

7th February 1944

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

Official Report

Volume I, 1944

(7th February to 28th February, 1944)



TWENTIETH SESSION

OF THE

FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,

1944



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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The Honourable Sir ABDUR RAHIM, K.C.S.I.

Deputy President :

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Captain Haji Sardar NUR AHAMAD KHAN, M.C., I.O.M., I.A.

Committee on Petitions :

Mr. AKHIL CHANDRA DATTA, M.L.A. (*Chairman*).

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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THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES
(OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE TWENTIETH SESSION OF THE FIFTH
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY)

VOLUME I—1944

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Monday, 7th February, 1944

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House in New Delhi, at Eleven of the Clock, being the First Day of the Twentieth Session of the Fifth Legislative Assembly, pursuant to Section 63-D (2) of the Government of India Act, as set out in the Ninth Schedule to the Government of India Act, 1935. Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim, K.C.S.I.) was in the Chair.

MEMBERS SWORN.

- Mr. Arthur Cecil Inskip, C.B.E., O.B.E., M.L.A. (United Provinces: European);
Mr. Olaf Kirkpatrick Caroe, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., M.L.A. (Secretary, External Affairs Department);
Mr. Charles MacIvor Grant Ogilvie, C.S.I., C.B.E., M.L.A. (Secretary, Defence Department);
Mr. Ennappadam Sundara Ayyar Krishnamoorthy, M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official).

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

QUININE POSITION.

1. *Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: (a) Is the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands aware of the statement made by the Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons on the 9th December, 1943, that "Quinine is produced in India and supplies there are adequate"?

(b) Was the Secretary of State furnished with any statistics about the quinine position in India at any time in 1943?

(c) Is the aforementioned statement consistent with statistics and information in possession of the Government of India? If not, have Government pointed out to the Secretary of State its inaccuracy?

(d) What is the total annual production, and total normal annual consumption of quinine in India?

(e) What was the average annual import of quinine from other countries before the war, and what was its import in 1941, 1942 and 1943?

(f) Was the supply of quinine in India adequate in 1942 and 1943?

(g) Did the Government of India make any report at any time in 1943 to the Secretary of State about the shortage of quinine in India and increase of mortality in consequence?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes, in April, 1943.

(c) and (f). Stocks of quinine in India are adequate in the sense that all immediate requirements can be met if the available stocks are distributed without regard to future needs. They are not adequate in the sense that they will suffice for all requirements over a period of years. For that reason supplies have to be rationed in order to conserve stocks.

(d) and (e). Attention is invited to the reply given to part (a) of starred question No. 154 by Mr. A. N. Chattopadhyaya on 19th February, 1943. Information regarding the amount of quinine imported in 1943 is not yet available. The information will be laid on the table of the House.

(g) Information regarding available stocks of quinine was supplied in April, 1943. In early December the Secretary of State was informed that malaria

incidence in Bengal was reported to be increasing in most districts and later in the month he was informed that malaria was widespread in epidemic form in Bengal.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know approximately from the Honourable Member the quantity of quinine that is in India at present?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I think I must ask for notice of that. It does not really arise out of this question.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I, therefore, know from the Honourable Member if quinine can be imported from outside?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: No, Sir. I do not think it can.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Then what is the other

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

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I am asking a question. Can the Honourable Member tell me what other medicine can be given instead of quinine in India?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: There is a synthetic preparation variously called Mepacrine or Atabrine or Atebrin which is being imported and which can be given in place of quinine under medical supervision.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: May I know from the Honourable Member whether preference is given to Bengal over other provinces in the matter of supplies of quinine?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Yes, Sir.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Does the Government of India get any supplies of quinine from the United Kingdom?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: No, Sir.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Did the Government of India make any requisition to the Secretary of State for India for the supply of quinine to India in view of the appalling epidemic of malaria?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I did not catch the last part of the Honourable Member's question, but there was correspondence with His Majesty's Government earlier in the year, before the present outbreak of malaria in Bengal, and at that time it was made clear that India could not expect any quinine from the United Kingdom.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: With regard to (f) is the supply of quinine adequate? We want a definite reply to that question.

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I have given an answer to that. "Stocks of quinine in India are adequate in the sense that all immediate requirements can be met if the available stocks are distributed without regard to future needs. . . ."

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: Available everywhere? In every part of India?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Will the Honourable Member put his question more plainly?

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know whether Atebrin is being sold at a very high price?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Mr. Kazmi.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: What are the places where the substitutes of quinine are manufactured and what are the prices of the substitutes as compared with quinine?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: The places where the substitutes are being manufactured in bulk are the U.S.A. and the U.K. I could not say, without notice, what the prices are.

ENQUIRY INTO CAUSES OF BENGAL FAMINE.

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

(a) whether the report of the last food debate in this House was sent to His Majesty's Government;

(b) whether any form of enquiry into the causes of Bengal famine was suggested by the Government of India, while submitting the report in question;

(c) what the reactions were of His Majesty's Government and whether any

enquiry into the causes of Bengal famine is contemplated now or in the near future; and

(d) if the answer to part (c) be in the affirmative, the nature of the personnel of the enquiry?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a), (b), (c) and (d). A report of the last food debate was sent to His Majesty's Government, and the form, terms of reference and time of the enquiry contemplated are under discussion with His Majesty's Government. When a decision has been reached an announcement will be made.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Has the Government of India suggested any form of enquiry to His Majesty's Government?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I have already said that the matter is under discussion.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Is it under discussion with His Majesty's Government? I want to know whether the Government of India made any definite suggestion about an enquiry.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I am unable to give an answer at the present moment.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Have the Government of India considered the suggestions made by the Members of this Legislature during the last food debate?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: What suggestions?

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I made several suggestions regarding information to be given about the action taken on the report of the Food Committee and I want to know whether they have been considered.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Every suggestion has been considered and action has been taken where it was possible to do so.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Government of India propose to publish a report telling us which of the recommendations of the Gregory Committee have been given effect to?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Well, I shall be glad to lay a statement on the table.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Is the Government of India carrying out these suggestions on the basis of these discussions?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I have not said that we have not suggested any inquiry.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: What is the suggestion? Is the Government of India carrying on this discussion without suggesting any basis for it? What is the basis?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I do not see how that arises from the question.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Central Advisory Committee suggested by the Gregory Committee has been appointed. I want to know whether the Government of India have appointed or propose to appoint a Central Advisory Committee.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That does not seem to arise out of the question on the order paper.

STARVATION DEATHS IN BENGAL.

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

(a) the total number of starvation deaths in Bengal during the present famine including those who subsequently died of diseases; and

(b) whether Government are fully satisfied that the figures are correct?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) Figures of mortality in Bengal during 1943 are being collected by the Bengal Government, but are not yet complete.

(b) Does not arise.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Has the Government of India sent any report about the number of deaths in Bengal to the Secretary of State?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: As I have stated we have no definite figures yet.

Sardar Mangal Singh: But the Secretary of State made a statement in Parliament that so many deaths have taken place. What was the basis of that statement?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Mortality statistics do not, strictly speaking, belong to my Department; they belong to the Medical and Public Health Department.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Who sent this report to His Majesty's Government? Did you send it or was it sent by the Bengal Government?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I am unable to say without notice; but I can inform the Honourable Member that we do not know how the figures given by the Secretary of State were arrived at.

An Honourable Member: Probably some American correspondent might have sent them.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: May I know if the Central Government has regularly received from time to time figures of deaths from starvation and disease from the month of July last? Have they got regular periodical reports from the Government of Bengal?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: As I have stated, the reports we received from the Bengal Government were very inaccurate; they have themselves admitted them to be wrong. That is why we have no reliable figures.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: I wanted to know whether the Government of India had been in receipt regularly of such reports from the Bengal Government.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I do not know whether we have received regularly but I made inquiries and the figures which were supplied to me appeared to me entirely wrong.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Is it not a fact that as regards these figures the Secretary of State is better informed than the Government of India?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The Honourable Member can draw what inference he likes.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: What is the basis for the Honourable Member saying that the figures supplied by the Bengal Government have been found to be inaccurate? How did he come to know that they were incorrect?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: They have themselves admitted it; they themselves say that the figures supplied are not reliable.

An Honourable Member: Have they given any reliable figures at all?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: No; they are collecting reliable figures which they will give us this month some time, they say.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Can the Honourable Member tell us definitely what was the basis for the definite announcement in the House of Commons by the Secretary of State that the number of deaths was one million?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The question had better be addressed to the Secretary of State.

"GROW MORE FOOD" CAMPAIGN IN THE PUNJAB.

4. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state:

(a) what measures Government have taken to encourage the "Grow more food" campaign in the Punjab;

(b) how far they have helped the growers of the Punjab to supply material such as coal, iron, cement, etc., on controlled rates to sink more wells; and

(c) how much extra land has been brought under cultivation as a result of "Grow more food" campaign in the Punjab?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) By "Government" the Honourable Member presumably means the Central Government. A statement showing the measures

taken by the Government of India in support of the Provincial Government's "Grow More Food" Campaign in the Punjab is laid on the table.

(b) Licences have been issued by the Steel Controller (Civil Supplies) to the Government of the Punjab for about 100 tons of all categories of iron during the first two quarters of 1944 for sinking of tube wells. It is not possible to give statistics of demands for iron and steel received from applicants other than Government Departments as in the vast majority of cases they have been referred to the Deputy Iron and Steel Controller concerned and have been dealt with by him. No other request for the supply of materials for the sinking of wells has been received from the Provincial Government. So far as coal is concerned it is for the Provincial Government to allot such quantities as they deem desirable from the Provincial quota.

(c) About 2 million acres in 1942-43; no figure is available for 1943-44.

Statement.

1. The Government of India sanctioned a grant of Rs. 3 lakhs during the current financial year for the extension of cultivation to riverain areas, to the extent of 50,000 acres, by means of a subsidy at an average rate of Rs. 6 per acre for clearance. Of this only 1/3rd is expected to be spent in this year. For 1944-45 Government have sanctioned a subsidy at the same rate for bringing one lakh acres of riverain area under cultivation at a total cost of Rs. 6 lakhs inclusive of this year's saving of Rs. 2 lakhs.

2. The Government of India are assisting the Provincial Government in securing plant and equipment for 120 power operated tubewells for pumping subsoil water into the Lower Chenab Canal along canal banks in areas of high spring level. The project is estimated to bring under cultivation during the *rabi* of 1944-45 and the *kharif* of 1945, 63,000 acres of food crops in a commanded area of 84,000 acres of Crown Waste land.

Sardar Mangal Singh: May I know whether any steel has been made available to the Punjab Government to make agricultural implements? The amount of steel which the Honourable Member referred to is for sinking of wells only.

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I am afraid the Honourable Member's question related to "material such as coal, iron, cement, etc., at controlled rates to sink more wells", and I have not come prepared to answer his fresh question.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if the same materials have been supplied or made available for the other provinces also, including Sind?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: That does not arise.

INDIANS IN BURMA, MALAYA STATES, ETC.

5. ***Sardar Mangal Singh:** Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas please state:

(a) the total number of Indians, approximately, in Burma, Malaya States and other Eastern Islands;

(b) which neutral power looks after their interests;

(c) how many Indians there are in the Andamans and Nicobar Islands; and

(d) whether it is a fact that the administration of these two islands has been transferred to the "Provisional Government of Free India" at Shonan (Singapore)?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) The total number of Indians in Burma, Malaya and other countries in the Far East under enemy occupation is estimated at 13,25,000 approximately.

(b) The Government of Switzerland looks after the British and Indian interests in Japan, occupied China, French Indo-China and Thailand. The Japanese Government have not so far recognised any neutral power for the other countries under their occupation.

(c) The total population of the Islands in 1941 was 33,768. No information is available about the number of Indians who are now there.

(d) Government have no information.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: With reference to part (a), may I ask whether these 13½ lakhs of Indians in these states are interned or are they treated as free citizens?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I have no information.

INDIAN EVACUEES EMPLOYED BY GOVERNMENT OR GIVEN MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE.

6. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas please state :

(a) how many Indian evacuees have been employed by Government;

(b) how many Indian evacuees are being given maintenance allowances by Government; and

(c) the rate of allowance per head for (i) Indian evacuees, and (ii) European British Subject evacuees?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

(b) Accurate information is not available at present. The results of the Asiatic British Evacuees Census held in November, December, 1943 are being tabulated and are not yet ready. Provincial authorities who are in administrative charge of the scheme of financial assistance to evacuees have also been requested to furnish the necessary figures, and a statement will be laid on the table of the House as soon as information has been collected.

(c) I lay on the table of the House a copy of the Press Communique, dated the 17th August, 1943, indicating the scales of revised allowances sanctioned by the Government of India with effect from the 1st September, 1943. These allowances are payable to all evacuees, irrespective of race or nationality and are based on the estimated pre-evacuation income and present needs of applicants for assistance.

PRESS COMMUNIQUE.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO EVACUEES.

The Government of India have sanctioned the continuance up to the end of February, 1944 of their scheme of financial assistance to evacuees and dependants of Indians and other British subjects detained in enemy occupied territories. The revised scales of allowances (in rupees per mensem), effective from September 1, 1943, are as follows :

Estimated normal income or remittance.	Single adult earner or person in receipt of remittance.	Allowance for	
		wife or adult dependant.	each child.
Unskilled labour	10	4	2
15—25	12	6	3
25—50	15	10	5
50—100	30	15	6
100—150	35	20	8
150—200	45	25	9
200—300	55	30	11
300—400	65	35	12
400—500	80	40	13
500—600	90	50	14
600—750	100	70	16
750 and over	150	100	20

For the three lowest groups (unskilled labourers and those getting a normal monthly income of Rs. 50 or less) these scales will be adhered to provided that no family group gets more by way of maintenance than its pre-evacuation income. For the other groups the scales fixed above are the maximum amounts payable and in no case may any family group receive more than 75 per cent. of their normal income or Rs. 350 per mensem, whichever is less.

The allowances for children prescribed above are maintenance allowances only, over and above which school allowances may be granted up to a maximum of Rs. 10 per mensem for a child attending an Indian school and Rs. 20 per mensem for a child attending an European school.

A special non-recurring allowance equal to $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the monthly allowance may be granted once a year to an evacuee for unavoidable expenses such as buying clothes and special medical treatment.

In deserving cases, instead of monthly allowances, evacuees may be granted repayable capital advances not exceeding Rs. 350 per head to set up their own business or trade.

All these allowances are granted generally only against undertakings to repay. Applications for assistance, should, as in the past, be made to the district authorities.

Indians Overseas Department, New Delhi, August 17, 1943.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: With regard to clause (a) may I know if new posts are being created for these evacuees or posts belonging to Indians which are available for Indians are being given to them?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: It does not arise from this question.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Why does it not arise? I asked how many Indian evacuees have been employed and I am now asking in what posts. I think I should have a reply to this.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): He is not prepared to answer it at present.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Let him say "I am not bound".

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has put his question and has got his answer.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I have not got an answer.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: With reference to the answer to part (c) of the question, may I know whether the Government of India are now considering any scheme for restricting the allowances that are being granted to these evacuees?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: This again does not arise out of this question at all.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: May I know what is the total sum that has been allotted by the Finance Department for allowances?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I cannot answer that question.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Will the Honourable Member kindly enlighten the House whether these allowances are paid by His Majesty's Government or by the Government of India?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: That also does not arise out of this question.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: Is the Honourable Member being consulted as to the amount that is being given as allowance to the evacuees?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: The Government acts as one corporate body.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: Are you being consulted or not?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has given the answer. Next question.

RULES TO ENFORCE RECIPROCITY ACT.

7. ***Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh:** Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas please state, with reference to the answer to starred question No. 33 regarding framing of rules to enforce the Reciprocity Act given on the 9th November, 1943:

- (a) what matters are covered by the Reciprocity Act regarding which draft rules have been prepared;
- (b) whether these rules will be laid on the table;
- (c) when Government intend giving effect to these rules;
- (d) why the enforcement of these rules is delayed; and
- (e) whether the rules on other matters covered by the Reciprocity Act which were not ready by the 9th November, 1943, are now ready; if not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) and (e). For possible application to South Africa draft rules have been prepared in respect of immigration, acquisition, holding and disposal of property and franchise other than political. As regards the other matters covered by the Reciprocity Act no statutory rules are proposed at present as in their case on practical considerations statutory action is either unnecessary or inappropriate.

(b), (c) and (d). The rules already framed will be published in the official gazette and given effect to as soon as it is decided to issue a direction under Section 3 of the Act against a particular British possession; Government have not yet taken a final decision on the question.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I know whether rules have not been ruled as regards employment of colonials in the services of the Government of India?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: As regards employment there are no statutory rules against Indians in the Union, and statutory action on our part would only urge the South African Government to take similar action against Indians in the Union.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I know whether the Honourable Member will consult the Standing Advisory Committee for Emigration as regards the draft rules?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: No.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask why he is not pleased to consult a body which has been created to give him advice on the matter?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: It is not necessary.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I know when the Government of India will come to a decision for making these rules applicable? What is the hitch in making these rules applicable now?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: The Government are having the whole question in all its aspects under their consideration and it is not yet complete.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I know what are those aspects?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: A reply cannot be given in the course of an answer to a question.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: How long will the Government of India take to finish their consideration of these matters?

Sir Syed Raza Ali: It should be, how much longer will the Government of India take?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I cannot give you any period.

Mr. Hossainbhoy A. Lalljee: Is it under active consideration?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: Yes.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will that activity be stimulated?

(No answer.)

PREVENTION OF SLAUGHTER OF PRIME CATTLE.

8. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state, with reference to starred question No. 137 put on the 13th November, 1943, in respect of slaughter of young and prime cattle and the reply thereto:

(a) the system of inspection enforced by the Defence Services to carry out the recommendations and restrictions suggested by the Central Food Advisory Council on slaughter of prime cattle;

(b) the number of cattle in the year near about the commencement of the war and in the years 1942 and 1943;

(c) the reasons for replying 'No' to part (c) of my question about enacting legislation to prohibit the slaughter of prime cattle; and

(d) whether Government cannot issue an order prohibiting the slaughter of prime cattle and providing punishment for the breach of such an order?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) Prior to acceptance, cattle tendered for slaughter are inspected by officers of the Royal Indian Army Service Corps, who are specially trained in these duties and in cases of doubt, a Veterinary Officer is called in, if such an officer is available.

(b) The information asked for is not available for 1942 and 1943 as the last cattle census was held in 1940. In that year the figures for British India, omitting the United Provinces and Orissa, and for States for which figures are available aggregate about 170 million cattle and buffaloes.

(c) and (d). Provincial Governments have both the responsibility and the power to take such action, in the light of the local situation, as they deem necessary for the protection of prime cattle in their territories. Four Provincial Governments have already issued notifications under the Defence of India Rules prohibiting the slaughter of certain categories of cattle, whether for civilian or Army consumption. So far as the Central Government is concerned, the military authorities have issued the necessary instructions to the various Commands prescribing the categories of cattle which may be purchased for slaughter.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will Government think of the advisability of employing non-military agency for inspection before cattle are slaughtered?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Yes, we will consider that.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know whether other provinces than these four have also been asked to pass legislation in this respect?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: We addressed all the provinces bringing to notice what we had asked the military to do.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I take it that there are no statistics available of the cattle for the year 1941-42. Then would it be justifiable to make a statement that cattle are surplus in India?

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

SCHEME FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF CENTRAL NURSING COUNCIL.

9. ***Sir F. E. James:** Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state, with reference to his reply to question No. 243 given on the 17th November, 1943, whether the scheme for the establishment of a Central Nursing Council at an early date has been completed? If so, has it been circulated to the Provincial and State Governments concerned for their opinion?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: A draft scheme has been prepared and is under consideration. It will be forwarded to Provincial Governments for opinion shortly.

Sir F. E. James: I do not want to hurry the Honourable Member or his Department, but as the recommendation was made nearly two years ago, I wonder whether he would define the meaning of the term "shortly"?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: It means what it says.

MANUFACTURING MINERAL OIL BY SYNTHETIC PROCESSES.

10. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Commerce be pleased to state whether the question of manufacturing mineral oil by synthetic processes has been under the active consideration of Government? If so, does he propose to make a comprehensive statement indicating the present position in the matter?

(b) Has the Honourable Member's attention been drawn to certain statements made by Dr. H. K. Sen, Director, Indian Lac Research Institute, Namkum, Ranchi, and Chairman of the Fuel Research Committee of the Board of Industrial and Scientific Research, in the course of a series of lectures delivered in December as the Sukh Raj Ray Readership lecturer of the Patna University, in which he referred to a type of low temperature carbonisation plant devised by him and his co-worker Mr. K. L. Roy, five of which were working in different educational institutions to supply the gas required with appropriate yields of tar and petrol, and stated that he had no doubt that the present need for tar and petrol could be met by the erection of units of this type capable of handling 50 to 60 tons of coal per day? If so, what action is proposed to be taken by Government for the purpose of encouraging this experiment and expanding the manufacture of motor fuel by this process?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Yes. Research schemes have been inaugurated by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research; before these schemes can proceed further, fuel research experts are being consulted as regards the properties of different types of Indian coal.

(b) Government have not yet seen the statements attributed to Dr. Sen though they are aware that he has carried out considerable preliminary work on the utilisation of inferior coal. Information has been called for. A scheme has, however, been already started under the auspices of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research for the production of tar oils from coal but it is at present too early to indicate results. Mineral oils produced from low-temperature carbonization of coal are known to be generally uneconomical.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: May I tell the Honourable Member that a very full report of these lectures appeared in the newspapers about the 21st December last.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: That may be so.

STATEMENT ON FAMINE CONDITIONS IN BENGAL.

11. *Mr. K. O. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to make a comprehensive statement on the famine conditions in Bengal, particularly referring to:

(i) the adequacy and actual availability of supplies of foodstuffs in each district during December, 1943, and January, 1944;

(ii) the effectiveness of price control measures and actual levels of prices of foodgrains in each district during the above two months;

(iii) the nature and extent of gratuitous relief provided by Government in each district so far;

(iv) the nature and extent of prevalence of epidemics in each district and adequacy of measures taken by Government for medical relief and supply of suitable dietary to the people affected by such epidemics; and

(v) the schemes adopted by Government for the rehabilitation of different sections of the affected population, and financial assistance, if any, proposed to be given by the Central and Provincial Governments, respectively, towards the execution of such schemes?

(b) Were any complaints brought to the notice of the Honourable Member during his visits to certain places in Bengal in December, 1943, regarding procurement, supply, price-control and quality of foodgrains, as also inadequacy of medical and other relief? If so, to what effect were these complaints, and what action has been taken to remove them?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) The information required for each district of Bengal is not available to the Government of India, but I place on the table of the House a general statement of the position.

(b) I received a number of representations touching various aspects of Food supply and other relief measures for Bengal, and I have had an opportunity of discussing these fully with the Bengal Government and with my colleagues in the Government of India. Every effort is being made to remove short-comings and improve relief measures.

Statement.

Thanks to a bountiful harvest, the supplies arranged by the Central Government, the relief measures of the Government of Bengal and the assistance of the Army, conditions of widespread and acute shortage no longer exist in Bengal. But the confidence of the people has suffered a severe shock from which it will take time to recover.

Supplies.—During the last 3 months of 1943, 347,525 tons of foodgrains were despatched to Bengal and, out of the Bengal Government's stocks, over 141,000 tons were sent to the districts. The stocks in Calcutta are now nearly 100,000 tons. In spite of the general improvement, local shortages have been reported during the last two months from parts of the districts of Dacca, Nonkhali, Chittagong, Tippera, Nadia, Pabna and Midnapore, but these have been met as far as possible by the despatch of supplies, with the assistance of the Army. District Officers have reported difficulty in disposing of imported foodgrains placed at their disposal, even at heavily subsidised prices. There is also a marked reduction, all over the province, of attendance at Relief Centres, Free Kitchens and Test Relief Works.

Prices.—The prices of rice have fallen, but they are still about 3 to 4 times the pre-war level, and local shortages combined with speculative buying which Government has not yet been able to eliminate, have caused local and, it is hoped, temporary fluctuations. While in the Burdwan and Rajshahi Divisions coarse rice is available below the controlled level at Rs. 12 to Rs. 14 per maund, and at about the controlled level in the Presidency Division, in East Bengal prices are higher and vary from Rs. 15 to Rs. 18 per maund.

Relief.—Expenditure on relief operations up to the end of December was Rs. 37.67 million on gratuitous relief, over Rs. 13.06 million on Test Relief Works and over Rs. 20.11 million on agricultural loans. At the beginning of December—the peak period of relief—6,625 Relief Kitchens were functioning of which 4,469 were run by Government, 1,605 subsidised by Government and 551 were private. These centres fed about 2½ million people daily, but attendance has now greatly decreased. Recipients of cash doles and grain doles had also decreased by the first week of January, from nearly 300,000 to 16,000 and attendance at Relief Works has decreased from 130,000 to 20,000. Further substantial decreases have since taken place.

Epidemics and Medical Relief.—Impoverishment and under-nourishment have rendered the people of Bengal easy victims to epidemic diseases, malaria, small-pox, cholera and dysentery, and bowel complaints generally. The incidence of these diseases has been widespread throughout the province but they are now on the decrease. 79,000 lbs. of quinine have been sent to local officers and dispensaries since July. 3.8 million cubic centimeters of anti-

cholera vaccine were also despatched during the same period. Rural Public Health Staff has been considerably reinforced. About 991 additional Public Health staff has now been engaged in preventive measures. This excludes 56 military Medical Officers in charge of Preventive Medical Relief in the 56 most affected subdivisions and eight hygiene specialists for supervisory duties. 2,080,000 persons have been inoculated against cholera and 1,582,000 vaccinated during November and December. Military Mobile Medical Units have also been helping in preventive measures.

