

8th November 1944

**THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES**

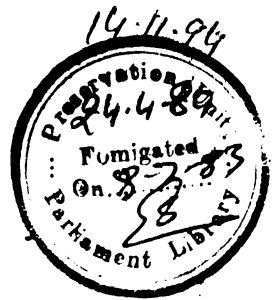
Official Report

Volume IV, 1944

(1st to 13th November 1944)

**TWENTY-FIRST SESSION
OF THE
FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
1944**

Chamber Fumigated 18.10.73



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

President :

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

Deputy President :

Mr. AKHIL CHANDRA DATTA, M.L.A.

Panel of Chairmen :

Mr. ABDUL QAYUM, M.L.A.

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Mr. K. C. NEOGY, M.L.A.

Sir HENRY RICHARDSON, M.L.A.

Secretary :

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Assistants of the Secretary :

Mr. M. N. KAUL, Barrister-at-Law.

Khan Bahadur S. G. HASNAIN.

● *Marshal :*

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

Committee on Petitions :

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

Nawabzada MUHAMMAD LIAQUAT ALI KHAN, M.L.A.

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

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

Sardar SANT SINGH, M.L.A.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 8th November, 1944

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

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

INSTALLATION OF KARACHI RADIO STATION

157. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state whether the Honourable Member's attention has been drawn to the paragraph appearing on page 118 of the *Indian Information*, dated August 1, 1944, about the Karachi Radio Station to the effect that the project has been held over owing to technical difficulties? Will the Honourable Member be pleased to specify them briefly?

(b) Is the Honourable Member aware that the Secretary in the Department of Information and Broadcasting informed me on the 17th March last that owing to the preoccupation of the Department with other heavy commitments connected with the War and lack of suitable house for use as a Radio Transmitting and Studio building at Karachi, the installation will be delayed?

(c) Is the Honourable Member also aware that the Secretary of his Department in his earlier letter to me on the 5th August, 1943, stated that if no suitable building was forthcoming at Karachi, the Government of India may put up a building of their own?

(d) Is it not a fact that all commitments for extension of the Delhi Radio Station are now complete? Is it now proposed to start installations at Karachi? If not, when is it proposed to take the matter in hand?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) Yes. The difficulties arise out of the depletion of the technical staff owing to the installation of a number of new transmitters, including two of 100 k.w. and the pre-occupation of the remaining staff with the installation of some more transmitters and also their being unable to remodel the 0.25 Transmitter into a 1 k.w. Transmitter due to the present war conditions.

(b) Yes.

(c) The Honourable Member is presumably referring to the letter of the 25th August, 1943. The letter clearly explained that the Government of India may put up a building of their own only when work in connection with the installation of the transmitter starts.

(d) The reply to the first two parts of this part of the question is in the negative. As regards the last part, plans for the post war development of Broadcasting in India are being prepared and the installation of more stations including a station at Karachi will be taken into consideration as part of the general plan.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I ask if the Honourable Member has seen the debates in which three of the Honourable Member's predecessors made a promise for a radio station at Karachi and yet it has not yet been installed?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I have seen this promise.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Last time the Honourable Member said in reply to a question that the installation at Delhi was occupying the attention of the Government. Now that the installation has been completed, will the Honourable Member fulfil his own promise?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I am prepared to do this provided the Sind Government is prepared to take the .25 transmitter.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable Member include Nagpur also in his plan as it is a very important station?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Certainly.

INDIAN KINGS COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ENLISTED FROM INDIA

158. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will the War Secretary be pleased to state as to how many Indian King's Commissioned Officers have been enlisted in the fighting forces from India, provincewise, since the 1st January, 1943, together with their grades and emoluments?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: Presumably the Honourable Member is referring to Emergency Commissioned Indian Officers of the Indian Army.

The number of those commissioned during the period 1st January 1943 to the 31st August 1944, was 5,756, including 1,960 Medical Officers, I regret that this information is not available by Provinces.

Of these officers, excluding Medical Officers, 560 have been promoted to the rank of Lieutenant, 33 to the rank of Captain and 15 to the rank of Major.

As regards their emoluments, a statement has been laid on the table.

Statement showing rates of pay and allowances of Indian commissioned officers

Ranks	Rates of pay	
	Unmarried Rs. p. m.	Married Rs. p. m.
2nd Lieutenant	370	450
Lieutenant	410	490
Lieutenant after 3 years' service	440	520
Captain	480	610
Captain after 3 years' service as such	500	630
Captain after 11 years' service	530	660
Captain after 14 years' service	620	750
Major	765	850
Major after 22 years' service	865	950
Lieutenant-Colonel	1,090	1,145

2. Married officers serving overseas and in "non-family" areas where their families are not permitted to go, receive separation allowance at the following rates:—

	Rs. p. m.
2nd Lieutenant	40
Lieutenant	
Captain	50
Major	80
Lieutenant-Colonel	120

3. Indian commissioned officers serving overseas receive expatriation allowance at the rate of colonial allowance admissible to British officers of the British Army. The rates of expatriation allowance for certain areas are:—

	Rs. p. m.
Ceylon	75
Persia & Iraq	120
Egypt	70

Unmarried officers serving in India and in areas overseas where no expatriation allowance is admissible receive a special allowance at the following rates:—

	Rs. p. m.
2nd Lieutenant	35
Lieutenant	20
Captain until completion of 11 years' service	20

4. A field allowance of Rs. 30 per mensem is also admissible to officers serving in areas declared as "field allowance areas". These are generally the forward areas.

5. Officers serving in technical corps like the Corps of Indian Engineers, Royal Indian Army Service Corps, Indian Army Ordnance Corps, Corps of Indian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, receive corps pay at the following rates:—

	Rs. p. m.
2nd Lieutenant and Lieutenant	45
Captain	70
Major	115
Lieutenant-Colonel	160

6. Officers serving in staff appointments receive rates of pay as follows:—

	Single Rs. p. m.	Married Rs. p. m.
General Staff Officer III	700	830
General Staff Officer II	1,090	1,130
General Staff Officer I	1,350	1,510

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Was any separate record kept of the provinces from which these officers were recruited?

Mr. O. M. Trivedi: So far as I am aware, there is no separate record, and in order to get the information, I will have to look up the applications of the candidates concerned.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: May I ask whether the figures given by the Honourable Member also include the officers in the Royal Navy and the Air Force?

Mr. O. M. Trivedi: No, Sir. I said: "Presumably the Honourable Member is referring to Emergency Commissioned Indian Officers of the Indian Army". It does not include the Indian Officers in the Royal Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Can the Honourable Member give the figures of Commissioned officers in the Royal Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force?

Mr. O. M. Trivedi: I shall be very glad to do so if the Honourable Member will put a question. Even if the Honourable Member will not put a question, I will communicate the information to him.

CONTINUANCE OF HUR TROUBLE IN SIND

159. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state what the legal responsibilities of the Central Government are in case the civic security in a province is in danger?

(b) Have Government taken any account from the Sind Government after the withdrawal of Martial Law, with regard to the welfare and safety of the community from the ravages of Hurs and allied culprits who not only attack villages but cause serious breaches in canals, flooding and desolating the country?

The Honourable Sir Francis Mudie: (a) The primary responsibility is on the Provincial Government. The Central Government, by virtue of war-time provisions, have certain powers of control by way of Legislation and direction.

(b) The Central Government are kept informed of happenings in Sind, as in other provinces. They have no reason to suppose that the Sind Government have failed in their responsibility since the withdrawal of martial law.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Is it not a fact that so many murders and dacoities have been committed by the Hurs in the Sind Province? If so, may I know why the Honourable Member is not interfering in the matter?

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

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will the Honourable Member inquire as to what is happening in the province of Sind and then do something on the responsibility of the Central Government? Will the Central Government always leave it to the Provincial Government even if there are disturbances? I want a reply.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has heard the question but he is not replying.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: May I ask if the occurrence of crime is the test of the efficiency of a Provincial Government or the overcoming of the crime is the real test of their efficiency?

(No answer.)

HOME DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM ON REPRESENTATION OF MINORITY COMMUNITIES IN POSTS FILLED BY PROMOTION

160. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Home Department had issued a memorandum in September, 1942, on the subject of representation of minority communities in posts filled by promotion? If so, will the Honourable Member be pleased to lay a copy of the same on the table of the House?

(b) Has this memorandum been circulated to the staff affected? If not, is it proposed to do so now? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Francis Mudie: (a) Yes; presumably the reference is to Home Department office memorandum No. 23/1/39-Ests. (S); dated the 4th September, 1942. A copy of which is laid on the table.

(b) No; the instructions in the memorandum are meant only for the guidance of the authorities making promotions.

No. 23/1/39-Ests. (S).

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

HOME DEPARTMENT.

New Delhi, the 4th September, 1942.

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT:—Representation of minority communities in posts filled by promotion.

The undersigned is directed to invite a reference to this Department office memorandum No. 23/1/39-Ests. (S), dated the 16th August 1941, and to say that after considering the views expressed by the Departments on the proposals contained in that Office Memorandum it has been decided to adopt the following principles:

(a) There should be no indefiniteness about the normal mode of filling vacancies nor any uncertainty about the proportions to be filled by direct recruitment and by promotion. The practice, where it is not sufficiently well-defined, should be settled for the future.

(b) No variation in existing rules or practice which would have the effect of increasing the present proportion of vacancies filled by promotion, nor any departure from the pre-determined proportions, should be made without the orders of Government.

(c) Except in certain classes of appointments which must be defined as open only to selection, seniority must as a general rule be given its due weight and good men should not be passed over by their juniors merely because the juniors might, other things being equal, be judged to be better than they.

(d) Without prejudice to the position of the War Department *vis-a-vis* Naval, Army and Air Headquarters, each Department should be responsible not only for the accuracy of the communal returns from each of its Attached and Subordinate Offices, both in form and substance, but also for submitting a consolidated return for all its offices to the Home Department by a specified date each year, accompanied by brief remarks on any defects or departures from the rules that may have come to its notice. It should be the duty of the Home Department not to check the returns of other Departments but to consolidate them further without delay and review the general working of the rules as disclosed by the returns.

