if any, economies consistent with the policy implied in those estimates could be effected therein. The terms of reference of this proposed Committee were practically the same as the terms of reference of the Estimates Committee of the British House of Commons. That Committee would sit from time to time and examine each year with the assistance of the departmental officers a group of estimates selected by the Finance Department; and the Finance Member of that day made a suggestion as to the first group of estimates which might be considered by that Committee. Sir, it seems to me that that is the direction in which my Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, might look for a closer check by the Legislature upon the spending departments of the executive.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: That is an alternative proposal you are putting forward:

Sir F. E. James: It is an alternative proposal to my Honourable friend's proposal. I do not think the time is ripe for a retrenchment committee. A time will come when that will be necessary, but in the most intensive year of the war as far as India is concerned, obviously it is most unsuitable that there should be a retrenchment committee appointed for the purpose of scrutinising the expenditure of the various departments of the Government of India. Had my Honourable friends at that time only accepted the proposal that we made for an Estimates Committee, (which I note was rejected by the House by only two votes, my Honourable friend voting against), then he could have had to-day in existence a very powerful check upon the day to day expenditure of the administration.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Times have changed.

Sir F. E. James: But he chose to reject that proposal in favour of the Standing Finance Committee, which, as I have said, does not really exert any substantial check upon the administration. Therefore, I regret very much that I shall not be able to follow my Honourable friend in this matter. But I would ask the Honourable the Finance Member whether he would at some stage, not necessarily now, be prepared to consider the suggestion of an Estimates Committee, if it were made to him again. I feel that in that way the control of the Legislature over the spending departments of the Government of India would be infinitely more effective than it is to-day.

Sardar Mangal Singh (East Punjab: Sikh): I rise to support the motion moved by Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan on behalf of the Muslim League Party.

Sir, this motion raises a very important issue, that the expenditure of the Government of India should be scrutinised by a committee elected by this Honourable House. I think that the Government of India should have no hesitation in accepting this motion because it will only act as a surveillance committee on the expenditure of the Government of India. The Honourable the Finance Member himself does not want any extra expenditure or any waste in his Department, and this proposed committee is, as I understand the Honourable Mover of the cut, to supervise the expenditure of the Government of India. This proposal is all the more necessary because most of the expenditure of the Government of India is non-votable, particularly. . .

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Yes, that is the point.

Sardar Mangal Singh: The defence expenditure which has mounted up to more than Rs. 300 crores is not put for approval or even for discussion before this House. Before the passing of the 1935 Act, Defence expenditure and the Defence Department used to come up here for discussion at least, but

[Sardar Mangal Singh.]

after the passage of that Act, even that opportunity has been taken away from this House, and the expenditure has mounted. I put it to the Honourable the Finance Member whether it is not necessary now, in view of the increase in expenditure and in view of the fact that this House has no say in the expenditure of the Defence Department, that he should agree to the appointment of a committee. The committee will only look into details. Then again it is necessary because the Government of India has come to an arrangement with His Majesty's Government regarding the allocation of defence expenditure by what is now known as the Financial Settlement. The terms of that Financial Settlement are very vague and elastic. Apart from the normal budget which amounted to Rs. 45 crores, now we have come to a position when that expenditure has risen to more than 300 crores. The Honourable the Finance Member, the other day, while replying to the General Budget debate, asked: "Do the Members on this side of the House expect that the Defence expenditure should be less than what it was in 1939-40"? We do realise that in view of the war the expenditure will go up, but we only insist on this, that we should be told exactly where this money is being spent, how this money is being spent. In my speech I put it to the Honourable the Finance Member to tell us how many hundreds of crores have been spent on behalf of His Majesty's Government by the Government of India. In his budget speech in 1941-42, and again in 1942-43, he gave two figures. In the first year he said that the Government of India had spent 200 crores on behalf of His Majesty's Government. Again in 1942-43 the Honourable the Finance Member said that the Government of India had spent Rs. 400 crores on behalf of His Majesty's Government. This was two years ago. After that, the Finance Member has discontinued even informing this House how many hundreds of crores they are spending on behalf of His Majesty's Government in this country. I categorically ask the Finance Member at least today to tell me what that figure today is. During the last two years, that figure rose by 100 per cent. If it has been increasing like that, it should be now 1600 crores, from about 8 to 16, but I do not think it would be that much. At least I want to know that figure.

Now, Sir, in the financial settlement, they have put down that, apart from the normal defence budget, expenditure would be incurred on joint Indian war measures. We do not know what those joint Indian war measures are. We are told that according to that settlement those Indian troops who are sent abroad are to be paid by His Majesty's Government and those Indian troops who will remain here—the British also—will be paid for by the Indian Government. This settlement was in 1939. Since then the position has changed. At that time Japan was not in the war. India has now become one of the most important operational bases of this war. With the establishment of the South East Asia Command and with the coming of Lord Mountbatten in this country, India has become the springboard from which the United Nations will rise and conquer Japan. Now, Sir, I want to know whether the expenditure of all these troops who have been placed under the command of Lord Mountbatten are to be paid by this country or they are paid by the United Nations. I know you do not require my vote. This House is nothing but at least I have to pay. My children have to pay. I at least want to know, and if possible to scrutinise, the expenditure. It is not fair that all those armies which have been placed under the command of Lord Mountbatten should be paid by India. The other day, the Finance Member said that the establishment of the South East Asia Command will neither diminish nor increase the liability of this Government. I ask—is it fair, when all these troops stationed in this country are not intended for the local defence of this country. They are being prepared to reconquer Burma, Malaya and defeat Japan. They are being trained and equipped in India. Is it fair to burden this country with the expenditure on these items? I at least want to know whether you are paying for these troops. I want to know how all

those troops who are stationed behind Arakan and on this side of the country in India are paid for and by whom. According to the financial settlement, the Government of India will pay for all the troops, Indian and British, who are stationed in this country. But if those troops are stationed in this country to conquer Burma and other countries, then surely it is fair and just that that expenditure should not fall on this country. I want to know who is paying for these troops and if you refuse to tell me that, there will be a natural suspicion that there is something wrong and that you are misusing the finances of my country.

Then again there is the vexed question of the fixing of the ceiling. How many troops exactly do you want for the local defence of this country. Before the war, the number of our troops was only one lakh and 50 thousand, including the British and Gurkha troops, but now the number of troops has risen by more than 20 lakhs. Surely all these 20 lakhs are not required for the local defence purposes of India. They are required to reconquer Burma, and I put it to the Government of India and to the Finance Member whether it is fair that we should pay for the reconquering of Burma. When the Government of India agreed to the separation of Burma, we protested in this House. But the Government said 'No'. The Frontiers of India are near Arakan and this side near Bombay'. When the war began, somebody said that the frontiers of India are the Nile on one side and Singapore on the other. Why is this. Because the Government of India wanted to burden this country with the defence expenditure for the troops that will be sent to guard Egypt and to guard Singapore. That was surely not fair.

Then again, about fixing the ceiling, I want to know how many troops you require for local defence. The motion which my Honourable friend, Sir Yamin Khan, has moved raises all these points. To me, it is very important that the Government of India should come forward with an open mind, without any hanky panky or shilly shallying. What is the difficulty, I ask, to agree to this proposal. Show us the accounts. There is a Persian saying:

*"An rá ki hisáb pákast
Az muhásiabah chí bák ast."*

It means: If your accounts are clear, why should you be afraid. So, the Finance Member should not be afraid.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I am not afraid.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Then, why don't you agree to this proposal. I do not think the Government of India should take this motion seriously as a political motion or a censure motion. My country wants to know how you are spending and where you are spending and whether the expenditure placed on this country is justified, when its inhabitants are dying, are naked and have no food or clothing. We at least want to know here that you are not unnecessarily spending the revenues of the country. I commend the motion to the House.

Sir Cawasjee Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Mr. President, I am afraid this cut motion as drafted by my Honourable friend is rather vague, especially under present conditions, but the Honourable Sardar Sahib has raised one or two very important points. During the last budget-discussion I had occasion to bring to Government's attention a point which was causing considerable anxiety amongst people who take an interest in India's finances. I refer to the allocation of defence expenditure between India and His Majesty's Government. The Honourable the Finance Member explained in his last Budget speech the method adopted of checking that allocation on behalf of this House and on behalf of the peoples of India. I believe he pointed out then or afterwards that this method was a constitutional method. I believe he used the word 'constitutional'. The method is this. known as the Public Accounts Committee. The Auditor General of India—These allocations come before a Committee of this Honourable House which examines them on our behalf, the Auditor General in England examines them on behalf of England and the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons examines them on behalf of England.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: We say that the money should be properly spent and that it should not be spent if the expenditure is not justified.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Now, let us examine and see how for this House and the larger public who are much more interested than many of us here, and who have amongst them men, if I may say so with due respect to my Honourable friends opposite, who understand these problems much better than many of us do, would like to know who scrutinises these accounts on behalf of this House and the peoples of India. It is this Public Accounts Committee. Now, this Public Accounts Committee is a Statutory Committee and is appointed for a very definite purpose. I do not wish to repeat all that I said a year ago, but it is as well to remember the present position. This Public Accounts Committee is a Statutory Committee, as I said, appointed for a very definite purpose. When the Legislature decided that there should be a Public Accounts Committee, it never contemplated the very heavy task of having to check the allocation of the defence expenditure between England and India because there was no question of war then. I did point out that in my humble opinion this Public Accounts Committee was not suitable to do this very important work on behalf of this House and the public of India. And my Honourable friend's reply was quite logical when he said that this is an arrangement between England and India. This is a constitutional method and if we were to change it, we could not do it without their sanction. I do not wish to misrepresent him, but I think this is what he said.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I am afraid the Honourable Member is misrepresenting me very considerably as I shall have to explain.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: I will stand corrected. All I ask is that a more representative *ad hoc* Committee be appointed to go into this question of allocation of defence expenditure between England and India and that alone will satisfy public opinion. I do not impute any motives. It is very possible that this allocation is being done to the advantage of India. Possibly it is.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That is not the kind of phraseology that can appropriately be used. It is being done in accordance with the financial settlement. That is the point.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: And perhaps the financial settlement is to the advantage of India.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That is a different matter.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: The financial settlement may be to the advantage of India. But surely the public outside this House is to be convinced of that and they have to be satisfied. Until another method is devised of satisfying the public, we shall continue to get such criticisms as have been expressed by the Honourable Sardar Sahib today.

Now, Sir, let me candidly admit and let us all candidly admit that we may appoint committees which may be statutory committees or *ad hoc* committees for a certain purpose, but very much will depend upon the personnel of these committees. The mere appointing of committees will not help us. We have to see how these committees function and how they are manned.

Sir Syed Raza Ali (Cities of the United Provinces: Muhammadan Urban): And what are the powers of those committees? That is the main test.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: You may give them as much power as you like, but they are, after all, advisory committees to a certain extent, who report and tell you what is the position. But it will depend, let me repeat, upon the personnel of those committees. I would, therefore, respectfully suggest that on this committee there should be representatives of the public who may not be the Members of this Honourable House. It should be an *ad hoc* committee only for this one purpose of reviewing the allocation of expenditure on defence between England and India. It should report to this House but it should not be confined only to the Honourable Members of this House or the other House. Some representative men in India who may not happen to be the Members of the Central Legislature should have the privilege of being members of this

committee. And I would urge the reconsideration of the question that I brought up at the last Budget Session that if it is a constitutional question, surely constitutions can be changed. If anything can be done, I would suggest that it should be done in the right direction.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa: Muhammadan): Mr. President, Sir, this cut motion is moved in the nature of an advice to this Government and is more aimed at to help the post-war reconstruction than the removal of the actual economy planning difficulties that are being felt under present conditions. Only yesterday we had a hot debate on another more comprehensive issue and probably heat was introduced unnecessarily. Constitutionally, we know that the Executive Council is not responsible to the Legislature but there would be no harm if they become responsive and if we build up a tradition that they should be responsible to the Legislature particularly when the majority of the Executive Council consists of Indian Members and we certainly expect that they should appreciate this position more than non-Indian Members. It is with that end in view that my party has moved this cut motion and propose to give them a concrete suggestion. It may be said, as the Honourable the Finance Member said the other day, that this is not the time for planning economy and Members will not be justified in proposing a reduction or retrenchment at a time when everybody is finding it difficult to purchase the necessities of life with the salaries that they receive. I may make it clear that by planning for economy, there is no intention of cutting down the salaries or removing the necessary staff or refusing to sanction the necessary establishment. What is aimed at is a committee of vigilance which will see to the practical economy and whose members may advise and arrange for our resources being used to the best advantage of the country and in the most economical manner to avoid any waste. This committee will look into the whole question. It may be that certain Departments of the Government of India are overstaffed with high officers and clerks. There may be other Departments which are understaffed. This committee would look into the whole structure and advise the Government how best to utilise the extra staff in certain departments for relieving pressure in those departments which are understaffed.