As regards Curative Medical Relief, 444 Relief Hospitals with 14,000 beds had been started by the end of January. 133 more hospitals with 2,000 beds have been planned to be opened. This excludes 18 hospitals opened by the military with 2,000 beds. 112 extra doctors have been engaged with necessary equipment. 50 mobile treatment centres are also being worked by the Army and 50 by the civil authorities in the villages. The total cases treated by military up to 28th January was 320,000. The military units had also given 322,654 cholera inoculations and 163,628 vaccinations.

As regards suitable dietary, full information is not available but Milk Canteens have been established in the districts, with the assistance of the Indian Red Cross Society, and special supplies of milk, including imports from overseas, have been arranged. This is intended for the sick, nursing mothers and children.

Proposals and estimates for rehabilitation of destitute persons are under the consideration of the Bengal Government, and these include opening and continuing of Hospitals and Dispensaries, Children's Homes, Orphanages, Homes for Women and other destitutes, Milk Canteens, Work Centres, to provide cottage industry type of work to destitutes in the centres and at their homes. Also special assistance to fishermen, potters and other artisans, and the financing of cattle purchase, house-building, and redemption of lands sold in all seriously distressed areas. Pending final decisions, the Bengal Government has already started work on the above lines.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I have not got specific replies to the specific points that I have raised in part (b) of the question.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: As I have stated, I have discussed all these things with the officials of the Bengal Government and my colleagues in the Government of India.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: But then I do think that the House is entitled to know what exact points were brought to the notice of the Honourable Member and what action has been taken for the purpose of removing those complaints.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Complaints largely centred round the inadequacy of the medical arrangements, and we are doing what we can in that respect.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it not a fact that specific complaints were also brought to the notice of the Honourable Member regarding procurement, supply, price control and quality of foodstuffs supplied?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: -Yes, Sir. That was also raised in one place, at all events and we looked into the matter. I hope the supply has improved since.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: What were the complaints in regard to those points?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: There were so many of these. I did not keep a catalogue of them all but the important ones were discussed with the people concerned and I hope we have been able to do something to improve matters.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Was the Honourable Member informed that in certain parts of Bengal, the foodstuffs that were supplied to the people by the Military were all deteriorated foodstuffs?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That complaint was not made to me.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Were not specific complaints made to the Honourable Member at Dacca? Is it not a fact that the Honourable Member was shown certain samples of foodstuffs which were considered to be unfit for human consumption?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I can tell my Honourable friend that at Dacca I was shown some samples of rice, which was not deteriorated, so far as I remember, but it was red rice, which the Dacca citizens cannot eat.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: When I visited Dacca, I was shown some of these samples and I was told that the Honourable Member was also shown some of these samples, which were not eatable.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Because they were not of the quality which is eaten by the citizens of Dacca.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: In the Calcutta Corporation, the employees were supplied with this type of rice and they refused to take that and the Analyst of the Calcutta Corporation pronounced that type of rice to be unfit for human consumption.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I have heard of that.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: It is not a question of hearing. It appeared in the newspapers.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I have seen it in the newspapers. I have taken up the matter and I think in future the quality will suit the tastes of the people.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Is it a fact that in certain parts of Bengal, the Chairmen of Municipalities had sealed certain foodstuffs, which they declared unfit for human consumption and these were thereafter distributed outside the Municipalities?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I am not aware of that.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: In view of the fact that Members are interested in the Bengal situation, will the Honourable Member read the statement which he has laid on the table. As we do not know what the statement is, we have no opportunity of asking questions.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: It is a very long statement. It covers the entire field of the work being done.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member will have another opportunity.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Honourable Member will circulate this statement?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I will.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Has the Honourable Member's attention been drawn to a statement made by Mr. Suhrawardy, the Minister in Charge in Bengal, in which he said:

"We have rejected quite a lot of the stock we had in hand. But you must realise (*He was speaking at a Press Conference*), that the Government of India have been sending these food-grains and complaints, if any, should be made to the Government of India."

What does the Honourable Member think of that statement?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Well, Sir. I do not know what to think of it but the fact of the matter is that this was not brought to our notice when the rice actually reached Bengal. This rice might have been lying there for some time and it is very difficult to determine where it came from. We do not supply any rice ourselves from Delhi. This rice is supplied by various Provincial Governments and now, at this late stage, it is not possible to trace the origin of the rice.

✓ **DIRECTIVES ISSUED TO BENGAL GOVERNMENT FOR COPING WITH FAMINE IN BENGAL.**

12. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state the substance of the "directives" so far issued to the Government of Bengal under section 126A of the Government of India Act, in respect of measures to cope with the famine conditions in Bengal?

(b) Has the attention of the Honourable Member been drawn to the statement made by the present Chief Minister of Bengal at the meeting of the Muslim League held at Karachi on the 26th December last, in the course of which he observed that it was the Government of India that had so far been the "supporters and protectors of vested interests", that the Central Government were advocating a policy which might frustrate the object of getting hold of the "aman" crop in Bengal this year, that the Bengal Ministry had gone on with their scheme in this connection but "objections were raised by a Member of the Government of India only a few days ago", and that if those objections were not quickly withdrawn there might be great difficulty in the procurement of the "aman" crop? If so, does the Honourable Member propose to explain in detail the point of view of the Government of India in regard to each of the above allegations?

(c) What are the outstanding differences, if any, between the Central Government and the Government of Bengal, in regard to measures for the procurement of foodstuffs and the control of supply and prices thereof, including details of rationing schemes?

(d) Are Government fully assured that their formal "directives" or informal advice and instructions have been or will be carried out by the Government of Bengal in their true spirit?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) One direction only has been issued to the Government of Bengal to set up by the 31st of January in Calcutta at least 1,000 centres for the distribution of rationed foodstuffs, of which not more than 450 should be Government shops, the remainder being licensed private retail shops. Of the latter, 400 were to be situated within the city of Calcutta itself.

(b) The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative and to the second part in the negative.

(c) It is not in the public interest to answer this part of the question.

(d) I regret that I cannot follow the Honourable Member into the realms of speculation. Means for securing that a direction under 126A is carried out are provided in the Act and will be applied if necessary.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Has the Honourable Member's attention been drawn to certain Press comments in regard to the statement made by Mr. Suhrawardy at the Press Conference? I am referring to an article which appeared in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of the 27th January, in the course of which it was stated:

"The Food Minister's views make it clear that the collaboration between the Centre and Bengal in respect of tackling the food problem is likely to be half-hearted."

This is with reference to the Honourable Member's reply to part (d) of the question.

(No reply.)

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask why the Government of India gave a direction to the Bengal Government that not more than 400 shops will be Government shops. Why were Government so partial to private shopkeepers?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: There is no question of being partial. We felt that in order to expedite the introduction of rationing it was necessary to enlist the support of these shops.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Government direction in this matter has been fully given effect to? Have one thousand centres been opened?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I know whether rationing has been introduced in the Calcutta city?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I have not got a reply to my question yet.

(No reply.)

STARVATION DEATHS IN BENGAL.

13. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Food be pleased to state whether complete official statistics are now available of deaths from (i) starvation, and (ii) diseases resulting from starvation, in the different districts of Bengal? If so, will all such statistical statements be laid on the table?

(b) With reference to the Honourable Member's answer to a supplementary question arising from starred question No. 36 on the 9th November, 1943, to the effect that the Government of India tried to impress upon the Government of Bengal the necessity of getting accurate information in this matter, will the Honourable Member please indicate the different times when Government made enquiries on such points from the Government of Bengal, and the result of the enquiries on each occasion?

(c) Has the attention of the Honourable Member been drawn to various reports that have appeared in the Press in Bengal from time to time giving estimates of the number of deaths from starvation and diseases resulting from starvation and malnutrition in different local areas?

(d) If the answer to (c) above be in the affirmative, have enquiries been made by the Government of India from the Government of Bengal regarding the general accuracy of such Press reports, and, if so, what replies have been received to such enquiries?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) No: the mortality statistics of Bengal for 1943 are expected to be available during this month, and will be laid on the table of the House when received.

(b) Enquiries were made on numerous occasions, and reports were received, but these were known to be neither complete nor accurate. Improvement has now been effected in the system of reporting, by eliminating certain links in the chain of reporting agencies.

(c) Yes.

(d) As I have already stated, enquiries have been made as to the facts on numerous occasions but not with special reference to newspaper reports.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know why this delay? Does the Honourable Member propose to wait and see till more deaths take place?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: We have been pressing the Government of Bengal to supply us with figures and they stated that they were unable to obtain reliable figures under the system which prevailed. Now, in consultation with us, they have improved that system. They have eliminated certain links in the chain and we hope that the information will now be readily available.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: The Bengal Government have no figures regarding the deaths in their province?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: No.

STATEMENT BY MR. HUTCHINGS *RE* BENGAL FAMINE.

14. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state whether Mr. Hutchings, Secretary of the Food Department, gave an interview to Press correspondents sometime in December, 1943, as reported in the London Press in the third week of December, to the effect that "famine no longer exists in Bengal which has passed out of the stage of acute food shortage. Some people, only comparatively few, are still going hungry, but even in normal times some people go hungry"? If so, to which period does this statement relate?

(b) If the above statement correctly represents the opinion of the Government of India, does the Honourable Member propose to make a detailed statement of facts of the situation in each of the Bengal districts on the basis of which this opinion may have been formulated by Mr. Hutchings?

(c) Did Mr. Hutchings visit the *mufossil* centres of Bengal before making the above statement? If so, which centres did he visit, and when?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) The extracts quoted from the London Press do not correctly represent the information given to the correspondent by the Food Secretary. The interview related to the situation in the first half of December 1943.

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

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the Honourable Member be pleased to lay on the table an authenticated version of the statement which was made by Mr. Hutchings in this connection?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I do not know whether the Secretary retained a copy of what he said.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Then, how does the Honourable Member know that he has not been correctly reported?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That I have from the Secretary himself.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: But the Honourable Member can depend upon the memory of his Secretary and try to put together all the things that he said in the course of the interview?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I have asked the Secretary and he said that the interview lasted for half an hour. He did not keep any notes of it but when he saw the reports in the London newspapers, he asked the correspondent for a copy of the message which was sent and the correspondent offered to take any further action which may be necessary and I suppose the correspondent corrected his first report.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: If he corrected his first report, is he prepared to circulate the corrected report now?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That rests with the correspondent. We have not got a copy of the second report or the first report.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: May I ask whether the Secretary published a contradiction of the alleged press report in connection with this matter?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Secretaries do not generally indulge in newspaper controversies.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Government of India will publish weekly or at least fortnightly reports on the food situation in Bengal and other places in view of the fact that there is so much public interest and also in view of the fact that so many contradictory statements are published?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I shall consider that matter.

DISCRIMINATION BETWEEN RAILWAY AND OTHER CENTRAL GOVERNMENT SERVANTS
STATIONED IN BENGAL AS REGARDS SUPPLY OF FOODGRAINS AT CONCESSION
RATES.

†15. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** With reference to his answer to part (a) of starred question No. 55 of the 9th November, 1943, on the subject of supply of foodgrains at concessional prices to certain employees of the Central Government, etc., will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state the grounds on which the Central Government decided to discriminate between Railway servants and all Central Government civil servants stationed in Bengal, in regard to the admissibility of the concession, in so far as all Railway servants and their families are entitled to the benefit of this concession while those Central Government civil servants who are in receipt of Rs. 300 per month or less are entitled to it only for themselves?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The Railways had an all-India scheme, designed to secure that foodgrains were available to all classes of their servants, which was in operation before the system of concessional sales to Central Government servants came into force. In view of the comparatively small extra cost involved, it was decided not to deprive Railway servants in any category, of a privilege which they had been enjoying, even though this carried with it the benefit of concessional sales, which in the case of other Central Government servants was governed by salary limits prescribed by Provincial Governments.

There is no discrimination as regards families between Railway and other Central Government servants.

STEPS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS.

16. ***Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta:** (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state, what steps, if any, have been taken or are proposed to be taken to implement the recommendations of the Foodgrains Policy Committee made for the improvement of agricultural statistics?

(b) If any steps have been taken, on what dates were they taken?

(c) If no steps have yet been taken, when are they proposed to be taken?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: The Foodgrains Policy Committee recommended that the proposals for the improvement of agricultural statistics which were then before this Department should be implemented. A statement showing the progress made is laid on the table.

Statement showing steps taken or proposed to be taken on the proposals for the improvement of agricultural statistics.

The whole question of the improvement of agricultural statistics relating to production, distribution, exports, consumption and stocks was considered at an Inter-departmental Committee meeting held on the 3rd March, 1943.

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

The Committee noted *inter alia* that information was lacking for about 44 per cent. of the total area covered by the Indian States and that the annual statistics of area in the permanently settled parts of British India were not reliable except in the case of tea and possibly jute and sugarcane. In April 1943 the Indian States were invited to furnish specified particulars of their surveyed and unsurveyed areas and the statistics supplied by them are being collected.

As for the collection of more reliable statistics from the permanently settled areas of Bengal, Madras, Bihar, Orissa, Assam and the United Provinces, the Provincial Governments concerned were asked on the 31st March, 1943, to examine the question urgently and were informed that any concrete proposals for financial assistance submitted by them to implement the recommendations of the Committee would receive very careful consideration of the Government of India. In response the Madras Government reported the appointment of a Special Staff for the collection of statistics in their permanently settled areas. The Bihar and the Bengal Governments have under consideration schemes for undertaking sampling surveys of areas under paddy. Information from other provinces has not been received so far.

2. The next recommendation of the Inter-departmental Committee related to the improvement of statistics of yield per acre which, like area, is an important factor in the estimation of production of different crops.

A series of important experiments on better methods of judging cotton yields which can be applied on a large scale in place of the present uncertain methods is being carried on at the Institute of Plant Industry, Indore. The Imperial Council of Agricultural Research have also with a grant from the Government of India undertaken an inquiry for working out better methods of assessing yields of grams per acre in two selected districts, one in the Punjab and the other in the Central Provinces but the work may be held up owing to the non-availability of trained staff. If these methods prove successful the intention is to apply them on a large scale.

A scheme for the determination of yield per acre of wheat in the provinces of Sind, Punjab, United Provinces and Central Provinces by crop cutting experiments according to methods of random sampling is under the active consideration of the Government of India.

3. Action taken on other recommendations of the Committee is summarised below :

(a) It is considered that the list of foodgrains for which statistics of acreage are at present published in the *Agricultural Statistics of India*, should be amplified and the Provincial Governments and Indian States were asked on the 17th December, 1943, to state if it would be possible for them to furnish statistics in the amplified form.

(b) It has been decided that the areas included in each trade block should be more clearly specified than at present in the publication 'Accounts relating to the Inland (Rail and River-borne) Trade of India'. A list of British Indian districts and Indian States included in each trade block has been drawn up and is being examined for inclusion in the publication referred to above.

(c) At present the statistics of coastal trade are registered for the five maritime provinces, viz., Bengal, Orissa, Bombay, Sind and Madras and represent the total imports into and the total exports from each of these provinces. The question of improving these statistics is under consideration.

(d) The weekly arrivals and despatches of commodities included in the 'Accounts relating to the Inland (Rail and River-borne) Trade of India' are recorded at 35 railway stations situated in different parts of the country. Proposals to revise this list of stations are being considered.

(e) The Industrial Statistics Act empowers the Provincial Governments to obtain periodical returns from the factories of the raw material used and the finished goods made by them. Preliminary details in connection with the enforcement of the Act are under the active consideration of the Government of India.

(f) As regards the improvement of statistics of stocks it is considered that under existing conditions it is not feasible to obtain any reliable direct statistics. Arrangements have, however, been made to obtain from two reliable banks fortnightly reports regarding crop and stock holding tendencies in the principal producing areas.

(g) It has been decided to publish equivalents of different kinds of 'candy' in terms of lbs. side by side with actual units of prices published in the *Indian Trade Journal*.

4. It may also be mentioned that at present all-India forecasts of acreage and production are issued in respect of two food crops only, viz., rice and wheat. The views of the Provincial Governments and Indian States have been received on the proposal to issue forecasts of *kharij* food crops other than rice and are being considered by the Government of India. The question of publishing all-India forecasts of *rabi* food crops other than wheat will be taken up shortly.

STEPS FOR BUILDING UP OF CENTRAL FOODGRAINS RESERVE, ETC.

17. *Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether any step has been taken to build up a Central Foodgrains reserve of five lakh tons, as recommended by the Foodgrains Policy Committee;

(b) whether the Government of India have already pressed the United Nations to arrange for an annual import for the current consumption of about one million tons of foodgrains; if so, when and with what result;

(c) whether an investigation has been made of the impact on the food situation in India of the strategic plans of the war, in so far as they concern the presence of large overseas forces in India; if so, the conclusions and decisions reached in consequence of the said investigation; and

(d) whether there has been any export from India of rice after March, 1943; if so, the quantity thereof, and the countries to which it was exported?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) Yes.

(b) The need for imports has been strongly and repeatedly represented to His Majesty's Government since the middle of 1942, and the scale recommended by the Foodgrains Policy Committee has been supported by the Government of India. Over 3,60,000 tons of grains were imported during 1943-44 and more are expected.

(c) Yes. The conclusion arrived at is that India needs more imports, and His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief has given an assurance that additional troops brought into India will not be allowed to become a drain on the country's food resources.

(d) Yes. A statement is placed on the table.

Statement showing exports of rice from India with destinations from 1st April, 1943 to 31st December, 1943.

Destination.	(In tons.) Quantity.	Particulars.
United Kingdom	190	for ships' stores upto August, 1943.
Aden and Dependencies	55	upto May, 1943.
Arabia	212	Do.
Bahrein Islands	101	upto April, 1943.
Ceylon	25,905	all but 1,202 * tons before July, 1943.
Union of South Africa	627	for ships' stores upto August, 1943.
British West India Islands (excluding Bahamas)	5	for ships' stores upto April, 1943.
Miscellaneous Destinations (ships' stores)	538	
Total	27,643	

*This represents quantities permitted to be exported to Ceylon prior to July, 1943, of which shipment was delayed for various reasons.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask during what period did the Government of India import 300,000 tons of grains? Did it take six months to import this quantity or twelve months? May I ask the period during which 300,000 tons of grains were collected?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I will give you the figures roughly. 126,000 tons were imported from January to April, 1943, and 238,000 tons were imported during October to January 1943-44.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: In view of the fact that the Government of India could import only 300,000 tons during thirteen months, may I ask what period will the Government of India take to import the million and a half tons which the Gregory Committee has said should be imported into India?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That exactly is the point which we are pressing on His Majesty's Government.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: Has the Government of India pressed this point on the United Nations because that was the recommendation of the Gregory Committee and not merely His Majesty's Government?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I think we can go as far as His Majesty's Government for the present.

MAL-ADMINISTRATION OF THE SALT SUPPLY SCHEME IN BIHAR.

18. ***Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall:** Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to say:

(a) if it is a fact that the Government of India, Finance Department (Central Revenues), in their letter No. 41-Salt/42, dated the 20th October, 1942, to the Secretary to the Government of Bihar, Commerce Department, promulgated a scheme for checking profiteering in salt and ensuring regular supply of salt;

(b) if it is a fact that in the said scheme the District Magistrates were required to nominate reliable persons or firms to place indents, and to arrange for the distribution of salt in each district;

(c) if it is a fact that, in pursuance of the said scheme of the Government of India, the Government of Bihar, stated in paragraph 3 of their circular letter No. 1970 P. C., dated Patna, the 11th/14th November, 1942, addressed to all District Magistrates, that "In order to work this scheme it will be necessary to select one or two reliable merchants in each district or in each important district market who may be authorised to place direct orders for salt wagons which will be cleared out of turn and will be free from Sambhar lake 'Orders Profits'. These merchants or firms must be of good repute, well established and experienced in the salt trade"; and

(d) if the Government of India are aware that the Government of Bihar have not administered the scheme either in the spirit of the Government of India letter referred to above or in accordance with their own circular letter quoted above?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a), (b) and (c). Yes.

(d) No such complaint has been received.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: With reference to the answer to part (d) of my question, may I ask whether there is no scope for people to approach the Government of India with regard to any complaints in these matters?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: They have got the Posts and Telegraphs Department.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: I did not mean through the Postal Department, but whether the public can approach the Government of India directly or through the Bihar Government and whether the Bihar Government is to forward such a petition to the Government of India or it can summarily dispose it of without sending it to the Government of India?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Without going into the constitutional position, I receive a number of letters and telegrams every day and I try to remove the grievances of the people.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Is there no regular machinery for redressing the grievances of the people in this respect?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The whole machinery of the Government of India is meant for this kind of work, namely, to remove the complaints of the people.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Has the Government of India any specific agency to deal with such matters?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: In my own Department, when I receive complaints, I pass them on to the Department. They are dealt with in the Department first. They make inquiries and then we try and do something.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I ask whether the Government of India actually overrides and overrules the matter which the Provincial Government says belongs to it finally?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That requires a discussion of the constitutional position.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I am only asking what the practice is, whether the Provincial Governments are overruled or not?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: They generally accept our wishes.

MAL-ADMINISTRATION OF THE SALT SUPPLY SCHEME IN BIHAR.

19. ***Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall:** Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to say:

(a) if the Government of India are aware:

(i) that representations from old and reputed firms dealing in salt have been made to the Government of Bihar alleging about the mal-administration of the scheme in which new firms have been selected in preference to firms of good repute, well established and experienced in the salt trade; and

(ii) that taking advantage of the scheme and authorisation of powers to the District Officials, such officials have acted more in the spirit of distributing favours and patronage than with any regard for justice and fair administration;

(b) if the Government of India have reserved any power of safeguard against the mal-administration of the Salt Department by the Provincial Government; and

(c) if the answer to (b) be in the affirmative, if Government propose to look into the grievances of the firm that alleges serious charges of mal-administration with regard to the selection of firms?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) (i) No.

(ii) No.

(b) No, but in the capacity of the rule making authority, the Government of India have the power to investigate all matters of mal-administration and to amend the rules or orders if necessary.

(c) Representations made by individual firms to the Government of Bihar regarding the selection of persons nominated by District Officers to receive salt under the Salt (Emergency Distribution) Order, 1942, have been dealt with by the Provincial Government who are responsible for the local distribution of salt and there is no ground for the Government of India to interfere in the matter.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: May I know if the Government have satisfied themselves that there have been no grounds for enquiry because of any enquiry made into the complaints of the people?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: We made enquiries from the Bihar Government and we gather that only persons who were reliable and well established in the salt trade were selected.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: In how many cases were enquiries made?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I am unable to say off-hand, but we are generally satisfied that there is nothing wrong with the selection of these dealers.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: May I know what is the basis of this general satisfaction that there have been no grounds for any grievance on the part of the people?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: We have got eyes and ears.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: What are the standards by which well reputed firms are judged to be capable of dealing in these things?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: It is difficult to lay down a yard stick, but as I have said we have satisfied ourselves that the selection was not wrong.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: May I know whether it is a fact that in Bihar the only criterion for selecting these people is nothing but the purchase of National Savings Certificates?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That is not correct, Sir.

DIRECTIVE ISSUED TO BENGAL GOVERNMENT IN THE MATTER OF DISTRIBUTION CENTRES IN CALCUTTA.

20. ***Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Salt:** Will the Honourable Member for Food be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons that led to his issuing a directive under section 126A of the Government of India Act to the Bengal Government in the matter of the distribution centres to be established in Calcutta under the Rationing Scheme:

(b) whether any written advice was tendered to the Government of Bengal before issuing the directive;

(c) whether the Government of Bengal refused to accept such advice; and, if so, for what reasons; and

(d) whether he proposes to place on the table copies of such parts of the correspondence on the subject as are not confidential?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) The direction was issued in pursuance of Recommendation No. 56 of the Foodgrains Policy Committee, that in the administration of urban rationing schemes, every use should be made of the normal machinery of the retail trade, and in order to avoid any factor which might delay or prejudice the operation of an efficient rationing scheme for Calcutta.

(b) No. All discussions between the Government of India and the Government of Bengal on this subject had been personal or through the Regional Food Commissioner.