2. In order to comply with principle (c), Departments will have to prepare lists of appointments which may be filled only by selection of the best candidates available. So far as posts in the Secretariat Ministerial Staff are concerned, the list will be prepared by Home Department after consulting the other Departments.

3. As regards (d), the Departments are requested to submit to Home Department consolidated returns for 1941 as soon as possible and thereafter by 1st April of each year.

H. K. CHAINANI,

Deputy Secretary to the Govt. of India.

STATEMENT ON PROGRESS OF WAR

161. *Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Will the War Secretary please lay on the table a statement on the progress of the War during the months of August, September and October?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I would refer the Honourable Member to the statement laid on the table in reply to Mr. Lalchand Navalrai's starred question No. 61 on the 3rd November, 1944.

CANDIDATES EXAMINED BY GENERAL HEADQUARTERS SELECTION BOARDS

162. *Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: (a) Does the War Secretary propose to lay on the table a statement showing the number of candidates examined by each of the four General Headquarter Selection Boards, and the number of candidates declared to be successful? What is the percentage of passes by each Board, and by all the Boards combined?

(b) Is it not a fact that nearly all the candidates examined by the General Headquarter Selection Board were examined by a preliminary Board—provincial or otherwise? What is the reason for the difference in the estimate of the primary and final Selection Boards?

(c) Have the Government in the Army Department examined the method of psychiatrists and psychologists? Have the Government in the interest of economy and efficiency considered the proposal that the test of psychologists and psychiatrists should be applied at the beginning and not at the end.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) As regards the first part, it would not be in the interests of security to reveal the actual number of candidates appearing before and accepted by the General Headquarters Selection Boards, of which there are now seven. The percentage rates of acceptance by each Board for the year ended the 31st August, 1944, are as follows:—

No. 1 Board—29.4 per cent.

No. 2 Board—26.9 per cent.

No. 3 Board—30.8 per cent.

No. 4 Board—24.3 per cent.

No. 5 Board—32.2 per cent.

No. 6 Board—24.9 per cent.

The average acceptance rate is 28 per cent.

No. 7 Board has been excluded as this is intended only for candidates for the Indian Air Force. In the few months that this Board has been operating, the acceptance rate has been 11.8 per cent. This comparatively low percentage is partly due to the higher standard required of officers in the General Duties Branch and partly to the policy whereby large numbers of candidates are sent direct to No. 7 General Headquarters Selection Board, without a preliminary interview.

(b) The answer to the first part is in the negative. The proportion of civilian candidates who have passed a preliminary interview has been less than 50 per cent. for some time past. As regards the latter part, the preliminary interview boards have no accurate objective means of assessing the qualities of a candidate and therefore pass him to the General Headquarters Selection Board if there is the slightest chance of success. Only the obviously unsuitable candidates are weeded out by the preliminary boards.

(c) Yes, Sir, Government have thoroughly examined the question and are satisfied that the methods now being used are the best devisable and are producing the high standard of individual required for the Defence Services, consistent with economy and efficiency in the machinery of selection.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: With reference to the latter part of (c), may I ask whether the Government have considered that these tests of psychiatrists ought to be applied at the time the candidates go to the Provincial Board, that is in the beginning and not in the end?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: We have considered this, but it has not been possible to adopt this because of the limited number of psychiatrists and psychologists available.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: With reference to parts (a) and (b), will the Honourable Member say whether any police reports are called for before final selection is made of each candidate?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: The G. H. Q. Selection Boards do not call for any police report.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Is there any machinery which sifts the number of candidates who appear before the Boards?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: There is no machinery to do so before the candidate appears before the G. H. Q. Board for selection.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I know if political influence does not play any part in the matter of selection or rejection of a candidate?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I can assure the Honourable Member that political considerations do not play the slightest part in the deliberations of G. H. Q. Selection Boards.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Is the Honourable Member prepared to examine any specific case if it is brought to his notice?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: Most certainly.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I know whether at any stage of the selection reference is made to the police for a report?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: Yes, the suitability of a candidate for the service is taken into account after he is selected by the Selection Board.

Sardar Sant Singh: Before appointment is made, is there any stage at which the antecedents of the candidate are enquired into by the police from the parents in the place where he comes from?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: Yes.

Sardar Sant Singh: Is it confined to the antecedents of the candidate himself or to the antecedents of his parents and relatives also?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: So far as I am aware, it is confined to the antecedents of the candidate himself.

COMMUNAL COMPOSITION IN HIGHER POSTS OF THE HOME DEPARTMENT

163. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member please state the number of posts carrying monthly salaries of Rs. 500 to Rs. 750, Rs. 750 to Rs. 1,000, Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 1,500 and Rs. 1,500 and upwards in the Home Department?

(b) How many of these posts are held by (i) Europeans, (ii) Anglo-Indians, (iii) Hindus, (iv) Sikhs, (v) Muslims, and (vi) others, under each category, separately?

The Honourable Sir Francis Mudie: (a) and (b). A statement which gives substantially the information required by the Honourable Member is laid on the table.

Statement showing the communal composition of Gazetted and non-Gazetted Officers in the Home Department drawing pay in the salary-groups of Rs. 500-749, Rs. 750-999, Rs. 1,000-1,499 and Rs. 1,500-upward.

Community	Salary Groups				Total.
	Rs. 500-749	Rs. 750-999	Rs. 1,000-1,499	Rs. 1,500-upward.	
Europeans	..	1	2	6	9
Hindus	6	Nil	1	3	10
Muslims	2	Nil	Nil	Nil	2
Anglo-Indians	1	Nil	1	Nil	2
Sikhs	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	1
Others	1	Nil	Nil	1	2
Total	11	1	4	10	26

Sardar Sant Singh: Before this statement was made, did the Honourable Member take into consideration the circular issued by the Department that the Sikhs included in these are those who are *bona fide* Sikhs?

The Honourable Sir Francis Mudie: Who am I to distinguish between them?

COMMUNAL COMPOSITION IN HIGHER POSTS OF CERTAIN OFFICES UNDER THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT

164. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state the number of posts carrying monthly salaries of Rs. 500 to 750, Rs. 750 to 1,000, Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 1,500 and Rs. 1,500 and above in his Department including (i) the Central Board of Revenue, (ii) the Inspectorate of Customs and Central Excises, (iii) the Office of the Chief Chemist, Central Revenues, (iv) the Auditor General in India, (v) the Director of Railway Audit, (vi) the Accountant and Deputy Accountant Generals, Posts and Telegraphs, (vii) the Accountant General, Central Revenues, (viii) the Chief Controller of Supply Accounts, (ix) the Director of Audit, Defence Services, (x) the Military Defence Department, (xi) the Supply Finance Department, (xii) the office of the Additional Financial Adviser, Supply Finance, and (xiii) the office of the Joint Financial Adviser, Supply Finance? (Please give figures separately for each of the above section)?

(b) What number of posts under each category in each Section is held by (i) Europeans, (ii) Anglo-Indians, (iii) Hindus, (iv) Muslims, (v) Sikhs, and (vi) others?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

SIKH REPRESENTATION IN HIGHER POSTS OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

165. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Planning and Development please state what steps he proposes to take in organising his new Department to grant adequate share to the Sikh community in posts carrying monthly salaries of Rs. 500 to Rs. 750, Rs. 750 to Rs. 1,000, Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 1,500, and Rs. 1,500 and above in his Department?

(b) Will the Honourable Member please give assurance that he would give personal attention to this aspect of the personnel of his staff so that the Sikh community should have no grievance in this matter of selection?

The Honourable Sir Ardesahir Dalal: (a) and (b). I may assure the Honourable Member that in making appointments every endeavour is being and will be made by me to secure adequate representation of all communities, subject of course to candidates with the requisite qualifications being available.

CONVERSATIONS WITH HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT RE STERLING BALANCES

166. *Sardar Sant Singh: Will the Honourable the Finance Member please make a statement as to the conversation Mr. Deshmukh, Governor of the Reserve Bank and the Honourable Member had with His Majesty's Government as to Sterling balances in England?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I would refer the Honourable Member to my reply to Starred Question No. 66 asked by Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad on the 3rd November, 1944.

PROJECTS POSSIBLE ONLY UNDER NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

167. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will the Honourable Member for Planning and Development be pleased to state:

(a) which are those things which a National Government alone could do and not the present Central Government as stated by the Honourable Member in the course of replies to journalists at a recent Press Conference?

(b) whether such things will be left out from planning until the National Government is established in India? Will the Honourable Member enlighten the House on this subject?

(c) whether the booklet which the Honourable Member proposed to bring out is ready? If so, will it be placed on the table of the House, and if it is not yet ready, when should it be expected to be out?

(d) which large private industries he contemplates in his post-war reconstruction plan which could be helped and encouraged by Government with sufficient Government grants like those of Tatas, in view of the present economic condition of the country?

The Honourable Sir Ardesahir Dalal: (a) and (b). When the Plan is in full operation, large scale measures involving compulsion and interference with the established habits of the people will have to be put into force. Such measures could only be carried out by a Government having the full support and goodwill of the people behind them.

(c) The booklet to which I referred is the Second Report on Reconstruction Planning which has recently been issued and a copy of which I laid on the table of the House on Friday, the 3rd November.

(d) It is proposed to set up panels to deal with the questions of almost all the important industries, such as iron and steel, heavy and light engineering, manufacture of automobiles, aircraft, heavy and light chemicals, electrical and other machinery, non-ferrous industries, textiles, plastics, etc. ♦

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know whether in the formulation of these plans, the Government consult some responsible people in India?

The Honourable Sir Ardesahir Dalal: Yes, Sir.

† Not printed in these debates, but copies have been placed in the library of the House.—
Ed. of D.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: With reference to part (d) may I know whether the Honourable Member has taken into consideration any private industries which are suitable to be given grants so that they may develop like the Tatas?