On this Cut Motion, I do not want to indulge on the issue of military expenditure, because that subject, as Honourable Members have already observed, is non-votable. There is not much to be done for or against it. Besides, it will probably be impossible for a committee of this nature to advise the military department either as to the desirability of employing a certain number of soldiers or as to volume of their equipment and so on. In that respect, this Committee may not be of much use. What I want to impress is that Departments like the Supply and the Food require more economic planning. These two Departments have become practically the dumping ground for all sorts of people with doubtful qualifications, and these Departments are also the dumping ground for all sorts of merchandise in this country, good, bad or rotten. I do not wish to cast any reflection on the heads of these two Departments, but it is an open secret that they have not done what they ought to have done. It may be that by better planning the stocks required by the Supply Department may be made available at cheaper rates and this will mean practical check on inflation. It may be possible as far as the Department of Food is concerned that procurements may be made available at cheaper rates and that better facilities for distribution of foodstuffs may be devised with the advice of this Committee. It may not be out of place to mention that the Government of India have been indulging in expenditure in many Departments which are absolutely unnecessary. I have been associated with the Railway Department as a Member of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways for many years. I have seen that only last year serious efforts were made to abolish the lower gazetted service, and in that way the cost in the shape of salaries and emoluments would have come to about six lakhs yearly or to a capitalised value of over 1½ crores. In the same Railway Department, we find that a new Member for Engineering

[Mr. Muhammad Nauman.]

has been appointed. It may not be very long before we will see all the paraphernalia round this officer with so many Directors, Deputy Directors, Assistant Directors, Personal Assistants and all sorts of fellows will be brought in at the expense of the rate payers. The taxpayer will be called upon to pay to the tune of over four lakhs a year. This is one Department. There are several other Departments which are mere luxuries. I am not suggesting that in all cases the Departments are luxuries, they may be necessary in some cases, in others they may not be at all necessary. On the pretext of war, the Government of India have not only doubled themselves in volume, but in some cases, they have quintupled themselves. Where a department formerly consisted of 50 officers, it now contains 200 officers besides the necessary complement of clerks, etc. The volume of work may not justify such an increase of staff. We are not convinced that the work justifies the increase everywhere. At the whim of a certain individual officer, the staff is increased on the pretext of war and war conditions. So, Sir, I think it is absolutely necessary that some sort of programme for planning Economy should be made at this stage and it is idle to suggest that at a time when we are faced with all sorts of expenses on account of war, sometimes even extravagant expenses, therefore we should not entertain the idea of a committee of economic planning. I think this is the only only right time to have a committee of this nature. It is only in opulence that you plan for economy, a poor man can have no plan for economy, he has no money to spend. Probably it is at this time when we have to incur large and heavy expenditure, when we have to budget for an increase in taxation that we should think of economy and planning. Without a plan for economy it may not be possible for us to get substantial reductions in all the Departments, even on the termination of war.

I am glad to see that the Honourable Member for Supply is now in the House. As I was saying that these two Departments, Supply and Food, have been the dumping ground for all sorts of people. Some fellows who could not earn Rs. 50 a month for whole of their life find themselves appointed on Rs. 500 a month in these two Departments. There are not only one or two cases, not tens of cases but hundreds of such cases. That has been the practice in both the Supply and Food Departments. If a particular commodity could be purchased say at Rs. 20, the officers of these two Departments do not mind paying Rs. 30 or even more for the same commodity. I have also seen that the Officers in the Supply and Food Departments most frequently resort to telegraphic and telephonic communications. I may agree that sometimes it may be necessary. But it often happens that the officers of these two Departments do so merely for the sake of pleasure. They use telephone for conversation to distant places like Bombay or Calcutta and in the end the result is nothing satisfactory. It takes sometimes 15 days to put a transaction through. This could have been accomplished without resort to telegram or telephone, but by postal correspondence. The Food Department is much worse in this respect. Unfortunately the Honourable Member for Food is not present here, and so I do not want to dilate on this subject at length. The idea of this cut motion is to have a sort of vigilance committee. I was glad to hear my Honourable friend, Sir Frederick James, say that he was having this in mind when he moved for an Estimates Committee few years ago—just at the advent of War. Probably he was wiser than others, as we have brought this too late in his opinion. But can that be a ground for Sir Frederick James refusing at this stage a support to this motion. It is not exactly an estimates committee that we are proposing but something which would work as a sort of some check, if nothing else, on the departments which are indulging in all sorts of things. At least this will create confidence and an impression in this House and outside in the country that every thing is being done. Government will have advocates to say that the impression that the Government of India are developing these departments without use or necessity is wrong; they will be able to show that only such people are employed as are absolutely necessary, that the minimum number of officers is

put in and the utmost economy is being planned. The Honourable the Finance Member has tried to say that many times but why not allow other people also co-operate with him in that planning which he may have in mind and which may be for the ultimate good of Government and of this country? The purpose of this motion, therefore, is not to create any difficulty, but it is a sort of test as to how far the Indian Members of the Executive Council are prepared to build up a tradition that there is responsibility attached to them on behalf of the country and they are prepared to accept the advice of this House when tendered in a manner which is in the interest of the whole country.

Sir, I support the motion.

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, my Honourable friend the Leader of the European Group in the course of his speech on the Budget made a forceful suggestion that Government should immediately undertake an anti-waste drive with a view to securing economy in public expenditure. I take it, Sir, that the object which my Honourable friend, Sir Yamin Khan, has in moving this cut motion is to suggest a machinery through which that anti-waste drive might be undertaken. I fail to appreciate my Honourable friend, Sir Frederick James' difficulty in interpreting the terms of this cut motion, because, as I read the object of the motion, it is not intended that a regular retrenchment committee should be appointed but that a committee of the Legislature should be enabled to scrutinise expenditure for which the Government of India are responsible, and suggest where economies can be made. I endorse the suggestion which has just now been made by my Honourable friend, Mr. Nauman, that there are certain departments of the Government of India,—like the Food Department, the Supply Department and perhaps the Public Works Department which is concerned with military works,—the transactions of which require to be more carefully scrutinised than the transactions of the other administrative departments. And while on this point, may I draw the attention of the House to what is allowed in America? Nowadays even the Government of India are not ashamed to copy things from America. Here is a copy of a very well known American journal called *Post* dated 9th October, 1943, where we find an illustrated article showing that a Congressman after voting billions of war appropriations, set out to see how it was being spent. This one man's investigation covered 48 plants in 44 days. It is a very interesting article, and it just enables us to appreciate what part the non-official members of the legislature in America play in regard to such important matters. It is stated in this article that—

"This legislator got the information that a lot of extravagance can be stopped in the production of military equipments if somebody would just take the trouble to look into things instead of swivelling about in a chair in the capital."

Let me imagine my Honourable friend, Sir Yamin Khan, undertaking such a work himself; let me imagine him approaching a munitions factory. What is the kind of reception that he is likely to get from the gateman?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Please continue the picture. Assuming that he is well received, what does he do then?

Mr. K. C. Neogy: He would run the risk of being shot at, perhaps necessitating a motion for adjournment of this House the very next day.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I am prepared to guarantee his benevolent reception. Please continue.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I am very glad to find my Honourable friend, the Finance Member, in an accommodating mood today.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Because no money is concerned in it.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: But would he give that guarantee to a body of selected people that my Honourable friend has in mind, and who may be constituted into a committee for the purpose of undertaking this interesting adventure? I take it that my Honourable friend is anxious that the Legislature having been

[Mr. K. C. Neogy.]

made responsible for finding funds of such dimensions for the purpose of carrying on the war, should have some opportunity given to them to assure themselves that the money is not being absolutely wasted. It is true that we have not got to vote the major portion of the money that is being spent directly, as we do in regard to these demands for grants; but the fact remains that the money has to be raised by taxation and with the assistance of our votes. And therefore, Sir, I endorse my Honourable friend's anxiety in this matter and hope that Government will find it possible to institute a sort of inquiry in which the non-official elements in this House might be associated.

Reference has been made to the control exercised by the Finance Committee as well as the Public Accounts Committee. So far as the Finance Committee is concerned, I speak with some amount of experience, because I was a member of the Finance Committee ever since 1921 for several years together; and from what I know of the present-day functions of the Committee, I can say that the utility of that Committee has been considerably circumscribed; so much so that I find my Honourable friend the Finance Member himself has appended his signature to a report in which this particular observation appears:

"The position, therefore, is that the executive is now able to utilise funds without the consent or even the knowledge of the legislature, and there is no safeguard to show that the matter will be brought to its notice or to the notice of its representatives in either of the committees which deal with finance."

The reference is to the report of the Public Accounts Committee for the year 1941-42, and it deals with unanticipated credits, and the elasticity which the departmental heads enjoy in regard to appropriation of funds made available to them in the shape of unanticipated credits without either the legislature knowing anything about the matter or the matter being placed before the Standing Finance Committee for its approval.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I hope my Honourable friend realises that the observation was entirely limited to that very small field.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I made that quite clear that it was with reference to a particular point.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: But it is not an observation from which any wider inference can be drawn. It is simply in relation to that narrow field that we admitted that the position was not satisfactory and devised means to remedy it.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: That is true, but this gives an indication of the nature of the duties of the Finance Committee. That is to say, the Finance Committee has not got a very comprehensive scope of examination of public expenditure.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: On the contrary does it not show that in a certain field in which they discovered that there was no satisfactory arrangement they immediately proceeded to consider what should be done?

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Yes, I entirely agree with my Honourable friend that the particular point arises with reference to a particular set of circumstances. But I say that that itself shows that if we are under the impression that the Standing Finance Committee is there as our watchdog to safeguard the financial interests of the country, we are mistaken.

Then again, Sir, with regard to the Public Accounts Committee's work. The

Public Accounts Committee functions in the sphere in which the
1 P.M. Audit authorities function. It is really on the reports of the Audit authorities that the Public Accounts Committee goes into different matters which may be brought up for their consideration. This again is an extract which I am giving from the very same Report of the Public Accounts Committee, as regards relaxation in the audit control that has come about as a result of war exigencies. This is what I find:

"The Auditor General informed us that no less than 23 per cent. of his officers and 20 per cent. of his staff have had to be given up to the other Departments of Government who were in need of their services, that their place has been taken by new and inexperienced staff, that at the same time the number and magnitude of transactions required to be audited has increased owing to the war, and that the consequence has been that throughout the whole field there has been a relaxation of the standards of audit, a partial suspension of local audit and a reduction in the quantum of audit."

Now, Sir, this is a very serious state of things, though I appreciate the reasons that have led to this particular result. But my object in drawing the attention of this House to this particular point is this: That here again we would be labouring under a misapprehension if we thought that at the present moment the circumstances that exist for the purpose of enabling the Public Accounts Committee to discharge its functions are such as would enable any strict vigilance over public expenditure. Now, Sir, having regard to these circumstances, I think it is a legitimate demand for the non-official Members to put forward that we should be associated in any enquiry that might be thought necessary, following on the suggestion of the Honourable the Leader of the European Group, into expenditure of certain departments of Government. As a matter of fact, certain particular types of expenditure may be picked out by agreement for the purpose of having a sort of an *ad hoc* inquiry to be made therein. Even if this is not comprehensive enough or exhaustive enough, the very fact that there is a body of persons in which non-official Members of this House are associated to go into these matters, may produce a salutary effect, because, as I said yesterday, the air is thick with reports about corruption and bribery about which a reference was made by no less a person than the Chief Justice of Calcutta. I would like to know, Sir, the reaction of the Honourable the Finance Member to the particular proposal that has been made. If it is not his intention to accede to the suggestion made by my Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Yamin, what is it that he would do to reassure public mind in regard to this very important matter?