(c) and (d). Do not arise.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: What is the answer to this specific question in part (c), "whether the Government of Bengal refused to accept such advice"?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes, they refused to accept the advice and then we issued the directive.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Did the Bengal Government accept then?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes, the directive was carried out.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: What were the reasons for refusing to take the advice?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: It is very difficult to enter into all the reasons. I myself went into the matter in Calcutta with the Bengal Government. I had a long talk with the Members of the Government there.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Did I understand the Honourable Member aright that he said 'no' in answer to part (b)?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes, I said 'no'.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: The question was "whether any written advice was tendered to the Government of Bengal before issuing the directive". The Honourable Member replied 'no', and then later on the Honourable Member says that because they had refused to accept the advice, therefore, the Government were compelled to issue a directive. How does the Honourable Member reconcile these two statements?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The discussions between the Government of India and the Government of Bengal on this subject had been personal or through the Regional Food Commissioner. That is a much more satisfactory way of dealing with these matters.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Was any record kept of the discussions?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes, there are records of these discussions.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Why did not the Government of India advise the Government of Bengal before issuing the directive?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes, I did advise personally.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Why not in writing?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: It is not necessary.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Was it intended to issue the directive only to show the authority of this mighty Government?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Certainly not.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: The Honourable Member said in reply to parts (c) and (d) that they do not arise, but he is now making a different statement.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: If the Honourable Member will read the question and the answer, he will find that there is no inconsistency.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Did the Honourable Member in his original reply say that parts (c) and (d) do not arise?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: What I suppose the questioner meant was whether the Government of Bengal refused to accept 'such' advice, that is advice in writing. The word 'such' is there. We did not advise them in writing. I have admitted that fact and so there is no inconsistency in my answer so far as I can see.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Was it or was it not the reply that parts (c) and (d) do not arise?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That was the reply.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: How was it based?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Mr. Essak Sait.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: The Honourable Member said just a short while ago that the Bengal Government gave reasons. He has mentioned only one side of the argument as to why the Government of India issued the directive. He never gave the reasons which the Bengal Government brought forward. Will the Honourable Member mention some of the reasons which led the Government of Bengal to refuse. This question is in part (c).

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I was asked for our reasons as to why we issued the directive. If you want to know the reasons why the Government of Bengal refused, I will give you some of them. They thought that trade was dishonest, they thought that black markets would be created as a result of trade being interested in the distribution of food grains. Well, we could not accept that line of argument for the simple reason, as I have stated in my answer that the Foodgrains Policy Committee after going into the whole matter at great length came to the conclusion that in order that rationing may be a success, we must make use of the normal trade channels. This practice has met with success in Bombay and elsewhere where rationing has been introduced.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: The Honourable Member said that certain things have gone on record. May I ask whether the Honourable Member will publish such portions which are not confidential?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I do not propose to go further into the matter. The question has been settled. Our directive was accepted by the Government of Bengal cheerfully and rationing has been introduced in Calcutta. It is no use discussing the matter now.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: I am asking about the publication of such parts of the correspondence on the subject as are not confidential?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: They are all confidential, I think, in that sense.

QUININE POSITION.

21. *Dr. P. N. Banerjee: (a) Has the attention of the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands been drawn to the following telegraphic message dated the 9th December, 1943, published in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, dated the 11th December, 1943, "Answering a question in the House of Commons to-day why shipping space was used to consign a cargo of Whisky to Bombay when it was not found possible to send badly needed supplies of quinine", Mr. Amery said: "The ban which had previously been maintained on shipment of spirits was lifted in September. This has certainly not been at the expense of quinine. Quinine is produced in India and supplies there are adequate"?

(b) If so, on whose information was the Secretary of State's statement that the supplies of quinine are adequate, based?

(c) Is it a fact that supplies of quinine in India are adequate, and is quinine available in India at reasonable prices?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a), (b) and first part of (c). Attention is invited to the reply just given by me to starred question No. 1 by Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta.

2nd part of (c). Quinine is distributed at reasonable prices by Provincial Governments.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: With regard to part (a), is it a fact that whisky has been given preference over quinine in the matter of imports?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: No, Sir.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: With regard to part (c), will the Honourable Member kindly tell us how the present prices compare with the prices in 1939?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I have not got a schedule of the prices here but I think the price of Government quinine is probably fifty per cent. higher now than it was in 1939.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: One thousand per cent. higher.

(b) WRITTEN ANSWERS.

GRIEVANCES OF INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

22. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas be pleased to state if he has received representation from Indian Nationals in South Africa with regard to their conditions and grievances, since the Reciprocity Bill was passed by this House? What steps has the Honourable Member taken to remove those grievances, and to improve their conditions there?

(b) Is the Pegging Act in force in the Union of South Africa? If so, what attempts have the Government of India made to get it repealed?

(c) Have any retaliatory measures been taken against the Government of South Africa under the provisions of the Reciprocity Act?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) No, Sir. But though no representations have been received direct by the Government of India, since the last Summer Session of the Legislature matters affecting the Indian community in the Union of South Africa continue to engage their attention as well as that of their High Commissioner in the Union.

(b) The answer to the first part is in the affirmative. As regards the second part it is the constant endeavour of the High Commissioner for India in South Africa to urge the repeal of the Pegging Act.

(c) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply just given by me to Mr. Deshmukh's question No. 7.

FOOD CONDITION IN CALCUTTA.

23. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state the present food condition in Calcutta? How much food has been supplied to Calcutta since the last meeting of the Assembly, and from which places was it imported?

(b) How many destitutes were removed from Calcutta since the meeting of the last Assembly, and to which places, and what arrangements exist for their living and maintenance?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) Conditions have much improved. Rationing of rice, wheat, wheat products and sugar have been introduced.

A statement showing despatches of foodgrains from different areas to Bengal from the 1st of October to the 20th of January is placed on the table of the House. Figures of despatches to Calcutta alone are not available.

(b) About 42,851 persons were removed from Calcutta under the Bengal Destitute Persons (Repatriation and Relief) Ordinance, 1943. Most of these destitutes were repatriated to their respective villages when the harvest was beginning, so that all could obtain work. They were provided with free passages as well as some money or rations for the journey and ration cards enabling them to obtain food at their villages from free kitchens. Some are reported to have returned to Calcutta after repatriation, but these are stated to be mostly

professional beggars, or persons unable to work, who are being kept in Relief Centres until they can be dealt with under the Rehabilitation Scheme.

Despatches of different foodgrains from surplus areas to Bengal including Calcutta during the period from 1st October, 1943, to 20th January, 1944.

Supplying areas.	(In tons.)				Total.
	Wheat (including products).	Gram.	Rice.	Other grains.	
Punjab	148,356	11,020	30,622	6,442	196,440
Sind	1,913	2,007	13,608	..	17,528
Punjab States	765	13,317	630	..	14,712
Bahawalpur	14,963	2,737	560	..	18,260
W. I. States . . . . .	..	..	..	2,700	2,700
Bihar	1,272	1,572	6,680	..	9,524
U. P.	26,086	4,653	2,206	6,314	39,259
Rewa	2,002	1,625	2,199	..	5,826
C. P. & Berar . . . . .	..	344	16,004	..	16,348
E. States . . . . .	..	250	27,897	..	28,147
Assam . . . . .	..	..	6,370	..	6,370
Orissa . . . . .	..	..	6,740	..	6,740
Gwalior . . . . .	..	..	..	4,642	4,642
Baluchistan . . . . .	..	..	73	..	73
Total	195,357	37,525	113,589	20,098	366,569
Foreign imports	71,055	..	..	27,969	99,024
GRAND TOTAL	266,412	37,525	113,589	48,067	465,593

IMPORT OF AGRICULTURAL TRACTORS.

24. *Khan Bahadur Nawab Makhdum Murid Hossain Qureshi: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state:

- if he is aware of the large demands for agricultural tractors in the country, and the very meagre number imported by the Government of India;
- the number of agricultural tractors coming out in the year 1944; and
- the steps he is taking to import tractors to meet full demands?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a), (b) and (c). The number of tractors required during 1944 for replacement of existing machines was estimated by a joint conference of importers, distributors and indigenous manufacturers of agricultural implements and machinery held last year and licences for import up to that number will be granted to the trade on the basis of priority determined by Government. For tractors required during 1944 for new projects designed to bring culturable but uncultivated land under cultivation, the demands of Provincial and State Governments have been ascertained and steps to obtain the number necessary from the United States of America have been taken. It is impossible in present conditions to state even approximately how many tractors of either category will be shipped during 1944.

STEPS FOR MEETING DEFICIENCY OF AGRICULTURAL BULLOCKS.

25. *Khan Bahadur Nawab Makhdum Murid Hossain Qureshi: Is the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands aware of the fact that bullocks are not readily available, and how he proposes to meet the deficiency of bullocks for ploughing?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Government are aware that in some parts of the country plough bullocks are not readily available. Owing to the difficulty of importing cattle from abroad in present conditions and the absence of any scientific technique practicable in the circumstances of the country by which the cattle population can be rapidly increased, the efforts of Government have perforce been concentrated on the preservation of working bullocks from slaughter to the maximum extent possible. Instructions have been issued by the military authorities to all Commands in India that cows in milk, pregnant cows or working bullocks (both plough cattle and cattle used for transport) should not be

accepted for slaughter and cattle tendered for slaughter are inspected from this point of view. Provinces have been invited to adopt and enforce similar restrictions and certain Provincial Governments have issued notifications under the Defence of India Rules which prohibit the slaughter of certain important categories of cattle whether for civilian or army consumption.

IMPORT OF AGRICULTURAL TRACTORS.

26. *Khan Bahadur Nawab Makhdum Murid Hossain Qureshi: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state whether he is aware that large tracts of land in the Central India and Central Provinces can be brought under cultivation with the help of agricultural tractors; if so, what arrangements he is making for the import of suitable tractors?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) There are possibilities of extending the cultivated area in certain parts of the Central India with the help of tractors.

(b) The Honourable Member is referred to my answer to question No. 24. A substantial proportion of the tractors which are being imported for new projects are intended for the part of the country the Honourable Member has in mind.

POWER ALCOHOL FACTORIES.

27. *Mr. R. R. Gupta: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state the number of Power Alcohol Factories already working in India?

(b) How many more factories are expected to be set up, and when?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) and (b). Government would in present circumstances prefer not to broadcast the information.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ECONOMISTS CONFERENCE.

28. *Mr. R. R. Gupta: (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to make a statement regarding the deliberations of the Economists Conference held at New Delhi in November, 1943, with particular reference to their tentative recommendations and the Government's decision thereon?

(b) Will the Conference have further sittings? If so, when?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) The third meeting of the Consultative Committee of Economists was held in New Delhi on the 12th and 13th November, 1943. I am not in a position to make a statement regarding their deliberations, as Government have so far taken no decision on their preliminary conclusions. Piecemeal publication of opinions expressed by the Consultative Committee is not desirable. Moreover, the Committee is only one among several bodies which Government have to consult, and these other bodies have not yet expressed their views.

(b) Yes. The date of the next meeting has not yet been settled.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

COMMUNAL COMPOSITION IN THE OFFICE OF THE CONCILIATION OFFICER (RAILWAYS) AND SUPERVISOR OF RAILWAY LABOUR.

1. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury: Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state:

(a) how many office clerks there are in the office of the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour;

(b) how many Inspectors of Railway Labour have been appointed temporarily or permanently from December, 1942, up to the second week of February, 1944; and

(c) out of these appointments, how many were recruited from (i) depressed classes, (ii) caste Hindus, (iii) Muslims, and (iv) members of other communities?

The Honourable Dr. B. E. Ambedkar: (a) Eleven including a Stenographer.

(b) Five temporary Inspectors only have been appointed from December, 1942, upto January, 1944.

- (c) (i) Three.
 (ii) and (iv). None.
 (iii) Two.

MUSLIM INSPECTORS OF RAILWAY LABOUR.

2. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the number of persons who served temporarily as Inspectors of Railway Labour and who were trained hands at the time of the first appointment of Mr. Jhadev, Conciliation Officer (Railways)?

(b) How many of these Inspectors were Muslims, and how many of the Muslims who had served temporarily as Inspectors were given chance of appointment to permanent or quasi-permanent vacancies?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Two.

(b) Both were Muslims. One has secured appointment elsewhere and the other at present officiating as an Inspector of Railway Labour.

DEPRESSED CLASS APPOINTMENTS OF INSPECTORS OF RAILWAY LABOUR.

3. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is true that five Inspectors of Railway Labour posted respectively at Dacca, Tatanagar, Ajmer, Asansol and Jalpaiguri went on deputation to the Central Civil Supplies Department or as Civilian Labour Welfare Officers in the Military Department?

(b) Is it true that all these five long standing officiating vacancies which will continue up to the duration of the War, were filled up by five depressed class Hindu Inspectors who have been appointed arbitrarily by the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour, superseding the claims of two Muslims who have served temporarily for more than six months and who are trained hands?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes, but all deputations were not to the Civil Supplies Department or as Civilian Labour Welfare Officers.

(b) No, as will be clear from the reply to part (c) of question No. 1 of the same member.

DEPRESSED CLASS APPOINTMENTS OF INSPECTORS OF RAILWAY LABOUR.

4. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is a fact that five long standing officiating vacancies of Inspectors of Railway Labour occurred because of the deputation of two Muslims, viz., Mr. A. Hamid and Mr. A. Karim, one Sikh, Mr. T. Singh, and two caste Hindus?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: It is true that the vacancies arose because of the deputations.

DEPRESSED CLASS APPOINTMENTS OF INSPECTORS OF RAILWAY LABOUR.

5. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is a fact that five depressed class appointments of Inspectors of Railway Labour were made without any advertisement and without selection by the Selection Board?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: No. Only three Scheduled Class candidates were appointed. Recruitment was not made by advertisement or by a Selection Board.

DEPRESSED CLASS APPOINTMENTS OF INSPECTORS OF RAILWAY LABOUR.

6. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour was justified in appointing all the five new depressed class Inspectors without any selection? Are they from amongst relatives of his own province of Bombay?

(b) Was the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour justified in appointing his relations and his own community people as clerks and Inspectors? Is the Honourable Member aware that there were qualified depressed class candidates from other provinces also?

(c) Why did he not consider the claims of those who once served creditably in officiating vacancies as Inspectors?

(d) Why did the Supervisor of Railway Labour appoint Inspectors without consulting the Selection Board?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a), (c) and (d). I would refer to my reply to the previous question. The candidates appointed are not related to the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour.

(b) I have given the information relating to Inspectors. As regards clerks, out of eleven only one belongs to the Scheduled Caste whom the present Conciliation Officer (Railways) has appointed.

DEPRESSED CLASS APPOINTMENTS OF INSPECTORS OF RAILWAY LABOUR.

7. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury: Is the Honourable Member for Labour prepared to consider the desirability of filling up the five vacancies of Inspectors of Railway Labour by forming a Selection Board so that the legitimate claims of all communities may not be jeopardized?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The question of filling of vacancies in the grade of Inspectors is under examination of Government.

BENGALEE INSPECTORS IN THE OFFICE OF THE CONCILIATION OFFICER (RAILWAYS) AND SUPERVISOR OF RAILWAY LABOUR.

8. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state how many Bengalee Inspectors there are in the office of the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour? If there is only one Bengalee, why are not more Bengalees appointed?

(b) Is it not a fact that there are sufficient number of qualified Bengalees, both amongst Hindus and Muslims, who are awaiting chances?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Two.

(b) There may be sufficient and suitable Bengalees available for appointment but the presumption behind the question that the appointments are made with any reference to the province of a candidate is not correct.

QUALIFICATIONS OF MR. D. G. JHADEV, CONCILIATION OFFICER (RAILWAYS) AND SUPERVISOR OF RAILWAY LABOUR.

9. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member state if it is true that Mr. D. G. Jhadev is at present the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour, Government of India? If so, what are his qualifications? Was he in Government service or in Railway service before?

(b) Will the Honourable Member please state if it is a fact that Mr. Abdur Rahman Puri, the Head Clerk of the Office of the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour has been degraded to the post of an Inspector? If so, what are the reasons?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes. Mr. D. G. Jhadev at present holds the post.

Mr. Jhadev was an elected member of the Bombay, Legislative Assembly prior to his present appointment. Besides being an elected member of the Backward Class Board, Bombay, he had served on many Select Committees, Development Boards, Advisory Committees and was an arbitrator of Co-operative Societies in the District of East Khandesh. He is a B.A., LL.B., having graduated in 1934 and taken his law degree in 1940. He has not been in Government or Railway Service before.

(b) The Honourable Member is presumably referring to Mr. Abdul Hamid Puri. He reverted to his substantive post of an Inspector on expiry of his tenure of appointment as Head Clerk.

CONCILIATION OFFICERS (RAILWAYS) AND SUPERVISORS OF RAILWAY LABOUR.

10. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state who were the Conciliation Officers (Railways) and Supervisors of Railway Labour since its creation?

(b) Does he consider it desirable to post an I. C. S. Officer or otherwise an experienced officer as Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The combined post of Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour was held only by Mr. Khaieeli, I.C.S., before Mr. Jhadev was appointed to it.

(b) I do not consider it necessary that the post should be held only by an I.C.S. Officer or some other person who has had experience as an Officer of Government.

FIXATION OF WHOLESALE AND RETAIL PRICES BY GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL FOR PADDY AND RICE.

11. Mr. K. C. Neogy: With reference to his reply to starred question No. 54 on the 9th November, 1943, stating that an enquiry had been made from the Government of Bengal in regard to the actual result achieved by the fixation of wholesale and retail prices for paddy and rice, does the Honourable the Food Member propose to make a statement giving the necessary reply to the original question on the subject?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The following is a summary of the information received from the Government of Bengal:

(a), (b) and (c). The Bengal Government's Order dated the 10th November, 1943, controlling the wholesale and retail prices had the effect of bringing out stocks of rice in certain districts and enabling Government to purchase substantial quantities at or below the controlled rates. It also brought down the black market prices for rice within a short time by Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 a maund. There was some anticipated dislocation of the retail markets in urban areas immediately after control was imposed, which was met by sales from Government controlled shops at statutory retail prices and by requisitioning, wherever necessary and possible. It is not possible without an unjustifiable expenditure of labour to prepare a detailed statement of the actual prices of the principal foodgrains ruling at the relevant periods in Calcutta and the districts.

SUPPLY OF FOODGRAINS AT CONTROLLED OR CONCESSIONAL PRICES TO NON-MILITARY EMPLOYEES OF BENGAL GOVERNMENT.

12. Mr. K. C. Neogy: With reference to his answer to part (d) of starred question No. 55 on the 9th November, 1943, stating that information regarding supply of foodgrains at concessional prices to Bengal Government employees and official and semi-official organisations such as the A. R. P. Services and Civic Guards, had been called for from the Bengal Government, does the Honourable the Food Member propose to place on the table the reply of the said Government on this subject?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The information received from the Government of Bengal is as follows:

The following categories of employees of the Bengal Government are entitled to concessional supply of foodgrains:

- (1) Gazetted Officers in receipt of dearness allowance.
- (2) Non-Gazetted employees drawing less than Rs. 300 per month.
- (3) All ranks of the Police up to and including the rank of an Inspector.
- (4) All personnel of the Calcutta Firebrigade and Auxiliary Fire Service upto and including the rank of an Engineer.
- (5) Jail menials and Warders upto and including the rank of Chief Head Warder.

About 44,000 employees of the Bengal Government, members of the A. R. P. Services and Civic Guards enjoy concession in Calcutta. The amount of foodgrains supplied in each month has varied with the supply position but the monthly quota during 1943 never exceeded 12,600 maunds of rice and 9,500 maunds of *atta*. Figures regarding employees outside Calcutta are not readily available. District Magistrates in the districts and the Civil Supplies Department in Calcutta are responsible for issuing these supplies.

STOCKS OF FOODGRAINS HOARDED BY EMPLOYERS IN BENGAL.

13. **Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to refer to his answer to part (d) of starred question No. 56 on the 9th November, 1943, on the subject of stocks of foodgrains hoarded by employers in Bengal, and give a complete reply to the question?

(b) Where employers actually required by the Government of Bengal under the authority granted to them under an amendment of the Foodgrains Control Order, dated the 29th May, 1943, to submit returns of stocks that they held for distribution to their employees or to take out a licence for the maintenance of such stocks? If so, will the Honourable Member be pleased to indicate the time when such action was taken and the statistical position of stocks thus disclosed at the time?

(c) Does the Honourable Member propose to make a statement, giving the statistical results of the Food Drives that were undertaken by the Government of Bengal in different areas of the Province?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) and (b). Returns furnished under the Foodgrains Control Order by large employers of labour in the Calcutta and industrial area show that they held on 31st July, 1943, the following stocks :

Rice—540,886 maunds.

Wheat and Wheat products—79,860 maunds.

Dals—97,368 maunds.

Relatively smaller stocks were held by employers of labour in the districts, information of which is not readily available. The stocks given above represented four weeks' requirements of the labour.

Employers were required to submit returns by the Amendment to the Government of India's Order, dated 22nd May, 1943, which was brought to their notice by the Government of Bengal.

(c) A statement showing the stocks found in the districts and Calcutta during the Government of Bengal's Food Drives in June, 1943, and August, 1943, is attached.

A statement showing the stocks found in districts during the Food Drive in June, 1943.

Districts.	Stocks found on 16.6.43 (in terms of rice).	Districts.	Stocks found on 16.6.43 (in terms of rice).
Burdwan	2,116	Jalpaiguri	756
Birbhum	1,060	Rangpore	468
Bankura	852	Bogra	651
Midnapore	1,707	Pabna	351
Hooghly	894	Malda	607
Howrah	235	Dacca	828
24-Parganas	1,802	Mymensingh	2,399
Nadia	1,041	Faridpore	438
Murshidabad	688	Bakarganj	1,897
Jessore	878	Tipperah	602
Khulna	1,637	Noakhali	257
Rajshahi	1,152	Chittagong	378
Dinajpore	1,893		
		Total	25,587

Stocks found in Calcutta and Howrah during the August, 1943, Food Drive.

	Maunds.
Rice	8,22,743
Paddy	81,105
Wheat and wheat products	2,36,226
Dal	5,07,655

REPATRIATION OF DESTITUTE PERSONS FROM CALCUTTA.

14. Mr. K. C. Neogy: With reference to his answer to starred question No. 57 of the 9th November, 1943, on the subject of repatriation of destitute persons from Calcutta, that an enquiry had been made from the Government of Bengal, will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to make a statement in reply to the question?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: An inquiry was made which reveals that the Bengal Destitute Persons (Repatriation and Relief) Ordinance, 1943, was promulgated on 26th October, 1943. The Ordinance was not the subject of consultation with the Government of India before promulgation. The Government of Bengal estimate that approximately 62,351 persons have been dealt with under this Ordinance. Most of these destitutes were repatriated when the harvest was beginning, so that all could obtain work. They were provided with free passages as well as some money or rations for the journey and ration cards enabling them to obtain food at their villages from Free Kitchens. Some are reported to have returned to Calcutta after repatriation, but these are mostly professional beggars, or persons unable to work, who are being kept in Relief Centres until they can be dealt with under the Rehabilitation Scheme.

FEEDING OF LABOUR ENGAGED ON MILITARY WORKS IN BENGAL BY MILITARY AUTHORITIES.

15. Mr. K. C. Neogy: With reference to his answer to starred question No. 62 of the 9th November, 1943, on the subject of the responsibility of the Government of Bengal for feeding labour engaged on military works, will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to give a complete reply to parts (a) and (b) of the question, and indicate the final decision that may have been reached with regard to the arrangements referred to in the question?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The following statement shows the allotments made by the Bengal Government to the Central Public Works Department for civil labour engaged on military works during 1943, the price per maund charged for these quantities and the average pooled price at which the foodgrain was procured during the months in question:

1943		Price charged		Average Pooled Price	
		Rs. A. P.		Rs. A. P.	
March	3,000 mds. Rice	15	6 0	per md. including bag.	15 15 0
April	17,000 do.	15	6 0	Do.	16 0 0
	5,000 mds. Atta	16	8 0	Do.	Not known.
May	3,000 mds. Rice	19	6 0	Do.	19 7 0

Quantities supplied from districts are not known but are believed to be small.

The Government of Bengal did not make any special arrangements to acquire and maintain stocks for this purpose.

Before March, 1943, purchases were made for this labour in the open market and after May, 1943, some assistance was given by the Central Government's Regional Food Commissioner out of imported grain placed at his disposal.

The final arrangement for supply to this labour is still under consideration.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FOODGRAINS POLICY COMMITTEE.

16. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to place on the table a statement summarising the recommendations of the Foodgrains Policy Committee (Gregory Committee Report) indicating—

(i) which of them have already been accepted by Government, and are being carried out;

(ii) which are still under consideration of Government; and

(iii) which have been rejected by Government?

(b) In the case of the third category of recommendations indicated above, what are the reasons for the non-acceptance of each of the recommendations concerned?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) and (b). A full statement is placed on the table.

Report on the Progress of the recommendations of the Foodgrains Policy Committee.

The Foodgrains Policy Committee's Report contained 56 recommendations for action and 37 conclusions or statements of fact or opinion. Two recommendations only have not been fully accepted, these are No. 91 the Export Arbitration Committee, which was rejected by the Fourth Food Conference, and No. 66 Pooled Prices, the situation about which is discussed at the appropriate place in this report. 39 of the former are the direct concern of the Food Department, and the remainder of other departments of the Government of India: the Food Department has undertaken the 'progressing' of all of them. They include both long-term and short-term recommendations and cannot, therefore, all be implemented immediately, but work has started on each one; on some of them action is complete and, on many others considerable progress has been made.

The note below examines the progress made, taking the operative chapters of the Report in order.

Statistical Position—(Chapter 2).

The improvement of agricultural statistics was one of the first matters taken up by Food Department, early in 1943. An inter-departmental committee consisting of the representatives of the E. H. & L., Commerce, Food, Finance and Political Departments and the Economic Adviser, was set up under the chairmanship of the Vice-Chairman, Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, to investigate possible improvements in agricultural statistics. Provinces and States were addressed and a scheme was prepared for the consideration of the Committee.