The Honourable Sir Ardeshir Dalal: The question of the exact grants or protection to be given to the different industries will come up as the plan gradually evolves. Such a question has not yet come before the Government.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Is it the intention of the Government of India to eliminate altogether the Provincial Governments and formulate industrial planning direct?

The Honourable Sir Ardeshir Dalal: I can assure the Honourable Member that it is not the intention of the Government to eliminate the Provincial Governments at all. Plans are being worked out in full agreement and co-operation with Provincial Governments and without in any way encroaching upon their autonomy.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: May I know whether the Provincial Governments can go ahead with their own planning or have their schemes to be considered and approved by the Government of India?

The Honourable Sir Ardeshir Dalal: The plans which are now being formulated by the Provincial Governments will be taken into account by the Central Government and a co-ordinated plan for the whole country will be put into force.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I know at what stage the Government of India propose to consult the Legislature or any one of its committees in the matter of evolving these plans and carrying them out?

The Honourable Sir Ardeshir Dalal: This is a matter which will come up in connection with the Resolution of Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad and it will be considered at that time.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Will the plans prepared by the Provincial Governments be in the nature of suggestions which the Government of India might alter or amend, or will the Provincial Governments have full authority to carry out their own plans?

The Honourable Sir Ardeshir Dalal: Provincial autonomy is not going to be disturbed in any way. It is hoped that in co-operation with the Central Government, and perhaps with the financial assistance of the Central Government, a co-ordinated plan will be made out.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: I want to press this point. Provincial autonomy ought to be respected in every plan which the Government of India may produce and if it is set aside then there will be chaos.

The Honourable Sir Ardeshir Dalal: I have already assured the Honourable Member that it is not the intention of Central Government in any way to interfere with the autonomy of the Provinces.

Sir Vithal N. Chandavarkar: Is it the intention of Government to bring the Indian States also into the picture?

The Honourable Sir Ardeshir Dalal: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: With reference to part (d), may I know whom the private industrialists have to approach, the Provincial Government or the Central Government?

The Honourable Sir Ardeshir Dalal: Both, Sir.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: In view of the supreme importance of this subject, will the Honourable Member see that copies of these reports are placed at the disposal of each Member of the House?

The Honourable Sir Ardeshir Dalal: If possible, I shall try to do so.

ANTI-EROSION MEASURES FOR SIND AND OTHER PROVINCES

†168. ***Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** (a) In taking effective anti-erosion measures for the future well-being of India, has the attention of the Honourable Member for Planning and Development been drawn to the constant recurrence of such happenings on the Indus in the portion which runs through the Sind Province

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

and which cause immense loss and damage to crops and affect the food products not only of Sind but even of other provinces deficient in food? If so, what proposals has he on the subject? Have any experts been engaged or are proposed to be engaged to meet the situation?

(b) Does the Honourable Member propose to take this matter in the plan for the agricultural development of the country as a whole? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Ardeshir Dalal: The question should be addressed to the Honourable Member for Education, Health and Lands.

PROGRAMME FOR PROVISION OF DEMOBILISED WAR SERVICE MEN

169. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable the Defence Member please state what plans and programmes have been made after February, 1943, by the Government to guarantee freedom from want to demobilised war service men and to absorb the military officers?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: Sir, I lay a statement on the table.

Statement

The Second report on Reconstruction planning published by the Reconstruction Committee of Council, a copy of which has been placed in the library of the House, explains the objectives of Government planning.

2. Leaving aside those persons who have their own lands to which to return or other forms of employment which they can take up without assistance, plans for resettlement of ex-service men have to cater for four main categories. Firstly, those who wish settle on the land; secondly, those who wish to take up a profession or business career, thirdly, those who wish for employment in the service of Government; and fourthly, those who seek employment in industry.

3. To assist those who wish to return to the land the Military authorities have opened Exhibition Rooms and Demonstration Plots at Training Centres. Here volunteers from amongst those who are returning to or wish to settle on the land are being given short courses in improved methods of agriculture, including poultry farming, vegetable growing, horticulture, and bee-keeping. It is hoped that the men who have been trained in these courses will themselves become instructors and pass on their knowledge to those of their companions who are interested either during or before the demobilization period. In the case of Centres in the United Provinces batches of instructors are already being trained with the aid of Specialists from the Provincial Agricultural and Co-operative Services, and it is hoped that similar arrangements will be made with other Provinces in the near future. A start has also been made in the Punjab. It is proposed to extend this scheme to all Training Centres from which men will be demobilized and when hostilities cease the scheme will be extended to all cantonments where large numbers of troops are stationed.

Most of the Provinces have also offered facilities for training in rural subjects, including co-operation and the consolidation of holdings. It is proposed to make as much use of this as possible, and of all facilities which exist or have been created at Service establishments, both now and during the period between Armistice and Demobilization.

It is not yet possible to say how much land will be made available for settlement, either as grants or by purchase at concessional rates, but schemes to this end are being examined.

4. Some officers and men have had to interrupt their education or training by volunteering for service. Others have acquired some technical skill which, with a little further training, would fit them for a career in civil life. The Government have under consideration a scheme for further education and training for their benefit. Government's aim in such cases is to provide facilities to enable these men to qualify for a career or to acquire the necessary standard of skill in the chosen trade. The employment of disabled personnel is also engaging the attention of Government. These schemes are still in the planning stage.

5. As regards employment in Government service all Governments—Central, State and Provincial—have made Provisions for allotment of vacancies to ex-service men and women in the departments and services which they control. This is being done by reserving a percentage which varies from 70 per cent. to 30 per cent. of all newly created posts, and vacancies which have occurred in existing cadres. In order to facilitate the placing of ex-officers in the superior services all Emergency Commissioned Officers have been asked to state the employment which they wish for when demobilized, and the particulars of all those who have asked to be considered for employment in the Civil Services have been passed to the Federal Public Service Commission.

A special organisation is being set up to deal with the problems connected with resettlement in civil life of demobilised medical personnel, including Auxiliary Personnel such as Nurses, Nursing Orderlies, Dispensers Radiographers and Laboratory Assistants. The question of the civil capacities in which Auxiliary medical personnel can be employed, the recognition for civil purposes of any training they have had and the supplementary training necessary to fit them for civil employment is under examination. The provision of facilities for post-graduate training of medical officers in the United Kingdom and the United States of America in the Post-War years is under active consideration.

6. Particular care will be taken to see that ex-service men receive the fullest consideration of their claims at the hands of Government in all post-war employment schemes. The development of reconstruction plans will naturally provide many openings for employment—both superior and inferior—for ex-service men.

7. Resettlement of men and women in industry depends largely upon the good-will of employers and their realisation that the qualifications of the servicemen are or can be made suitable to their particular branch of industry. Arrangements are already in hand for canvassing employers to this end and also to provide the necessary machinery for bringing employers and employees together.

Service trades have been related to civil trades wherever possible, and every effort is being made to persuade industrialists to accept this classification. It may be possible to bring those trained for the special work of the Army, more into line with the needs of civil life by post-demobilisation training in certain lines in technical training institutions already established or by arranging for men with suitable qualifications to become apprentices.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Is that a general statement or is it with reference to number of officers as well as other ranks?

Mr. O. M. Trivedi: Both. The Honourable Member will find the information he wants there.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Does it refer to figures in detail or is the plan merely sketchy with reference to the number of persons enlisted and the officers in the army? When is the plan coming into effect? When is the army going to be demobilised?

Mr. O. M. Trivedi: The Honourable Member will please read the statement and then ask questions, if necessary.

ANTI-HINDI POLICY OF ALL-INDIA RADIO

170. ***Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh:** (a) Has the attention of the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting been drawn to the news published in the *Hindustan Times* of September 14, 1944, under the heading "Anti-Hindi Policy of A. I. R.—Strong condemnation at Lucknow meeting"?

(b) What has the Honourable Member to say regarding the demand for programmes of all categories in Hindi according to the proportionate requirements of the Hindi knowing listeners which is referred to in it?

(c) Whether more than 85 per cent. of the items are in Urdu, and whether more than 75 per cent. of the items were contributed by Muslim writers?

(d) Have Muslim salutations and phraseology been exclusively adopted by the All-India Radio for all purposes of its Hindustani programmes?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) Yes, and also to a recent publication of the Provincial Sahitya Sammelan, Allahabad, and to a number of representations and comments in the Muslim press.

(b), (c) and (d). Government are considering the whole question of language policy of the All-India Radio and other matters connected with it and hope to announce their decision at an early date.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will Government take steps to consult non-official opinion also before they come to any final decision?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Certainly.

Sardar Sant Singh: Is the matter being considered departmentally by the Government of India or will representatives of the various communities be taken in order to reach a conclusion satisfactory to all?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I do not know what is a satisfactory solution; it is very difficult to say. But I propose to consult the representatives of the Hindi Sammelan and the representatives of the Anjuman-i-Taraqqi Urdu and our own standing committee of the two Legislative bodies here.

BADGES DISTINGUISHING MILITARY OFFICERS WITHIN FIGHTING AREA

171. ***Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh:** Will the War Secretary please state if any decision on the question of badges distinguishing military officers who have been actually within the fighting area from those who are sitting in offices, either army or civil, has now been taken?

Mr. O. M. Trivedi: The only distinguishing badge so far issued is the Overseas Badge for Viceroy's Commissioned Officers who have returned to

India from Overseas, or from the Burma front. No other officers are eligible for it.

Two War Medals in the form of Stars have been awarded by His Majesty the King. These are the Africa Star, and 1939-43 Star and are granted to officers and other ranks who have served in theatres of war, subject to certain necessary qualifications. Recipients of these awards can be distinguished by the medal ribbons sanctioned for each star.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I am referring specifically to such persons as are civilians, including Vice-Chancellors.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I did not read the question like that.

OMISSION OF MR. JINNAH'S ID MESSAGE IN ALL-INDIA RADIO NEWS BROADCASTS

172. *Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: (a) Is the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting aware that both Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Gandhi issued messages for the last Id-ul-Fitr?

(b) Is it a fact that the All-India Radio news broadcasts on the morning of the 20th September in English, Urdu and Gujrati mentioned Mr. Gandhi's message but totally suppressed Mr. Jinnah's? If so, why?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) Yes.