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar (Salem and Coimbatore *cum* North Arcot: Non-Muhammadan Lital): I have the honour to support the motion moved by my Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan. I first thought that this will be a matter which will be unanimously supported by all the elected Members of this House, and having heard the speech of the Leader of the European Group on the Budget discussion and he having admitted that the need for economy was necessary. I did think that he and his Group will support us in this very moderate motion. The Government is now spending about four times the expenditure which they were spending in normal times—I do not say that it is without justification; they may have their own justification for that. Our normal budget used to be about 80 crores of rupees before the war and it is nearly three hundred crores today. If Sir James Grigg accepted that a more improved machinery than the Standing Finance Committee was necessary many years back when the budget was only eighty crores, does it not go to prove, now that the budget is three-hundred crores, that the need for an improved machinery is much greater? But one reason is given: We are in special circumstances. Certainly, Sir, we are in special circumstances. Money has to be spent urgently, expenses have to be incurred immediately and sometimes even at enhanced rates. While generally agreeing to this proposition, Sir, it is impossible not to admit that there has been a tremendous waste in the public expenditure of this country. Some of us publicmen of this country come into touch with the contractors, with the people who execute the orders of the Central Government for the military and other Departments. The whole world knows how the money is being wasted and what is going on behind the scene. I was told by a gentleman this morning of what happened only recently. A contractor put in a tender for a certain work; his rate was low. The officer in charge, who was to accept the tender, asked him to double the amount and the deal was to share the difference in the proportion of $\frac{3}{4}$ th for the officer and $\frac{1}{4}$ th for the contractor.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: How will the Committee come into this transaction?

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: I will tell you, Sir. The Committee will consist partly of businessmen who know the market.

Sir, I was talking today with a member of the Government of Gwalior State. I asked him how his Government controlled the business, and he gave me a constructive suggestion. His reply was, "The Finance Department in my State has laid down that no tenders of public works should be above a

[Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar.]

certain percentage of the 1938-39 level and we are able to do that''. If you are careful about it, you can certainly get your orders executed at that level. It is simply because you do not fix any level in respect of any contracts or any sort of business, that the temptation is so great for those who are concerned,—it may be a major or it may be a minor. I asked some of my friends as to why big officers also are carried away by the temptation. Are they not Englishmen, are they not patriots? But this is what an Englishman is supposed to have told: "War after all comes but once in a life-time and we have to make a job of it at this time; it is not any individual who pays, it is the Government—it may be the Government of United States, or it may be the Government of United Kingdom, or any other Government for the matter of that. And during the time of war we must get things done''. So this is what is happening. Money is being wasted. You must have read in the papers that a poor Major's house was searched and Rs. 70,000 was recovered

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Why poor? Does the Honourable Member sympathize with him?

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Poor because he will think that so many others who are doing the same thing have not been caught and he has been caught.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I deplore the Honourable Member's use of that term.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: I very much deplore all this corruption and I also deplore very much the complacency with which the Finance Member is speaking without checking all this.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Don't call him poor; call him unfortunate.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Sir, I was talking about contracts. People who get contracts give a certain percentage to the officers concerned, and I wanted to tell you how this committee can help. The committee can prescribe standards; they can also lay down schedule rates. If the Government is prepared to accept these standards I believe that things can be done cheaper.

I have been told about those two Committees which may serve the purpose. My Honourable friend, Sir Frederick James, came with the sort or attitude which says: 'Did not tell you before. It would have been nicer if you had accepted my advice then.' Such advice is not useful these days. Let us know whether he will support us now. I have been in the Finance Committee of this Assembly for many years, but what my experience has been is this. An infinitesimal portion of the amount spent has come before us. The supplementary grants come before us but they make a very infinitesimal portion of the total Budget. As such you cannot say that a Finance Committee can control or guide or suggest retrenchments on a Budget which covers a hundred times as much as that which comes before the Committee. About the Public Accounts Committee, a friend remarked that it is a *post mortem* examination and there is no use in it. Mostly it is about things that have gone and the interest is not much.

So, both these Committees do not serve the purpose which was wanted to be served by this motion, and I think, especially in view of the fact that the *bona fides* of this Government have been questioned, a large majority of the people of this country believe that India does not get a fair deal from it. It is up to them—if the Honourable the Finance Member will hear me and it is also in his own interest—to accept a Committee, like this. For instance, he has been saying that India has had a good deal and that India has not been treated badly. Now he will have elected members with him who will say it only if he can prove to them that things done in India have been in the best interests of the country.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Would you ever use those words?

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: If you are so. If you are deserving I would.

I have worked somewhat closely with Sir James Grigg but I have not had the pleasure of working with Sir Jeremy. Sir James Grigg may not be a paragon of good manners and he was not many other things. But one thing I think he was. He was fairly strict in his own job, *i.e.*, Finance. I hope, Sir, that Sir Jeremy is the same, but I have no evidence, but if he shirks a motion like this it will be a sorry thing. It will only go to prove that the Government is not prepared to face any scrutiny and especially the scrutiny of people who are the representatives of the country, and especially at a time when the taxpayer's capacity in India is reaching breaking point. At this time, Sir, you want a set of people who can say and say boldly that things done are not really very bad, it will be really in the interests of Government to accept this motion. I hope, Sir, they will have the good sense to do it.

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

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock, Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta) in the Chair.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I support this cut motion. This cut motion aims at these points: first, the appointment of a Committee for investigating or scrutinizing the expenditure and the second to suggest the methods for economy. Now, in other words, this Committee means this. The right principle of economy is and should be that one should cut his coat according to the cloth. This Committee is being asked for to see if the Departments of the Government of India are cutting their coats according to the cloth or they are using more cloth which is an unnecessary waste of that cloth. We have also to see how far they have done up to now and how far they wish to do it now on the pretext of war or the so-called exigencies of the war.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Of this so-called war?

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Yes. I have always put questions to know whether the war is for India or for the British and Americans and other Allies. What I mean to say is this: India has been helping you and India is giving you men and material and there are people who are helping you, and it is those people—the Members of this House—who are asking you to render accounts of your expenditure to them, which you are not doing. And it is, therefore, that this Committee is being asked for to be appointed. If the Honourable the Finance Member had taken us into confidence and associated at least some Members of this House for the purposes of getting all expenses which are going on now, then there would probably have been no necessity for asking for this Committee. Whenever we put questions or ask for anything relating to the war, *i.e.*, how much money is being spent on war and how it is proposed to make adjustments, we get no reply from the Finance Member. My Honourable friend will remember that I not only put these questions at the question time but I put all these questions when I spoke on the Budget: and I put a direct question to him as to how much money has been spent by him on this war on behalf of India and how much for Britain. I put a clear question to him, but I had no reply from him either at the time of questions or in reply to the Budget speech that I made. Therefore, I have every justification to say that this Committee is very necessary. The Honourable the Finance Member wants to keep things in closed cover till the war is over. We do not know when the war will be over. We do not say anything more than ask you just to tell us something about the matters I have just mentioned, so that we may be in a position to inform our constituencies and to the public at large, that you are doing such and such things and that you are not wasting our money. But you do not want to give any accounts of your expenditure. Therefore, I say that this Committee is absolutely necessary.

Now, Sir, besides that I think and I know it as a fact that there are Departments where there is a lot of waste. For instance, the Supply Department, it was introduced just when the war came on and I do not blame the present

[Mr. Lalchand Navalrai.]

Honourable Member in charge of that Department, because the Supply Department began before this Honourable gentleman took charge of that Department. I do not know and I would rather much like to know if the Honourable the Supply Member understands his men or they are understanding him. That is the question, which I hope the Honourable Member will answer when he gets up for reply.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar (Supply Member): Both, I understand them and they understand me.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I do not think that is so. If you have understood them properly then how these defalcations are taking place under your very nose? Contracts are being given only to a few favoured contractors. If you had understood these men working under you, then nothing of the kind would have happened. Of course, there are not many Sindhis, who are difficult for the Honourable Member to understand. There are others from outside Sind, but you have not understood any of them.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: None of them is from Sind.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I hope, Sir, that the Honourable Member will agree to this Committee being appointed. The Department which is considered to be more expensive and more abused in this matter will then understand properly and see how much money is spent or not and how much money is wasted.

So far as the Army Department is concerned, there also, Sir, I do not know but I am told, the Government has actually launched certain prosecutions against such persons as have been found guilty of defalcation. We know nothing as to what investigations you have been making hitherto or what further investigations you propose to make in regard to this matter. I submit that this is a wrong way of doing things. I want only those men to suffer who are looting public money and wasting it. Therefore, I suggest that for the purpose of making further enquiries into the matter a Committee of the kind asked for in the cut motion should be appointed.

Sir, it is said in this House and my friend, Sir Frederick James, raised this question that this will be a Retrenchment Committee or a Planning Committee or what? I say why go into all these technicalities. He knows what we want. The whole House knows, the Honourable Member himself many a time has been proposing, has been planning so many things of that nature, to save money and to see that money is not wasted. Do not fight with words. We want an *ad hoc* committee of the Legislature to go into the question of the expenditure, the waste that has been committed and to guard against it. We do not say that that waste which has been committed should be reimbursed by the Finance Member. I will say once the money is lost, it is lost; so much money of India has already been lost. It may be said that today you have got two committees, and why should we want this *ad hoc* committee. Those committees have not been doing as much as this proposed committee will do. Their powers are limited. They are hedged round with several restrictions and restraints. I have been for some years a member of the Standing Finance Committee, and I know what the procedure is. The procedure is that certain items are brought before the Standing Finance Committee—not all but some items only for consideration. We are asked to go into those items and sometimes we put questions. Witnesses also come up and we examine them. But what happens after all this? We are not being taken into confidence there in regard to all matters. I think it will be best if I give you the opinion of a high official to throw light on what the functions of the Standing Finance Committee are and whether they are sufficient enough that no *ad hoc* committee need be appointed. In his speech in this House on the 24th February, 1942, our Leader, Dr. P. N. Banerjea, said:

"The Standing Finance Committee bears a dignified name but it possesses no real power (That is what everybody's opinion should be.) Its functions are extremely limited. It is merely an advisory committee and its recommendations need not be accepted by the Finance

Department or the Government of India. It does not deal with revenue or taxation and it confines itself to expenditure, but even there does not cover the whole field of expenditure. Its function is limited to a consideration of a few items of fresh expenditure."

Even now I do not think all the fresh expenditure of the war or of the departments on account of the war is placed before the Committee. Therefore it is that an *ad hoc* committee is necessary:

"Therefore, it is clear that this Committee is not a very useful body.

I should like to place before the House the observations which were made by Sir Malcolm Hailey, now Lord Hailey, who, as Finance Member in 1922, introduced a motion. . . ."

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Is the Honourable Member in order in reading long extracts from previous debates in this House?

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I think the Honourable Member should have patience to hear me. I am not long.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Order, order. I am afraid that is a long quotation that the Honourable Member is making. He can give the substance of it in his own words.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: What I wanted to place before the House was what actually Lord Hailey had said about the functions of this Committee and I think I must read that, and it is this.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): You can leave out the other portion of Dr. Banerjea's speech.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:

"He said that this Standing Finance Committee would perform three main functions. In the first place, it would examine all the papers relating to the budget estimates

As regards the second function, he said:

"The second function will be thus, that in the course of the year we shall probably have to place before the House demands in excess of the budget for the purpose of supplementary vote"

There remains a third function. I should like to be arranged that the Committee should in the course of the year deal with any schemes for fresh expenditure which are put forward by the departments. (Not all.) I would limit these to the major schemes, schemes which will be sufficiently large to have any influence on the budget"

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I submit that it was made clear to the House even then that all matters were not to be placed before the Committee, but only a few matters, at the sweet will of the Finance Member, would be placed before the Committee, and those functions have also been dragged down now. I say that the Standing Finance Committee cannot take the place of this *ad hoc* committee that we are asking for. There should be an *ad hoc* committee to go into all these matters and it is very necessary.

Then, Sir, the other day

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (East Central Punjab: Muhammadan): You must cut your throat according to the sharpness of the razor.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Alright, I cut my coat according to the length of the cloth.

Sir Vithal N. Chandavarkar (Bombay Millowners' Association: Indian Commerce): I wholeheartedly support the principle underlying this cut motion, but at the same time I would like to make my position clear. If I am supporting the principle underlying this motion I am not doing so because I want an investigation into the working of the departments. I make no aspersions on the working of the departments. I would like to take this opportunity of placing before the Honourable the Finance Member certain considerations which have come uppermost in my mind while I was sitting here listening to the debate.