The improvement of the agricultural statistics involves:

(a) the setting up of machinery for the collection of reliable figures of actual acreage and yield of principal crops from year to year in the 'permanently settled' areas, similar to the revenue machinery in the ryotwari tracts, and

(b) measures to improve estimates of yield.

As regards the first, the possibility of collecting the primary data about acreage and yield in the 'permanently settled' areas, viz., Bengal, Bihar and parts of Orissa, and such Indian States as do not maintain statistics, was considered in detail, but it was decided that the task could not be undertaken satisfactorily during the war owing to the difficulty of securing or training sufficient staff for the purpose. As regards the improvement in the yield estimates, the Committee decided that a scheme drawn up by the Statistician of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research should be implemented in respect of next wheat crop, which is expected to result in considerable improvement. In addition, the governments of Bengal and Bihar have entrusted the task of formulating independent estimates of their current crops to Professor Mahalanobis, and the results of his enquiry are awaited.

'Grow More Food Campaign'—(Chapter 3).

In their third chapter the Committee made 13 recommendations, on various important aspects of Government's drive to produce more food in the country. The rate at which progress can be made on some of these recommendations is limited by war conditions.

(1) *Distribution of improved seed.*—For 1943-44 substantial sums (Rs. 1,55,32,810 in all to date) have been made available: in grants from Central Revenues and from the Cotton Fund (Rs. 31,50,693), and as loans to provinces for various schemes designed to promote the distribution and multiplication of improved seeds and manure at concession rates (Rs. 1,23,82,167).

For 1944-45, similar schemes have been prepared by provincial governments, some of which have already been accepted for assistance from the Centre. Grants on this account already approved at present amount to Rs. 18,74,717 and loans (Rs. 50,04,200). Distribution of improved seed is one of the most important factors in increasing the yield of food crops. Undertaken on a country-wide scale it is a colossal task, but it has been for some time consistently urged on provinces and States, who are co-operating well.

(2) *Compost of town-refuse.*—As noted by the Committee, a scheme for training staff in what is known as the "Bangalore Process" is already in hand. Wide publicity has been given to it in almost all leading newspapers, and by means of illustrated articles and the cinema. The first stage in a training schedule which will cover 18 months is the training of bio-chemists deputed by the most important provinces and States, and that is now complete; the bio-chemists have been given a good practical grounding in routine methods of compost manufacture on a large scale, and the trained men have, in turn, taken up the training of their assistants, who will then have to train the required number of municipal staff. Results may begin to appear by the end of the present year.

(3) *Chemical fertilizers.*—The combined Raw Material and Food Board, Washington have allocated to India certain quantities of chemical fertilizers for the 12 months ending June, 1944. These will be distributed under the control of the Government of India so as to get the best value from them. The question of production in India of synthetic ammonia was examined in consultation with industrialists in September, last. The production of all the chemical fertilizers which India could profitably use is a long term project, but, as a short term 2-year policy, the Government of India's aim is to establish manufacturing capacity for an output of 350,000 tons annually of ammonium sulphate or ammonium nitrate. This will involve the importation of manufacturing units from the U. K., Canada or the U.S.A., and enquiries to that end have been cabled to the Indian Purchasing Mission, as well as to the U.K. The question of technical advice and training is also in hand.

(4) *Irrigation and Drainage Schemes.*—A number of schemes designed to irrigate or drain about 200,000 acres of land have already been initiated, with assistance from the Centre, and numerous other short-term schemes are being explored e.g., tube-well irrigation, river-pumping, embankments, tanks, contour bunding. The early completion of some of these schemes depends on importing machinery from abroad and every effort is being made to secure early delivery. Certain other projects are in hand in the Bombay, C.P., and Bengal provinces, which do not involve importation of any plant, and these are expected to add appreciably to India's foodgrains resources. Provincial Governments and administrations have been asked to furnish progress reports on all projects, whether power-operated or otherwise, sanctioned since April, 1942.

(5) *Depletion of India's milch and draught cattle.*—Restrictions on slaughter of certain categories of cattle, were recommended by the C.F.A.C. in order to prevent permanent damage to the cattle wealth of the country. The War Department and the Provinces have readily accepted the restrictions, which are enforced by a proper system of inspection. On the advice of the Central Government Provinces have also passed orders to prevent indiscriminate slaughter. The position is constantly under review and further measures to tighten control and inspection will be taken, if necessary.

(6) *Iron and steel for agricultural implements.*—Provinces and States have been asked to submit their requirements of "good" (or standard) iron and steel during 1944-45, for the manufacture of country implements in common use. When requirements are known the priority authority will be approached for the allotment of a special quota for this purpose. Provinces have also been informed how they may obtain cuttings and defective steel suitable for agricultural implements from the Iron & Steel Controller. The supply of tools for manufacture and repair of agricultural machinery and the import of such machinery required during the next two years has been arranged. The question of reducing prices of agricultural implements is also in hand.

(7) *Supply of Fuel and Lubricating Oil to agriculturists.*—Provinces and States have been informed of the procedure for obtaining supplies of lubricants and fuel oil for agricultural machinery. The system of distribution of the available supplies is reported to be working satisfactorily. Every effort will however be made to increase supplies and improve distribution.

(8) *Regulation of crop production.*—The necessary powers have been given to Provincial Governments by the new Defence of India Rule 80B. Powers have been taken to bring culturable waste under cultivation and to control the cultivation of specified items of crops.

(9) *Land settlement in Assam.*—The Central Government are keeping a close watch on the progress of the Assam Government's measures for opening up land for settlement, and monthly reports have been called for.

(10) *Under-milling of rice.*—Most provinces have followed the example of the Madras Government, and have issued orders making compulsory the under-milling of rice. The effect of the orders and the extra output are now the subject of enquiry. This method of making more (and more nutritive) rice available is being strongly urged on Government and States that have not so far adopted it.

(11) *Stores for rice-mills.*—Information is being collected about the requirements of the rice mills. When that is known arrangements will be made to supply them, as far as possible.

Imports and Exports—(Chapter 4).

The export of foodgrains from India had been stopped 3 months before the Report of the Foodgrains Policy Committee. The only exception permitted is in the case of small quantities required for provisioning ships sailing from Indian ports or for the use of Indian seamen, or the merchant-navy in Indian Ocean ports. Correspondingly smaller quantities are permitted similarly in the case of passenger-carrying aircraft. The embargo on exports of foodgrains is effective, and is very strictly and scrupulously observed, under the personal scrutiny of the Hon'ble Food Member. A small monthly export of 2,000 tons of pulses, has been permitted to Ceylon which is otherwise cut off from all supplies of foodgrains from India, and therefore needs pulses to supplement protein deficiency; and 250 tons a year to the Persian Gulf.

As regards imports, the Government of India are constantly pressing upon His Majesty's Government the urgency of foodgrains imports on the scale recommended by the Foodgrains Policy Committee, for the purpose of reserve, current consumption and military requirements. Since October, 1943, 232,402 tons have been received.

Army Purchases—(Chapter 5).

The Food Department is in close touch with the War Department, and, through them, with the military authorities over the supply of the Army's requirements, and have constantly before them the effect of the Army's demands on the available food supplies of the country. The procurement of the Army's requirements out of indigenous resources is entrusted to the Food Department and can thus be co-ordinated with the supply of civilian requirements.

As regards the direct or indirect effect upon available food supply and upon prices, of supplying the requirements of the additional armed forces arriving in the country, H. E. the Commander-in-Chief has declared that these will not be allowed to be a drain on the country's resources of foodgrains. The necessity for this has also been made amply clear to H. M. G.

As regards other foodstuffs other than the principal foodgrains as large a quantity as possible is being imported. Local purchase is restricted to those items which cannot with advantage be imported. In case of vegetables, fish, meat and poultry the impact of Army demand on prices and supplies available for civilian consumption is being minimised by planning and co-ordinating purchase on behalf of local commands and the Food Department. It has been decided to set up Co-ordination Committees consisting of the Military Commands; Food Department and the Provincial Governments. These committees will work on the basis of surveys of the available resources and will determine the sources of supply. They will regulate purchase of supplies so as to prevent destruction of breeding stock and seed requirements and will also take necessary action to increase production in deficit areas.

Procurement—(Chapter 6).

The Government of India agreed with the Committee that a Central Government foodgrains monopoly is the ideal medium of procurement, but that for the time being it had to be ruled out of consideration by the time factor. They do not, however, rule out the possibility of establishing a Central monopoly at some future date, and are therefore studying, as recommended by the Committee, the operation of existing Provincial and State purchase systems, with that end in view.

A Central Foodgrains Reserve approximating to about 500,000 tons has been recommended by the Committee. So far as wheat is concerned, this will be built up as much as possible, by imports, from abroad (which are discussed under Chapter 4). A Depot at Karachi has already been established for the purpose.

The Committee recommended that if the functioning of the procurement organisation in a province is unsatisfactory, the Centre should insist on remedial measures, and, to this end, recommended that there should be set up an "enforcement" branch in the Secretariat. The Food Department has been reorganised and this function will be performed by the Division entrusted with the procurement and distribution of foodgrains assisted by the R.F.Cs. and their staff.

The points to which Food Department direct their attention most in the various local schemes, are the elimination of competitive buying; the control of movement and transport; employment of the trade under official supervision; limitation of numbers, prescription of purchasing areas and prohibition of private trade for purchasing agents; and the proper use of the Foodgrains Control Order, as the most effective supporting instrument. These features are already embodied in many local purchasing schemes and there have been important developments in these directions since the Foodgrains Policy Committee reported. Government monopoly purchase already exists, for practical purposes, in the Central Provinces, Orissa, Mysore, Travancore and Cochin, Baluchistan and other smaller areas. In Madras and Bihar Official grain purchase officers direct purchases both for licensed traders and other large consuming interests, and movements between districts are strictly controlled according to quota. The U. P. have localised purchases and movements, and have largely eliminated competitive buying. Licensed agents operate under the orders of Regional Controllers and a large marketing staff. In Bombay the Revenue Department buys direct from producers a percentage of the crop. In Hyderabad a single Commercial Corporation and in Sind, two syndicates—one for wheat and the other for other grains—buy for export. In the Punjab 5 Purchasing Agents were appointed for export and one for Defence Services, but the Punjab Government who also receive offers direct from the trade or producers, and use their Agents to take delivery are now examining their present system in the light of experience gained with a view to improving or altering it before the Rabi crop comes to be marketed. In Bengal four trade agents purchase under the direction of Government assisted by an Advisory Board in defined areas for the requirements of deficit districts, for industrial and other heavy consumers and for the provincial reserve. In Assam, one firm purchases for large internal consumers export and the Army in the Assam Valley and two syndicates in the Sylhet Valley. As regards the use of transport to support official procurement against private competition, the high priority previously given by Railways to all foodgrains has since July, 1943, been confined to movements made at the request of the Central and Provincial Governments.

The Food Department maintains a record which indicates the common factors—both of strength and of weakness in the various schemes, and will enable the experience of one area to be shared by others.

The Government of India are aware of the difficulties of requisitioning and are in general agreement with the Committee's conclusions in this matter. It is a weapon to be used sparingly, but without hesitation, at the appropriate seasons, if the situation in a particular area should demand it, and is being so used at present. The 'freezing' of wheat stocks pledged to Banks in the Punjab with a view to requisitioning, is a good example of the use of this weapon to 'loosen' the movement to stocks, and incidentally to prevent a rise of prices, though in that case requisitioning ultimately proved to be unnecessary.

The Government of India are, at the same time, not neglecting the important complementary recommendation of the Committee, that, for successful procurement, consumer goods should be made available in as great a volume as possible to the producer, and the appropriate departments all have measures in hand to this end; for instance considerable progress has been made in the distribution of Standard Cloth to the various Provinces.

Arrangements have been made for the distribution of iron and steel (defectives and cuttings) for the manufacture of agricultural implements and other rural requirements through the Regional Deputy Iron and Steel Controllers.

The Indian Copper Corporation, under instructions from the Government of India, will shortly be releasing 400 tons of brass sheets per month for conversion into domestic utensils by manufacturers.

Under arrangements with the Government of India about 6 million canvas shoes with reclaimed-rubber soles and 1 million reclaimed-rubber soled shoes with leather uppers are going to be manufactured in the next 12 months by Messrs. Bata Shoe Co., and distributed at controlled prices through their Branches all over India. The price of canvas shoes will range from Rs. 1-13-0 to Rs. 2-2-0 per pair.

Roughly 50 per cent. of the prewar capacity of woollen mills in India will shortly be available for manufacturing woollen material for the civilian market. It has been decided by the Central Government to purchase the entire output, and to place it thereafter on the market through dealers. Each province will be allotted a certain quantity of each bit of material produced, based on its population, a slight weightage being given to North Indian Provinces. It is expected that the woollen material will become available to the public under the arrangements by the end of January, 1944.

Government are considering the question of securing the release of additional manufacturing capacity for meeting the requirements of the civilian consumer of cement, matches, paper, cutlery, crockery, plywood, enamel ware, electric fans and lamps and other electric goods, domestic holloware, steel for bazar sales, etc. Details are, however, still under discussion and will take some time to finalise.

The possibility of increasing the present available supplies of kerosene is also being actively pursued. If our proposals materialize, we may hope to get in the not distant future, kerosene supplies equal to 60 per cent. of the 1941, consumption as against the 50 per cent now being supplied.

Action is at the same time being taken to import from the U. K. and U. S. A. larger quantities of consumer goods of the type required generally in urban areas, and it is hoped that by the end of June, 1944, a large quantity of these goods will have arrived in India.

As regards prices the Hoarding and Profiteering Prevention Ordinance 1943 has made the charging of more than 20 per cent. profits on cost of production or landed cost in case of imported articles a crime. Prices of various articles like leather, cigarettes, fountain-pens, cycles, polishes, photographic goods, razor blades, sports, goods, etc., have been statutorily fixed.

Distribution and Consumption (Including Rationing)—(Chapter 7).

Such transport difficulties as have occurred in the distribution of foodgrains, have usually been quickly solved with the help of Regional Controllers of Railway Priorities, set up by War Transport Department, with whom provincial Governments and the Food Department's Regional Food Commissioners have been encouraged to keep in close touch. A senior Railway official has been appointed Director of Movements, with the Food Department, who advises on all questions of transport policy affecting foodstuffs, and assists in removal of practical difficulties.

Coastal shipping, country-craft, river and canal traffic and road transport—all play a vital part in the movement of foodgrains, especially in local movement, and none of these methods of transport have been neglected. The Coastal Shipping Committee at Bombay is responsible for the co-ordinated movement of all available tonnage on the coast, and acts under the general direction of War Transport Department which consults the Commerce Department, under whose formal control coastal shipping remains. A country-craft organisation has been set up by the War Transport Department and country-craft are used, particularly on the West Coast, for the carriage of foodgrains.

"This form of transport of foodgrains by country-craft, to begin with, was not very popular owing to the risks of pilferage and damage. The War Transport Department have however, recently entered into an arrangement with the Bombay Steam Navigation Company to run organised country-craft services between Karachi and Bombay, Mormagao, Cochin, Alleppey and Trivandrum at fixed rates subject to certain conditions, which provide *inter alia* that the Company will (1) be liable for pilferage and (2) provide either decked crafts or suitable tarpaulins to cover the cargo."

Inland water transport is a provincial responsibility, but the War Transport Department have addressed various provincial Governments and this method is likely to be used increasingly for local carriage of foodgrains. The same applies to road transport and arrangements have been made by the War Transport Department for the special supply of motor vehicles to those producing areas where their use can most greatly assist the extraction of marketable surpluses. The use of Army motor transport has proved invaluable in the distribution of foodgrains in Bengal.

The Government of India regard the introduction of individual food rationing in all large cities and towns as fundamental to a co-ordinated food plan. In this a considerable measure of success has been achieved in a short time and, as a result of careful publicity and actual experience, the public are beginning to understand that rationing is not something to fear as a hardship but an instrument of confidence and an assurance of fair distribution of available supplies at reasonable prices. The Government of India arranged for a series of courses of instruction for Food Controllers in rationing in Bombay during September, 1943, which were attended by senior officers from almost all provinces and States.

Practically every government in the country has now accepted the need for food rationing of towns. Rationing schemes covering one or more of the staple foodstuffs are now in force in 20 cities or towns with a population of 1 lakh and over; in 17 towns with a population of half a lakh or over, and in 66 smaller towns 103 in all. Of these, 82 are in British India and 21 in Indian States. Bombay City has provided a model for most rationing scheme, and the most rapid development has been in Madras where 59 municipal areas and taluks have already been rationed. In Travancore, an ambitious extension of rationing to the whole State has been undertaken. In addition to the figures given above, the U. P. Government has partially rationed 20 of its largest towns, and proposes to extend this to 60 more towns in the near future. Combined with strict movement control, the U. P. scheme provides individual rations for 60 to 75 per cent. of the population and allows the trade to look after the rest. The U. P. Government have agreed to expand their system to full urban rationing as may be deemed necessary and desirable in consultation with the Government of India.

The Government of India also attach importance to the use of individual ration cards as opposed to family ration cards, and, although many towns prefer to start their rationing schemes with family cards, there is taking place, as a result of the Government of India's advice, and a lead given by the Government of Bombay, a transition to individual ration cards.

Rationing has been introduced in Calcutta with effect from the 31st January and it will be introduced in Karachi before the middle of February; the Punjab proposes to ration Lahore, Amritsar and Rawalpindi by March; Delhi will be rationed by April; and plans for the rationing of Hyderabad (Sind), Hyderabad (Deccan), Nagpur, Jubbulpur and numerous other smaller towns, are well advanced.

According to the Foodgrains Policy Committee the basic ration of foodgrains should not be allowed to fall, except in the case of temporary breakdown below 1 lb. per adult per day. In most cases the basic ration has been fixed at or slightly above 1 lb. of foodgrains per adult per day. It has not yet been possible to conform to this standard in the heavily deficit areas of Travancore and Cochin though every attempt is being made to increase supplies to these areas.

Instructions in pamphlet form on food control and rationing have been prepared by the Rationing Adviser to the Government of India, and have been issued to all the local governments, covering the need for the greatest possible uniformity in administration, the proper enforcement of legal sanctions, the setting up of Advisory Committees and the important place of publicity in the preparation and execution of rationing schemes, as well as other advice on numerous details, based on administrative experience. Most provinces have, in order to anticipate hoarding by consumers, issued an "Essential Articles (Restricted Acquisition) Order".

The Rationing Adviser's instructions are to be followed up by a more detailed manual which is now in the press, which will have the effect of encouraging uniformity in rationing administration. It will also stress the importance of the nutritional aspect of rationing. The nutrition booklets published by the Nutrition Research Laboratories, have been widely circulated to all provinces, and they have been advised to avail themselves of expert advice on nutritional feeding and welfare, through Food Advisory Committees.

In addition, the nutritional possibilities for the use of groundnuts have been examined and the results will be communicated to provincial governments.

The Foodgrains Control Order, and in most cases Provincial Governments' Foodgrains Movement Control Orders already exist and operate as checks on hoarding and smuggling.

The advice and information issued by the Food Department is personally reinforced by the Rationing Adviser and other officers, who are almost continually on tour.

The steps taken by the Government of India to secure the improvement of the procurement machinery of provinces is dealt with under another chapter. The special importance of this in its relation to the introduction of rationing has been emphasised.

The Government of India accept the recommendation of the Committee regarding the employment of the normal machinery of the retail trade in rationing schemes. In Calcutta as well as elsewhere, the existing systems of food distribution devised by employees of industrial labour have been adapted or incorporated in the rationing schemes.

There is much to be learnt about food rationing and methods of food distribution in the best interests of the public. The Food Department have under close study, many other relevant matters, including those brought to their notice by the Committee such as rationing of sugar and milk, the function of industrial canteens, cooked food shops. As practical experience of rationing develops, it will be the function of Food Department to see that experience is shared by every town and administration in India.

One of the greatest advantages of rationing is that it limits the consumption of food to what is necessary, and helps to prevent waste. India cannot afford to waste food, and, the recent appeal by the Hon'ble Food Member to the more prosperous members of the community, for the avoidance of waste and excess in the consumption of food has echoed the last recommendation of the Committee in this chapter, on the need for greater austerity, and at least one local administrations has, by order, given practical effect to this.

Basic Plan.—(Chapter 9).

Government have accepted both of the main recommendations of the Committee on this subject. The Food Department intend to proceed with the preparation of the Basic Plan by two stages: first, a plan of distribution is drawn up as between the deficit areas from the beginning of the relative crop year. The actual movements of grain are adjusted with the harvesting period. This is, in fact, in the nature of a 'budget estimate' calculated on the basis of the best information then available. The preliminary plan is thus circulated to the Provinces and States, and movements begin in accordance with the provisional allocations made.

At the second stage, the formula proposed by the Committee for calculating deficits and surpluses of the provinces and the States is to be used as a basis for discussion between the Centre and the Provinces or States concerned. In applying the formula and in the discussions, regard will be had to all relevant factors such as, for instance, actual crops, harvesting periods, abnormal increase in population, or the statistics, if such exist, of past exports and imports. The first Edition of the new plan, known as "Preliminary Kharif Plan", has already issued and has been operative since the 1st November. The information on which to check the first stage in the light of the formula, and other relevant factors, are now available and consultations with the Provinces and States are about to take place. The revised or final Edition of the Kharif Plan will be issued in April, to be operative from the beginning of May, and will coincide with the preliminary edition of the rabi plan.

The study of a more appropriate formula, as recommended by the Policy Committee, is continuously in hand. Much material for this is likely to be obtained at the stage of consultation with local governments and the revision of the preliminary kharif plan.

The Committee also recommended, under Chapter 12 of their Report, that in the case of any difference of opinion between the Centre and a local government over target figures, the matter should be dealt with by the Arbitration Committee; but the Fourth All-India Food Conference by majority rejected the proposal for an expert arbitration committee, and recommended that the decision of the Central Government should be accepted as final. The Government of India have accepted the views of the majority of the Conference on this matter and contemplate that consultations between the Centre and the Provinces or States will normally be conducted between the Centre and the administration concerned, but Government will invoke in any case presenting peculiar difficulties, such expert opinion as may be mutually agreed upon between the governments concerned.

It is of interest to record that under the original Basic Plan, operative from the 1st December, 1942, (in respect of kharif grains) and the 1st April, 1943, (in respect of rabi grains) upto the 15th July, 1943, the total quantity of foodgrains moved from surplus areas was 1,254,200 tons. Since the 15th July, under the revised Basic Plan and the new Kharif plan upto the end of January, 1944, the total quantity moved on civil and Defence account has been nearly 1:4 million tons.

Prices.—(Chapter 8).

The Government of India have announced their intention of bringing provincial and regional prices of foodgrains into parity with each other, with a view to eliminate the wide local variations which now exist, and, eventually, to establishing all-India statutory control of foodgrain prices, which would be maximum prices fixed for the respective crop season, based on a fair return to the cultivator and related to the prices of other commodities and to the needs of the consumer.

The Foodgrains Policy Committee consider that the minimum conditions precedent to the establishment of statutory price control are: (a) adequate procurement machinery, (b) enforcement of the Foodgrains Control Order and anti-hoarding measures, and (c) control of transport. They also consider that for the maximum chance of success, statutory price control requires the existence of Central and Provincial foodgrains reserves. These are all matters the importance of which, so far as the local governments are concerned, had previously been emphasised repeatedly by the Central Government, and attention to them forms a great part of the daily work of the Food Department. They are dealt with further under other chapters of this Report.

As regards control of the prices of non-agricultural commodities necessary to the cultivator and anti-inflationary measures generally, these are receiving the close attention of other departments of the Central Government, and the successful result of the steps which have already been taken to reduce the prices of various essential commodities, are generally apparent. This process will continue.

The principle that statutory prices should not be fixed or altered without the consent of the Central Government, but that pending statutory control of prices throughout India, local control, whether by statute or by conducting purchases at "ceiling prices", should be allowed subject to the approval of the Central Government, has been accepted, and local governments have been asked to discuss questions of price control with each other on a regional basis, in consultation with the Regional Food Commissioners.

It has been decided to set up a small expert Price Advisory Committee, consisting of representatives of the trade and producers, sitting with experts of the Central Government. The invitations have already issued, including the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Associated Chamber of Commerce.

During December, discussions were held with the main wheat producing provinces, and it was decided, and has been announced, that statutory control of wheat prices will be introduced at the time of the next rabi harvest at levels which will be determined before the harvest commences.

In January, a Conference was held to consider what steps could be taken now to implement the Government of India's policy in respect of the prices of the principal kharif grains, viz., rice and millets. After considering the recommendations of the Conference, the Government of India decided that maximum prices in primary wholesale markets throughout British India should be fixed by statute for *bajra* and *jowar*. These have been notified by provincial Governments, the accepted levels being Rs. 7 for *jowar* and Rs. 7-8-0 for *bajra*. Differentials are admitted from these prices in the markets of deficit areas of producing provinces.

In the case of rice, while there was a considerable measure of agreement as regards the proper level for price control in the provinces and States of Southern and Central India, price differences in Northern India are still too wide to announce coordinated price levels. Steps will be taken to reduce current prices in those areas to levels which we consider appropriate, preparatory to fixing statutory maximum prices in parity with each other throughout India.

A start has therefore been made on a systematic implementation of the policy recommended by the Committee and accepted by the Government of India, and this will be steadily pursued, together with development of all the pre-requisite conditions, until food-grain prices throughout India are all firmly under control.