(b) The facts are that both Mr. Jinnah's and Mr. Gandhi's Id messages were broadcast. Mr. Jinnah's message was issued on the evening of the 18th September, was received through the A.P.I. on the night of the 18th/19th and broadcast on the morning of the 19th September. Mr. Gandhi's message was issued on the evening of the 19th September, was received through the A.P.I. on the night of the 19th/20th and broadcast on the morning of the 20th September. The question of suppressing Mr. Jinnah's message on the 20th September does not, therefore, arise.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS DURING AND AFTER WAR BETWEEN INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

173. *Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member please lay a statement on the floor of the House about the work done by him and his other colleagues about financial arrangements during and after the war between India and other countries?

(b) Will the Honourable Member give an opportunity to the House to discuss his statement?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I refer the Honourable Member to my answer to his Starred Question No. 66 on the 3rd November, 1944, also to my answer to Sardar Sant Singh's Starred Question No. 72 on the same date.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Will the Honourable Member give us an opportunity to discuss it?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I answered that also.

STEPS FOR STABILISING PURCHASING POWER OF RUPEE

174. *Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member please lay a statement before the House on the steps he has taken since the last session of the Assembly for stabilizing the purchasing power of rupee and fixing the prices of principal commodities to paper rupee?

(b) What is the price of gold in terms of sterling at New York and London?

(c) What is the price of gold on the same rates in India as sold by the Reserve Bank?

(d) What is the reason for such an enormous difference?

(e) Is it not a fact that the difference of prices is written off against the sterling balances of India and England?

(f) Have the South African Government approached the Government of India or the Reserve Bank with the request that their gold may also be sold at this high price by the Reserve Bank? What reply, if any, have the Government of India given to the South African Government?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the answer given to his question No. 67 on 3rd

November, 1944. It is not considered necessary to lay a further statement on the table.

(b) The price of gold in London is 168 shillings and in New York \$35 which at the present rate of exchange of \$4.03=£1 represent 178 sh. 7d. per fine ounce.

(c) The question is not clear but if the Honourable Member wants to know the price at which Reserve Bank makes sales on behalf of H. M. G. and the American Government as compared with the London and New York rates, the London price is equal to Rs. 112 and the New York price to Rs. 116-7-0 per fine ounce while the Reserve Bank does not sell at a fixed price but with reference to the prevailing market price in India.

(d) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to my remarks on the Budget Debate at pages 941-43 in Volume II, No. 6 of the Legislative Assembly Debates.

(e) No process of writing off is involved.

(f) The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. The second part does not arise.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: In part (c) there was a misprint, the word "rates" being put instead of "dates".

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That is one of the reasons why the question was not clear.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: The Honourable Member should have noticed that mistake.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I cannot always assume that an ambiguity in the Honourable Member's question is due to a printer's error.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: With reference to part (f), may I know if any gold belonging to the South African Government is sold in India as such?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I have already answered that. Certainly a certain amount of gold that comes from South Africa is sold in India. But the question was whether the South African Government had approached the Government of India or the Reserve Bank; the answer is in the negative.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: In amplification of it, does the Honourable Member confirm that a certain amount of gold that comes from South Africa is sold in India?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Certainly; South Africa is one of the main sources of the world's gold, and a good deal comes here from South Africa.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Can the Honourable Member state whether this gold is the property of the South African Government?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: As far as I am aware, the gold sold by the Reserve Bank is sold on behalf of either the United Kingdom or the U. S. A.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: At what profit?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I have already said that no question of profit arises.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Is it a fact that the full price realised in India goes to His Majesty's Government or to the South African, and neither the Reserve Bank nor the Government of India get any share of that price?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: It is a fact that neither the Reserve Bank nor the Government of India make any profit on these sales.

Mr. Manu Subedar: May I know why the Government of India have not so far approached H. M. G. for a share of this profit that is made in this country, and whether they propose to approach them in this matter?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: This question was fully discussed in the last Budget debate and I have nothing to add to what I said on that occasion.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: I want to know whether gold is sold in India at world's parity on the same date.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: No, Sir, it is not.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Then some one is making a profit; who is that?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I am afraid the Honourable Member is arguing, but I did deal with that argument in the course of my reply to the Budget debate.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: It is no argument. My question is, who is making that profit?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: If it is not admitted that a profit is made, it becomes an argument.

DETENTION OF MR. R. P. CHADDAH OF AMRITSAR.

175. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the War Secretary please state if Mr. R. P. Chaddah, resident of Koocha Khotian, Katra Moti Ram, Lohgarh Gate, Amritsar, was originally detained under rule 26 of the Defence of India Rules on his repatriation from Shanghai when he landed at Bombay along with the members of his family.

(b) Is it a fact that later on he was transferred for detention from civil jail to military authorities? If so, how long has he been in detention now?

(c) Were any charges ever handed over to this gentleman? If so, will the Government place a copy of the charge on the table of the House and his reply to the charge if any?

(d) Was his case ever reviewed, since his detention? If so, by what authorities, and with what result?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir, he is still in a civil jail. Mr. Chaddah has been in detention since 24th November, 1942.

(c) No, Sir; neither the old Defence of India Rule 26, nor the new Ordinance IV of 1944 required communication of the grounds of detention to the detenu. The latter part of the question does not arise.

(d) Yes, Sir. Mr. Chaddah's case has been reviewed twice by the Central Government, but on each occasion it was considered, after due deliberation, that he must continue to remain in detention. Government propose to review the case again shortly.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: What was the last date when his case was reviewed?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I think it was about six months ago.

Sardar Sant Singh: His original arrest and detention was under D. I. Rule 26 and later on he was transferred to the military authorities. May I know the reasons for this transfer?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: He has not been transferred to the military authorities. What happened was that when Ordinance No. 4 of 1944 was passed the order under D. I. Rule 26 was cancelled and an order under that Ordinance was passed.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Are not Government expected under Ordinance 4 of 1944 to review these cases at least once every six months?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: Not according to Ordinance 4. My Honourable friend is thinking of Ordinance No. 3.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Very well. Under Ordinance No. 3 are not the Government of India liable to review these cases once in six months? If so, why is it that they have not reviewed this case as yet, because the Honourable Member said it was last reviewed six months ago?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: This gentleman was not detained under Ordinance No. 3 but under Ordinance No. 4.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: In that case has he the privilege to expect his case to be reviewed once in six months or not?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: The Ordinance itself does not require a review ordinarily, but we sometimes do so.

Sardar Sant Singh: May we know whether it is a fact that the civil police of the Punjab and the police of Bombay reported in favour of this man when he was originally detained?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I am not aware of that.

Sardar Sant Singh: Will the Honourable Member kindly send for these reports when reviewing the man's case?

Sardar Mangal Singh: Who reviews these cases?

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

WAR ALLOWANCE.

†176. ***Seth Yusuf Abdooia Haroon:** (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Government of India, Finance Department, in their letter No. F. 2 (52)-W44, dated the 25th September, 1944, have sanctioned War Allowance equal to 10 per cent. of pay to married officers drawing pay up to Rs. 1,000 subject to a minimum of Rs. 50 and with marginal adjustments up to Rs. 1,100?

(b) Is it a fact that single officers drawing pay up to Rs. 750 will also receive War Allowance equal to 5 per cent. of pay subject to a minimum of Rs. 30 and with marginal adjustments up to Rs. 78s?

(c) Is it also a fact that non-gazetted officers will also receive Dearness Allowance at existing rates or War Allowance at 10 per cent. of pay, whichever is greater?

(d) Is it a fact that so far as the non-gazetted staff getting pay up to Rs. 200 is concerned, there will be no relief to men getting pay up to Rs. 140 and relief of Re. 1 to Rs. 6 to those whose pay is between Rs. 150 and Rs. 200? Do the Government think that this relief to staff getting pay up to Rs. 200 is commensurate with the rise in prices which have increased from 400 per cent. to 600 per cent. over the pre-war rates? Will the Government be pleased to reconsider the matter and afford some more substantial relief to staff getting pay up to Rs. 200? If not, why not?

(e) Is it a fact that the Government of India had sanctioned the grant of travelling allowance upto a maximum of Rs. 300 to Government servants not enjoying Dearness Allowance?

(f) Is it a fact that the Government of India have now sanctioned War Allowance equal to 10 per cent. of pay to officers drawing pay up to Rs. 1,000 with marginal adjustments up to Rs. 1,100?

(g) Will the above travelling allowance also be paid to all the officers now in receipt of the War Allowance? If so, will the Government also extend this concession to the entire non-gazetted clerical staff in Audit and Accounts Offices in India who are also paid 10 per cent. War Allowance from the 1st July, 1944? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) and (b). Yes, to gazetted officers.

(c) Yes.

(d) The extra relief in 'B' areas is as stated by the Honourable Member. The general increase in prices has been somewhat overstated in this part of the question. Government do, however, realise that the present rates of dearness allowance only compensate in part for the increased cost of living, but they regard the present rates as affording as much relief as all the factors which have to be taken into consideration permit. Government have the matter continually under review.

(e) Yes, but the maximum varies from Rs. 300 for 1st Grade to Rs. 150 for second Grade and Rs. 80 for third Grade officers and is only admissible to the extent that they and their wives incur the expenditure on a journey on leave granted for rest and recreation.

(f) My reply to parts (a) and (b) of this question covers this point.

(g) Yes, except to those who were in receipt of dearness allowance prior to 1st July 1944. Government regret that they are unable to make an exception from the scope of the above decision, in favour of the staff mentioned.