You all remember what happened after the last war. Every Government, every local authority, which had great responsibilities, went on incurring vast expenditure with the result that when the slump came in 1924-25 every Government, every local authority, the larger municipalities, had to appoint retrenchment committees and had to introduce drastic cuts in the expenditure. The

[Sir Vithal N. Chandavarkar.]

consequence was that a great deal of injustice was done to employees and activities which were absolutely necessary in the interests of the nation had to be curtailed. I want to avoid such a catastrophe now. My submission to the Honourable the Finance Member is this. I entirely agree that you cannot have a very close scrutiny when you are running a war, but at the same time I am sure he will agree with me that it is all the more necessary that there should be some machinery for scrutinising expenditure. I do not approve of the idea that the qualification of the members of the committee should be membership of this Legislature. Government is entitled to choose people who in its opinion are likely to be of great help to Government in scrutinising expenditure, but at the same time the appointment of such a committee is eminently desirable. Otherwise, what would happen after the war is over? If there is no proper scrutiny, there may be a great deal of expenditure, waste of money, and in order to wipe that off Government may be called upon and compelled to effect retrenchment of a very drastic nature which may upset the machinery of the administration. I do not agree with Sir Cowasjee Jehangir that this committee should be mainly concerned with the question of allocation of expenditure as between His Majesty's Government and Government of India. I agree that there is a danger in that. If this committee goes into the principle of allocations, His Majesty's Government might try to reopen the whole settlement and we might be adversely affected. But I do not think there can be any objection to the setting up of a machinery for scrutinising whether the allocations are made according to the agreement between His Majesty's Government and the Government of India. When I was some years ago connected with a comparatively small organisation with a budget running to 3½ crores a year, I was a member of the Finance Committee of that organisation. We were just then suffering from the aftermath of huge expenditure on development schemes and we were just trying to make out a workable scheme for introducing retrenchment on the basis of the very valuable report made by Sir M. Viswesrayya. We found that a mere periodic committee of inquiry leads you nowhere and being very much interested in that question—at that time I had lot of spare time and I was reading literature on the general question of retrenchment—I came across a certain maxim which has stuck into my head all the time and that was that retrenchment to be effective must be continuous and not spasmodic. It is from this point of view I place my views before the Finance Member. I am not asking for an investigation into what has happened. All that I submit is that the war has gone on for four years and if the Finance Member accepts the principle underlying this motion and then chooses his own machinery, I do not think any harm will be done. Some Members said—what about the powers of the committee? I am prepared to concede that the ultimate responsibility is with the Government of India. Such a committee cannot exercise any power except that of making recommendations. It is possible that owing to war conditions the Government of India may not be able to place all items of expenditure before such a committee. In that case it is open to the Government to say that in public interests they cannot place certain items of expenditure before this committee and make a report accordingly to the House. It is possible that the Government of India may not be able to accept the recommendations of the committee. In that case, it is open to the Government of India to certify to that effect and make a report accordingly. I do not think the acceptance of the principle underlying this motion will make the Government uncomfortable or obstruct the war effort in any way. It is from this point of view that I support the principle underlying this cut motion, although I do not agree with the Honourable Members who have said that it should consist only of elected Members of the Legislature.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): There has been some difference of opinion about the name which should be given to this committee. Otherwise, I find that on the principle of scrutinising and finding out the defect of the budget there is no objection in this

House. There might be some kind of objection to the personnel of this committee or about other things but about the principle of scrutinising I do not think that there is much difference in this House. Our friend, Sir F. E. James, objects to the word 'scrutiny'. He says that it is tantamount to saying that there must be retrenchment. That is not the real object of this motion. If he is prepared to accept the principle of the motion, as suggested by the last speaker, we might add the word 'estimate'. Perhaps then he will have no objection. You may call it a scrutinising committee or an estimate committee. By whichever name you call it, the principle remains that there ought to be some kind of scrutiny of the vast expenditure of the Government not only on war but on other things. There is a Persian saying, which says:

"Har ki amad imarate nau sakht."

It means: whoever came he put up new building or begins to build according to his own taste. The Moghuls built Delhi according to their own taste. The English built New Delhi according to their own taste. So, is the case with every member of the Government of India who comes and takes charge of the Department in his own hands. We find that since the new Executive Council came into being in 1942 the Government Departments have been distributed from one head to another. Departments have been passing from hand to hand, there have been reshufflings. When a new comer comes, he makes appointments according to his own liking. So, there are bound to be some sort of additions and subtractions. We find that the new Members make appointments according to their own taste. It is impossible for one member of the Government of India to differ from another when he wants to expand his own Department. These two are the matters in respect of which we must find out facts and the necessity for expansions and their exigencies of the moment. We know and the House cannot deny that good government exists only on the foundation of sound public finance and constant scrutiny is the basis of sound finance. If that is so, then why should there be any objection on the part of the Government to accept this motion? If the only objection is that the members of this or the other Legislature should not be introduced into this committee, then the scrutiny will not be considered to be a scrutiny by the representatives of the public of India. If foreigners are co-opted, it will not be called a committee of the House. It will be called a committee of the Government of India. The Government ought to know that under the Government of India Act this House represents the public of India in every sense and in all senses. My friends have pointed out that the expenditure has gone up from 80 crores to 300 crores. This colossal sum requires that there should be some sort of scrutiny or investigation whether it is made under the aegis of the Executive Council alone or under the aegis of the two Houses of the present Legislature. It is for the Government to decide this. What I submit is that the principle of the scrutiny has been established by speeches all over the House and if the Government do not accept this motion, then it will be regarded that the Government do not really want that this amount should be checked. The difference between the Public Accounts Committee and the Standing Finance Committee has been pointed out by my friend, Mr. Neogy, very elaborately. Whether the Government of India will accept this cut motion and give effect to it remains in their own hands but the fact remains that the budgetary system of the present Government of India requires that there ought to be some sort of investigation and some sort of scrutiny. With these remarks I support the motion.

Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam (Surma Valley *cum* Shillong; Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I support the motion moved by my friend, Sir Yamin Khan. The Resolution is so simple and reasonable that any Government which wants the confidence of the people should gladly accept it at once. Sir, taxation is going up higher and higher, and we see that the net tax revenue for 1944-45 is 231 crores and odd whereas the total net tax revenue in 1938-39 was 68.6 crores. Sir, the people who pay so much for the conduct of the Government should be given an opportunity to see to it that no wastage is done. The Honourable the Finance Member has gone to tax the poor man's betelnut

3 P.M.

[Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam.]

in order to find out only 2 crores of rupees. If such a committee as is contemplated under this cut motion had been formed to effect economy in the expenditure before, they would have found out five times 2 crores of rupees for strengthening the hands of Honourable the Finance Member. So, Sir, it is quite reasonable and proper for the Government of India to set up a committee as demanded by my friends opposite to scrutinise the expenditure of the Government of India and to suggest where economy could be effected. I do not want to go into the technicalities which have been indulged in by my friends, Sir Cowasjee Jehangir and Sir Frederick James. The scope of the committee is a very limited one and by appointing it the Government can at once have the confidence of the people from whom they want taxation every year. I do not want to go into the details of the Honourable the Finance Member's speech but there are so many crores of rupees which can easily be found by reducing the expenditure in the Supply Department, the Food Department and several other Departments referred to by my Honourable friends before me. With these few words I support the cut motion moved by my friend Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Sir, I rise to support this cut motion because it is a motion on merits, it is not a political stunt-mongering. I wish that Government will readily accept it; it is necessary. Yesterday the Honourable Sir. Ramaswami Mudaliar very rightly said that part of the bitterness in this House is due to the frustration of our hopes and our views. It is for Government even under this Act of 1935 and 1919 to do whatever they can do within the constitution which will not lead to frustration. Any attempt on their part to become obstinate leads to more frustration and more irresponsibility. When I know that I have nothing to do here except to shout . . .

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: You shout.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: And when I know that my shout will fall on deaf ears, I tend to become irresponsible and to shout louder. But if Government does not put lead into their ears—the Honourable the Finance Member's ears have got absolute lead inside,—things would be different. No sound of reason, no appeal of justice, no cry of distress from 400 millions of people, ever reaches that lead-laden ear. Therefore, you find irresponsibility. Even if under this Act you had taken care to listen to the voice of reason, you would not have, like Cromwell, been thrown to the winds in your old age.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: I think the Honourable Member is referring to Cardinal Wolsey.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Thanks for your correction. It was the Cardinal, he was addressing Cromwell. Oh, Cromwell, Oh, Cromwell, etc. So, if you had served the people of India more than the others, you would not have been thrown to the winds of censure motions as you have been. Therefore, I request in all humility that this motion can legitimately be accepted by a Government which is conscious of its strength; it has nothing to fear and it has everything to gain by the scrutiny which is made of its expenditure.

The main argument is that there ought to be economy. Is it suggested that there should be no economy? But do you know that there is some kind of penny-wise and pound-foolish economy? I find economy practised in a way which will surprise you. The boy who comes to deliver the Assembly papers and cards to me brings a pencil with him to sign my name. One day I saw that the poor fellow was unwilling to show me the pencil. I took it from him and found that it was this small bit of a pencil. This is the economy. I have kept it in my pocket against this motion. I gave him a full pencil in return for this and Government owe me three-fourths of its price. Next day that whole pencil was taken from him and another small piece given. Let this small piece of a pencil remain in the Museum of Antiquity or of Modernity, whichever you like as a sample of the retrenchment methods of the Government. It is not worth one anna; it is worth a thousand rupees. I will ever keep it as a memento from a chaprassi of the Assembly whom the Government of India gave this pencil as a measure of economy.

But when you come to examine the bigger things, as we say in Bombay, the doors are kept open and the chinks are closed. This is the chink that you close and the doors are open by which God knows what waste is going on. Apart from the increase of other expenditure of the pre-war years, the army expenditure has gone up from 36 crores to 276 crores. If you watch the progress of the rate, it is increasing year after year almost by geometrical progression. I do think that this House, whatever little opportunities it may have, must feel a sense of responsibility to the tax-payer on whose behalf we rightly claim to speak that this expenditure is necessary and can be justified. I know the difficulty of pursuing expenditure. I know that we will find it extraordinarily difficult to test whether a particular expenditure was necessary or not. The Honourable the Finance Member tried to induce my Honourable friend, Mr. Neogy, to pursue his inquiry into the munition factory, but Mr. Neogy refused to be trapped. I am willing to be trapped. If Mr. Neogy had agreed he would have stated that it is extraordinarily difficult to test, but still there is such a thing as a public scrutiny. And I may tell my Honourable friend, the Finance Member, that what with lease-lend and what with reciprocal aid and what with ordinary expenditure and the effect of rise in prices, and the cost of what are called war measures,—all these, I can assure him, are a perfect maze to follow. His speeches, year after year, do not show any consistent line on which I can test his figures. This year he has given up the attempt himself and he has accepted the Commander-in-Chief's authority as the final word. It seems clear that he himself is unable to follow. I have a very high regard for the Commander-in-Chief, and I hope he has a high regard for this House and for the taxpayer. Then for the last two years, we have got the additional figure, "the capital expenditure", which is very nearly approaching the pre-war revenue expenditure. Is that not a picture which should at least put us on our guard? I do not characterise any expenditure as absolutely unnecessary nor do I say that the Departments are full of corruption; although I do not say these things, yet a responsible Government would not hesitate to accept fears and misgivings voiced in the House. I may agree that the Honourable Members of the House being non-technical some outside assistance may be necessary. I do not mind if some technical experts are associated, but we who sit here from day to day have got a grip which even experts will not have. The people who follow the fortunes of their country in the matter of taxation from day to day, they have in spite of their being laymen got a grip on the public pulse on the one hand and on the public purse on the other and they are rightly qualified to judge of the wisdom or otherwise of any expenditure. I am quite clear that if the scope of the committee was as wide as I think it should be, such questions can be gone into as to why the price rose so suddenly and steeply, whether the Government did not set the ball rolling by paying fancy prices to contractors and even to millowners—all these things can legitimately come under review and the Government will lose nothing, if they are right, they will be strengthened by the result of this scrutiny; if they are wrong they will get an opportunity to improve and everybody will be satisfied that the taxpayers' money was being properly used. Sir, as this is not a political cut motion, but a pure motion on merit, the Government should have no hesitation in accepting the same.

Sir Syed Raza Ali: Sir, I rise to say a few words on the merits of this motion which is before the House. The chief merit of the motion, if I may say so, is that it does not seek to tread on anybody's toes. It does not affect anybody's rights in this country.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari (Tanjore *cum* Trichinopoly: Non-Muhammadan Rural): A large assumption. How do you know that?

Sir Syed Raza Ali: I very much hope so. That is all I can say. Along with that, I would very briefly invite the attention of this House to what took place during and after the last war. We know that in the years 1914-1918, though for a part of the time a very vigilant Finance Minister presided over his Department, yet the finances of the country unfortunately were not very carefully looked after. We also know as to what share of the burden fell on the shoulders of India in connection with the Mesopotamian campaign. That

[Sir Syed Raza Ali.]

campaign became a perfect riddle and our finances were so heavily involved that an Indian who was an expert in financial matters had to go through the whole accounts which had to be settled somehow or other. Possibly some of the Honourable Members of this House perhaps know as to how the final settlement between England and India was arrived at. There was a feeling at the time and there is a feeling among a section of the people, I mean those who took an interest in that affair, even now that the settlement finally proved detrimental to the interests of India. The result of all these muddles was that a very strong Committee presided over by Lord Inchcape and known as the Inchcape Committee was appointed. It took a fairly long time to go through the whole question and it produced a very drastic report. Indeed that, as Honourable Members would remember, was after the war. Now, Sir, I put it to the Honourable the Finance Member and the Government of India what do they propose to do this time. Do they propose to learn a lesson from what happened in the years 1914-1918 or sleep over this affair till the war is over and then leave it to the Government of India and the British authorities in England to take drastic steps and reduce our normal pre-war expenditure by about 30 to 40 per cent? I am sure nobody desires to follow that course. If that is so, I am quite sure and I have no doubt in my mind that it is up to the Government of India to look into this matter and not allow matters to drift into a hopeless condition.