The Committee recommended, as a step towards the levelling of existing price differences, the re-introduction of the system of "pooled prices" for grain imported by deficit from surplus areas. Since, in accordance with another recommendation of the Committee, procurement has now been entrusted to provincial agencies, it is not feasible to introduce the system of Central pooled prices which was in force up to the middle of July, 1943. The accounts of the Central Purchasing Agency up to that date were examined and as they disclosed a profit, a rebate was passed to the recipient administrations who were asked to pass on the benefit to consumers. A similar benefit resulting in the reduction of prices of wheat to the consumer, is expected to accrue from imported Australian wheat, which is landed in India at a lower cost than the prevailing market prices of wheat in India. The possibility of working out export prices from various surplus areas, averaged over a given period and closely related to each other, which will approximate to a pooled price system is under examination.

Food Department.—(Chapter 10).

The Food Department has now been reorganised on lines corresponding to the recommendations of the Committee and final orders on the subject are under issue. The Department is divided into three Divisions, the senior officers of which meet daily, and work as much as possible through personal discussion. There are already, among the officers of the Department, experts experienced in the grain trade, and the number of these is likely to be increased. The Statistical, and Information Branch has been specially strengthened and has been placed in charge of an Economist-Statistician of repute. The Food Advisory Council is about to be reconstructed and strengthened and an announcement will issue shortly.

General Administrative Aspects of the Food Problem.—(Chapter 11).

The Central Food Administration will have the benefit of the advice of three main bodies, the Central Advisory Committee of the Legislatures consisting of 15 members, the Central Food Advisory Council and the Price Advisory Committee. A meeting of the first of these bodies took place early in January. As observed in the last paragraph the C. F. A. C. is an existing body which is about to be reconstituted and strengthened. The constitution of the Price Advisory Committee has been decided, and invitations have issued to the members selected who include experts in the grain trade and representatives of producers.

A Manual, dealing particularly with the distribution and nutritional aspects of Food Control Administration is in the Press.

The Foodgrains Control Order has been amended from time to time and is now being further examined in the light of a large number of suggestions received, including those in the F. P. C. report. Provincial Governments are about to be addressed.

Government have accepted the recommendation of the Committee regarding the retention of R. F. C.'s. Their functions are being reviewed in the light of present circumstances and their staffs will be reorganised and strengthened as necessary.

Relations between the Provinces and States and the Central Government in matters relating to Food.—(Chapter 12).

The Fourth All-India Food Conference which considered the recommendations of the Foodgrains Policy Committee, by a majority rejected the proposal that an expert arbitration committee should resolve differences of opinion between the Centre and the provinces, and recommended that the decision of the Centre should be accepted as final. The Government of India accepted the views of the majority of the Conference in this matter, and contemplate that consultations between the Centre and the provinces or States will normally be conducted direct between the Government of India and the administration concerned or through the Central Government's Regional Food Commissioners. The Government of

India have declared their willingness to invoke in any case presenting particular difficulties, such expert advice as may mutually be agreed upon between the governments concerned.

Differences of opinion have, inevitably, from time to time, arisen in recent months and, in some cases, after full consideration of the local government's point of view, the Government of India have had to direct certain action to be taken under its statutory powers; in other cases, after discussion, the local governments have agreed to comply with the Central Government's advice; and in yet other cases the Central Government have been able to meet the local government's point of view.

FOODGRAINS POSITION.

17. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to refer to the statistical statement of exports of foodgrains from Bengal from April, 1943, to September, 1943, laid by him on the table of this House in reply to starred question No. 134 on the 13th November, 1943, and state whether the figures of export include exports on Government account?

(b) Have figures of such exports on Government account been included in all his statements made in connection with the food situation in the country, dealing with the export of foodgrains from India?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) and (b). Yes. There were, in fact, no exports from Bengal on Government account during the period in question.

"CRIPPS OFFER" AND ACTIVITIES OF THE REFORMS OFFICE.

18. Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: (a) Since the British Government are now committed to the "Cripps offer" will the Honourable the Leader of the House be pleased to say what preliminary steps have been taken to facilitate the transfer of power to the representatives of the people?

(b) Does the Reforms Office still function? If so, what are its activities?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Part (a) The policy of the Government with regard to the Cripps proposals was explained in the Council of State by the Honourable the Leader of that House in the course of debate on a resolution moved by the Honourable Mr. G. S. Motilal on the 24th November, 1943. I invite attention to that speech to which I have nothing to add.

Part (b) I invite the Honourable Member's attention to the reply given by the Honourable the Home Member in the Council of State on the 10th April, 1940, in reply to question No. 107 on the same subject by the Honourable Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru. The functions of the Secretariat of the Governor General (Reforms) were explained by the present Reforms Commissioner in the course of evidence before the Public Accounts Committee in August, 1942. I reproduce below the relevant paragraph from the Committee's Report:

"It was explained that the functions of this Secretariat briefly stated were to advise the Governor-General on constitutional matters, to interpret the Government of India Act on its constitutional, as distinct from its legal, aspects—a duty which this Secretariat was particularly fitted to perform in view of its association with the drafting and implementation of the Government of India Act (1935)—and to serve as a nucleus office in preparation for a post-war revision of the Constitution".

OUTPUT, ETC., OF COAL IN BRITISH INDIA AND THE STATES.

19. Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state:

(a) the output of coal in British India and in the States, separately, for the years 1941, 1942 and 1943;

(b) the stocks of coal in British India and in the States as on the 31st December of 1941, 1942 and 1943; and

(c) the despatches of coal, including the colliery consumption, from collieries in British India and in the States during the years 1941, 1942 and 1943?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The output of coal in British India and the States during 1941 and 1942 was:

	1941	1942
British India	26,088,600	25,949,800
States	3,260,400	3,385,100

(b) Stocks of coal in British India on the 31st December, 1941, were 2,767,500 tons. Stocks on 31st December, 1942, were estimated by the C.I.M. to have been 2,521,600 tons. The figures reported by collieries were found to be greatly exaggerated when they were checked by the C.I.M. Stock figures of States are not available.

(c) The despatches of coal including the colliery consumption from collieries in British India during the years 1941 and 1942 were 24,257,700 tons and 22,695,800 tons, respectively. The despatches of coal excluding colliery consumption from collieries in the States during 1941 and 1942 were 3,243,200 tons and 3,370,500 tons, respectively. Figures of colliery consumption in the States are not available.

It is not in the public interest to disclose figures for 1943 at present.

COAL POSITION.

20. Mr. K. O. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state to what extent the present output of coal is below the requirements of the country?

(b) Is it a fact that recently the Department of the Chief Inspector of Mines measured the stocks of the different collieries as reported to him by the respective collieries, and found a large shortage? If so, what was the quantity of shortage, and how was it explained?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) It is not in the public interest to disclose to what extent the present output of coal is below the requirements of the country.

(b) Coal stocks were checked at the end of May, 1943, and a shortage of over 2 million tons was found. During 1942 a number of collieries had given fictitious figures of raisings probably in order to obtain a better wagon allotment. Proceedings have been taken against a number of collieries for submitting incorrect returns. Periodical checks are now made.

WAR TIME IRRIGATION PROGRAMME FOR INDIA.

21. Mr. R. R. Gupta: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands kindly state:

(a) if his attention has been drawn to an article which appeared in the *Hindustan Times*, dated the 19th December, 1943, page 4, column 5, under the caption 'War time irrigation development in U. S. S. R.' by Professor Alexeli Kosyakov;

(b) if the Government of India, in collaboration with Provincial Governments, contemplate planning or have already planned any 'war time irrigation programme' for India;

(c) if any irrigation project has already been carried out during the war period; if not, why not; if so, how much culturable waste land in British India, and how much in Indian States, has been brought under irrigation during the last four years;

(d) how much more culturable waste land is proposed to be brought under irrigation in 1944 and 1945;

(e) how much culturable waste land there is in British India and in Indian States at present;

(f) what steps the Government of India have taken to implement recommendation No. 11 of the Foodgrains Committee regarding expediting of such irrigation and drainage schemes as promise quick results; and

(g) if Government are prepared to consider the desirability of launching upon such irrigation schemes at once as may bring all the possible culturable waste land under irrigation while the war is on, partly by themselves and partly by encouraging private enterprise in setting up hydro-electric plants at suitable places; if not, why not?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes; programme of irrigation schemes designed to assist the "Grow More Food Campaign" is under preparation and execution.

(c) and (d). Irrigation being a provincial subject, full information is not available; but so far as the Government of India are aware, projects for bringing under irrigation about 850,000 acres of land by the year 1945 are under consideration by Provincial Governments and some of these are in process of execution. Information is not available as to the extent to which this figure includes land classified as culturable waste land.

(e) The latest available figures are those given in "Agricultural Statistics" for 1937-38, viz.,

British India	...	...	91,969,000 acres.
Indian States	...	...	19,298,000 acres.

There are, however, reasons for believing that these figures represent an area much in excess of that which can be economically cultivated.

(f) The Irrigation Adviser to the Government of India is constantly touring the provinces and States for the purpose referred to by the Honourable Member. In respect of projects which have been scrutinised by the Irrigation Adviser, the Central Government have already offered subsidies to provinces to the extent of about Rs. 33 lacs and have secured priority of release for the plant, equipment and materials required. Similar assistance will be forthcoming as further projects are approved.

(g) Government are making all efforts to bring the maximum possible area of culturable waste land under cultivation during the War. The establishment of hydro-electric plants at suitable places is also under consideration.

HELP OF THE MILITARY IN FAMINE RELIEF OPERATIONS IN BENGAL.

22. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to make a statement giving a list of centres in Bengal where the Military have been helping in the famine relief operations, and the available details of the quantities of foodstuffs, clothing, and medical assistance provided through them at each centre?

(b) Have any reports been received from the Military Authorities regarding the extent of distress yet prevailing in the areas served by them, including the number of deaths that have already taken place from starvation or diseases resulting from starvation, the adequacy or otherwise of relief measures so far taken, the period for which these measures should be continued in future, and schemes of rehabilitation that may have been or should be adopted in the respective areas? If so, does the Honourable Member propose to give summaries of such reports under these various heads?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) The Military units which are operating in Bengal, assist the civil administration to convey relief supplies to 30 main distributing centres in the civil districts of Midnapore, Hooghly, 24-Parganas, Howrah, Pabna, Bakarganj, Khulna, Dacca, Mymensingh, Faridpur, Tippera, Noakhali and Chittagong. Military units also assist the District Magistrates in the distribution of the supplies in the interior of the districts. Military Medical and Hygiene units are operating throughout the affected areas.

Up to the 28th January, military units had handled 1,330,000 tons of food-grains, and medical units had treated 320,645 cases, given 322,654 cholera inoculations and 163,628 vaccinations.

60,000 tons of clothing were distributed by military units up to 21st January, 1944.

(b) The military authorities send no such reports to Government of India.

AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES OF RICE IN BENGAL.

23. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to make a statement showing the average retail prices at which rice has been available in the different districts of Bengal during each week or fortnight since November, 1943, as compared with the prices that are authorised by Government for the respective periods, and the ruling market prices in the corresponding periods of the previous year?

(b) Is it a fact that in some cases the operation of the gradually reduced scale of controlled prices resulted in local shortages due to withdrawal of stocks from the market? If so, what action was taken by the authorities to counteract these tendencies, and with what results?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) The Honourable Member will find the information which he requires published in the *Calcutta Gazette*, copies of which are in the Library of the House.

(b) Yes. There was some dislocation of the retail markets in urban areas immediately after control was imposed which was met by sales from Government controlled shops at statutory retail prices and by requisitioning wherever necessary and possible. This had the effect of bringing out stocks of rice in certain districts and enabling Government to purchase substantial quantities at or below the controlled rates.

FOODGRAINS SUPPLIED TO BENGAL.

24. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to make a statement showing the quantities of different foodgrains which were supplied to Bengal from outside, during the months of November and December, 1943, and January, 1944, showing how much thereof represented imports from abroad, and how much represented supplies from different areas in British India?

(b) What is the quantity of each kind of foodgrains that represents the supply to be made by the Central Government to Bengal under the scheme for supplying Greater Calcutta with foodgrains from outside the Province on the responsibility of the Central Government?

(c) What are the approximate prices that will be charged to the Government of Bengal for the supplies made under the scheme referred to in part (b) above?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) A statement is placed on the table.

(b) The Central Government have provisionally undertaken to arrange for the supply of 6,46,000 tons of foodgrains to the Bengal Government composed of 3,40,000 tons wheat, 2,46,000 tons rice and 60,000 tons millets.

(c) The prices charged to the Bengal Government by the supplying administrations will normally be the purchase price of the foodgrains plus transport and handling charges and a surcharge to cover administrative expenses.

Despatches of different foodgrains from surplus areas and abroad to Bengal during the months of November and December, 1943, and January (upto 20th), 1944.

Foodgrains.	From Indian sources.				(In tons.) Imported grains.				GRAND TOTAL.			
	Novem-ber, 1943.	Decem-ber, 1943.	January (upto 20th), 1944.	Total.	Novem-ber, 1943.	Decem-ber, 1943.	January (upto 20th), 1944.	Total.	Novem-ber, 1943.	Decem-ber, 1943.	January (upto 20th), 1944.	Total.
Wheat (including ducts).	95,234	46,213	32,209	173,656	18,564	31,452	..	50,016	113,798	77,665	32,209	223,672
Gram .	8,837	18,821	6,398	34,056	..	..	..	..	8,837	18,821	6,398	34,056
Rice .	35,778	22,037	22,001	79,816	..	..	..	..	35,778	22,037	22,001	79,816
Millets .	8,881	1,151	736	10,768	(a)	(a)	..	(a)	21,598	15,403	736	37,737
Total	148,730	88,222	61,344	298,296	31,281	45,704	..	76,985	180,011	133,926	61,344	375,281

(a) Barley.

STATEMENTS LAID ON THE TABLE.
Information promised in reply to supplementaries to Starred Question No. 441, asked by Mr. K. C. Neogy, on the 30th March, 1943.
LICENCES FOR EXPLORATION AND SCIENTIFIC PROSPECTING OF POTENTIAL OIL SOURCES.
ASSAM.

Name of the Company.	Name of Area.	Area under Lease or Licence.	Period.	Acresage fee per annum.	Royalty.	Remarks.	
		Sq. miles.					
The Assam Oil Co., Ltd.	Kharjan area	About 9	1. <i>Mining lease granted for 30 years in 1938.</i>				At the rate of 5 p. c. on the well-head value of 8 as. per 40 gallons which ever shall be greater of all natural petroleum and at the rate of 5% on naturesd gas.
			30 years with effect from 1st August, 1938.	Surface rent at Re. 1-11-0 per acre per annum and dead rent at Re. 1 per annum.			
The Assam Oil Co., Ltd.	1. West Digboi area	8	2. <i>Renewal of P/L granted in Lakhimpur District for 1 year in 1940.</i>				As above.
			1 year with effect from 30th March, 1940.	Re. 1-0-0			
The Burma Oil Co., Ltd.	2. Colai area	0-923	1 year from 1st July, 1940.	Do.	Do.		
	1. Masimpore area	9-64	3. <i>Renewal of P/L granted in Sylhet and Cachar for 1 year on 6th April, 1940.</i>				Do.
	2. Chhatachura extension area.	3-22	Ditto.	Do.	Do.		
	3. Kanchanpore, Chhatachura area.	4-69	Ditto.	Do.	Do.		
	4. Inner line reserve	1-7	Ditto.	Do.	Do.		
	5. Kanchanpore extension area.	2-375	Ditto.	Do.	Do.		
	6. Chhatachura 2nd extension area.	84	Ditto.	Do.	Do.		
	7. Masimpore Western extension area.	4-88	Ditto.	Do.	Do.		
	8. Masimpore extension area.	8-46	Ditto.	Do.	Do.		
	9. Singla Reserve area	4-9	Ditto.	Do.	Do.		
	10. Chhatachura area	4-84	Ditto.	Do.	Do.		
11. Patharia area	14-54	Ditto.	Do.	Do.			

4. Renewal of P/L granted in Sibsagar District for 2 years on 4th July, 1940.

Name of the Company.	Area.	Lease or Licence.	Period.	Royalty.	Rents.	Remarks.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The Assam Oil Co., Ltd.	Barsilla (revised) area 1. Hanspung area	3.5 4	2 years 25 years	Do. Do.	As above Do.	The lease has been approved but a copy of the lease executed has not been received from Commissioners of Divisions.
	2. Digboi area No. 1	4	Do.	Do.	Do.	
	3. Digboi area No. 2	4	Do.	Do.	Do.	

PUNJAB.

Name of the Company.	Area.	Lease or Licence.	Period.	Royalty.	Rents.	Remarks.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Attock Oil Co., Ltd.	2,580 acres within the local limits of villages Khaur, Ahmdal and Bora in the Attock District.	Mining Lease	30 years from 1920	The lessees shall during the first twelve months of the said term from the 1st January, 1920, to the 31st December, 1920, pay to the lessor the royalty of eight annas for every forty gallons or part of forty gallons of earth-oil which shall be extracted from the said oil-wells and shall during the remainder of the said term pay the said royalty for every forty gallons or part of 40 gallons of earth-oil which shall be extracted from the said oil-wells in any half-year of the said term over and above the quantity of earth-oil which the lessees are authorised to work or get in respect of the certain rent.	Certain yearly rent of Rs. 2,560 by equal half yearly payments.	
2. Attock Oil Co., Ltd.	8.75 sq. miles in Attock District.	Prospecting Licence	1 year from July, 1940.	5% on the well-head value convertible at the option of the Local Government to an equivalent charge per 40 gallons to be fixed annually), subject to the minimum of 0.8-0 for 40 gallons.	Acreege fee at the rate of 0.1-0 per acre per annum (but 0.4-0 per acre for the second year and 0.8-0 per acre for the third year.	200 gallons of mineral oil may be removed free of royalty during the currency of the licence.
3. Burmah Oil Co., Ltd.	101.63 sq. miles in the Attock District.	Ditto	2 years from November 1939.	Ditto.		

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

If sold by the licensee or lessee or if utilised by him for any other purpose than the production of natural petroleum or natural gas 5% on the well-head value. On gas converted into gasoline the well-head value shall be calculated on the volume of gasoline remanufactured; it shall be deemed to be equivalent to the selling value of the gasoline less the cost of manufacture and the royalty shall be subject to minimum of 8 annas per 40 gallons of gasoline manufactured: Provided that the 5% royalty rate shall be convertible at the option of the Government to an equivalent charge per 40 gallons of gasoline (not being less than eight annas) or per 1,000 cubic feet of gas, as the case may be, to be fixed annually.

200 gallons of mineral oil may be removed free of royalty during the currency of the licence.

Acreage fee at the rate of 0.1-0 per acre per annum (but in case of renewal this rate will be increased).

4. **Burmah Oil Co., Ltd.** 23.46 sq. miles in Rawalpindi District. Prospecting Licence 2 years from July, 1939.

This licence was not executed due to delay in local offices. On the request of the Company it has now been renewed for a period of 2 years in favour of their subsidiary Co., namely, the **Burmah Oil (India Concessions) Ltd.** The licence will be executed by the said company but will not actually be handed over to it during the period of the moratorium.

....

Information promised in reply to parts (a) and (b) of Starred Question No. 84, asked by Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha on the 28th July, 1943.

OFFICERS AND SUBORDINATES ON PILGRIM SHIPS.

(a) According to information received from Shipping Companies interested in pilgrim traffic the following are the different classes of officers and subordinates employed on pilgrim

Officers :

- (i) Masters.
- (ii) Navigating and Engineer Officers.
- (iii) Apprentice Navigating Officers.
- (iv) Medical Officers.
- (v) Other Officers.

Subordinates :

- (a) Medical staff.
- (b) Assistant clerks.
- (c) Tally clerks.
- (d) Deck crew (including sweepers).
- (e) Engine crew.
- (f) Saloon crew.
- (g) Pilgrim food supply staff.

(b) The posts of officers and staff referred to above, can be filled by Muslims without detriment to navigation of ships, provided men with requisite qualifications and experience are available.

Information promised in reply to Starred Question No. 181, asked by Sardar Sant Singh on the 4th August, 1943.

SIKHS IN HIGH SALARIED POSTS IN SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

(a) The number of posts on 1st September, 1943, carrying salaries of Rs. 400 per mensem and over was 1,850 and the number of Sikhs holding such posts was 13.

(b) The rules relating to communal representation in the services apply only to the filling of vacancies by direct recruitment and not by promotion. In respect of vacancies filled by direct recruitment, 8½ per cent. are reserved for 'other minority communities', which term includes Anglo-Indians, including domiciled Europeans, Indian Christians, Sikhs and Parsis. There is no separate quota fixed for Sikhs.

The Supply Department is a temporary war organization and most of the posts outside the Secretariat are of a specialised character. It is not therefore possible to adhere to any strict communal proportions. Every effort is, however, made to secure an adequate representation of the minority communities including Sikhs.

(c) The Selection Committees functioning in the Department of Supply are very small bodies and are composed mainly of officers holding certain specified posts. Their composition is not based on any communal consideration. A Sikh Superintendent who officiated as Assistant Secretary for two months became in virtue of his office a member of the Selection Committee of the Main Secretariat for that period.

Information promised in reply to Starred Questions Nos. 287 and 288, asked by Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali, on the 12th August, 1943.

CONTEMPLATED RETURN OF CERTAIN LAND NEAR SHAHDARA RAILWAY STATION BRIDGE TO FORMER OWNERS.

No. 287.—(a) The Chief Health Officer, Delhi Province, last inspected the locality on the 2nd April, 1943. The drainage of this building like many others in the town of Shahdara is unsatisfactory. A drainage scheme for the town has been prepared, but its execution has been held in abeyance owing to war conditions.

(b) and (c). The land in question is private property but has lately been requisitioned by Government and is now in the possession of the Central Public Works Department.

(d) It is not proposed to return the land to the owner. The trees were cut at the request of the owner.

(e) The intention is to acquire the land for the widening of the road.

No. 288.—(a) to (c). The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given to parts (b) to (e) of Question No. 287.

Information promised in reply to Starred Question No. 294, asked by Mr. R. R. Gupta on the 12th August, 1943.

RESEARCH IN THE MANUFACTURE OF PAPER PULP, PLASTICS AND ARTIFICIAL SILK.

Part (i).—The information is contained in the Indian Forest Bulletin No. 108, published by the Indian Forest Research Institute, Dehra Dun, a copy of which is available in the library of the House. Further research is in progress.

Part (ii).—A reference is invited to pages 11, 46-48, 54, 63-64 and 78-80 of the Annual Report on the Technical Work of the Board of Scientific and Industrial Research for the year 1941-42, a copy of which is in the library of the House.

Part (iii).—A reference is invited to pages 25-27 of the Report alluded to under part (ii) above.

Information promised in reply to Starred Question No. 12, asked by Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi on the 8th November, 1943.

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN COMPILATION OF COMBINED SENIORITY LIST OF SUBORDINATE SUPERVISING STAFF AND DRAFTSMEN ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY (MECHANICAL DEPARTMENT).

(d) The reply is in the negative.

(e) Government have inquired into the qualifications of the two Foremen referred to and are satisfied that there is sufficient justification for their inclusion in the technically trained grades.

Information promised in reply to Starred Question No. 102, asked by Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kasmi on the 12th November, 1943.

PROMOTION TO SELECTION GRADE OF NON-TECHNICAL HANDS ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY (MECHANICAL DEPARTMENT).

(a) No.

(b) A junior man was appointed purely as a temporary measure and as being the only suitable man readily available. A properly constituted selection has since been held to fill the vacancy.

(c) A literate mistry was appointed again purely as a temporary measure. A Selection Board to fill the vacancy is being arranged.

(d) The answer to the first part is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, the promotions complained of were, as already explained, purely temporary.

(e) No, since there is no occasion for it.

Information promised in reply to Starred Question No. 106, asked by Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam on the 12th November, 1943.

DISCHARGE OF MR. HALDER, OFFICIATING CHIEF CHEMIST AT KANCHRAPARA RAILWAY WORKSHOP.

Parts (a) to (c).—It is not in the public interest to disclose the details concerning the removal from service of Mr. Halder.

Part (d).—Yes.

Part (e).—The Railway refused to spare Mr. Halder's service when an enquiry was received from an outside source.

Part (f).—No.

Part (g).—Does not arise.

Information promised in reply to Starred Question No. 117, asked by Bhai Parma Nand on the 12th November, 1943.

FIXING OF PAY OF THE RETRENCHED STAFF RE-APPOINTED IN THE COMPILATION SECTION, NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY

(a) The intention of para. 3 of Railway Board's letter No. 1635-E. G. of 30th October, 1942, was correctly understood by nearly all railway administrations and there was no occasion for a clarification thereof.

(b) The Compilation Section at the time of the retrenchment was under the General Manager, and not under the Accounts Office. The interpretation applied to the administrative departments was, therefore, correctly applied also to the staff in question.

(c) Because they were cases which were correctly dealt with directly the incorrect interpretation of the rules was discovered.

(d) No.

Information promised in reply to Unstarred Question No. 19, asked by Mr. Piare Lall Kureel, on the 12th November, 1943.

COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION IN CERTAIN POSTAL OFFICES AT LUCKNOW.