RE-EDITION OF FILM "TUNISIAN VICTORY"

177. ***Mr. K. O. Neogy:** Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state:

(a) whether the film "Tunisian Victory" was re-edited in order to include the exploits of Indian soldiers;

(b) whether this re-edition has been only in respect of the copy exhibited in India;

(c) who were the producers of the "Tunisian Victory";

(d) whether his attention has been drawn to the comments of the British film weekly *Picturegoer* that the *Tunisian Victory* is "the first fifty-fifty per cent. Anglo-American documentary which depicts with complete impartiality the work of the British and American forces during the Tunisian campaign";

(e) whether it is a fact that the film "Desert Victory" also omitted to include the exploits of Indian Soldiers in the campaign depicted in it?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) The film "Tunisian Victory" was re-edited prior to release to the public in India in order that additional footage showing the exploits of Indian troops over and above that already in the original film could be included.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The film was a joint official Anglo-American production, the Ministry of Information being responsible for the British share.

(d) I had not seen the "Picturegoer's" comments, but as quoted by the Honourable Member they are correct.

(e) No, Sir. The exploits of Indian troops did appear in the film "Desert Victory".

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With regard to this other film, "The Tunisian Victory" has the Honourable Member taken any steps for the purpose of bringing to the notice of the British Ministry of Information the injustice done by exclusion of the exploits of the Indian soldiers from the original copy?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: The original copy included 100 feet of specific shots of Indian troops and we added afterwards another 150 feet. At the time this came to our notice we did lodge a protest to the Secretary of State.

FILM SHOWING MAHATMA GANDHI'S RELEASE

178. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state:

(a) whether any film unit working under the Information and Broadcasting Department had taken shots of the scenes showing Mahatma Gandhi's release from the Aga Khan's palace in Poona, and his subsequent arrival by train in Bombay;

(b) whether these shots were exhibited along with others in the series "Indian News Parade" in any city on any day, if not, whether these particular shots, inter on were prohibited from being exhibited?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) Yes.

(b) First part: 'yes'; second part: does not arise.

LANGUAGE POLICY OF ALL-INDIA RADIO

†179. ***Mr. R. R. Gupta:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state whether his attention has been drawn towards a recent publication of the Provincial Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Allahabad, entitled "The Language Policy of All-India Radio"?

(b) If the answer to (a) above is in the affirmative, what steps have his Department taken to refute the charges levelled against the language policy of the All-India Radio?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) Yes.

(b) In view of the fact that the book is full of inaccuracies and is manifestly tendentious, it has not been considered necessary to refute the allegations contained in it. Government is, however, aware that there has been some dissatisfaction with the language policy of All-India Radio in some quarters and the matter is receiving Government's serious consideration.

PREPONDERANCE OF URDU BROADCASTS FROM ALL-INDIA RADIO STATIONS

†180. ***Mr. R. R. Gupta:** Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the proportion of total

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

broadcasts from the All-India Radio stations, so far as language is concerned, is 85 per cent. items in Urdu and 15 per cent. in Hindi? Is it also not a fact that 75 per cent. items go to Muslim writers and 25 per cent. to Hindi writers, including Sikhs?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given by me this morning to part (c) of Mr. Govind V. Deshmakh's starred question No. 170.

HINDU AND MUSLIM EMPLOYEES IN RADIO STATIONS

†181. ***Mr. R. R. Gupta:** Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting be pleased to lay before the House a chart giving percentage of employees of Hindu and Muslim communities in all the Radio Stations in India?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: A statement showing the percentage of Hindu and Muslim employees on the staff of All-India Radio stations as on 31st August 1944 is laid on the table.

Statement

Name of station	Percentage of Hindus	Percentage of Muslims
Delhi	60.2	31.3
Bombay	70.0	13.3
Calcutta	70.3	18.8
Lahore	41.2	52.9
Lucknow	64.0	36.0
Madras	80.0	8.0
Peshawar	35.0	55.0
Trichinopoly	66.7	15.7
Dacca	76.9	23.1
Madras Unit (Delhi)	78.6	21.4

The above figures exclude the inferior staff and include the posts of Station Directors, Assistant Station Directors and Programme Executives which are exempted from the scope of communal representation orders.

RADIO NEWS BULLETINS IN HINDUSTANI

†182. ***Mr. R. R. Gupta:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state as to who lays down the language policy of Radio News Bulletins in Hindustani, and the policy followed in editing the Hindustani language for common consumption?

(b) Has ever an attempt been made to find out whether the language used is palatable to the majority of the listeners? Are the news bulletins written originally in Urdu or Hindi scripts?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) The policy is laid down by the Government of India. It is and has all along been that the words used should be as widely intelligible as possible.

(b) Suggestions from listeners are welcomed. They are invited through announcements and through correspondence and are constantly received in All-India Radio in large numbers. Government have also the benefit of the views of the Advisory Committees which have been set up, one for each station, to advise Director General, All-India Radio and to keep him in touch with the wishes of the listening public. The programmes are designed to meet these wishes as far as possible. The news bulletins are written either in Urdu or in the Hindi script depending on which script the Announcer is familiar with.

RECONSIDERATION OF LANGUAGE POLICY RE HINDI

†183. ***Mr. R. R. Gupta:** Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state if in view of the great resentment prevailing amongst the Hindi-speaking public regarding the treatment meted out to Hindi, the Government contemplate to reconsider its present language policy?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Government is aware that there has been some criticism of the language policy of All-India Radio in some quarters. The matter is receiving Government's serious consideration.

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

PAMPHLET "OUR INDIAN EMPIRE".

184. *Mr. K. S. Gupta: (a) Is the War Secretary aware of the publication of a pamphlet 'Our Indian Empire'? Who is the author, and when was it published?

(b) How many British officers in the Indian army were provided with the pamphlet?

(c) When was it withdrawn? Did the Government of India make any representation with regard to it? If so, would it be placed on the table?

(d) Is a copy of it available with the Government of India? Would it be placed on the table?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) Yes, Sir. The publication was produced by the General Staff, India, and published by the Manager of Publications, Delhi. It has been printed and revised four times during the period 1932 to 1940.

(b) Copies at the rate of 10,000 per annum were supplied to the War Office for issue to all Army and Air Force personnel proceeding to India.

(c) The pamphlet was withdrawn in April 1944. Being an official publication of the Government of India, the latter parts of the question do not arise.

(d) Yes, Sir. A copy is available in the Library of the House.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Why was it withdrawn?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: It was withdrawn because I think the pamphlet as a whole is really out of date.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Outraged?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: No, I said: is "out of date".

MAHATMA GANDHI'S LIFE SAVED BY BRITISH SOLDIERS.

185. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the War Secretary be pleased to state whether his attention has been drawn to a statement reported to have been published in the *Birmingham Post* and reproduced in the issue of the *Hindustan Times*, Delhi, dated the 13th September, 1944, to the effect that during a recent journey Mahatma Gandhi's life was saved by British soldiers? If so, what are the particulars of any such incident?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I have seen the statement in the *Hindustan Times*, dated the 14th September, 1944, in which the *Birmingham Gazette* is quoted as stating that Mr. Gandhi's carriage had to be protected by British troops from anti-Gandhi demonstrators. I have no particulars about this incident, except the Press reports that, when Mr. Gandhi was on his way to Bombay from Wardha, there was a small demonstration against him at Kalyan station on the 9th September, that the Railway Police and some British troops, who were travelling by the same train, and local volunteers cordoned off Mr. Gandhi's compartment and that the demonstrators withdrew after shouting slogans.

†186.*

INDIA'S DOLLAR POSITION.

187. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state to what use the dollars accruing from exports to the United States of America from India have been put since the beginning of the war?

(b) Is it a fact that these dollars have been appropriated by His Majesty's Government to their own use?

(c) Have His Majesty's Government given away all these dollars to the United States of America, or are they holding them in a dollar pool?

(d) If there is a pool, what is the volume of it?

(e) How far have the negotiations advanced for giving a share of the dollars accruing to India for use by India for purchases of capital and other goods after the war?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) and (c). The dollars which accrue from Exports to the United States of America from India, as also those which similarly accrue from other Empire countries, are paid into a Common Empire

†This question was withdrawn by the questioner.

pool from which are met the essential dollar import requirements of the sterling area countries.

(b) No.

(d) The Government of India are not in possession of this information.

(e) I am not in a position to add to the information which I have previously given on this subject.

Mr. Manu Subedar: May I know whether it is not a fact that a much larger amount of dollar accrued to India than the corresponding liability for purchases made in the United States for India?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That may be so in respect of commercial purchases. That does not necessarily give the whole picture.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Does he wish to convey that the United Kingdom and other sterling areas have appropriated dollars which rightfully belonged to this country?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I do not know what the Honourable Member means by appropriating dollars which rightly belonged to this country. The fact is that the whole of the transactions of these countries with the United States of America are dealt with as one and that the proceeds of those transactions are utilised on behalf of the war effort of the whole of the Empire country?

Mr. Manu Subedar: May I enquire, Sir, whether it is not a fact that the civil population is refused dollar exchange by the Reserve Bank even for such things as subscriptions to the Readers' Digest, and whether it is not a fact that a good many industrialists who desire to make essential purchases for their own requirements are told that they cannot get exchange on the United States of America when there is a visible surplus and when dollars arising out of the purchases by the United States of America from India are there and that the use of this exchange is denied to the citizens of this country: even for the education of their children no remittances are given.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: It is quite true that a stringent economy is exercised here as well as elsewhere in regard to the expenditure of dollars, but that arises from the fact that the whole position of the sterling area *vis-a-vis* America is difficult and therefore economy has to be exercised in the interests of the war effort. It is the situation created by the war which has brought about these difficulties and India as a participant country has to suffer certain disadvantages.

Mr. Manu Subedar: May I know with regard to (e) whether recently a promise was not made to assign a definite share of this pool to India and particularly for use after the war: also what progress has been made with regard to this arrangement and how much will be India's share in this dollar pool.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That undertaking has been carried out. A certain quantity of dollars is being earmarked for India's use after the war.

Mr. Manu Subedar: In that case the Honourable Member has replied to (d) that there is no share for India for the dollar pool and I have asked for the volume of it. Why not tell the House how much it is?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The question of the total external resources which are at the disposal of His Majesty's Government for this purpose is a secret which is not published anywhere. I am not in a position to state it.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will Government promise to see that justice is done to India?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The concern of the Government of India is to see that justice is done to India.