As has been mentioned there are two different Committees appointed by this House that look into the financial affairs. The first is the Standing Finance Committee and the second is the Public Accounts Committee. Now, Sir, the Standing Finance Committee, though charged with very important functions has hardly any time to go into the Budget side, the debit and the credit side of our Budget in a normal year. Now, Sir, our Budget figures have mounted to colossal figures. It would not be right to expect the Finance Committee, which apart from other things has very little real power, to be charged with this additional burden. The other Committee is the Public Accounts Committee. That Committee, as one of the Honourable Members pointed out, performs only *post mortem* examination, which is useful in certain ways, but it is powerless to influence or settle broad policy of the Government of India. If the Government of India is really anxious not to let India's expenditure go up unnecessarily, the only means by which the object could be achieved is to appoint a committee on the lines proposed in the cut motion before the House. Sir, the appointment of this committee would be a very useful thing and would benefit every section of the community not excluding even the Government of India itself.

The impression is, and all newspapers readers know as to how a very large number of posts has been added in every Department and the general belief is that in some of the Departments about 25 per cent. of men have not got sufficient work even though, during these days of war, no enthusiastic employee of the Government of India is supposed to return home before seven o'clock in the evening. What they do from ten o'clock in the morning till four o'clock in the afternoon is a mystery. There is always sufficient work in the evening so far as the general impression goes. But if there is not sufficient work in the morning how do they engage themselves from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.? The point really is this. It may be that this general impression is not wholly and entirely correct; it may be that it is exaggerated, but in the absence of facts and figures it is not open to the Government of India to say that the notion that generally prevails on this subject is exaggerated. As I said, the recommendation contained in the motion is so reasonable that one hardly realises on what ground it can possibly be open to the Government of India to oppose a motion of this character,—Government which is always shouting for co-operation from the Benches which face them in this House. Here is a sincere and genuine offer of co-operation with Government,—within limits of course,—and an olive branch is held out to the Government of India. Let us see if

they are now prepared to go half-way and come to terms with those whose co-operation they say they are always so solicitous to seek.

Sir, I support the motion.

Mr. Sami Vencatchelam Chetty (Madras: Indian Commerce): Sir, I feel no hesitation whatsoever in supporting this motion. In fact I cannot imagine how any reasonable man can possibly have any objection to accepting a motion of this sort unless he feels that there is something very much rotten in the State of Denmark to be concealed from the scrutinising eyes of the Members of this Legislature. The Honourable the Finance Member who is very meticulous about the manner in which our money is being spent, having regard to the difficulties of realising these moneys from the poor taxpayers of this country, ought to welcome a step of this kind, unless he felt that the members of the committee who would be elected by this Legislative Assembly would be far too critical and far too fault-finding. I do not think anybody as a member of the committee is going to be so unreasonable as to find fault with the actual policy of allocation of military expenditure between India and the United Nations. So far as the work of this committee is concerned, the terms of reference are quite clear. There need be no fear whatsoever in regard to the possibility of members of the committee entrenching upon the close and sacred preserves of allocation of expenditure in regard to the defence services. So, the fears that might have been entertained by my Honourable friend, Sir Narayan Chandavarkar, are, I think, based upon an illusion; and I understand that so far as the parties here are concerned they are in favour of this motion, excepting the members of the European Group who seem to base their case on the ground that because when they moved for an estimates committee with regard to war expenditure or the Finance Department the other parties objected, therefore they will now turn round and object to this motion. I am rather surprised that that was the kind of reason that was advanced by my Honourable friend, Sir Frederick James. Our war expenditure is mounting up far too high; it is going up in astronomical proportions; and it is necessary for us to know how these moneys are being spent and in what ways it is possible to suggest ways of retrenchment and cutting down expenditure. I am sure the knowledge and advice of Members of this House would be of great assistance to the Finance Member in putting down expenditure and probably in exposing some of the sources by which corruption has come in. I am sure it is not the case of the Finance Member that there are no items of wasteful expenditure and no chances of corruption. On the other hand he must be fully aware of the possibilities of corruption and of wasteful expenditure during these hectic times of war. And after all the formation of the committee need not be feared by the Finance Member because it is not going to affect what has already been spent. It will only show how badly and wastefully the money has been spent and how this bad and wasteful expenditure can be avoided and to keep on a concurrent audit as it were. In such a case it is a matter of surprise that Government should take up any attitude other than that of accepting and supporting this motion. Moreover, as has been very pertinently pointed out by my Honourable friend, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, it is one of the chances by which the Executive Council, though it might not be responsible to the Legislative Assembly, might at least be responsive. It does not affect any of their fundamental theories of administration or of rule or of Indianisation or any of such more important problems. It only deals with the manner in which the moneys that are allocated for the war are being spent. I see absolutely no ground on which any reasonable Member of the Assembly or of Government could possibly take objection to a proposal of this kind. Sir, I support the motion.

Mr. S. C. Chatterji (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I rise to oppose the appointment of this committee because I doubt whether this committee would serve any useful purpose. I am not convinced by the speeches that I have heard from the Mover and his supporters that it will serve any useful purpose. I, however, wish to oppose this motion for another special reason. This motion seeks to make an invidious distinction between the elected Members of

[Mr. S. C. Chatterji.]

this House and the nominated non-official Members. Sir, I have myself been an elected Member of the Legislature in my own province; and but for the fact that the Government of the time in that province thought in their wisdom, unwisely to my mind, that they would be serving the interests of the country best by quitting office, I should not have been here at all. Since, however, I happen to be here. . . .

Mr. Muhammad Ashar Ali: Bad luck.

Mr. S. C. Chatterji: . . . I should like to point out to Members sitting opposite that I am here as the representative and the solitary representative, nominated though I might be, of seven-and-a-quarter million nationals of this country. (Interruptions.)

An Honourable Member: Who are they?

Mr. S. C. Chatterji: Sir, the Mover of this motion yesterday while speaking on another cut motion made certain observations, and the special reason for which I have stood up to speak is to enter a protest against those observations. Incidentally, Sir, I might inform Members of the House, who may not be aware of the fact, that the disgruntled Knight from Meerut seems to have forgotten his own genesis. . . .

An Honourable Member: How is it? Order, order.

Mr. S. C. Chatterji: . . . as he has served his probation as a diligent 'chaprassi' not only in this House but in the other House of the Legislature also.

(At this stage there were many interruptions.)

An Honourable Member: You are mistaken.

Sir Munammad Yamin Khan: On a point of explanation, Sir. (Interruptions.) He should withdraw his silly remarks; he should withdraw his absurd remarks. It is on record that I voted against the Government several times.

Mr. S. C. Chatterji: Sir, I have very great respect for the Deputy Leader of the Muslim League Party. Also, I do not for a moment question the statesmanship and even the patriotism of the great Leader of the Muslim League Party and the great Leader of the Mussalmans of India. I have not had the pleasure of hearing him in this House, but I have heard him on various occasions. (Interruptions.)

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Order, order.

(Mr. S. C. Chatterji was standing in his seat.)

Sit down please. You should be just to the point.

An Honourable Member: He is a nominated Member.

Mr. S. C. Chatterji: Sir, I was referring to the invidious distinction that the cut motion draws between the two types of Members of this House. All the Members have equal privileges. . . .

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): You have said that already; you need not repeat that again.

Mr. S. C. Chatterji: I would add that the Honourable the Mover of this motion owes it to me and to some Members of this House who represent in this House interests which are not represented by elected Members—I mean, for example, Members representing the Scheduled Castes.

Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang (East Punjab: Muhammadan): Dr. Ambedkar is there.

Mr. S. C. Chatterji: I think the Mover of this motion,—who I understand has had much longer parliamentary experience than I have so far had,—if he has any sense of decency, I hope he will make amends for the uncalled for observations that he made yesterday.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: You have justified that you deserve more than that.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Has he spoken for the Government; is this the Government point of view?

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Sir Henry Richardson.

An Honourable Member: Another nominated Member!

Sir Henry Richardson (Nominated Non-Official): Yes, I am a nominated Member and to some extent I sympathize and agree with my Honourable friend who spoke just now.

Since Sir Frederick James, my colleague, spoke on this motion this morning and explained the position of my Group, several speakers have mentioned certain remarks which I made relating to this question in my speech during the General Budget discussion. They have suggested that the terms mentioned in the cut motion in fact provide the machinery for my proposals. I think Mr. Neogy made that statement. As a matter of fact, Sir, they do nothing of the sort (Interruptions.) and just as Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan some years ago found another machine unsuitable at that time and voted against it, so do we today consider that his machine is unsuitable at this time.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: What is your machine?

Sir Henry Richardson: My suggestion was for a more continuous, purposeful, independent and expert check on waste of all kinds and obsolescence particularly in respect of those projects and Departments of Government which are purely war time creations. I ask, can a committee of this House possibly carry out the onerous and exacting task which these words imply? Would Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan be prepared to sit continuously. . . .

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Yes, certainly; if I accept membership I will do so.

Sir Henry Richardson: And other members?

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: If they accept membership, they will also do that.

Sir Henry Richardson: I doubt it, Sir. Would this House be able to provide all the experts which would be necessary to cover the vast field of war-time expenditure in which the Government is now involved?

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: Government will provide experts.

Sir Henry Richardson: You ask for a committee of this House. A committee of this House would lose itself in the intricacies of Government finance, and if I were a dishonest Finance Member, I would accept this proposal knowing full well that it would be quite easy to lead that committee up the garden path. (Interruptions.) Honourable Members are deceiving themselves when they think that the objects they have in view could be achieved by the means they suggest. We are aware of existing means of check and we know that they do not provide the solution which is sought. I refer to those *post mortem* committees which we have heard so much of and other means. But we are also aware of checks which the Finance Member himself has instituted in the various big war time spending Departments and many of us have reason to know that the strictness of those controls have often been so severe as to hold up and impede the war effort. Some of those Financial Advisers that have been put into the positions of responsibility, especially in the early days when their control was very much stricter than it is today, actually did involve work being done over and over again because of the control that was exercised at that time. But we are approaching the time when some of these Departments are declining in their activities. One example I will quote is the Civil Defence Department. What is happening to the very large staff of that Department? What is happening to the stores? What is happening to the equipment? Now the scope of an enquiry into this one subject alone would probably necessitate touring in the provinces, and enquiries covering a very large area. A Committee of this House could not possibly undertake all that would be necessary for a thorough-going investigation which alone can hope to achieve check on vast wastes and the disposal of surpluses to avoid obsolescence. We still think that an Estimates Committee on the lines suggested some years ago might be found to provide assistance but naturally I agree with what Sir Vithal Chandavarkar said just now that ultimately Government themselves must decide on the best means of achieving what this House has in mind, and I am sure Government must agree to do so in principle.

[Sir Henry Richardson,]

Sir, waste under the guise of war is one of the easiest forms of sanction to unlimited expenditure. It is to stop this that the House considers Government should try and formulate some form of continuous and expert check such as I have suggested.

(For a while no Honourable Member stood up. Then the Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman rose in his seat but gave way to Mr. N. M. Joshi.)

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I will speak after you.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Someone must get up.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Sir, as nobody is getting up to speak I propose that you now put the motion to the vote.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I have always understood that in dealing with a out motion, Government has the right to hear what the House has to say and then reply before the motion was put to the division. I have never understood that the Government Member was expected to speak at an early stage in a motion of this kind when there would be other speakers.

Well, I do not know what other speakers propose to speak after me but I can deal with the debate as it has proceeded up till now.

I must say that I have listened with the closest attention to all the speakers today because I was very anxious to find out exactly what they had in mind. I wanted to know in some detail what was their concrete and precise conception of what should be done, what kind of Committee they would like and how that Committee should operate. I must admit that I found it very difficult indeed to fill in the picture. I was not merely being ironical when I asked my Honourable friend, Mr. Neogy, to go on when he was suggesting—supposing Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan went to a munitions factory: then he went off at a tangent and he said they would shoot him. In my desire to hear what exactly was contemplated, I offered to guarantee that my Honourable friend, Sir Yamin Khan, would be admitted and welcomed and I did honestly want to know exactly what the Honourable Member had in mind, what useful form of inspection or scrutiny could be carried out by Honourable Members of this House, even if it were possible and convenient for them to roam freely over the whole field.