(a) It is presumed that by 'Superior' the Honourable Member refers to Gazetted Officers. The required statement is appended.

(b) and (c). Previously there was no specific reservations for Scheduled Castes. Provision, however, existed for nominating duly qualified members of these classes when available. Government have now reserved 8½ per cent. of all vacancies to be filled by direct recruitment for Scheduled Castes and have also granted certain concessions with regard to age limit and fees for examination, so as to attract sufficient number of candidates of these classes.

Statement showing the Communal Composition of the Permanent Staff of the various Offices in Lucknow under the P. and T. Department on the 1st November, 1943.

Name of Office.	Class of Service.	Europeans.	Hindus		Depressed Classes.	Muslims.	Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians.	Sikhs.	Indian Christians.	Parsis.	Other Communitise.	Total.
			other than Depressed Classes.	Depressed Classes.								
Lucknow H. O.	Superior	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
	Subordinate	..	206	..	3	..	60	..	..	..	..	277
Lucknow T. O.	Inferior	..	60	..	3	..	13	..	..	..	..	76
	Superior	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Postmaster General's Office	Subordinate	..	30	..	..	..	26	..	..	..	..	68
	Inferior	..	19	..	1	..	16	..	..	..	..	36
Dead Letter Office	Superior	..	5	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	12
	Subordinate	..	130	..	..	..	35	..	..	..	1	171
R. M. S., 'O' Division	Inferior	..	45	..	..	..	20	..	..	..	..	65
	Superior	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Lucknow Engg. Division	Subordinate	..	29	..	..	..	12	..	..	..	..	41
	Inferior	..	5	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	7
Lucknow Postal Division	Superior	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
	Subordinate	..	164	..	1	..	48	..	..	..	..	203
Lucknow Engg. Division	Inferior	..	56	..	..	..	23	..	..	..	..	80
	Superior	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	6
Lucknow Postal Division	Subordinate	..	77	..	..	..	50	..	..	..	..	139
	Inferior	..	6	..	..	..	4	..	..	..	..	13
Lucknow Postal Division	Superior	..	0	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1
	Subordinate	..	8	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	10
Lucknow Postal Division	Inferior	..	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	3

There is no office called "Accountant-General, Posts and Telegraphs," at Lucknow.

Information promised in reply to Starred Questions Nos. 164, 165, 166 and 167, asked by Nawab Siddique Ali Khan, on behalf of Qazi Muhaamad Ahmad Kazmi, on the 15th November, 1943.

PERCENTAGE OF AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR MUSLIM RECRUITMENT IN THE CENTRAL EXCISES AND SALT REVENUES, WESTERN DIVISION.

Question No. 164.—(a) The Honourable Member is presumably referring to the constitution of a separate western division within the North-Eastern India Collectorate of Central Excises and Salt Revenue. This has not affected the percentage of posts reserved for Muslims, which continues to be 50 per cent. of the vacancies filled by direct recruitment in the various grades of the subordinate services, taking the Collectorate as a whole. No separate percentage for each division is fixed; but as far as possible recruitment is made from the various communities in the sanctioned proportion, province by province.

(b) Candidates for direct recruitment to posts of Inspector and Upper Scale Clerk must be graduates or hold the Senior Cambridge certificate.

Candidates for direct recruitment to post of Lower Scale Clerk must ordinarily be graduates or hold a Cambridge School certificate, but non-graduates may be appointed if they possessed good typewriting qualifications.

Candidates for the posts of Supervisor must possess at least a Matriculation certificate or its equivalent.

In the absence of any indication as to what is meant by the term "superior establishment", it is not possible to answer this part of the question.

(c) Candidates for appointment in the grades of Inspector and Upper Scale clerk are generally selected by the Collector, but the Assistant Collector is authorised to select candidates subject to the Collector's approval, where the exigencies of the public service demand that the appointment be filled without delay. Candidates for appointment in the grades of lower scale clerk and supervisor are selected by the Assistant Collector subject to the approval of the Collector.

(d) The selection of candidates by the Assistant Collector is made according to certain standards and tests prescribed by the Collector in respect of physique, education, age, and personal qualities.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR RECRUITMENT OF HINDUS AS LOWER-GRADE CLERKS IN THE CENTRAL EXCISES AND SALT REVENUES, WESTERN DIVISION.

Question No. 165.—(a) Yes. I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to the reply to part (b) of question No. 164. There is no difference in the minimum qualifications prescribed for candidates of different communities.

(b) A few posts of lower scale clerk have been given to Hindu under-graduates who have been trained in typewriting.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR RECRUITMENT OF CANDIDATES AS UPPER DIVISION CLERKS IN THE CENTRAL EXCISES AND SALT REVENUES, WESTERN DIVISION.

Question No. 166.—(a) and (b). All graduates of a recognised University, whether holding a degree in Arts, Science or Commerce, are eligible for appointment to the post of Upper Scale Clerk, but some preference is given to graduates in Commerce on account of their special training in general accounts and office procedure. This rule is applied equally in all Divisions.

MUSLIM RECRUITMENT IN THE CENTRAL EXCISES AND SALT REVENUES, WESTERN DIVISION.

Question No. 167.—(a) The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply given to part (a) of question No. 164.

(b) Since recruitment is made for the Collectorate as a whole it is not possible to state how many posts were available to Muslims in the Western Division. Out of the 305 posts filled by direct recruitment since the constitution of the Division, however, 136 were given to Muslims.

(c) No.

(d) No. So far, only one Muslim clerk has given such a reason for his resignation, and it is believed that his real reason was that he had secured a better appointment elsewhere. A number of clerks, both Hindu and Muslim, have resigned from time to time either because they were unable to cope with the work and were likely to be discharged as incompetent or because they had secured more lucrative or less onerous employment elsewhere.

(e) No. It appears to Government that the present system of recruitment is on the whole working quite satisfactorily and they do not consider any change necessary.

Information promised in reply to Starred Question No. 175, asked by Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam, on the 15th November, 1943.

SELECTION BOARD FOR APPOINTMENTS IN THE OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER OF ASSAM.

The registrar alluded to by the Honourable Member is maintained. The function of the Selection Board is, however, merely advisory, and my enquiries disclose no reason for believing

that the discretion of the Comptroller in dealing with their recommendations has been judiciously exercised.

Information promised in reply to Starred Question No. 230, asked by Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani, on the 17th November, 1943.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE DELHI RESTRICTION OF USES OF LAND ACT, ETC.

		Muslims.	Non-Muslims.	Total.
(a) Staff ordinarily appointed excluding menials	{ Officers	1	..	1
	{ Others	2	6	8
(ii) Staff now employed	{ Officers	1	..	1
	{ Others . . . . .	..	3	3

(b), (c) and (d). The Act, which is a measure for controlling the activities of private builders, does not contemplate the preparation of any development schemes and no officers have been employed for the preparations of such schemes.

In regard to the effect of the Act on religious buildings the attention of the Honourable Member is invited to clause (b) of section 16 of the Act. There is no question of employing any staff for the purpose of protections and exemptions of graves, etc.

Information promised in reply to Starred Question No. 244, asked by Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali, on the 17th November, 1943.

SUPERINTENDENT OF INDUSTRIES, DELHI.

(a) The Superintendent of Industries performs duties similar to those of the Departments of Industries in the Governor's provinces; namely, the maintenance of statistics of trade and price movements, technical advice, marketing, industrial surveys, supervision of mines and minerals. The Superintendent of Industries acts also as a Labour Officer and as such supervises the enforcement of the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923 and the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926. He also acts as Additional Inspector of Factories. He is further in charge of the Government Cottage Industries, the cost of Living Index Scheme and the Reclamation Colony.

(b) About Rs. 19,000 per annum.

(c) The usefulness of the office has been proved over and over again, especially during the period of economic unsettlement since the outbreak of the War. In a large city like Delhi, it is most useful for the Commercial Community to have an office to which they can refer in matters affecting their interests.

Information promised in reply to Starred Question No. 285, asked by Mr. N. M. Joshi, on the 18th November, 1943.

TREATMENT METED OUT TO DELHI DETENUS IN PUNJAB JAILS.

(a) Except in special cases such as, for instance, persons suffering from contagious diseases, prisoners of all classes and categories, and whether from Delhi or not, are, when sent to the Mayo Hospital, Lahore, as indoor patients, admitted into the general ward. The reason for this is the limited accommodation available in the Indian private ward at the Hospital. Nevertheless, such security prisoners as are prepared to meet the expenses of accommodation in a private ward are admitted into the Indian private ward and it is understood that persons so admitted have included certain security prisoners from Delhi.

(b) It is not, of course, possible to arrange for separate accommodation in the Hospital for security prisoners and the only way, therefore to secure the necessary segregation of each security prisoner from the public is to forbid all contacts with fellow patients.

Information promised in reply to Starred Question No. 304, asked by Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi, on the 18th November, 1943.

QUESTIONNAIRE ISSUED BY INCOME-TAX DEPARTMENT TO INDIAN FIRMS OF AUDITORS.

(a) and (b). The answers are in the affirmative. The questionnaire, the issue of which has since been discontinued, had not yet been sent to any European firm, because the stage at which the information could be utilized in any such assessment was not reached before the questionnaire was discontinued.

(c) No. The object of the questionnaire was to obtain by correspondence with the Auditors the information which the Department wanted and so to save the assessee the trouble of the Income-tax Officer's detailed investigation. But as this method of approach through the Auditors has been strongly objected to, the issue of the questionnaire has, as I have stated, been discontinued.

Information promised in reply to Starred Question No. 312, asked by Mr. Lalchand Navalrai, on the 19th November, 1943.

FIXATION OF LOWER PAY FOR GRADE I GUARDS IN KARACHI DIVISION, NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY, ON ABOLITION OF THAT GRADE.

(a) Some guards grade I were, on the abolition of their posts, appointed to stationary posts in the scale of Rs. 33-3-60 and their substantive pay fixed at Rs. 36. As regards the second part, this is in accordance with the rules on the subject.

(b) It is regretted that the reply to part (e) of the Honourable Members starred question No. 25, asked in the Legislative Assembly on the 31st January, 1938, was incorrect as the mileage earned by a guard is taken into consideration only in fixing his seniority and not in fixing his pay.

(c) No, for the reason explained in reply to part (b).

Information promised in reply to Unstarred Questions Nos. 43 and 44, asked by Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali, on the 19th November, 1943.

RUNNING ROOM ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEPRESSED CLASSES STAFF ON STATE RAILWAYS.

No. 43.—No Special arrangements for Running Rooms have been made for the use of staff recruited from Depressed Classes as there are no restrictions against their using the existing facilities.

EYE TEST FOR TRAVELLING TICKET EXAMINERS ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

No. 44.—The reply to the first part is in the affirmative. The Inspectors referred to, are treated like Transportation Inspectors, but the question of lowering the eye-sight qualification is under consideration.

MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT.

APPOINTMENT OF AN AUSTRALIAN AS THE GOVERNOR OF BENGAL.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have received notice of a motion of adjournment from Mr. A. C. Datta who wishes to discuss a definite and urgent matter of public importance, namely, the failure of the Government of India to protest against the appointment of an Australian to be Governor of Bengal.

12 Noon.

I may inform the House that His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General has disallowed the motion on the ground that the motion relates to a matter which is not primarily the concern of the Governor General in Council.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next motion stands in the name of Pandit Nilakantha Das who is not in the House.

DISPERSAL OF THE HINDU MAHASABHA PRESIDENTIAL PROCESSION AT AMRITSAR.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next motion is in the name of Sardar Mangal Singh who wishes to discuss "the dispersal of the presidential procession of the annual session of the Hindu Mahasabha on the 25th December, 1943, at Amritsar by indiscriminate lathi charge by the police".

I do not think the Government of India have anything to do with it; the motion is disallowed.

FAILURE TO GIVE PROTECTION AGAINST MOB VIOLENCE AT HARIPUR.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next motion is in the name of the same Honourable Member who wishes to discuss "the failure of Government to protect life and property of peaceful citizens at Haripur (N. W. F. P.) on 2nd January, 1944 when an unruly mob burnt the Gurdwaras and a temple including the holy Guru Granth Sahib, murdered innocent Granthies, and looted the shops in broad daylight while the police did not intervene".

In this case also the Government of India are not responsible for an occurrence like that; the motion is disallowed.

DISAPPEARANCE OF RICE FROM PATNA AND BHAGALPUR MARKETS CONSEQUENT ON PARTIAL RATIONING.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next adjournment motion is in the name of Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall who wishes to discuss "the disappearance of rice from the markets of Patna and Bhagalpur as a sequel to partial rationing resulting thereby in much hardship to the people, and the

failure of Government to put into operation the programme of rationing with due precautions and deal with the situation".

I should like to know what Government have to say about this.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava (Food Member): Sir, we are not aware of the facts in this connection. It is entirely a provincial matter, but since the receipt of notice of this motion we have made inquiries. We are still waiting for the report, though we have been told this much that the facts are not as stated. Rice is still to be found in sufficient quantities in these two places.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall (Bhagalpur, Purnea and the Sonthal Parganas: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I may inform the Honourable Member that since I gave notice of this motion I went to Bhagalpur and made first-hand inquiries. The Adviser to the Governor of Bihar was also there, a deputation waited upon him and the fact is as I have stated. There is no rice to be had there.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): This is a local matter as to the facts of which the Government of India apparently are not aware. I understood the Honourable the Food Member to say that they are expecting a report on the subject from the Bihar Government. Therefore, I think the Honourable Member had better put down a question on the subject and elicit the information in possession of Government.

NOTICE SERVED ON "HINDUSTAN TIMES" AND "NATIONAL CALL" NOT TO PUBLISH CERTAIN STATEMENTS UNLESS PASSED BY SPECIAL PRESS ADVISER.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next motion is in the name of Sardar Mangal Singh who wishes to discuss "the issue of a notice to the *Hindustan Times* and the *National Call* by the Chief Commissioner, Delhi, asking them not to publish any statement made by or attributed to Mahatma Gandhi or any other member of any Congress Committee which has been declared an unlawful association, unless such statements have been passed by the Special Press Adviser".

I should like to know from Government whether this is in accordance with any law that has been passed.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell (Home Member): Yes, Sir; this order was passed under rule 41 of the Defence of India Rules.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Then the order is covered by that rule?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Yes, Sir; certainly.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Then I do not see how this can be a matter for an adjournment motion. The motion is disallowed.

ORDER SERVED ON MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU DIRECTING HER NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC MEETINGS, ETC.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next motion stands in the name of Mr. A. C. Datta who wishes to discuss "the order served on Mrs. Sarojini Naidu on behalf of the Government of India on 28th January, 1944, at Lahore directing her not to participate in public meetings and processions nor communicate with the press anywhere in India".

Is that not rather a wide and general order?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Sir, I submit that it is not a wide and general order. It applies only to one particular case which is a case of ordinary exercise of legal powers by the Government of India.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Will the Honourable Member give me a reference to that law or rule which empowers such an order being made?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: The order was passed in exercise of the powers conferred by clause (f) of sub-section (1) of section 8 of the Restriction and Detention Ordinance, 1944. That corresponds to the old Defence Rule No. 26.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): May I know what that rule is?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I have not got a copy of the rule itself here, but it empowers Government to restrict the conduct of any individual person.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): What is troubling me is this: "Directing her not to participate in public meetings and processions". Such a prohibition would apply even if the object is perfectly innocent; it may have nothing to do with the war effort or any other matter affecting public tranquillity or peace, similar difficulty arises with respect to the order, "nor communicate with press anywhere in India". Is there any objection to leave being granted?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Yes, Sir. As I have explained, this cannot be regarded as a matter of urgent public importance when it only refers to an order passed with regard to a particular individual.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): An objection has been raised to leave being granted. I hold that the motion is in order, those Members who are for leave being granted should rise in their places.

(More than 25 Members rose in their places.)

As more than 25 Members have risen in their places, leave is granted and the motion will be taken up at 4 O'clock or earlier, if the business of the House is finished before that time, unless the Member in charge has any objection.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I have no objection.

H. E. THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S ASSENT TO BILLS.

Secretary of the Assembly: Sir, information has been received that the following Bills which were passed by both Chambers of the Indian Legislature during the Autumn Session, 1943, have been assented to by His Excellency the Governor General under the provision of sub-section (1) of section 68 of the Government of India Act, as continued by section 317 of the Government of India Act, 1935:

1. The Victoria Memorial (Amendment) Act, 1943.
2. The Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Act, 1943.
3. The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Act, 1943.
4. The Code of Criminal Procedure (Second Amendment) Act, 1943.
5. The Indian Tea Control (Second Amendment) Act, 1943.
6. The Indian Companies (Amendment) Act, 1943.

AMENDMENTS TO CERTAIN MOTOR VEHICLES RULES.

Sir Gurunath Bewoor (Secretary, Posts and Air Department): Sir, I lay on the table a copy of Notification—

(i) No. 1525/35-40-M.V., dated the 24th July, 1943, issued by the Chief Commissioner of British Baluchistan under Section 21 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939; and

(ii) No. F. 12(25)/43-General, dated the 15th November, 1943, issued by the Chief Commissioner, Delhi, under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF BRITISH BALUCHISTAN. NOTIFICATION.

Quetta, the 24th July 1943.

No. 1525/35-40/M.V.—In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 21 of the Motor Vehicles Act 1939 (VI of 1939), the Chief Commissioner of British Baluchistan is pleased to direct that the following amendments shall be made to the British Baluchistan Motor Vehicles Rules, 1940 published in the Notification No. 347/M.V., dated the 1st April 1940, printed at pages 841 to 982 of the *Gazette of India*, part II-A, dated the 27th April 1940:—

1. After Rule 2.4(c) the following shall be added:

"(d) No fee shall be charged for the test if the applicant satisfies the licensing Authority that he previously held a license granted or renewed under any provision of law which was in

force in British India at the time it was granted or last renewed, to drive a vehicle of the class to which the application refers and was prevented, by reason of absence out of India on service connected with the present war, from obtaining or renewing a license in accordance with the provisions of the Act, on the expiry of the previous license."

2. After Rule 2.19 add the following as Rule 2.20.

"2.20. A refund of Rs. 2 out of the license fee of Rs. 5 shall be granted if the applicant satisfies the Licensing Authority that he previously held a license granted or renewed under any provision of law which was in force in British India at the time it was granted or last renewed and was prevented, by reason of absence out of India on service connected with the present war, from obtaining or renewing a license in accordance with the Act, on the expiry of the previous license.

By order,

H. D. RUSHTON,

Secretary to the Agent to the Governor
General in Baluchistan.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER, DELHI.

NOTIFICATION.

Delhi, the 15th November 1943.

No. F. 12(25)/43-General.—In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (c) of sub-section (2) of section 41 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939, read with the notification of the Government of India in the Department of Communications No. R-60, dated the 28th June 1939, the Chief Commissioner is pleased to make the following amendments in the Delhi Motor Vehicle Rules, 1940, the same having been previously published with his notification No. F. 12(25)/43-General, dated the 11th September 1943.

Amendments.

I. The following proviso shall be added at the end of sub-rule (2) of rule 3.16, namely,—
"Provided that if the certificate of registration has been lost while in the custody of a court or of any authority to which it has been submitted or surrendered in pursuance of the provisions of any of these rules or any other law in force, a duplicate certificate shall be issued free of charge".

II. The following proviso shall be added at the end of sub-rule (2) of rule 3.17, namely,—
"Provided that if the certificate of registration and certificate of fitness have been lost while in the custody of a court or of any authority to which they have been submitted or surrendered in pursuance of the provisions of any of these rules or any other law in force, a duplicate certificate of registration and certificate of fitness shall be issued free of charge."

A. V. ASKWITH,

Chief Commissioner, Delhi.

REVIEW OF IMPORTANT EVENTS RE INDIANS IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare (Member for Indians Overseas): Sir, I lay on the table a copy of the Review* of important events relating to or affecting Indians in different parts of the British Empire during the year 1942-43.

THE CENTRAL EXCISE BILL.

PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman (Finance Member): Sir, I present the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to central duties of excise.

THE INDIAN MERCHANT SHIPPING (AMENDMENT) BILL.

PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha (North-West Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, I present the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill further to amend the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1923.

PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman (Finance Member): Sir, I present the Report* of the Public Accounts Committee on the Accounts of 1941-42.

*Not included in these Debates, but a copy has been placed in the Library of the House.—
Ed. of D.

ELECTION OF A MEMBER TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR ROADS.

Sir Gurnath Bewoor (Secretary, Posts and Air Department): Sir, I move:

"That this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct, one member to serve on the Standing Committee for Roads during 1943-44 in place of Mr. B. L. Gray, who has resigned his membership of the Legislative Assembly."

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

"That this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct, one member to serve on the Standing Committee for Roads during 1943-44 in place of Mr. B. L. Gray, who has resigned his membership of the Legislative Assembly."

The motion was adopted.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE DELHI UNIVERSITY COURT.

Mr. J. D. Tyson (Secretary, Department of Education, Health and Lands): Sir, I move:

"That the elected Members of this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as may be approved by the Honourable the President, four persons from among their own number to be members of the Court of the University of Delhi in pursuance of clause (xiv) of sub-section (1) of section 18 of the Delhi University Act, 1922 (VIII of 1922), as amended by the Delhi University (Amendment) Act, 1943 (XXIV of 1943), read with clause (5) of Statute 2 of the Statutes of the University set out in the Schedule to the latter Act, in place of the four members whose three year period of office will expire on the 25th March, 1944."

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

"That the elected Members of this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as may be approved by the Honourable the President, four persons from among their own number to be members of the Court of the University of Delhi in pursuance of clause (xiv) of sub-section (1) of section 18 of the Delhi University Act, 1922, (VIII of 1922) as amended by the Delhi University (Amendment) Act, 1943 (XXIV of 1943), read with clause (5) of Statute 2 of the Statutes of the University set out in the Schedule to the latter Act, in place of the four members whose three year period of office will expire on the 25th March, 1944."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I may inform Honourable Members that for the purpose of election of members for the Standing Committee for Roads and the Court of the University of Delhi, the Notice Office will be open to receive nominations up to 12 O'clock on Wednesday, the 9th February, 1944, and that the elections, if necessary, will be held on Friday, the 11th February, 1944. The elections, which will be conducted in accordance with the principle of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote, will be held in the Assistant Secretary's room in the Council House, New Delhi, between the hours of 10-30 A.M. and 1 P.M.

NOMINATION OF THE PANEL OF CHAIRMEN.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have to inform the House that under sub-rule (1) of rule 3 of the Indian Legislative Rules, I nominate Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Mr. K. C. Neogy, Mr. Hoosainbhoj A. Lalljee and Sir Henry Richardson on the Panel of Chairmen for the current Session.

COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have to announce that under sub-order (1) of Standing Order 80 of the Legislative Assembly Standing Orders the following Honourable Members will form the Committee on Petitions, namely: (1) Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang. (2) Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh. (3) Sardar Sant Singh. (4) Mr. N. M. Joshi.

According to the provision of the same Standing Order the Deputy President will be the Chairman of the Committee.

THE HINDU CODE, PART II (MARRIAGE).

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy (Law Member): Sir, I move:

"That the Bill to codify the Hindu Law relating to marriage be continued."

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

"That the Bill to codify the Hindu Law relating to marriage be continued."

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadian): When will the next motion in connection with this Bill be made?

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy: It will be made in the course of this Session.

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

"That the Bill to codify the Hindu Law relating to marriage be continued."

The motion was adopted.

THE COAL MINES SAFETY (STOWING) AMENDMENT BILL.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Coal Mines Safety (Stowing) Act, 1939.

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

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Coal Mines Safety (Stowing) Act, 1939."

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

THE INDIAN COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque (Commerce Member): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Companies Act, 1913.

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

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Companies Act, 1913."

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

THE INDIAN AIRCRAFT (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Sir Gurunath Bewoor (Secretary, Posts and Air Department): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Aircraft Act, 1934.

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

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Aircraft Act, 1934."

The motion was adopted.

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

THE INDIAN COCONUT CESS BILL.

Mr. J. D. Tyson (Secretary, Department of Education, Health and Lands): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the creation of a fund for the improvement and development of the cultivation, marketing and utilisation of coconuts in India.

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

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the creation of a fund for the improvement and development of the cultivation, marketing and utilization of coconuts in India."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

THE COFFEE MARKET EXPANSION (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque (Commerce Member): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Coffee Market Expansion Act, 1942.

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

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Coffee Market Expansion Act, 1942."

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

THE CANTONMENTS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie (Secretary, Defence Department): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Cantonments Act, 1924.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is: "That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Cantonments Act, 1924." The motion was adopted.

Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

ORDER SERVED ON MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU DIRECTING HER NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC MEETINGS, ETC.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): We shall now take up the adjournment motion. The discussion will last for two hours.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta (Chittagong and Rajshahi Divisions: Non-Muhamadan Rural): Sir, I move that the Assembly do now adjourn.

The order against which I want to protest is a most astounding and outrageous order. It is of a very reactionary and of a very sweeping character. Mrs. Naidu is prohibited from speaking and writing anywhere in India. I wonder if any more comprehensive and sweeping order of restriction was ever passed anywhere in the country. The Honourable the Home Member was pleased to say that it is a very simple thing. It is not of public importance because it is directed against one particular individual. My short answer to that is that it does not stand by itself. It is not an isolated order. It is part of a big programme.

I shall now explain what the underlying policy of this order is, but first let me give the facts.