Mr. Manu Subedar: I said in proportion to the goods which the United States required from this country that the entire dollar arising out of such purchases will be made available to the population of India.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The question of doing justice to India would not be decided on that factor alone.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Is it a fact that the United States of America has to pay India a considerable amount of money for expenditure incurred on American troops in India?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Yes. The United States has to raise rupees for expenditure in India.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Does America pay India in dollars for that purpose?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: It raises rupees partly by sale of gold and partly by provision of dollars.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: What happens to those dollars?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Those go to the Empire Dollar Pool.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Why should they go to the Empire Dollar Pool? It is a direct payment by the United States to India for services rendered by India directly to the United States. Where does the Empire Dollar Pool come in?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Because dollars, like all resources—like man power, like life blood—is a factor which has to be used in the prosecution of the war.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: That life blood has to be used by everybody. . . .

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Quite so.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: by India, as everybody else, and if it is due directly to India, it should be credited to India.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: It is credited to India as part of India's contribution to the general war effort.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: May I ask whether the Reserve Bank of India or the Finance Department is keeping a separate Lease and Lend Account between India and the United States?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Yes, Sir. We are endeavouring to keep a separate account.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask the Honourable Member whether the amount that is made available to India is a specific amount arbitrarily fixed, or does this amount depend upon the requirements of the Indian public as assessed by the Indian Government?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: It also depends, to a certain extent, on the quantity of India's dollar earning.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Will the Honourable Member give a certificate of good accountancy to any person who is 'endeavouring' to keep separate accounts?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: It depends on the circumstances with which he has to deal.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Since the Honourable Member has remarked that the amount that is made available depends on the quantity of India's dollar earning, may I ask whether any amount that is paid by the American Government in respect of expenses on American Forces in India also comes into the Pool?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The amount paid by America in dollars comes into the general calculation.

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

MEASURES FOR RECOVERY OF STERLING BALANCES.

188. ***Mr. Manu Subedar:** (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state if it is a fact that purchases in India by the Eastern Group, the Allied Governments, the U. K. C. C. and His Majesty's Government are made at controlled rates? What, if any, are the exceptions to this rule?

(b) Is it a fact that concern has been shown in the United Kingdom about the sterling balances accumulated in London and that there have been various proposals to scale down or to repudiate the liability for such balances?

(c) What correspondence in letters and telegrams has taken place between the Secretary of State and the Government of India, and do Government

propose to place this correspondence on the table of the House?

(d) What steps have the Government of India taken to safeguard the interests of India which are in clear conflict with the interests of the United Kingdom in this case?

(e) What conversations did the Honourable Member have in London on his way back from the Bretton Woods Conference?

(f) Is it a fact that the Honourable Member did not support the non-official delegates at the Bretton Woods Conference in the specific request which they made with regard to the sterling balances?

(g) What decisions have Government reached with regard to the measures to be taken for the recovery of the sterling balances?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) I assume that by 'controlled rates' the Honourable Member refers to Supply Department contract rates for Government purchases. Where other Governments purchase from India through Government channels Government of India contract rates are available where the purchase is for war purposes; otherwise not. Eastern Group Governments make all their purchases from India through official channels; Allied Governments sometimes do and sometimes do not. HMG generally obtain finished articles through Government channels but not raw materials. The UKCC whether it purchases direct from the market or through the Supply Department (*e.g.*, for controlled items) gets no price advantage.

(b) The question of India's sterling balances has been discussed in the English Press and in Parliament but no proposals of the nature suggested have been made by His Majesty's Government.

(c) It is not the practice of Government to disclose the contents of their correspondence with the Secretary of State.

(d) The necessity of steps to safeguard India's interests has not arisen, but the Government of India are fully conscious of the importance of this matter.

(e) and (g). I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply which I gave to Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad's starred question No. 66 on the 3rd November 1944.

(f) No, it is not a fact.

Mr. Manu Subedar: With regard to the answer to part (a), has the Honourable Member conveyed to this House the fact that these outside parties get their goods at controlled rates through Government channels, goods which the civil population of this country cannot get either at controlled or at any rate?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I said '... Government of India contract rates are available where the purchase is for war purposes'.

Mr. Manu Subedar: But where the purchase is for the civil population of the United Kingdom, does the Honourable Member deny that tea has been purchased in this country for consumption of the United Kingdom civil population and at controlled rates of 5 to 8 annas a lb. whereas the civil population of this country has to pay Rs. 1-8-0 to Rs. 2 per lb.?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I am not aware of the facts about tea specifically. I should require notice of that.

Mr. Manu Subedar: There is a Controller of Tea purchasing to the tune of about a crore of rupees a month. Does the Honourable Member in charge of India's finances really mean that he is not aware of these accounts?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I am certainly aware of the existence of the Tea Controller.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Then, Sir, does he deny that tea for the civil population of the United Kingdom and many other articles for civil population of the Eastern Group, including our friend South Africa, are purchased at controlled price in this country in priority to, and in preference to the requirements of the civil population of this country?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The purchase of supplies for civil population may nevertheless be a purchase for war purposes.

Mr. Manu Subedar: With regard to the rest of the replies, will the Honourable Member tell this House when he proposes to lift this *pardah* of mystery

on the question of sterling balances which is agitating the minds of the whole country? When does he propose to give us full amounts of them, when he will tell us what negotiations are on in order that these balances may be ultimately, and when India requires them, realized?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I am not aware what the Honourable Member means by a 'pardah of mystery'. The actual figures regarding. . .

Mr. Manu Subedar: I refer to the consistent denials of information by the Honourable the Finance Member on this subject.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The actual figures of the sterling balances are published more or less every week and anybody can find out what their amount is. They are regularly commented on in the financial journals. So I do not see where 'pardah of mystery' comes in. As regards the other question, I, like every human being, am not in a position to make a statement on any matter which has not yet been determined. I have answered questions regarding the present position of the sterling balances and the possibility of discussions on them, but I cannot tell him about anything which does not yet exist.

Mr. Manu Subedar: With regard to (g), I asked what decisions have Government taken with regard to the measures to be taken for the recovery of the sterling balances? I hope the Executive Council have deliberated on this subject and I would like the Honourable Member to give this House some information as to what progress has been made in these discussions?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: If the Honourable Member would kindly listen sometimes to replies given to other Honourable Members' questions as well as his own, he will realize that I have answered that very question. I have said that no decisions were taken.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Is it not a fact that the United Kingdom were going to invite a delegation to that country to discuss this question of Sterling Balances?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I indicated on a previous day that we were expecting discussions to take place and I said that I did not think they could take place before the next spring.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: I understand that no progress has been made with regard to the invitation to the Government of India to send somebody to England to discuss this question?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Yes, no further progress.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: With regard to part (d) of this question, may I ask the Honourable Member what steps Government of India are taking to associate with themselves non-official public opinion in order to safeguard the interests of India when the interests of India are in clear conflict with the interests of the United Kingdom in respect of sterling balances in England?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I do not know what specific steps the Honourable Member contemplates. I should have thought that we had already associated with ourselves non-official public opinion with regard to this matter.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: What I had in mind is this: Whenever there is a conflict between the interests of India and the interests of England in regard to the disposal of the sterling balances that have accumulated to the credit of India in England, what steps do Government of India propose to take in order to associate with themselves non-official public opinion of this country so that they can strengthen their own hands in their effort to get justice for India from England and English statesmen.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The Government of India are fully aware of the importance of the considerations suggested by my Honourable friend and they will undoubtedly bear that in mind when any question of negotiations or discussions arises.

†189.*

†This question was withdrawn by the questioner.

BRETTON WOODS MONETARY CONFERENCE.

190. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state when the Government of India received an invitation to attend the Bretton Woods Conference?

(b) Was the invitation extended direct or through His Majesty's Government?

(c) What were the considerations that influenced him in selecting the delegation to Bretton Woods Conference?

(d) Where exactly did the General Policy (Reconstruction) Committee come in regard to this matter?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) 26th May 1944.

(b) The invitation was received direct.

(c) The official delegates consisted of those who are Government's principal expert advisers in regards to monetary policy. Government selected as non-official delegates persons representing business and commercial interests who were in close contact with current economic developments.

(d) In view of the close connection between monetary policy and reconstruction, and the limited time available for sounding public opinion, the Government, for the guidance of their delegation, consulted the General Policy (Reconstruction) Committee on the Joint Statement of Principles by experts, which formed the basis of the Bretton Woods Conference.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask the Honourable Member if it is the considered opinion of the Government of India that this House is not capable of helping him in regard to what is stated in answer to part (c) of the question.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: No, Sir. I must point out that the last Session of this House, viz., the Budget Session, had already finished early in April and that suddenly through no fault of ours, but as a result of American developments, we received an invitation in May for an early conference. It was hardly possible in those circumstances to summon this House in order to deal with that question.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Could not the delegation be made wide enough to include one or two non-official Members of this House to assist him in this Delegation?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The invitation which was sent to us asked us to send one or more delegates to participate in the Conference and it did not seem at the time as though any non-official association was expected. But, on mature consideration, we did decide to associate two non-officials with our Delegation, which was a larger proportion than was present in most of the other Delegations.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Am I to understand that the Honourable Member has come back wiser and now feels that non-official help will be of value in such delegations in future?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: It did not require any increase in wisdom in order to arrive at that conclusion!

Prof. N. G. Ranga: In view of the fact that the Bretton Woods Conference made a specific recommendation that special steps were expected by that Conference to be taken to make provision for adequate agricultural credit in the different countries of the world, how is it that the Honourable Member never thought it necessary to see that his Delegation included at least one or two representatives, whether official or non-official, who could be expected to speak for the interests of the Indian agriculturists at this Conference. Does this mean that the Government of India had thought that at this Conference the Indian agriculturists have no interests at all nor were their interests involved in the deliberations of this Conference?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I am afraid if arguments of that kind were accepted the Delegation would have to consist possibly of fifty or sixty persons. The Government of India felt that they were themselves able

to deal with such aspects of agricultural credit as might arise at the Conference.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Government of India bear in mind the necessity for providing adequate representation for these interests at least in regard to the future conferences that may be held?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The Government of India are not likely to overlook the necessity of bearing in mind the agricultural interests.