The first difficulty, as the Honourable the Mover himself realised is that we have two Committees of the House who already deal with finance. There is the Standing Finance Committee and there is the Public Accounts Committee. But he said the Public Accounts Committee makes a *post mortem* investigation, and so apparently that was not what he had in mind, although many subsequent speakers have suggested that the function of this Committee should be to conduct, at any rate, retrospective investigations into what was happening. But it was not quite clear how if a Committee did that its function could be distinguished from that of the Public Accounts Committee.

Then of course there is the Standing Finance Committee, which is intended to be prospective, so to speak, rather than retrospective and there his difficulty was that the Standing Finance Committee apparently is so busy that it does not have time to give sufficient attention to the material which is placed before it.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: You do not allow them sufficient time.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That is because I try to arrange the meetings during the Sessions and do not call them up at other times?

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: That is wrong.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That is the objection.

Do I understand from my Honourable friend that if the Standing Finance Committee had more time to carry out its functions that that would largely meet his objections? I believe not!

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: That would have been better than it is now, but it would not serve the present object.

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

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Well, I shall come back in a little while to the question of these two Committees. I feel that several points have been raised in the course of the debate which call for some reply from me before I come back to the actual problem which is presented to me by a motion of this kind. I want particularly to deal with some of the remarks made by Sardar Mangal Singh, because he seemed to suspect that I was deliberately keeping certain information from him. It is true that when I replied to the general debate on the Budget the other day, there were many points which I found it impossible to cover although I had material before me and had intended to reply to them; and the questions which he asked were among those points. He wished to know, as far as I remember, what were the figures of war expenditure by His Majesty's Government in India during the year subsequent to 1942-1943 because in years up to and including that the figure has been regularly mentioned in the Budget speech. Well, in order to disabuse him that there is any attempt of suppression of facts, I will give him the figures which I had before me at that time but could not bring in to my reply.

The estimated figure for the year 1943-44 was Rs. 385.2 crores as compared with a total Indian expenditure of Rs. 300.9 crores.

The estimated figure for the year 1944-45 is Rs. 443 crores as compared with the Indian estimated expenditure of Rs. 301.2 crores. I have brought those figures in merely

Sardar Mangal Singh: These are the estimates. What is the actual expenditure?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I am talking of the year 1943-44 which is not yet completed and for which accounts have not yet been made up; and I am talking of the year 1944-45 which has not begun, and therefore I can only give him estimates. That is one of the reasons why I did not mention the figures. I cannot give actual figures. The figures for previous years which I have mentioned before were actual figures.

Now, Sir, I do not think this is a suitable occasion for me to go again over the question of the troops for which India has paid or the forces for which India is liable and the question of the interpretation of the financial settlement, because I have already spoken on that subject and I dare say I may have to speak on it again. I do not think it is directly relevant to this particular motion. But I must deal with Sir Cowasjee Jehangir's point, because he has made it more than once and I am afraid that I have still failed to enable him to appreciate the difficulty in his suggestion. Sir Cowasjee Jehangir appears to me to have entirely a different conception of the Committee that was required from almost any one else, an example of how various speakers have agreed in supporting the motion with different ideas about the object which is envisaged. Sir Cowasjee Jehangir wants a Committee not confined to Members of this House to scrutinise, so to say, the working of the financial settlement and the actual allocation of expenditure under the financial settlement between India and Britain. Now, what I have tried to point out to him in the past is this. The primary allocation of charges between India and Britain is done by what I may call the Indian machinery i.e., the machinery of the Indian Finance Department. It is audited by the Indian Audit Department under the Auditor General and no separate British machinery either allocates or audits allocation. The primary accounts are prepared in India and they are audited in India and the results of that allocation and that audit are placed before the Public Accounts Committee of this House. Now, even the Auditor General of India has been delegated, as it were, certain function on behalf of the Auditor General of England, at any rate, the Auditor General of England accepts the position that when the audit has been carried out in India, it is unnecessary for him to ask any independent machinery again to go through it, so that the same accounts which are presented to the Public Accounts Committee of this House are duly presented to the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament. Now the position is that this House

[The Hon. Sir Jeremy Raisman.]

through its Committee should receive satisfaction and the Parliament through its Committee should receive satisfaction

An Honourable Member: That is done only during war years.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I am explaining the regular position under the settlement. If for any reason you wish to disturb that constitutional machinery, if you say "I am not entirely satisfied" (and I do not know on what grounds, but you seem to imply that it is impossible to entrust this task to Public Accounts Committee of this House which has the capacity to deal adequately with this question), whatever your grounds may be, but you say "I am not satisfied with the position, and I want some other Committee to go into this matter", then you depart entirely from the constitutional position. What is there to prevent the British side to say "we want some other Committee to go into this matter. We notice that in every year our expenditure on war in India is the lion's share. *Prima facie* these allocations are made primarily by the other side, by the Government of India, and while we are not satisfied we would like to have our own independent machinery and our own enquiry committee to go into the matter". You get into a position, in fact, of mutual lack of trust and so on, and the whole thing is liable to be churned up again. In fact there is no practical solution. After all you have to satisfy two constitutional bodies: two separate constitutions have to be satisfied in respect of this expenditure as you go on, so to speak, to divide the cake between the two. That is the difficulty which I have tried to explain to Sir Cowasjee Jehangir. It may be, he may have a feeling that he would like to have somebody else to go into the matter further, but there, it seems to me, that is not possible. I do not admit for a moment that there is anything whatever that could not be subjected to the scrutiny of any number of Committees. But I think it is not desirable at the present moment especially when there is an official machinery which exercises an objective and dispassionate judgment and which is audited by the Auditor General who is in this regard in exactly the same position as a higher judicial authority. Whatever is presented to him, he does not pass his decisions thereon either to the advantage of India or to the advantage of Britain. He says "What was your settlement, what did you say and what did you agree to? According to what you agree to, this falls to your share". In case one party tried to argue, is that going to get us any further? That is a judicial procedure which should be adopted by a more or less impartial authority.

On the question of allocation of the defence expenditure, I cannot see how a Committee of this kind could enter the field. On the question of control it may be argued that there is a good deal of defence expenditure which you have to control. This defence expenditure is incurred by a number of military authorities, Commanders in the field and various types of military authorities.

An Honourable Member: What about the military engineering service, and the contracts?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Yes, I quite agree that in regard to that it is possible, I do not say prospectively or concurrently. If the audit operates, it is possible for a Committee to examine what was done, and actually, of course, that is done by the Public Accounts Committee.

An Honourable Member: That is a *post mortem* examination.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: My Honourable friend himself was a member of the Military Accounts Committee which cross-examined the Engineer-in-Chief in regard to the military constructions and contracts. My Honourable friend says that is a *post mortem* examination. What exactly is the alternative? The military works in which I myself was closely interested concerned the construction, for instance, of a number of air-fields and various other works. The trouble was that most of those works were executed in a great hurry and under stress of urgent military necessity. What exactly—and I ask this in all seriousness—what exactly would be the function of the Committee of this House in relation to that situation?

What would you do? Would you call the Committee of the House together and say, "Well, now, there are 40 airfields to be constructed within the space of 2 or 3 months, and there are various other things. We have to have accommodation in such and such a district for 150,000 men who have never been there before, where no troops have ever been". What would you do? Would you consult the Committee as to the method in which you should set about that? Would the Committee sit here from day to day and would it discuss with the military authorities which require these works the degree of urgency, how long they could wait, what should be the specification of the works, where the labour should be got from, and so on? How exactly—and again I say in all seriousness—would the Committee of this House help me, as Honourable Members have said they would like to do, in the work of scrutiny—and a scrutiny which is not *post mortem*, that is to say, in some way prospectively and concurrently.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: They will help you in finding out whether the rates are proper or not.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: It cannot be done.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan—and here again I would like to emphasise that I am speaking with intense seriousness, since many Members of this House have said, how does the Government resist a suggestion of this kind, and I do not want, I am very anxious not to alienate the feelings of Members who wish to approach this matter entirely on the merits and are not anxious to do what can be done any day in this House, namely, inflict a defeat on the Government. It is nothing new that we are in the position in which we cannot rely on a majority in the House, and so, if anybody is acting from any political motives, then, of course, there is nothing we can do about it. We can have the monotonous spectacle of divisions day after day, or hour after hour or even every half hour, but whether that helps to induce a sense of responsibility either on this side of the House or on that side of the House, I will leave to others to judge. But it should be remembered that that situation works both ways.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: How do you react to it yourself?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: My reaction? I will be quite frank with the Honourable Member. My reaction is this. There are a number of matters on which I should be very glad to know exactly what the sober judgment and feeling of the Members of this House in regard to the merits are. I consider that in the House at present it is impossible for me to get an answer to any of those questions, because, if my Honourable friend, for instance, were to raise a question or move a cut motion in which in all seriousness he wished to debate a point or to elicit some information from the Government, he would almost certainly find that he was unable to withdraw that cut motion because once the possibility of inflicting a defeat on the Government has arisen on the floor of the House there would be so many people who cannot refrain from exploiting the opportunity, and therefore the result is that we have complete irresponsibility all round. That is my personal reaction to the position.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Shut up this House then.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I leave that to my Honourable friend. But as a Member of the Government who has a good deal of work to do, and work of difficult and exacting character,—as one who has always tried to carry reasonable opinion with him I can only say that the position which exists at the present moment is one in which it is virtually impossible to carry out one's functions in a satisfactory manner.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Have you carried reasonable opinion about railway fares with you?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I believe, if that question were considered entirely on the merits, I would get 99 per cent. of reasonable opinion with me.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Don't make a condition.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I do not mean people who dislike paying higher fares, because then I myself would be in the class, I would have to support you. Everybody dislikes it, but then I believe most forms of anti-inflationary action are unpopular, and so is that one.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maatra (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): What is the percentage of reasonable opinion which likes the enhancement of fares?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I am afraid I have strayed somewhat from my point, but I was saying that I was anxious to try and visualise exactly how a committee functioning in this way could help in dealing with these problems. My Honourable friend, the Mover of this cut motion, drew my attention to bribery and corruption of which I hear so much and of which I am indeed distressed to hear, and I wish I could obtain assistance in dealing with it effectively. I personally would be prepared to stop at nothing in order to eradicate the evil. How exactly will a committee of this kind help us to eradicate bribery and corruption from particular departments? I find it rather difficult to visualise. It is true, as my Honourable friend says, that a good deal goes on and may go on, that never comes to my knowledge, except, of course, that letters are sent to me, anonymous letters, and Honourable Members sometimes speak to me on matters of this kind or mention them in a general way. But how exactly would his Committee deal with this particular evil? If I could concretely visualise that, I could see possibly great value in a committee of this kind, but I find it difficult, again, to visualise exactly how it would operate.

Sir Syed Raza Ali: I have no desire to interrupt the Honourable Member. But may I point out that the very existence of such a committee would remove many of the difficulties which have been specifically put before this House by the Honourable Member—the very existence of such a committee?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: You create new problems also.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I do not quite see that. If that were the case, if the mere existence of the committee were to do that, then, of course, we could call it into being and let it exist.

Sir Syed Raza Ali: I do not mean that the Honourable Member should treat this committee in the same way as the Treasury Benches treat this side of the House. I do not mean that. I meant really a live committee, a committee which, if necessary, would function.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I am trying to visualise—that is the point. As regards existence of the committee, I see no difficulty, because you have only got to appoint a committee. But when one tries to get to the actual working of the committee I find it difficult.

Now, my Honourable friend of the European Group, Sir F. E. James, mentioned an Estimates Committee which he had wanted some years ago and he wished to know what would be my reactions to a committee of that kind. Well, an Estimates Committee works in a different way, of course, from our Standing Finance Committee. What it does is to take blocks of the accounts, so to speak, periodically. Every year, it would take different parts of the field of Government expenditure and go through them fairly carefully and in this way it would make a minute study of particular departments spread over a period of years. In this way, it would cover the whole field of Government expenditure and in the course of that examination, it would bring to light many matters which ought to be brought to notice. That is what was done in England. But I believe at the present moment and during the war the Estimates Committee is in abeyance, because it does not correspond to the needs of a war time situation.