Mrs. Naidu is one of the most gifted and talented ladies in the world. She was an ex-President of the Indian National Congress. She is a member of the Congress Working Committee and along with other members of the Working Committee she was in jail. She was released only about two months ago on the ground of ill-health.

Now, what is the immediate cause of this outrageous order? In this connection, Sir, two dates are very important. One is that there was a Press Conference here at Delhi on the 25th January which was addressed by Mrs. Naidu, and this order was passed within three days after that, *viz.*, on the 28th January. Let us see what happened during the Press Conference on the 25th January. On that day, Sir, she answered on behalf of the Congress Working Committee, and Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders the case of the Government of India as against the Congress. The case of the Government of India against the Congress, against Mahatma Gandhi and against the Working Committee has always been that the Congress had a pro-Axis sympathy at the time when the leaders were arrested. The Government had another charge. It was that Congress is responsible for the disturbances of 1942. Now these are the two charges against the Congress. These charges have been formulated formally in the shape of reports and books.

Now, these Congress leaders are in jail. They cannot answer. The only member of the Working Committee that is out of jail now is Mrs. Naidu. Therefore she made it a point to answer these charges before the Press Conference of 25th January. She repudiated and denied all these charges; she said in so many words, from her own personal knowledge as a member of the working committee, and as being in intimate touch with Mahatma Gandhi before the arrest and after the arrest till her release, she said that it never was the intention of Mahatma Gandhi or of the Working Committee to take to any violent movement: it was never their intention. It was not their instruction. And she said, if any people still carry on that story, whether on behalf of the Government or from any other quarter, then they are mere propagandists and—to use a less polite word—they are liars. That was how the case

of the Government was answered by Mrs. Naidu on the 25th January, and the result has been that she is not allowed to open her lips after that anywhere in India. I say that this act of the Government is not isolated act: it is part of a big conspiracy on behalf of the Government of India against the people of India. You should also remember that along with this order the press has been practically muzzled in this country now. There is an order upon a few local papers of this city. Messages are not allowed to come in from outside into India and messages are not allowed to go out of India to other countries. The press is not allowed to make its comments on the internal situation in India. Responsible leaders are not allowed to express their opinion on the internal situation in India. No statement of Mahatma Gandhi is allowed to be published; even the Independence Day celebrations were banned this year. These celebrations have taken place all these years; but under the present reactionary policy of the Government, this has been prohibited.

I say this is all part of a general policy and is not an isolated act. What is that policy? It is important for us to consider what is that policy in pursuance of which this extraordinary order was passed on Mrs. Naidu. I say that policy is a policy of separating the people from their leaders, a policy of crushing the leadership of India, a policy of suppressing facts and truth, a policy of suppressing the ordinary and primary rights of citizens, a policy of frightfulness and terrorism as a definite weapon of war against the people of India who want to fight their battle of independence by non-violence. When she is asked not to speak, if she wants to speak, on which side is the violence? Is it not a fight for freedom in a non-violent way? So, even this constitutional agitation is prohibited by the Government. That is their policy. It is a policy of continuing the deadlock. It is said that for putting an end to the deadlock the initiative must come from the people, not from the Government: How on earth can they take the initiative if you do not allow them to come together? If you do not allow the leaders to speak, if you do not allow even an interview with Mahatma Gandhi on this very question of deadlock—nobody is allowed to see Mahatma Gandhi; and after all, it is for him to deliver the goods. How can any initiative be taken by the people on this question of the deadlock unless you allow them to obtain the advice of the Leaders? He will not be allowed to see the Viceroy and yet it is for him. . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): There is no mention of Mr. Gandhi in this motion; I think the Honourable Member is going rather wide of the mark, he might stick to the motion.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: My point is this; an order has been passed. . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): There is a lot of background, I have no doubt; but the Honourable Member must make his speech relevant to the motion before the House.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: I said that one of the objects of this order is to continue the deadlock. It is also really a case of might against right. The order says she cannot open her lips anywhere in this vast continent on any question. Look at the absurdity of the order. She cannot appeal to people outside or at home for relief of famine in Bengal. I can understand this order, even from the standpoint of the Government, if it was of a restricted character—that you cannot talk of politics or something like that; even though that would have been improper. But the order covers all manner of subjects, even social matters and humanitarian questions and famine questions—she cannot speak on anything whatever. That really shows the absurd character of the order. I say it is absolutely unjustified and the Government should not seek to perpetuate their policy of crushing the elementary rights of the people, but should revise their ideas. It is high time they did so. It would not do for any length of time to go on like this with the help of lathis and bayonets; lathis cannot always be the arbiter of the destinies of a people. Sir, I move..

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Motion moved.
 "That the Assembly do now adjourn."

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I must explain my position as well as why our Party is in favour of supporting this. We have got nothing to do with Mrs. Sarojini Naidu's politics; we have nothing to do with what she was going to say and why she should be stopped from saying anything on politics. That is not our position. We think that by this order Mrs. Sarojini Naidu is being stopped from saying anything on social matters; she is a poetess and she cannot speak on that line too. She is stopped from taking any part in social reconstruction by this order. She cannot communicate on those matters which may be quite harmless and she cannot go and address a university on literature; she cannot take part in any procession which may be required for the uplift of the people who are depressed; she cannot ask for subscriptions for giving any food relief to the distressed people. All these things are covered by this order and I think the order is so sweeping that we cannot support it. If her politics were bad, if she was a dangerous woman, and if her being at large was dangerous to the society as a whole, then the Government should have kept her in jail. But after having released her and after finding that she can go about, to put restrictions of this nature is not consistent from our point of view. We think that if Mrs. Naidu can go and agitate the people in the country, which in the opinion of the Government is not desirable or might destroy the peace of the country or hinder the war efforts, then certainly the Government should keep her inside the jail and not allow her outside. Or even if they had thought that she could go and should not be kept in jail on account of her health or some other reasons, then they should have restricted her activities as far as war efforts were concerned, and we would have supported Government if that had been the position of the Government. But now we find that the position of the Government is absolutely different. They have exceeded the limits of what is at present required and we cannot be a party to supporting any such sweeping order, which is neither necessary nor in the interests of the safety of the country, which is not logical but arbitrary, and which we believe is putting up a bad precedent restricting the liberties of the individual and citizen of this country. That is our position and we cannot support the order of the Government on account of these reasons.

Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury (Bengal: Landholders): After a long time we have come into this House with the definite object of ventilating before the House and the country our grievances, as we have no forum outside. It is with that principle in mind that I stand on my legs today to throw some light over this motion as it has come up before the House. I was rather surprised to hear the objections which were raised by the Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell that it is an individual case and as such no permission should be given to discuss the motion. But I am glad that you, Mr. President, overruled the objection and allowed the motion to be discussed on the floor of this House. Is there any legitimate ground in opposing this motion? No man with any grain of common sense can realise it. Whatever the Honourable the Home Member may have in his mind or whatever methods or policy he may pursue—he can do it at the point of the bayonet—we on this side of the House, however oppressed we may be outside the precincts of this House, have our conscience clear; our blood is boiling; no human being with a conscience can tolerate this autocracy of the particular Government which is now running here. They have lost their dignity, they have lost their prestige. . .

An Honourable Member: Had they any?

Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury: They have lost their common sense. They are, practically speaking, ruling this country at the point of the bayonet. I predict and throw a challenge with all the force at my command that this policy of administration will collapse in the near future. The world is moving very fast to-day. No nation in the world can keep down a nation like us. What is the object of this ban on Mrs. Sarojini Naidu? I am just quoting from a comment in the papers. Mrs. Naidu at the press conference simply expressed the view that to rectify past mistakes with the right gesture the Government

should withdraw the lies and allegations that the Congress and Mahatma Gandhi advocated violence. That was the reason for the gag Government, not only here in the Government of India but also in the provinces, issued a number of pamphlets at their own cost and distributed them to show that the Congress was the only element which was responsible for the sabotage and violence which had occurred. During all that time it has been stated—and I quite remember when we came to attend the Leaders' Conference summoned by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru—here is one categorical denial. Mrs. Naidu is honoured all over India, all over the world she is an international figure, and still the Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell says that it is a question of an individual. The question of individual comes up when on that individual the entire nation's welfare depends. Mahatma Gandhi is an individual, but one single move of his finger can practically revolutionise the whole country, and it is with a definite object that the Government are putting him behind prison bars without giving an opportunity to defend himself. In her statement Mrs. Naidu did not ask for any favour to release the individuals.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is going beyond the terms of this motion.

Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury: I am only showing that the Honourable the Home Member is afraid of facing this fact before a court of law. I can assure Sir Reginald that he cannot crush the national movement with all the resources at his disposal, he cannot crush the Congress, he cannot crush the ideals and ideology of the Congress. I am standing for the right cause and I think the House will agree with me and support this motion and condemn the activities of the Government of India.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): This order is one of the instances which show how the Defence of India Act and Rules can be abused. This order is without any parallel, without any parallel I make bold to say, in the annals of any civilised Government. If any one wants to cite any parallel he will have to go to the Czarist Government or the Hitlerite Government. As has been observed by you, this is an order which is very wide in its scope and terrible in its effects. The scope is so wide that Mrs. Sarojini Naidu must shut up her mouth except when she is talking to her people in the house, and so extensive also that she cannot come out of the house and mix anywhere. It may be said if she mixes with even four or five people—it may be said, you are going in a procession, and she may be locked up. Then it is so terrible in its effects that she cannot carry on any agitation, any movement; even social or cultural. That being so, it is apparent to any one that an order like that should not be passed by any Government. The merits and demerits of the order have been expressly mentioned just now. What did Mrs. Naidu do after coming out of the house where she was laid up? After recovery, the statement she made was to this effect, that the responsibility for what is called the sabotage movement did not lie with the Congress, that the statements made in the booklet issued by the Government were false, that the Congress is against any violence. She expressly said that that was not only her view but the view of Mahatma Gandhi and that no person was authorised to take any action which would go against the principle of non-violence. Now, this authoritative person, connected with the Working Committee had come in the field and was contradicting the statements published by the Government, which were sedulously circulated in this country as well as outside. If the Government had a good case, they should have allowed her to put the Congress case and come out with more and better proofs. That the booklet was one-sided and that the statements made in it were incorrect was said by everybody and what was demanded then was 'You please release all those members of the Working Committee who are in jail and give them a chance to defend themselves'. Now, here is a person who has come out and made a statement, a person who is in the know of things and who knows the whole movement and what is in the mind of Mahatma Gandhi. She comes forward and says to the Press that the statements made by the Government

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are absolutely false. Now, Sir, after that, all one can say is that the Government is afraid of letting people know and letting the world know the authoritative views of an authoritative person who was closely in the know of things, as she was moving in that circle.

Then another thing which she said and which has been reported in the Press is this and I do not know why Government should have taken any objection to it. All that she did say was that she was advising the Congressmen to follow a particular course and that course also did not indicate that anybody was to follow a violent path. As a matter of fact, she did say that Congress is still adhering to the principle of non-violence. One could have understood the action of the Government if they said to her "Your activities are such that they are likely to hamper war efforts" and then passed an order under the Defence of India Act to muzzle her. Truly if one were to go through the speeches she has delivered, one will not find that she is in any way hampering the war efforts. Otherwise they would have expressly said so in the order. As they have nothing to say, they have said nothing in the order. Under these circumstances, how could any order muzzling Mrs. Sarojini Naidu be justified? With these words, I support the adjournment motion.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): I rise to support this motion. The Government of India in issuing the order may have feared that Mrs. Naidu would make some statement, or act in such a way, that the public order in this country would suffer and, secondly, that the prosecution of the war may be hindered. The reason given by them is two-fold. First, they want to prevent Mrs. Naidu from acting in a way prejudicial to the public order and secondly they want to prevent Mrs. Naidu acting in such a way as to hinder the prosecution of the war. I feel that the Government of India had no justification in issuing the order against Mrs. Naidu on any of these grounds. If Mrs. Naidu is to be judged, she must be judged by the recent statements which she has made and after reading those statements very carefully, I feel that if Mrs. Naidu issues any such statements afterwards her statements would be helpful in maintaining law and order in this country and her statements may be helpful in the prosecution of the war. What the country needs at present is firstly a solution of the political deadlock. Secondly, the country also needs the end of the rule by means of repressive Ordinances. One of the statements made by Mrs. Naidu was that Mahatma Gandhi was wrongly accused of being pro-Japanese. This country has suffered terribly on account of the wrong notion that exists that Mahatma Gandhi is pro-Japanese and that a large number of people in this country have sympathy with Japan and Mrs. Naidu's statement was very helpful in creating a right idea about the attitude of the people towards Japan. We have no sympathy with Japan. Unfortunately, a wrong impression has been created and Mrs. Naidu has done well in issuing that statement about the attitude of Mahatma Gandhi towards Japan.

Then, Sir, Mrs. Naidu has made another very helpful statement and that is that the communal problem is not insoluble. I think anybody who is able to do something for the solution of the communal problem is helping towards the political settlement of this country. Her statement was very optimistic and I think she has certainly created a feeling of hope that the communal problem may be solved early.

Then, Mrs. Naidu has made a statement which is of great use regarding the attitude of the Congress and Mahatma Gandhi towards violence. I have no doubt in my mind that the violence and the disturbances that took place were to some extent encouraged by the wrong conception of some people that Mahatma Gandhi may have approved of violence, or the Congress Working Committee may have approved of the violence. Mrs. Naidu removes that misconception and I think the removal of this misconception will be of great use in the political settlement of this country.

1 P.M.

Thirdly, Mrs. Naidu also makes a very hopeful statement regarding the future settlement of the political problem of this country. I do not wish to read many quotations, but I think her statement that if Government makes a proper gesture, the political settlement will not be difficult is a very useful statement. What the whole country at present needs is the political settlement. I, therefore, feel that Government had no justification in issuing any order against Mrs. Naidu. Mrs. Naidu was performing the very useful function. She was acting, in my judgment, as an angel of peace instead of a devil creating disturbances in this country. The Government of India have not only no justification for issuing an order against Mrs. Naidu, but they have prevented Mrs. Naidu from acting in a manner which would have been of great use to this country. I, therefore, feel that this House should condemn the action of the Government of India.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari (Tanjore *cum* Trichinopoly: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Mr. President, Sir, it would have helped the House considerably if we had known the attitude of the Government in regard to this motion. Since we do not know what the Honourable the Home Member is going to say, we have to anticipate his arguments in support of the action of the Government. It has been stated that some Members of this House resent the blanket order imposed on Mrs. Naidu but they would not object to her being muzzled so far as the expressing of any political opinions is concerned. That is one aspect of the question. In my opinion the Government issued this order not because they wanted to restrict the freedom of Mrs. Naidu but because they felt that they have to exercise their rights, their rights over every individual in this country who stands for the freedom of this country. Probably, the Honourable the Home Member when he rises will say: It does not matter to us what Mrs. Naidu has said; it does not matter to us even if she had been helpful; it does not matter to us if she pleaded for communal settlement; it does not matter to us if she gave an assurance to us that Mahatmaji was not pro-Japanese and that the Congress never intended to support acts of sabotage and violence. What I think he will say is this. Mrs. Naidu is a member of an organisation which has been declared unlawful by us and so we can do just what we like with her. He may not be right there but I think that is what is going to be his reply. The Government have made up their mind that certain people are members of an unlawful body and they have made a declaration to that effect and no person belonging to that body can ever be permitted to say anything good, bad or indifferent. Unless it is to be justified on these grounds, I cannot see how the Government order on Mrs. Naidu could be justified.

Taking the larger issue, the political repercussions of Mrs. Naidu's statement, much has been said by speakers that preceded me. I would like to say this that she said something at Allahabad with which you did not find fault. It found its way into the newspapers. Again, she said something in Delhi which seems to have provoked the Government into action. But was not the same thing said not merely by Mrs. Naidu but also by others before her? Now, what has she said? It has been said by speakers who preceded me that she has been very helpful; she has denied the fact that Mahatmaji was pro-Japanese; she denied the fact that Congress was pro-Japanese; and she also said categorically that the Working Committee had not even thought of the ways and means of implementing the resolution of 8th August, 1942, when they were arrested. Apparently, that has not been approved by the Government. Apparently, they do not want people outside this country to know, as they will inevitably know, if a person of the eminence of Mrs. Naidu is left free to reiterate those statements. That wonderful pamphlet issued under the authority of the Government of India by Sir Richard Tottenham cannot be proved to contain anything but lies. I think that is the conspiracy behind the Government's action. The Government want the present state of things to continue. The Government want to continue their lying propaganda in countries outside India. They want to arm their propagandists in America and in England to go on saying that no settlement is possible in this country; that the leaders cannot

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be released because they are pro-Japanese, for one thing, and they have been at the bottom of these acts of sabotage and violence for another. If that is not the case, why should they not take this opportunity of examining further whether the views expressed by Mrs. Naidu are also the views of other people who are members of that unlawful organisation which seems to be the only crime of which Mrs. Naidu is now guilty.

The motion before us raises large issues. There is a limit to every Government action. There is no denying that this Government is empowered to do anything it wants on the face of the earth. This Government can imprison anybody without assigning a valid reason. The Honourable the Home Member can quote chapter and verse from the Defence of India Rules that he has powers to keep any person under detention. He can gag any person for any reason. After all, in this House, I think, it serves no useful purpose to question what the Government can do legally because they can do the most illegal acts under the cover of the Defence of India Act and the Rules framed thereunder. But the question is: Is it equitable? That is the point we want to raise here today. Here you have done something which you cannot justify. Come out and tell us today what is your policy. You do not want people to give expression to their views, views which categorically deny the statements you have made and the charges you have attributed to the Congress and the leaders of this country and on the basis of which you continue to keep them under detention. If the Honourable the Home Member says that they are bent on keeping things like this during the period of the war and that Mrs. Naidu and other people who will make similar statements will necessarily be gagged and that if they disobey the gagging order they will be imprisoned, then we have nothing more to say. This legislature is powerless to make the Government see reason and do the proper thing. But I think we are quite right in exposing the unjust acts of this Government which will go on charging popular leaders with the most atrocious charges and will not permit of any denials of their charges made known to the public.

I do not want to go beyond the purview of this motion but it is a fact and I would like the Honourable the Home Member to deny it that not merely have they gagged Mrs. Naidu but they have also prevented her statement being sent out of this country. That is the reason why I say there is a conspiracy behind all this. It does not matter really very much whether the order is of an omnibus nature or is a blanket order or just an order for a specific purpose. The real fact is you are questioning the elementary rights of the country being curtailed. I suppose it is not possible in this country for us to raise the question of the rights of individuals at all. My Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, was right when he exposed the absurdity of this order. The order is not only absurd but the Government are empowered to curtail even the ordinary and normal action of individuals. There is the larger issue, the issue which this order brings into relief. It is the policy of the Government of India to persist on doing what they have done all along and to keep the leaders in prison and not to allow any statements which are made on their behalf to be published and also not to permit them to deny the charges that have been made *ex-parte* by the Government under cover of issuing a pamphlet establishing the responsibility of the Congress in regard to the disturbances that occurred in the latter half of 1942, not to allow anything that has been said contrary to what they have affirmed times without number not merely on the floor of the House, not merely in the country, but also outside by means of paid propagandists. That seems to be the whole conspiracy. What the Government of India now want is to see that the edifice that they have built up, the edifice of untruth, the edifice of false propaganda, the edifice of unjust acts, the edifice of muzzling people and of trying to crush out all ideas of freedom in the minds of Indians, that edifice should not be tampered with or interfered with by any casual statement made by any person like Mrs. Naidu lest that statement should go abroad. It is not so much that they are afraid of what Mrs. Naidu says in this country, but they

are afraid that her statement will go out ultimately, they are afraid that their false propaganda will stand exposed in the eyes of the world. The Honourable the Home Member stands as the originator of that false propaganda. He is the man who has furnished the means with which that false propaganda could be carried on in all the countries. In order to feel secure, in order to see that the false edifice does not stand exposed, he wants to muzzle Mrs. Naidu for ever. He wants to tell the people of this country this is what we will do, here is the big stick which we will use, you had better be warned. This is the underlying idea behind Government's action, for one thing, and for the other their decision to continue their present policy is at the bottom of this order. That is why I say this has got to be exposed. I do not know whether the proceedings of this House will ever get abroad, possibly they will not. We have no means of asking the Government not to muzzle the Press, not to censor messages that go abroad about the debate in this House. We have a right in this House to ask, such of those who feel that the Congress Party has been condemned *ex-parte*, I think even my friends of the Muslim League ought in fairness to join us in saying that the Congress has been condemned *ex-parte*, to express their disapproval of this latest wanton act of this Government. Here is a person of the standing of Mrs. Naidu who has been in the secrets of the Congress organisation who comes forward and says categorically that Mahatma Gandhi and others are not pro-Japanese, that they never thought of any move to implement the Resolution of 8th August. What is most surprising is that in Mrs. Naidu's statement, the very revealing reference to the letter of Miss Mira Ben, does not find any place in Government's communique. After all what does the Government do? It takes out of the statements of popular leaders what suits it and rejects what does not suit the Government. There is no answer at all to that letter of Miss Mira Ben about which Mrs. Naidu has mentioned. It was not incorporated in that pamphlet containing the correspondence that passed between the Government of India and Mahatma Gandhi. The Government have nothing to say about that letter.

Sir, this order seems to be a protective order. Government are afraid, I would not say they are afraid, I do not think they are afraid even of God, the Government are afraid only of the outside world knowing about their acts in this country. Of course the Government stand supreme, they can do what they like. But they are only afraid of the outside world knowing that they have been carrying on this false propaganda, that they have imprisoned thousands of people on the most baseless charges, that they have produced propaganda material which is not worth the paper on which it is printed, that it is merely waste of public money and public stationery. Here is a responsible person who says something in this country, and the Government think it will get abroad, and it is because of that fear they have passed this gagging order. I should like to see the Honourable the Home Member denying it.

Sir, in regard to the other point, what Mrs. Naidu can do and what Mrs. Naidu cannot do, my Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, referred to this, I should like the Honourable the Home Member to read that very nice doggerel verse that appeared in the *National Call* the other day. I do not think I will take up the time of the House by reading the whole of that verse. I dare say it should have also appealed to the sense of humour of the Honourable the Home Member. What can Mrs. Naidu do? Can she write, can she speak at the funeral of her friend? What else can she do and what she cannot do? It asks Sir Reginald Maxwell for God's sake be frank about it. Tell us what she can do, and what she cannot do.

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

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: I support the motion.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Assembly stands adjourned for lunch till half past two of the clock.

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.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (East Central Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, may I suggest that you should vacate the Chair in favour of Mr. Neogy because you are the author of this motion which is being discussed?

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): That does not matter, because I will vacate the Chair before the voting takes place.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, the Honourable the Home Member has not yet risen to speak; I do not know why he is so shy in this matter. This adjournment motion deals with the direction on Mrs. Naidu not to participate in public meetings and processions nor communicate with the press anywhere in India. Therefore at the very start we should have an explanation as to what the Resolution really is. We must know, before we criticise it, what the terms are of that Resolution which entitles Government

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell (Home Member): May I know what the Honourable Member means by "Resolution"?

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I mean the circular or direction asking her not to participate in meetings and processions, etc.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I thought before the Honourable Member wished to discuss that he would know what he was talking about.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I must say that the order of Government is most unreasonable and there is no sense in it and that is why this motion has been admitted. Apart from political movements and war fronts, the reason why this motion has been admitted is sufficient for its acceptance, because it was admitted on the ground that it is too extensive; and an omnibus order like this should be condemned on the face of it. Now it is surely silly to say that Mrs. Naidu or any one else should not take part in public meetings or processions of all kinds or communicate with the press anywhere in India. That is more than gagging and should be condemned. I know Government are very nervous about political leaders and therefore gag them; but when I came here today I was thinking that perhaps Government have changed their mind and there will be a better atmosphere. I do not know how far that atmosphere has changed but it will depend on the attitude of Government as to whether they want to meet the public demand of India. Now, Sir, I will submit that the Defence of India Rules are simply abused in their application. We have condemned them and asked that they should be revised, and made more reasonable, but that has not yet been done. They were not placed before this House and they have done great harm to the country; the most absurd orders are being passed under these Rules. Orders, for instance, are passed that you should not move out of your house; you are interned in your house. Again, that you should not move from one place or one village to another. And now they say that you should not talk at all. It is no credit to the British or the Indian Government to pass such an order. It is too extensive and without taking any more time I will say that for the same reason for which it has been admitted it should be accepted also.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Sir, I should like to make it clear at the outset that I have nothing to say against Mrs. Sarojini Naidu personally. I have had many previous dealings with her in my own province and those who have had such dealings, whether as opponents or as friends, all share the liking and respect which has been voiced in this House. I do not wish to suggest, nor did this order of Government suggest, that she has in any way improperly evaded any conditions which she had accepted at the time of her release. But at the same time her action has put us in a difficulty and has created an unexpected situation which we ought perhaps to have foreseen at the time of her release.