**PROFITS MADE BY UNITED KINGDOM AND AMERICA THROUGH SALE OF GOLD IN
INDIA.**

191. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state:

(a) the total profits made till 1st November, 1944, through the sale of gold in this country by—

(i) the Government of the United Kingdom, and

(ii) the Government of the United States of America;

(b) whether the transactions by the Government of the United Kingdom are made through the agency of the Bank of England and by the Government of the United States of America through the Federal Reserve Bank; and

(c) whether the profits made by these two Governments are subject to income-tax and super-tax?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) As I have previously explained on the floor of this House, the purpose of the sales of gold by the Reserve Bank of India on behalf of the Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States of America is to provide rupees towards meeting the war expenditure of those two countries in India. The question for profit does not therefore arise. If the Honourable Member's desire is to know the difference between the actual realisations from these sales and what would have been realised had the sales been made at import parity prices I regret that I cannot give the information.

(b) The sales are made by the Reserve Bank as agent for the two Governments concerned on instructions received from time to time from the Bank of England.

(c) There is no question of liability to income tax as the sales of gold are not of the nature of trade or business transactions.

Mr. Manu Subedar: If the question of profit does not arise, what are they? Is it not a fact that gold is sold in this country because the price of gold in this country is higher than its price in the country of its origin?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I have already pointed out that the only object in the sales of this gold is to raise the rupees necessary in order to pay India for some of the services and goods which are received from India.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Any article sold by any foreign government in this country should be liable to income-tax at the hands of the agent of that country. I would like to know why the Finance Department is lax in its duty of sticking up income-tax and supertax on these people, from the agents whom they employ in this country?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The Honourable Member is not quite correct in saying that any foreign agent is liable. Actually the legal position is that such a body like, for instance, the Government of the United States of America would not be liable to income-tax, even if the view that the transactions were of the nature of trade were adopted.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Is the Reserve Bank of India allowed to act as agent of any foreign Government in the matter of sale of gold?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The functions of the Reserve Bank are controlled by the Reserve Bank of India Act. The Reserve Bank is certainly entitled to act as agent in such sales.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Are the Government of India prepared to have the Income-tax Act suitably amended in order to bring these people under the mischief of that act and see that those people are made liable to pay income-tax on the profits they make at the cost of India?

EXCESSIVE RAILWAY TRAVEL BY MILITARY MEN.

192. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the War Secretary be pleased to state the purpose of the considerable movement of military of all ranks throughout the country by practically every train which is running from anywhere to anywhere?

(b) Are Government aware of the enormous inconvenience to the civil population, of cases of unpleasantness between soldiers and the civil population, or of civil population being forcibly asked to clear out of Railway compartments in the middle of the journey to create accommodation for soldiers and their officers?

(c) Is it a fact that American sailors on duty at Madras were found in Simla for sight seeing because they had a week off?

(d) Is it a fact that liberal leave rules exist and every officer of the Army can get leave either to go and see his family or to go to the town or to a hill station?

(e) Is it true that the same conditions existed before the war?

(f) Have Government taken steps to reduce the amount of travelling by Army officers and others?

(g) Have Government thought of restricting the movement of military people to one day in the week or to a certain number of trains only and not in all trains?

(h) Is it a fact that advertisements of Railways appealing to the public to travel less had their origin in the desire to get more accommodation for military people when they are reporting from somewhere to somewhere, when they are going to conferences, or when they are spending their leave with friends or in large cities?

(i) What steps have Government taken to reduce travelling by their own officers and men in the Military Department so as to reduce the inconvenience to the travelling public and the civil population?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) Military personnel move on duty and leave. The fact that their movement at present is so heavy is due to the great expansion of the Defence Services.

(b) Yes, Sir; Government are aware of the inconvenience and of occasional instances of unpleasantness. I may however add that whenever the guilt of military personnel is established in such cases, disciplinary action is taken against the individuals concerned.

(c) I am not aware of this, but if my Honourable friend gives me further particulars, I will have the matter investigated.

(d) and (e). Leave rules do exist, but they are now considerably less liberal than they were before the war.

(f) and (i). Travel by military personnel is already reduced to the absolute minimum commensurate with the necessity of the situation, so that no further reduction is possible.

(g) This would be impracticable in view of the urgency of the moves and of the large numbers to be carried.

(h) Yes, Sir. It is essential that the civilian public should travel less in war time, not only to enable the railways to carry vital war material and military personnel wherever required, but also to avoid inconvenience to themselves.

EXPORT TRADE TO UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

193. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state the export trade to the United States of America since the beginning of the war? (Please state in value per year).

(b) Does this include export to the same destination, i.e., United States of America or is it also for the United States of America Army elsewhere from purchases made by the Government of India?

(c) Is there a purchase machinery for the United States of America in India, and, if so, how is it functioning, and how much is its turnover every year?

(d) Is it a fact that the dollars arising out of such exports to the United States of America or purchases made by the Government of the United States of America have been appropriated by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and India is credited only with the sterling equivalent?

(e) What is the total volume of such dollars which have been diverted from India into the United Kingdom Treasury?

(f) Since when has the Lend-Lease arrangement between the United States of America and India started?

(g) What is the total amount of Lend-Lease goods that have reached India?

(h) What are the principal items in such goods, and what is the total amount of purchases made by the United States of America or supplies made available by India under the Lend-Lease arrangement?

(i) On balance, who is the gainer?

(j) Who made this arrangement?

(k) Was it negotiated in England by His Majesty's Government, and imposed on India, or did the Government have anything to say on it?

(l) Was this arrangement discussed by the Executive Council of His Excellency the Governor General before it was accepted and given effect to?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) The figures of export trade from British India to the United States of America are given in the Accounts relating to the Sea-borne Trade and Navigation of British India which are published every month.

(b) The figures are for trade in merchandise to the United States of America

(c) The U. S. Government have no regular mission for making purchases in India on their behalf.

(d) All dollars accruing to India as well as to other Empire countries are put into the Common Empire Pool from which they are used for meeting the essential import requirements of the sterling area countries. India gets credit in sterling for the amount of dollars in excess of her requirements.

(e) There is no question of wrongful diversion. Information regarding the actual net amount of dollars contributed by India to the Empire Pool is not available.

(f), (j) and (k). The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the relevant portions of my Budget Speeches for 1942-43 and subsequent years.

(g) The total estimated value of Lend-Lease stores received in India to the end of July 1944 is approximately Rs. 275 crores.

(h) The principal items of Lease-Lend goods received from the United States of America are mainly munitions of war of all kinds. Metals, machinery, Pol, food and tobacco for the armed forces, etc. are also received. As regards the supplies or services made available to the United States of America as a measure of Reciprocal Aid, the Honourable Member's attention is invited to the Press Note on the subject published on the 3rd September, 1944.

(i) The Honourable Member can draw his own conclusions.

(l) The normal procedure was observed.

Mr. Manu Subedar: With regard to my question, on balance who is the gainer, the reply given is that "the Honourable Member can draw his own conclusions". But since the Honourable Finance Member has got figures on both sides, will he not tell this House whether up to date we have given more than we have received, or whether it is the other way round?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I explained the position in my last Budget speech; the position up to now is that India has received more than she has given.

(b) WRITTEN ANSWERS

OUTSIDE MISSIONS TO INDIA.

194. ***Mr. Manu Subedar:** (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state how many Missions have come to India since the commencement of the war?

(b) What has been the cost to India of each of these Missions?

(c) Why is the report of the Grady Mission not published?

(d) Did the Government of India invite the Machine Tools Mission, or was it the suggestion of His Majesty's Government or English businessmen that they should visit this country?

(e) Who invited Professor Hill, Earl Munster, Sir Henry French and Beverly Nichols, and what would their visits cost this country?

(f) In what other directions have "experts" been called out for this country, and what is the total additional cost of the services of these "experts" since the beginning of the war?

(g) What will be the cost of the proposed Medical Mission to India, and what is its purpose?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

CONFIRMATION OF A MATRICULATE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF INCOME-TAX IN THE PUNJAB.

195. *Bhai Parmanand: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state if it is a fact that the Governments' general instructions are to take candidates with the minimum qualification of Intermediate for the posts of clerks and Graduates for officers?

(b) Is it a fact that two new posts of Assistant Commissioners have been recently created in the Income-tax Department, Punjab, and two officers have been confirmed on those posts, out of whom one is a Matriculate? If so, will Government be pleased to see that the principle of minimum qualification of a graduate for the post of officers is duly adhered to?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) I take it that the Honourable Member is referring to the Income-tax Departments. Ordinarily, the minimum qualification required for direct recruitment to clerical grades in the Income-tax Departments is a Matriculation certificate or other equivalent qualification and to officers' grades a Degree. But this restriction regarding minimum qualification does not apply to departmental promotions.

(b) Possibly the Honourable Member has in mind the two temporary posts that have been made permanent. If so, one of the officers confirmed as an Assistant Commissioner against one of these two posts is a first in Arts, which is, I understand, a stage above a Matriculate. But he has been "selected" for promotion from the Income-tax Officer's cadre of the Punjab Income-tax Department. The second part of the question does not arise.

INCOME-TAX REFUNDS TO CERTAIN ASSESSEES IN THE PUNJAB.

196. *Bhai Parmanand: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state if it is a fact that the Commissioner of Income-Tax, Punjab, has given large amount of refund to some assesseees without their filing regular appeals, as provided by the Law, inspite of the fact that the assessment in those cases was approved by the Assistant Commissioners-in-Charge?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to take steps to avoid such unnecessary harassment to the tax-payers like this in future?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) and (b). I am making enquiries and an answer will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

SCHEME FOR RESETTLEMENT OF PERSONS EVICTED FROM HOMES UNDER DEFENCE OF INDIA RULE 75 (a) (1).

197. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: (a) Will the War Secretary be pleased to state whether Government have any scheme for resettlement and rehabilitation of persons evicted from homes under Defence of India Rule 75(A)(1)? If so, what is that?