Sir F. E. James: There is, of course, the National Committee on Expenditure.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I am coming to that. In England they have put the Estimates Committee in suspense, because it is not very useful at the present time. Now, they have there had for some time a

National Committee on Expenditure. Two things have happened. One is that the National Committee on Expenditure has found itself trying to cover to a large extent the same field as the Public Accounts Committee. The Public Accounts Committee, as here, takes a good deal of time to go through the accounts. We here try to get through and finish with our report in about three weeks or somewhat less and we have had great difficulty here in fitting the Public Accounts Committee in such a way as to meet the convenience of all the people who have to come together in order that the work of that committee should be carried out. I am one of the people, of course, who are chiefly affected and I find it increasingly difficult to fit the Public Accounts Committee into my annual programme. In England, they have now found that the same busy officials have to appear both before the Public Accounts Committee and the Select Committee. That is one difficulty. But another difficulty is this. In order that a committee of that kind should function, a tremendous amount of material has to be prepared by the departments. It is no use Honourable Members of this House deluding themselves into the belief that they can just sit round a table and discuss the question of Government expenditure in the abstract. They will have to have a tremendous amount of material, and not merely the accounts as presented. The figures will have to be presented in new ways. They will ask new questions. The whole of the material has to be worked up again in the departments, but now in England I am informed that that has proved an almost intolerable burden. It has presented the administration with a very serious problem indeed. In England, they have their staff on a scale which is many times the scale on which we are staffed here. In fact, single departments in Whitehall are as large as the whole of the Government of India. The Food Department is, I believe, larger than all the Government of India and all the Provincial Governments put together. That is the scale on which they are staffed. (Interruption.) Here we have a handful of men. Our chief difficulty is skilled administrative personnel. In particular, the work of financial control can only be done by people who have a certain amount of financial training. Of these, I have a very limited supply and they have now to carry out duties many times more than was ever necessary in the past. Those men are utterly over-worked. It is the worst bottle neck of all and when the word 'economy' is used, as it is used in relation to a debate like this, I am bound to say to you that economy in money or economy of any other kind is unimportant by comparison with the question of economy of skilled manpower which is necessary for work of this kind. Now, I should think myself failing in my primary duty if I laid any more burdens on that particular staff. I do not care what votes of censure this House may wish to inflict on me as the head of this department but I would rather endure 20 votes of censure than ask these men to undertake still more of the work which is killing them.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: 20 votes of censure will not hurt you at all?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: If Honourable Members can suggest ways in which they can helpfully assist in the work of controlling the expenditure without laying further burdens on a staff which is already undergoing the most desperate strain, then I should be very happy to discuss it with them. But I must make it quite clear that I could not contemplate for a moment the setting up of a further committee in addition to the committees which already exist—the setting up of a further committee which would make more demands on that staff. It is a staff which has deserved exceedingly well of the Government and of the country. It has done yeoman service and its standard of effort is beyond all praise. Sir F. E. James referred to an unfortunate casualty which has just occurred amongst that staff. That is an example of an officer who is completely irreplaceable.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has exceeded his time limit but if the House desires to hear him I have no objection.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum (North-West Frontier Province: General): He does not care for censure motions and we do not care for his speech.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: At the age of 38, this officer had reached a maturity of judgment and a degree of experience (*An Honourable Member*: "This is poetry, not finance") which were absolutely invaluable for precisely the purposes which the House is interested in, namely, the negotiation of contracts in regard to such matters as supply and food. Well, I have no doubt whatever that he is a war casualty. I do not know how gaps of that kind are to be filled. I do not know if Honourable Members can tell me how I am to replace personnel of that kind. I shall be glad to hear their suggestions but as far as I am aware we are desperately short of men and I certainly cannot possibly agree to place any more burdens on the shoulders of the existing over-worked staff. If Honourable Members think that the Standing Finance Committee is unnecessary at this time or if they think that the work of the Public Accounts Committee could be very greatly reduced. . . .

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: Increased, not reduced.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Increased, you think? If they can suggest ways in which the pressure on the machine can be reduced in order to make it possible to provide for the functioning of an additional committee, then I would be very glad to consider a suggestion of that kind.

Mr. R. E. Gupta (Cities of the United Provinces: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Will you give an assurance that if we can suggest some suitable formula for the appointment of such a Committee, you will accept it in principle?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Yes, I entirely agree on the principle of endeavouring to secure economy in Government expenditure by every possible means. I am at one with my friend, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, in spite of the hard things he says about me. He says the hardest things of all Members of this House, but I have the warmest regard for him in spite of all that. I regard him as a foeman worthy of one's steel. At the same time, I entirely agree that it is impossible for any Finance Member to oppose in principle a motion of this kind. My difficulties are not difficulties of principle; my difficulties are practical, detailed difficulties. My difficulty throughout in today's debate was to get a clear idea of what Members had in common and to visualise the common content and how it can be carried out. I must admit that I have so far failed to do that. If, therefore, I am asked: What is my reply to the motion, I can only say that I should have to study the speeches that have been made for some time longer than I have been able to do today, that I should have to consider whether there is any common content which could be met and, above all, whether it is practicable with the machinery at our disposal to make the working of such a committee fruitful. I am quite prepared, as I said, to bring a Committee into existence. That is a comparatively small matter. But what I am not prepared to undertake is that I can provide the official assistance which I know will be necessary in order to make such a committee operate usefully. That is where I have my doubts and they are of a most serious kind. It is absolutely fundamental with me that I cannot increase the burden on my administrative staff without providing any compensatory relief. Any further functions that are laid upon them must somehow come out of the total quantum which is already laid on them. In fact, the position there is exactly the same as I described in regard to the economy of India in my Budget speech. You cannot get a quart out of a pint pot. The staff that will have to assist you are already working at a pitch, which means that there is an imminent danger of breaking down. You cannot get them to do any more. You can kill them, but you cannot get more out of them. So, if you wish to have material provided for the work of the Committee, you have somehow to suggest how you will relieve them of a corresponding amount of work. On that simple issue, I do assert that it is quite impossible to proceed with a Committee unless that Committee requires no official assistance, which I cannot conceive.

I do not know if there is any specific question which Honourable Members expect me to answer in the course of my reply. But on the main question, my answer can only be that I should like to have further time to study what has been said on this motion and to consider whether it would be possible to meet the generally expressed desire for something of this kind to be done. But whatever it should be, it would have to be subject to the overriding condition that it should be practicable in relation to our man-power position. If that is accepted by the Honourable the Mover as being a substantial compliance with the main object which he has in view, then I should be very happy to do that. But if he considers it unsatisfactory then I regret that I cannot go any further and must oppose the motion.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Sir, but for certain remarks that have been made by the Honourable the Finance Member, I would not have felt justified in taking the time of this Honourable House. Before I deal with his speech, let me dispose off my Honourable friends, Mr. Chatterji and the Leader of the European Group. My Honourable friend, Mr. Chatterji, was angry and greatly annoyed with my friend, Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, for certain remarks which he is alleged to have made and which Mr. Chatterji misunderstood. He is a Professor and I am sure he will understand my meaning when I say: 'My lady protests too much.'

Now, I come to the speech of my Honourable friend, the Leader of the European Group. It seems that thorough as he is on other occasions in the study of the subject which is for discussion before this Honourable House, he did not take the trouble of even reading the language in which the cut motion is framed.

Sir Henry Richardson: I did read it.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: My Honourable friend says he did. I am not quite sure if he was quite wide awake when he did that because he stated that if there was a Committee of non-official Members, it would not be able to discover anything because what do the non-official Members know about the intricacies of finance and so on? But if he had read the motion carefully, he would have found that my Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, was very careful in stating that the Committee should have suitable officials to assist it. Then, Sir, he said that if the Honourable the Finance Member was a dishonest man, he would put the Committee on the wrong road. If we had thought that Sir Jeremy Raisman was a dishonest man, we would not have come forward with this motion. I do not think that my Honourable friend the Leader of the European Group did justice to Sir Jeremy Raisman.

Sir Henry Richardson: As usual, the Honourable Member has quite misunderstood what I have said.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Now, I come to the speech of my Honourable friend the Finance Member. He said that the object of this motion is to inflict a political defeat on the Government.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: No, I did not say that. I must protest.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: May I ask my Honourable friend to repeat what he said and what did he mean?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: What I said was that it has been suggested in various quarters that I should deal with this motion on its merits and therefore I was anxious to deal with it on the merits. Then, I was asked some questions about my reaction to political defeats.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: I think my Honourable friend was too engrossed in his own thoughts. Nobody from this side suggested anything like political defeat for the Government. We are not so foolish as to attach much importance to political defeats of this Government. But I think what he meant was that these motions that are being moved from this side of the House were really intended with the main purpose of inflicting a defeat on the Government. I can assure him that in this particular matter there is no such intention. He said that even if we were to pass twenty censure motions, he would not be moved.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Not in regard to this particular point. What I said was about imposing further burdens on the staff.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: I was wondering when I was listening to him if my Honourable friend when he retires and goes back to England and if he becomes the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would get up in the Parliament there and say to the Members of the House of Commons that "I do not care two buttons for the censure motions that you may pass against me."

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I did not say that.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: I do not think he would have the audacity to do a thing like that.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I think that if I were in that position, I should be prepared to tell the House of Commons that I would place the health of my staff and their ability to bear further burdens before any political considerations.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: And that you would face twenty censure motions!

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: My Honourable friend is again really mixing up this motion with political considerations. This is a new technique that the Government have developed since they found that they could not get a majority of votes with them. I do remember in this very House that when we were discussing a very important piece of legislation, how day after day the Government inflicted defeats on us and the excuse was that, "well, this is the decision of the House". Arguments, logic, fairness, everything was thrown to the winds and we were twitted and told that it was the decision of the House, but today my Honourable friend gets up and says that the decision of the House is not logical in these matters where he does not agree with it.

Sir, my Honourable friend said that he could not possibly put any further burden on his staff. Now, Sir, I want to ask him one or two questions. Does he satisfy himself that there is no waste in the various Departments of the Government? He shakes his head. He does not satisfy himself.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I thought the Honourable Member said 'am I satisfied'?

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: I said, 'does he satisfy himself that there is no waste in the various departments'?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I endeavour to do that with the means at my disposal.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: I dare say he does that on certain materials which are prepared by his staff and placed before him. Am I right or wrong?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: No, no. A greater part of this is not placed before me personally. It does not need to be committed to paper.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: It is not committed to paper; like all the decisions of the Government of India it is kept in the air. There are private conversations, I suppose, over a cup of tea when great issues are decided. But, Sir, I do not know whether my Honourable friend realises that he was not really being fair to his own Department when he made this proposition that he would not dream of putting any more burden on the staff. His Department, if it is vigilant, must be keeping a close watch over the expenditure of all the various Departments in the Government of India. It must have all the materials at its disposal, otherwise it cannot keep any watch on all these Departments. So, the material is already there. All that is required is that there should be a Committee of this House to scrutinise that material and to scrutinise the expenditure of various Departments.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: My Honourable friend must realise that the grounds of decision do not have to be justified further before another outside body and that again is another stage of labour. It is one thing to come to decisions in the light of your own technical expert knowledge and another thing to explain it to other people.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: In other words, it seems to me, Mr. President that the Government of India is run by various heads of Departments independently. They do as they like, they spend money as they please. There is no check over them, because if there is a check over the various Departments of the Government of India and its various branches, then, I am afraid, I cannot agree with my Honourable friend that the material is not already available for the scrutiny by such a Committee.

I can assure him, if my assurance will have any value for him—because after his remark that he does not care even for 20 censure motions, I do not think that any assurance from this side of the House will have any effect, anyhow, I never give up hope in anybody—I can assure him that this motion was not put forward with the intention or with the object of inflicting any political defeat on the Government. There is a general belief in this House and outside that there is a great waste in the various Departments of the Government. As was pointed out by my Honourable friend, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, we are here, if we have to justify our existence in this House, to see that the money which is collected by this Government in the form of taxes is utilised usefully and that there is no waste. I think my Honourable friend, the Finance Member would indeed be a bold man if he got up and said that there was no wastage. Wastage, there is and the object of this cut motion is to have a Committee which would give an opportunity to the non-officials to satisfy themselves whether there was any wastage or not. That is number one. Secondly, to suggest to the Government of India that economies were possible in such and such matters. Sir, my Honourable friend should know that in the Government you get into a certain groove, you cannot think beyond that circle in which you are and bringing in of fresh minds to bear on these problems can never do any harm to the Government, it might do some good. I am sorry that my Honourable friend is not able to accept this proposition. He gave certain assurance. He said that on principle he agreed, but that in practice it was impossible. We, however, think that on principle it is possible and in practice also it is possible. Therefore, I am afraid we are not able, we are not in a position to accept the assurance of the Honourable Member. We believe that a Committee of this kind will do immense good, we believe that a Committee of this kind can prove very useful and we believe that to give effect to a proposition of this nature is possible for the Government, if they would have only the will to do so, and if they would have some regard for public opinion not only in this House but in the country as such. Sir, I support the cut motion which has been moved.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The Honourable Member said nothing about my suggestion that a committee of this kind should function without any official assistance.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: My Honourable friend says that I have not said anything about his suggestion that a Committee of this kind should function without any official assistance. May I know if he has appointed any committee without official assistance? What about his Planning Committees or Post-war Reconstruction Committee? Have you appointed them? Did they not put pressure upon your officials?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: They did.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Sir, my Honourable friend is damning politics, but because politically it was in your interest to show to the world at large that you were doing great wonders regarding reconstruction in this country, you have appointed these committees. But here, where there is a question of immediate necessity and immediate requirements, you are not prepared to do it and you want to get away from this proposition by saying that it will be too much of a burden on your officials.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Do you suggest that this should take the place of a post-war reconstruction committee?