I will briefly remind the House of the facts. Mrs. Naidu is a member of the Congress Working Committee and was detained along with the other members of the Committee and Mr. Gandhi on August 9th, 1942. They were detained in order to prevent them from leading or supporting the mass movement sanctioned by the Resolution of the All-India Congress Committee on the 8th of August of that year. At the same time the Congress Working Committee was declared to be, and still is, an unlawful association. Mrs. Naidu remained in custody with Mr. Gandhi until some time after Mr. Gandhi's fast. She was then released unconditionally—and I stress the word 'unconditionally'—because Government were given to understand at that time that there had been a serious deterioration in her health and that she was physically incapable of taking part in any public or political activity for an indefinite period. Thus the reasons of her detention ceased to exist, but she remained a member of an unlawful association. This meets Sir Yamin Khan's point that if she was considered dangerous she ought to have been kept in detention. The act of Government was not to deny that she was dangerous, but it was an act of consideration for her then state of health.

Now I must give the House the facts which led up to this order. On the 23rd January last, without previous notice to Government, Mrs. Naidu arrived in Allahabad and issued an Independence Day message through the press.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Why would notice be necessary?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: She did not inform us of her emergence from retirement.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: No such condition was attached to her release.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I have already said so.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Then why should she inform you?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: She was not obliged to inform us and therefore we did not know.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum (North-West Frontier Province: General): Why should she?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: As regards the celebration of Independence Day, I would like to say one word, and that is that any restrictions imposed by Government on the celebration of Independence Day have not been directed against any independence movement as such, but those celebrations have commonly been accompanied by the recital of what is known as the Congress Pledge and Government have been advised legally that that pledge is a seditious document.

Mr. K. S. Gupta (Ganjam *cum* Vizagapatam Non-Muhammadan Rural): Ban it if you can.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Then, to resume the history of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, she came to Delhi and on the 25th of January she addressed a press conference.

Mr. K. S. Gupta: What was the harm?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Her statement to the press conference was in the nature of a political statement supporting the action taken by the Congress throughout. It practically amounted to another speech on the August Resolution such as might have been delivered at the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay and it was made by a member of the Working Committee which had been declared an unlawful association and whose members had been detained in consequence of that Resolution. There was nothing in that speech to indicate any desire to alter the situation thus created. Everything in that speech was such as to confirm and defend the action taken by the Congress and to dissuade others from repudiating it. I shall perhaps have time to give a quotation later to illustrate that point.

Now I come to the substance of the order which Government then considered it necessary to pass on Mrs. Naidu. The order was passed under a clause of the new Ordinance III which corresponds to the old Defence Rule 26 and that clause enables Government to impose on any person such restrictions

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as may be specified in the order in respect of his employment or business, in respect of his association or communication with other persons, and in respect of his activities in relation to the dissemination of news or propagation of opinions. It was under the same old Defence Rule No. 26 that Mrs. Naidu had been detained and the very light restriction now imposed on her was nothing as compared with physical detention.

I will now draw the attention of the House to the actual terms of that order. It reads:

"The Central Government is pleased to direct that the said Mrs. Naidu shall not make any public speeches"

I emphasise the word 'public'—

"or issue directly or indirectly any statement to the press or otherwise communicate her views to the public"

—again I emphasise the word 'public'.

The House will note that this order does not prevent Mrs. Naidu from doing anything. If she wishes to engage in social activities or any of the other activities that have been mentioned in this debate she is free to do so.

An Honourable Member: But she is not allowed to talk

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Why should it always be assumed that no one can do anything without talking? The only thing from which Mrs. Naidu is prevented is talking in public and giving her views to the press.

Again it has been argued that the order is too sweeping and the question has been raised why the restrictions imposed on Mrs. Naidu could not have been defined more narrowly. I tried to do so, but I found it was obviously impossible.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Because you are a broad-minded man!

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Because what a person can say on any particular occasion depends not on the subject, nor on the occasion, but on the mind of the person. In fact I have noticed in India a considerable tendency to bring politics into everything, and I have no doubt that if, for instance, Mrs. Naidu wished to make speeches on the subject of food, it would not be very long before food took on the complexion of politics.

Then I must hurry and come to the argument of Mr. Joshi that Mrs. Naidu's statements, if she were allowed to make them, might have helped the war effort. Well, if I were able to do so, I should welcome more statements of this kind because she presents me with a number of excellent arguments for the policy which Government have already followed. She refers, and the point has been raised in this debate, to a letter said to have been written by Miss Slade to Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Gandhi's reply and I have been asked why no publicity was given to that letter.

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

That letter was written and answered long before the Congress leaders were placed in detention. If Mr. Gandhi had wished to give publicity to that letter he was perfectly free to do it himself. But it was a confidential communication addressed to him and I do not see any reason why Government should disclose a communication of that nature. I might say that it would not help the Congress case if it were disclosed.

Then it has been said that Mrs. Naidu wished to defend the Congress from the implication of being pro-Japanese. Government have never at any time, either here or at home, charged the Congress with being pro-Japanese. Well the allusion to that in the booklet called "Congress Responsibility" refers to a statement quoted from Pandit Nehru himself. I have not the time to quote it at length, but if Honourable Members will refer to the quotation given in the "Congress Responsibility" pamphlet they will easily find the passage in question.

Finally, Mrs. Naidu affirms in unmistakable terms that the Congress are not of a mind to accept any compromise in their original position. Let me quote what she says:

"On fundamentals",—*she went on to declare*,—"we cannot surrender. I would rather that everyone of us died in jail than that merely for the sake of coming out we should compromise

the integrity of our position. We have spoken in the name of the nation. We cannot go back on it till we are convinced that we are wrong."

Anyone who says that a statement of this kind is calculated to liquidate the present situation is misreading the terms of the actual statement made by Mrs. Naidu.

I must refer to one other point, and that is the allegation that the Press is being gagged. Mrs. Naidu's statement was not allowed to be transmitted out of India because the policy of outward censorship has to be kept consistent with what is done inside the country; but there will be no stopping of any outward messages in regard to this debate.

As I have explained to the House, the object of this order served on Mrs. Naidu was simply to prevent an individual, who is not only a member of an unlawful association but also the only member of that association now at liberty, from pursuing a course of action and propagating views which other members of the Congress Working Committee have been prevented from doing, and which she alone was in a position to do from the fact that she had been released on grounds of ill-health. I cannot understand what logical claim can be put forward that Mrs. Naidu should be allowed to take part in public or political activities, so long as the ability to do so is denied to her colleagues. It would surely be unfair to say that she has any such claim merely because she was released unconditionally on account of her health, and because her health has now sufficiently recovered to enable her to pursue such activities. If her health had been such to enable her to do so, Government need never have released her; or if we had supposed that her health was sufficiently recovered to enable her to do what we had denied to the other members of the Congress Working Committee, then we should have served a restrictive order on her at the time of her release. We did not do so and we have to rectify that omission in the situation created by Mrs. Naidu herself.

Sir, I oppose.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: I listened very carefully to the speech of the Honourable the Home Member. I found that his speech was halting and that the points made and arguments advanced by him were in support of a thoroughly bad cause. The order is such that it can never be defended. It is of a very sweeping nature and such is the sweeping nature of the orders that are being passed by the Government of India under the Defence of India Rules that the Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court the other day publicly stated that they were utterly helpless before these sweeping and far-reaching orders which were being passed daily by the Executive under the Defence of India Rules.

Now, Sir, the reasons given in this order for preventing the members of the Working Committee and also Mrs. Naidu from making any communication to the Press, or delivering any speech, or the Press from publishing it, were with a view to preventing her from acting in a manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order and the successful prosecution of the war. Let us see what Mrs. Naidu had done in the interval between her release unconditionally, which the Honourable Member frankly admitted, and the passing of this order of a very sweeping nature.

She attended a Press Conference in Delhi and there she made a statement which cannot by any stretch of the imagination be described as a statement which would lead to the breach of the peace. If we are to judge people by what they are likely to do, then I think all manner of orders under the Defence of India Rules can be justified. In the statement she made the Congress position very clear regarding sabotage and violence. I will quote her own words:

"We discussed nothing in the Working Committee in the way of instructions or a programme. If anybody says now that the Congress Working Committee, and especially Gandhiji, even by implication or by gesture hinted, or a beating of the eye-lash suggested, to anyone that violence was to be a part of the programme, that person, Government, or group of propagandists are, to put it mildly, liars."

The Honourable Member can very conveniently forget facts. It is a well-known fact that the Government of India ever since they started this crusade against the Congress movement in India have been, through propagandists

[Mr. Abdul Qaiyum.]

paid and unpaid in the country, and especially in the United States and other parts of the world, doing a lot of propaganda to the effect that the Congress Working Committee is responsible for all the acts of violence and all the acts of sabotage which were witnessed in this country as a result of this foolish policy of wholesale arrests and the attempt at suppression of a movement which no power on earth can suppress. It was because of their misdeeds that all these acts of violence broke out. It was done by the Government of India; it is a well-known fact that in order to win this war the Government of

India like the Government of Great Britain will go to any length.
 3 P.M. The first thing that was murdered in this war was truth, and therefore in order to win over American public opinion it must be given out that the people of India, especially the Congress movement, was in league with the Japanese. It is the same everywhere. The other day there was a riot in French Morocco. It was obviously an attempt on the part of the Arab people in that unfortunate country to assert their birth right of freedom. But what did the French people say? The French Committee of Liberation were very quick to say that all these people who had taken part in this rioting or insurrection in Marrakesh and other towns in Morocco were the paid agents of the Germans. Similarly, what was more easy and more natural for the British Government to win over American public opinion and world opinion than to say that the Congress are paid agents of the Japanese. We know that a large number of paid agents, people who are unpatriotic and who are playing traitors to their country, are being constantly sent abroad. We have had even a public statement from one who was sent to Canada and U. S. A.—Rai Bahadur Mehr Chand Khanna—that it is the policy of the Government of India, to misrepresent facts about India. If Mrs. Sarojini Naidu had in her statement said something about that, how can it be considered to be a thing which will hinder the war effort? This is one of the arguments which has been advanced for putting this ban on the publication of her views. She says:

“She emphatically repudiated the suggestions that the outbreak of violence in India was in accordance with Congress plans and that the Congress and Mahatma Gandhi were pro-Japanese. If anybody has the audacity to continue saying it, it will be scurrilous, it will be a lie. I can tell you authoritatively that so far from being pro-Japanese we have been consistently against any form of foreign invasion, no matter what label it may bear, because we have had quite enough of foreign invasions. There are no two opinions among us on this.”

After all she had every right, whether she was a member of the working committee of a body which the Government of India thinks to be unlawful, she had every right to meet the scurrilous and false propaganda which had been carried on by the Government of India under instructions from the Government in Great Britain in this country and also in the United States through paid agents in order to distort the real facts of the situation. After all she merely stated that we have nothing to do with the Japanese. It is the same story—the French say that anybody who wants freedom in Morocco is in the pay of the Germans, and similarly the British say that because the people in this country do not like them and they want to see the end of their domination here, therefore they are in league with Japan; and what better reason can they advance in order to win over American opinion? It is an irony of fate that the great democracy of the United States of America should be found helping the British, in this war, to keep down so many countries which have been groaning and suffering under the yoke of British imperialism. If the Americans had not come forward with the help which they are rendering to the British, the British would not be able to maintain their hold here and perpetuate serfdom and slavery in various countries which are under British control. So, on the grounds which have been advanced, namely, the denial of the fact that the Congress Working Committee had anything to do with the outbreak of violence or that the Working Committee had issued any instructions in favour of violence or sabotage, the further statement that the Congress Working Committee was against the Japanese invasion, was the fittest and the most necessary reply that any member of the Working Committee

is expected to give, in reply to the propaganda which has been carried on by the Government. I was amazed to hear from the Honourable the Home Member that "Oh, we have never carried on this propaganda; we have never said that the Congress was in league with Japan." If so, what is the object of the white paper that you published and the imputations and insinuations contained in that white paper? What is all this propaganda which you are carrying on in foreign countries, especially in the United States of America? The real object of this order is that nobody should be permitted to speak the truth. In the good old days when they had tyrannical kings, they used to cut off the tongues of people who had the courage to say anything about the tyranny of a particular tyrant or king. Nowadays, the British Government has evolved a much better technique. This order is almost tantamount to cutting off the tongues of your opponents in order to prevent them from meeting the false propaganda in which you are indulging, because you want to win the war. You may be very keen on winning this war, but at the same time you must not forget that the people of India are also equally keen on getting rid of you and your domination. The people in this country have no faith in your promises. We know full well that this deadlock is the thing for which you have been working ever since you came to this country; you have been thinking about it, you have been planning it, you have been working it out in your minds as to how to bring about this deadlock and in your heart of hearts you are convinced that the very moment this deadlock is solved it means the end of your domination in this country. How can we believe that you really and sincerely mean what you profess and what you pretend? You say "We are very anxious to solve this deadlock this minute; it is these people who cannot come to terms". But we know full well that you do not really mean it, because that would be the end of your domination. Therefore this order which has been passed against Mrs. Naidu is an order which shows that the British Government in India is still adhering to its policy of repression and oppression, that there is absolutely no change of heart at all on the part of the British Government or the Indian Government who are their agents in this country.

After all, what is the sanction behind British rule? What is the sanction behind the orders of the nature passed against Mrs. Naidu and many other patriots in this country? The real sanction behind the British rule is the bayonet and the gun powder; it is sheer naked brute force. The people in this country do not want you. You are only inventing excuses. Today it is said that the Hindus and Muslims cannot come to terms. Who is such a fool in this country as to believe that if the Hindus and Muslims come to terms, you will walk out of this country? If the Hindus and Muslims come to terms, you will invent other classes in this country—the depressed classes, the princes, and God knows how many more classes will be invented as long as you are allowed to carry on merrily in this country. This is what you have been doing for the last two hundred years. Nobody in this country believes you. I do not know whether it is a fact—but a very responsible gentleman told me, that even news about this ban on Mrs. Sarojini Naidu was not allowed to go out of this country. The Honourable the Home Member admitted that the statement, as a result of which this order was passed, was also not allowed to go out. Is it fair on the part of the Government to ban such statements, to prevent the people outside this country from knowing the other side of the picture? After all, you have been making allegations after having shut up thousands of people in jail; you have been making allegations, and serious allegations against the Congress. You have not got the courage to bring them to trial—all these people whom you have detained for so many months without trial. Why do you not bring them before a court of law? If you think that these people are responsible for all these acts of sabotage and violence, why not have them tried by British judges, as Mrs. Sarojini Naidu says?

I submit, therefore that the real object of this order is that the Government of India do not want the Congress point of view to be known either in this

[Mr. Abdul Qaiyum.]

country or outside, and therefore this order cannot be defended. I strongly commend the House to adopt this motion.

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I venture to think that the House is entitled to greater fairness from Sir Reginald Maxwell in dealing with the statement made by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. It is a statement which has been published at least in two newspapers and I was somewhat surprised to find the Honourable Member taking one particular passage out of its context for the purpose of conveying an impression which was definitely not intended by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, and which impression cannot be confirmed on any fair reading of the statement as a whole. The Honourable Member tried to make out that the whole of the statement was by way of supporting the action taken by the Congress, that it virtually amounted to a speech on the August resolution, and that it went to confirm and defend the action taken by the Congress. If I had time I would have read out all the material portions of this statement to prove that the Honourable Member's observations are wholly inaccurate and misleading. The Honourable Member was good enough to assure the House that the debate on the present occasion would be permitted to be reported abroad. I take this opportunity of saying on the floor of the House that the Honourable Member has given a garbled version of the statement which Mrs. Sarojini Naidu made on the 25th December

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: On a point of personal explanation, Sir. The Honourable Member charges me with giving a garbled version. I can hardly be expected to read out the contents of four columns of type, but the particular statement which I quoted is in the copy which the Honourable Member has in his hand, printed in heavy type

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I am coming to that, the Honourable Member need not be impatient in that regard. I would ask the Honourable Member to have the fairness to allow the full text of that statement to be cabled abroad. As regards the particular quotation to which the Honourable Member has made reference just now, may I read only five lines which immediately precede those sentences? This is what Mrs. Naidu says:

"I think it is possible to find some way to make a breach in the wall"—(she was dealing with the *political deadlock*)—"if they would let people meet and talk to Gandhiji and let him meet the Working Committee and find out for himself what they thought, and what was happening in the country."

Then follows the statement which the Honourable Member quoted. She went on:

"On fundamentals we cannot surrender."

All honour to her for making that statement. I do not worship in the same political temple as Mrs. Naidu, but I would have a very poor opinion of this lady if she were not to make that statement which the Honourable Member tried to make capital out of.

The next point that the Honourable Member dealt with arises out of a letter which Miss Slade, otherwise known as Miss Mira Ben, is supposed to have written to the Viceroy. The Honourable Member said that that letter was written long before the Congress leaders had been put in jail and there was every opportunity for Gandhiji or others to publish that letter if they so chose in defence of their action. May I remind the Honourable Member that the question of defending their action did not arise till they had been put into prison? Where was the occasion for publicising the letter which Miss Mira Ben wrote or the answers which Gandhiji had given to a questionnaire sent out by Miss Mira Ben to Gandhiji? May I read out just a few lines from the statement of Mrs. Naidu on this point?

"Mrs. Naidu revealed that about the end of May 1942, Mira Ben, who was in Orissa looking after the evacuees, sent Mahatma Gandhi a report of her work and along with that report a questionnaire asking what should be the attitude of the Indian people if the authorities got into scare about the possibility of some kind of invasion from the east."

I may remind Honourable Members that at that time it was apprehended that the Japanese might land on the Orissa coast. It was an issue that directly arose out of Miss Mira Ben's visit to Orissa. The statement continued:

"Mahatma Gandhi dictated a letter in reply to the questionnaire. He gave the fullest instructions in the most uncompromising manner and he declared that there should be no compromise, no trade, no barter and acquiescence. Mrs. Naidu herself came to know of this letter at the time of the fast."

That was much later after the arrest of Gandhiji:

"At that time there was renewed propaganda about Mahatma Gandhi being pro-Japanese and Mira Ben being used as a messenger and so on.

Mira Ben then wrote a letter to the Viceroy saying that, as an Englishwoman she was ashamed of the lying campaign in which her name had been brought in. She also enclosed a copy of the questionnaire and Mahatma Gandhi's reply. But she received no acknowledgment from the Viceroy."

I am prepared to give way and give an opportunity to the Honourable Member to explain this, and state the date on which the Viceroy received the letter, in order to be able to understand whether this statement is wrong on this particular point.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: The letter was addressed to the Viceroy and not to me.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Everybody knows the part which the Honourable Member played in regard to the administration of India. It is no use taking the name of the Viceroy in this context. (Interruption.) Mrs. Naidu said she proposed soon to print the whole of the questionnaire and the reply:

"They will prove", she said "that we of the Working Committee have always been anti-Japanese. We would be anti-anybody that tried to invade us, we are against all forms of aggression, as we are against all forms of exploitation. That is the position of the Working Committee."

I am not surprised that the Honourable Member has passed this gugging order, in view of this threat on the part of Mrs. Naidu to upset the Honourable Member's apple cart.

The Honourable Member tried to defend his order on the ground that it would be unfair to let Mrs. Naidu have opportunities of making statements while such opportunities would be denied to her colleagues who are now in jail. The Honourable Member's fairness in this matter would always be a matter of the highest appreciation.

The Honourable Member and his colleagues who constitute the Government of India have, to my mind, done their best to demolish the moral foundations, whatever they were, of British rule in India. The process started some time ago, but the credit for putting the finishing stroke to that process must belong to the present day Government of India, and by way of illustration of the working of that process this action which we are discussing will be quoted as the most potent and convincing proof.

An Honourable Member: Let the question be now put.

(At this stage Dr. P. N. Banerjea rose to speak.)

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member will bear in mind that this motion has got to be put to the vote. If the Honourable Member can finish his speech, say, in five minutes, there will be time left for the Mover to reply.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): The Mover can reply now if he wishes to. I give way.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: I have heard with attention the speech of the Honourable the Home Member. His chief argument is that in the press conference Mrs. Naidu supported the Congress action. But the question is, what is the Congress action that she supported? Is it the Congress action as is interpreted by the Government, or, in other words, pro-Axis sympathy or the responsibility of complicity for the disturbances of 1942? Is it that action which was supported by Mrs. Naidu at the press conference or was it rather

[Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta.]

the other way? It is an absolute misstatement to say that she supported the Congress in the light in which the Government take it; she supported the Congress action in her own light as she understood it and as the Working Committee intended to bring forward before the country.

There are two ways of looking at the matter—one in its true perspective and the other in its false perspective. The Government interpretation is that the Congress is responsible for the disturbances. She says 'No, that was never the intention of the Congress'. Therefore, to say that she supported the Congress action is something which is very difficult to understand.

The Honourable the Home Member quotes the Defence of India Rule in support of the order, Rule 26. He says that that rule gives Government power to impose any manner of restriction. That is precisely our grievance. If your Defence of India Rule gives you power to pass such sweeping orders of restriction, then I say that that Defence of India Rule is not for the defence of India but for its annihilation.

Then he said that one of the facts leading up to this order was that a message was sent to Allahabad without notice. Of course, when he was interrupted, he could not give any reply. No notice was required to be given to Government at all.

Then he said that the Congress pledge is a seditious document. I do not think anything more absurd was said on behalf of the Government. From when the Congress pledge has become seditious? The Congress pledge was there all along. It is an old thing, not a new surprise to the Government of India. It has now become seditious. Your object is to crush the Congress movement and, therefore, you call it seditious.

This order is so sweeping in its nature that Mrs. Naidu will be prevented from making speeches of any kind. The Honourable the Home Member forgot that freedom of speech is one of the fundamental rights of a citizen. It is nothing short of Nazism or Fascism to prohibit people from speaking. There are so many conferences these days. Suppose there is a conference of poets. Even in that conference, Mrs. Naidu, who is a great poet, will not be allowed to speak. Now, my reading of this order is that Mrs. Naidu gave an answer to the false accusation of the Government and that is the reason why she has been stopped from talking or writing to the Press. Government want to carry on an *ex-parte* propaganda. That is the whole thing.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is: "That the Assembly do now adjourn."

The Assembly divided.

AYES—40.

Abdul Ghani, Maulvi Muhammad.
Abdul Qaiyum, Mr.
Azhar Ali, Mr. Muhammad.
Banerjee, Dr. P. N.
Chattopadhyaya, Mr. Amarendra Nath.
Choudhury, Mr. Muhammad Hussain.
Das, Mr. B.
Datta, Mr. Akhil Chandra.
Deshmukh, Mr. Govind V.
Essak Sait, Mr. H. A. Sathar H.
Ghuznavi, Sir Abdul Halim.
Gupta, Mr. K. S.
Gupta, Mr. R. R.
Habibar Rahman, Dr.
Hegde, Sri K. B. Jinafaja.
Hosmani, Mr. S. K.
Joshi, Mr. N. M.
Kailash Bihari Lall, Mr.
Kazmi, Qazi Muhammad Ahmad.
Krishnamachari, Mr. T. T.

Lahiri Choudhury, Mr. D. K.
Lalchand Navalrai, Mr.
Liaquat Ali Khan, Nawabzada Muhammad.
Maitra, Pandit Lakshmi Kanta.
Mangal Singh, Sardar.
Mehta, Mr. Jamnadas M.
Misra, Pandit Shambhudayal.
Naidu, Mr. G. Rangiah.
Nairang, Syed Ghulam Bhik.
Neogy, Mr. K. C.
Pande, Mr. Badri Dutt.
Parma Nand, Bhai.
Ramayan Prasad, Mr.
Sham Lal, Lala.
Siddique Ali Khan, Nawab.
Srivastava, Mr. Hari Sharan Prasad.
Yamin Khan, Sir Muhammad.
Yusuf Abdoola Haroon, Seth.
Zafar Ali Khan, Maulana.
Zia Uddin Ahmad, Dr. Sir.

NOES—42.

Ahmad Nawas Khan, Major Nawab Sir.
 Ambedkar, The Honourable Dr. B. R.
 Azizul Huque, The Honourable Sir M.
 Benthall, The Honourable Sir Edward.
 Bewoor, Sir Gurunath.
 Bhagchand Soni, Rai Bahadur Seth.
 Caroe, Mr. O. K.
 Chatterji, Mr. S. C.
 Daga, Seth Sunder Lall.
 Dalal, Dr. Sir Ratanji Dinshaw.
 Dalpat Singh, Sardar Bahadur Captain.
 Greenfield, Mr. H.
 Gwilt, Mr. E. L. C.
 Habibur-Rahman, Khan Bahadur Sheikh.
 Haidar, Khan Bahadur Shamsuddin.
 Inskip, Mr. A. C.
 Ismaiel Alikhan, Kunwer Hajee.
 Jawahar Singh, Sardar Bahadur Sardar Sir.
 Khare, The Honourable Dr. N. B.
 Krishnamoorthy, Mr. E. S. A.
 Kushal Pal Singh, Raja Bahadur.
 Lalljee, Mr. Hooseinbhoj A.

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, Mr. C. M. G.
 Piare Lall Kureel, Mr.
 Raisman, The Honourable Sir Jeremy.
 Richardson, Sir Henry.
 Roy, The Honourable Sir Asoka.
 Shahban, Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir
 Muhammad.
 Spence, Sir George.
 Srivastava, The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad.
 Stokes, Mr. H. G.
 Sukthankar, Mr. Y. N.
 Sultan Ahmed, The Honourable Sir.
 Thakur Singh, Capt.
 Trivedi, Mr. C. M.
 Tyson, Mr. J. D.
 Zahid Husain, Mr.

The motion was negatived.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, the 8th February, 1944.