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Surely, Mr. President, my Honourable friend is not so ignorant. I am talking of today, I am not talking of post-war.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the demand under the head 'Finance Department' be reduced by Rs. 400 lakhs."

The Assembly divided:

AYES—55.

Abdul Ghani, Maulvi Muhammad.
 Abdoul Qaiyum, Mr.
 Abdullah, Mr. H. M.
 Azhar Ali, Mr. Muhammad.
 Bajoria, Babu Baijnath.
 Banerjee, Dr. P. N.
 Bhutto, Mr. Nabi Baksh Illahi Baksh.
 Chandavarkar, Sir Vitthal N.
 Chattopadhyaya, Mr. Amarendra Nath.
 Chettiar, Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam.
 Chetty, Mr. Sami Vencatachelam.
 Choudhury, Mr. Abdur Rasheed.
 Choudhury, Mr. Muhammad Hussain.
 Dam, Mr. Ananga Mohan.
 Datta, Mr. Akhil Chandra.
 Deshmukh, Dr. G. V.
 Deshmukh, Mr. Govind V.
 Essak Sait, Mr. H. A. Sathar H.
 Fazl-i-Haq Piracha, Khan Bahadur Shaikh.
 Gupta, Mr. K. S.
 Gupta, Mr. R. R.
 Habibur Rahman, Dr.
 Hans Raj, Raizade.
 Hegde, Sri K. B. Jinaraja.
 Hosmani, Mr. S. K.
 Ismail Khan, Hajee Chowdhury Muhammad.
 Joshi, Mr. N. M.

Kailash Bihari Lall, Mr.
 Kazmi, Qazi Muhammad Ahmad.
 Krishnamachari, Mr. T. T.
 Lahiri Choudhury, Mr. D. K.
 Lalchand Navalrai, Mr.
 Laljee, Mr. Hoosainbhoy A.
 Liaquat Ali Khan, Nawabzada Muhammad.
 Maitra, Pandit Lakshmi Kanta.
 Mangal Singh, Sardar.
 Mehta, Mr. Jambadas M.
 Murtuza Sahib Bahadur, Maulvi Syed.
 Naidu, Mr. G. Rangiah.
 Nairang, Syed Ghulam Bhik.
 Nauman, Mr. Muhammad.
 Neogy, Mr. K. C.
 Pande, Mr. Badri Dutt.
 Parma Nand, Bhai.
 Ramayan Prasad, Mr.
 Raza Ali, Sir Syed.
 Reddier, Mr. K. Sitarama.
 Sham Lal, Lala.
 Siddique Ali Khan, Nawab.
 Siddiquee, Shaikh Rafiuddin Ahmad.
 Subbarayan, Shrimati K. Radha Bai.
 Umar Aly Shah, Mr.
 Yamin Khan, Sir Muhammad.
 Yusuf Abdoola Haroon, Seth.
 Zafar Ali Khan, Maulana.

NOES—46.

Ahmad Nawaz Khan, Major Nawab Sir.
 Ambedkar, The Honourable Dr. B. R.
 Ayers, Mr. C. W.
 Benthall, The Honourable Sir Edward.
 Bewoor, Sir Gurunath.
 Bhagchand Soni, Rai Bahadur Seth.
 Caroe, Sir Olaf.
 Chapman-Mortimer, Mr. T.
 Chatterji, Mr. S. C.
 Daga, Seth Sunder Lall.
 Dalal, Dr. Sir Ratanji Dinshaw.
 Dalpat Singh, Sardar Bahadur Captain.
 Griffiths, Mr. P. J.
 Gwilt, Mr. E. L. C.
 Habibur-Rahman, Khan Bahadur Sheikh.
 Haider, Khan Bahadur Shamsuddin.
 Imam, Mr. Saiyid Haider.
 Inskip, Mr. A. C.
 Ismael Alikhan, Kunwer Hajee.
 James, Sir F. E.
 Jawahar Singh, Sardar Bahadur Sardar Sir.
 Jehangir, Sir Cowasjee.
 Kamaluddin Ahmad, Shams-ul-Ulema.
 Khare, The Honourable Dr. N. B.

The motion was adopted.

Krishnamoorthy, Mr. E. S. A.
 Kushal Pal Singh, Raja Bahadur.
 Lawson, Mr. C. P.
 Maxwell, The Honourable Sir Reginald.
 Miller, Mr. C. C.
 Muazzam Sahib Bahadur, Mr. Muhammad.
 Mudaliar, The Honourable Dewan Bahadur
 Sir A. Ramaswami.
 Ogilvie, Sir Charles.
 Piare Lall Kureel, Mr.
 Raisman, The Honourable Sir Jeremy.
 Richardson, Sir Henry.
 Roy, The Honourable Sir Asoka.
 Shahban, Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir
 Muhammad.
 Sheehy, Sir John.
 Siva Raj, Rao Bahadur N.
 Spence, Sir George.
 Stokes, Mr. H. G.
 Sultan Ahmed, The Honourable Sir.
 Sundaresan, Mr. N.
 Thakur Singh, Capt.
 Trivedi, Mr. C. M.
 Tyson, Mr. J. D.

DEMAND No. 20—DEPARTMENT OF INDIANS OVERSEAS.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,43,000, be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1945, in respect of 'Department of Indians Overseas'."

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,43,000, be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1945, in respect of 'Department of Indians Overseas'."

Facilities for Pilgrimage to the Hedjaz.

Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha (North-West Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, I move:

"That the demand under the head 'Department of Indians Overseas', be reduced by Rs. 100."

Sir, the cut motion which I have just moved is intended to draw the attention of the Government towards the importance that the Mussalmans attach to the question of Haj pilgrimage to the Holy Kaaba, in the holy land of Hedjaz, and to impress upon the Government to abstain from stopping its performance this year, contrary to what they did in the last two years. It is also intended to show that the Government has failed so far to do what ought to have been done for providing proper facilities to the Hajis at the pilgrim ports, during their voyage to Jedda in pilgrim ships and in the holy land of Hedjaz itself.

Sir, the question of Haj is not a new thing for this House as it has always been the subject of discussion for the last several years in the form of Council Questions, Resolutions, and Amending Bills. It was only the other day that the House was pleased to pass my Shipping Amendment Bill in the interest of the Hajis. Therefore, without going into a detailed introduction about the Haj, it would, I think, suffice me to say, that the performance of Haj once in one's life-time is incumbent on every Muslim who can afford to undertake the journey. So it can very well be judged by the Honourable Members what would be the feelings of a Mussalman ready to go to the holy land for a pilgrimage when he is suddenly stopped from doing so. The Haj is generally performed by the people in India in the advanced age, and the House can well imagine the degree of disappointment of the old persons who are zealous and keen to perform this most essential religious duty but are denied to do so. The Government did not take a wise step in stopping the Haj performance in the last two years, and have thereby caused a widespread discontentment and resentment in the whole of the Muslim India. It was against the good name of the British and the Indian Government to have put forth lame excuses of the sea-route dangers. Sir, this question was discussed at length during the last Session on the 12th of August, when a Resolution was moved by my Honourable friend, Nawab Siddique Ali Khan, but to our great misfortune it had no effect whatsoever upon the Government. Sir, the next Haj comes off in November next and I have taken this opportunity to put forth our views, once again, in asking the Government not to treat the question of Haj in the light manner they did last year and the year before last, and to seriously consider the consequences of stopping the Mussalmans from performing their most sacred and religious duty. Sir, although during the last Great War the situation was a much more serious one, and the sea routes in the Indian waters were also much more dangerous than they have been in the last two years, and although at that time Turkey was fighting against the British allied with Germany, and the German U Boats, specially the well-known *Emden* had done havoc in the Indian Seas and had created a general panic and terror in the country, the performance of Haj was not stopped. Sir, the war broke out in 1939, but the Haj was allowed till the year 1941. Although the war situation in those years was not quite favourable to the Allies, the Government had arranged not only to pay subsidies to the shipping companies to carry pilgrims to Jedda, but in addition convoys were also sent for the protection of the pilgrims. It is still a mystery for us to know what are the special reasons for which the Government adopted the Haj stopping policy in the last two years. The Government, if they desired, could make arrangements, as before, even if any danger was expected at all in the sea voyage. Sir, the excuse of the unsafe route does not appeal to our mind when we see that hundreds of thousands of troops with supplies worth crores of rupees were transported to and from the Middle East in the last two years, without any loss known to the public.

Besides, the British Government themselves made shipping arrangements for Haj for Egyptian, Syrian and Palestine nationals in the last year, so much so that the Indian ships of the Mughal Line were employed for that purpose thus depriving the intending Indian pilgrims themselves from their use. The Scindia Steamship Company was prepared to carry on the Haj traffic, but they were not allowed to do so. Their ships were requisitioned and were not released.

[Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha.]

Immediately after the Haj season traffic between Jedda and India was resumed and it is only a few days back that a passenger ship from Jedda has arrived at Bombay. Taking for granted that the sea route to Jedda was not safe, did the Government consider to open land route for those passengers who wanted to undertake the journey for Haj and did they try to provide facilities to them? No. This was not done although suggestions were made to that effect by the public outside and their representatives in this House. A good number of pilgrims could also be sent by aeroplanes, if the Government desired so. The land and the air routes were admittedly safe, but it is an open secret, Sir, that the Government attached no importance to the Haj and to the religious sentiments of the Mussalmans of the country.

Sir, taking all these facts into consideration one feels difficult to understand why in the first three years of war all the arrangements were made by the Government for the performance of Haj, and why in the last two years they were denied, when the war situation was far better and the Allies had won victories everywhere. Sir, to me it appears that some unknown political reasons, besides the sea route danger, were the cause of all this, and perhaps the Government did not like the personal contact of the Indian Mussalmans with the Mussalmans of other parts of the world at their annual gathering in the holy land at the holy Kaaba. If it is like that, I must say that it is a very unwise policy of the Government, especially when it collides with the religious sentiments of the Muslim public. Sir, the Saudi Government or His Majesty the Sultan of Hedjaz may not have raised any objections to this Haj stopping policy of the British Government on account of certain diplomatic relations. They may have also been won over either by paying large subsidies to compensate their revenue losses they had to incur, owing to the stoppage of Haj, which the Saudi Government every year charges from the Hajeers from India and other countries, in the form of various taxes, or by offering a warm reception and valuable presents to the Saudi princes on their visit to India, but the public at large will never be satisfied unless and until their visit to the Holy land is opened for them and proper facilities are provided as usual. The question of Haj is a common question of the Muslim world and the Sultan of the Hedjaz and his Government are mere humble servants of the holy places and nothing more.

Sir, when reading the holy Quran, I happened the other day to read the chapter on Haj and came across the following *Ayat* (verses) which relate to persons who try to keep back people from going to the Holy Kaaba. I noted them down, to quote this open challenge of Allah on this occasion, for the benefit of those Honourable Members who were responsible for keeping back the Mussalmans from the performance of Haj, especially the Honourable Muslim Members of them, with the hope that they will not repeat what they did before in stopping the Haj and would amend their past doing.

The *Ayat* run as follows:

Innallazina kafru wa yas ududuna an sabilillahi wal masjidi-l-Haramillazi ja'alnahu linnabi sawa-ni lakifus fih walbad, wa man yurid fih bi-ilha din bizulmin nuziqhu min azabin alim."

Sir, the English translation of these verses would be as follows:

"Surely as for those who disbelieve and hinder men from Allah's way and from the sacred mosque (i.e., the holy Kaaba) which we have made equally for all men, for the dweller therein and for the visitor, and who-ever shall incline therein to do wrong unjustly, we shall make him taste a painful chastisement."

Let the Honourable Muslim Members of the Executive Council study this chapter at their leisure time and know their responsibilities towards this important and foremost principle of Islam.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): It is now Five of the Clock. I adjourn the House till Eleven of the Clock tomorrow morning.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 15th March, 1944.