(b) Is it a fact that the valuation of certain houses requisitioned under Defence of India Rule 75(A)(1) are done in the district of Sylhet, Assam, by officers who have no expert knowledge in the line?

(c) Is it a fact that the compensation paid for *kuckha* houses requisitioned under the Defence of India Rules in the district of Sylhet fall far below the

Public Works Department's rates for similar houses in those localities, and that the compensation given for trees also are very low, having no bearing with the present market value of fruits etc.?

(d) Will Government for the sake of justice have a schedule of rates for *kuchha* houses prepared by experts, having regard to the present Public Works Department's rates of every district, for ready reference of the laymen who make valuation of the *kuchha* houses requisitioned under Defence of India Rule 75(A)(1) and also revise the schedule prepared for the valuation of trees, having regard to the present market value of fruits?

(e) Have Government any information about the discontent prevailing in Assam, particularly in the district of Sylhet, over land requisition matters due to most unusual delay in payments and inadequate payments both for houses and trees?

Mr. O. M. Trivedi: (a) Attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the answer given to part (b) of starred question No. 29 answered on the 8th February, 1944.

(b) to (e). Information is being obtained and will be placed on the table of the House as soon as it is received.

TRIAL OF BABU JAI PARKASH NARAIN.

198. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

(a) whether Babu Jai Parkash Narain will be tried in a court of law; whether he will be tried alone or along with some other persons; and

(b) whether the sanction of the Government of India has been obtained for instituting this case?

The Honourable Sir Francis Mudie: (a) and (b). The whole matter is under consideration and I regret I can give no further information with regard to it at present.

RESTRICTIONS ON INTERVIEWS OF CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

199. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

(a) what restrictions have been placed on interviews of the members of the Working Committee with their relatives; and

(b) whether any interview has taken place since the permission has been granted to the members of the Working Committee?

The Honourable Sir Francis Mudie: (a) The restrictions are the same as for other security prisoners in Bombay. The Rules are in the Library of the House.

(b) No.

OMISSION OF INFORMATION RE BALANCE OF TRADE IN GOLD AND SILVER FROM THE RESERVE BANK REPORT.

200. *Mr. K. O. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state the reasons why the balance of trade in gold and silver is not shown in the statement on the balance of trade in merchandise of British India in the Reserve Bank of India report on currency and finance for 1943-44? Will the Honourable Member be pleased to give this House the information thus omitted from the Reserve Bank Report?

(b) What were the reasons for leaving the gold and silver market in India a free market, though the London and New York markets were controlled as stated in the above Report?

(c) What were the average prices of gold and silver in New York and London, respectively, during the period covered by the Report, and the prices in India during the same period?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) The answer to the first part is that disclosure of the information referred to, during war time, would be contrary to the public interest. For the same reason the answer to the second part must be in the negative.

(b) Government did not think it necessary or practicable in Indian conditions to fix and enforce maximum prices for gold and silver.

(c) The information required will be found on pages 27, 29, 77 and 78 of the Report in question.

INDIA'S DOLLAR CREDITS.

201. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether the amount of Rs. 46-85 crores which according to the Reserve Bank Report on currency and finance for 1943-44, represents India's total balance of trade with the United States of America from 1938-39 to 1943-44, has been accounted for as Dollar credits;

(b) how much or what percentages of the total dollar credits have been set apart exclusively to India's account and not surrendered to the Empire Dollar Pool;

(c) whether the allocations, when the Empire Dollar Pool is dissolved, would be made on a *pro rata* basis; and

(d) the value of the Dollar securities surrendered to the Government of India since their notification, dated March 10, 1941?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Ralsman: (a) The balance of trade, the figures for four years for which are given on page 23 of the Reserve Bank's report on Currency and Finance for 1943-44, differs from the balance of payments between the two countries the figure for which may be larger or smaller than the figure for the balance of trade. It would be correct to say that dollar credits have been received by India equivalent in amount to the favourable balance of payments India has with the United States.

(b) The arrangement is that the total dollar earnings of all empire countries are surrendered to the Empire Dollar Pool from which each country draws dollars according to its needs. There is no fixed allocation between the sterling area countries.

(c) The arrangement to be made when Empire Dollar Pool is dissolved have not yet been considered.

(d) I would refer the Honourable Member to the answer I gave to part (a) of his question No. 4 on the 3rd November, 1944.

RELEASE OF DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD.

202. *Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that there was a widespread feeling of expectation in Bihar over the release of Dr. Rajendra Prasad;

(b) if it is a fact that even the Government of Bihar recommended his release;

(c) who turned down the proposal for his release;

(d) if it is a fact that he was offered release on certain conditions;

(e) what those conditions were; and

(f) if it is not a fact that his health has considerably gone down due to an attack of asthma?

The Honourable Sir Francis Mudie: (a) No.

(b) No.

(c) There was no proposal.

(d) No.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) Dr. Rajendra Prasad is a chronic asthma patient. He had an attack in September but it was reported early in October that his condition was satisfactory.

POLITICAL PRISONERS.

203. *Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state:

(a) the latest figure of the political prisoners, security as well as convicts, in each of the Provinces;

(b) how many cases of the security prisoners have been reviewed since the promulgation of Ordinance No. III of 1944;

(c) how many security prisoners have been released in consequence of the review of their cases in each of the Provinces; and

(d) if the recommendations of the Tribunal instituted to review their cases have been given effect to in the matter of their release by the Provincial Government or the police had the final say even over the recommendation of the Tribunal?

The Honourable Sir Francis Mudie: (a) I lay on the table a statement showing the number of persons undergoing detention and imprisonment in the Provinces on 1st September, 1944, in connexion with the Congress movement.

(b) Under the Law all cases of detention must be reviewed at least once every six months.

(c) I gave the number 5,068 of releases since the beginning of this year in reply to question No. 93 on November 3rd.

(d) So far as I am aware no such Tribunal has been appointed. It is certainly not required by law. Certain Provincial Governments may have appointed persons to advise them, but the review in every case is conducted by the Government concerned.

Statement of persons undergoing detention or imprisonment in connection with the Congress Movement on 1st September, 1944.

Province	Detention	Imprisonment
Madras	288	744
Bombay	290	532
Bengal	53	275
United Provinces	617	3668
Punjab	79	61
Bihar	271	4230
Central Provinces	136	534
Assam	165	149
North-West Frontier Province	44	27
Orissa	127	481
Sind	26	11
Coorg . . . . .	..	..
Delhi	21	234
Ajmer-Merwara	7	4
Baluchistan . . . . .	..	..
Centre	4	..
Total	2128	10950

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

CASES UNDER CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT (AMENDING) ORDINANCES INITIATED BY THE SPECIAL POLICE ESTABLISHMENT.

40. Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the War Secretary please lay on the table of the House the number of cases under the Criminal Law Amendment (Amending) Ordinances, No. XVI of 1944, No. XXIV of 1944 and No. XXXVI of 1944, which the Special Police Establishment initiated itself (i.e., not being made over by the Central Government in accordance with the provision of Ordinance No. 22 of 1943)?

Mr. O. M. Trivedi: Forty six.

INFRACTUOUS INVESTIGATIONS BY THE SPECIAL POLICE ESTABLISHMENT.

41. Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the War Secretary please lay on the table of the House a list of cases up to date in which the investigations by the Special Police Establishment did not furnish adequate material for prosecution and the result of their disposal?

Mr. O. M. Trivedi: It is not in the public interest to give the information in the form asked for by the Honourable Member since it would involve disclosure of the names of persons who were suspected of misconduct but against

whom charges could not be proved after investigation. I may add for the Honourable Member's information that out of a total of 667 cases investigated up to date by the Special Police Establishment, only 40 cases, were dropped for want of evidence and 120 cases, in which the evidence available was not sufficient to warrant trial in a court of law, were referred for Departmental action.

TRIALS UNDER ORDINANCE NO. 29 OF 1943.

42. Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the War Secretary please state the result of the trial of cases under Ordinance No. 29 of 1943 as amended from time to time by the Special Tribunals and the result of the revisions of those cases by High Courts?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: The Special Tribunals have decided 64 cases, of which 45 have ended in conviction, nine in acquittal and ten in discharge.

In revision, High Courts have upheld the sentences awarded by Special Tribunals in all cases except two. In one, a sentence of imprisonment was modified to a sentence of fine only, and in the other a sentence of 1½ years' rigorous imprisonment and Rs. 2,000 fine was modified to a sentence of six months' simple imprisonment.

EXPENDITURE ON SPECIAL POLICE ESTABLISHMENT, ETC.

43. Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the War Secretary please state:

- (a) the expenditure up to date, year by year, of the Special Police Establishment (pay and allowances to be stated, separately);
- (b) the expenditure up to date, year by year, of the Special Tribunal (pay and allowances, separately);
- (c) the number of cases made over to the Special Police Establishment for investigation from the 1st March, 1944, to date, together with the result of their investigation;
- (d) the result of cases reported for departmental action from the inception of the Special Police Establishment to date; and
- (e) the amount of fine imposed in cases which were tried by Special Tribunals?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) A statement showing the expenditure on the Special Police Establishment year by year is attached.

(b) A statement showing the expenditure on the Special Tribunals is attached.

(c) A statement showing the number of cases investigated by the Special Police Establishment from the 1st March, 1944, to date, together with their results, is attached.

(d) The result of cases reported for departmental action from the inception of the Special Police Establishment to date is given below:

Found guilty	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	67
Found not guilty	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	24
Pending	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	29
Total								120

(e) The total amount of fines imposed in cases which were tried by Special Tribunals is Rs. 2,42,050.

(a) Statement showing the expenditure of the Special Police Establishment, War Department from June 1941 to October 1944, year by year.

Year	Pay		Allowances, etc.		Total
	Rs.		Rs.		Rs.
1941-42	37,355	7 0	23,993	7 6	61,348 14 6
1942-43	1,14,177	0 0	59,994	13 6	1,74,171 13 6
1943-44	2,19,520	2 0	1,37,369	1 0	3,56,889 3 0
1944-45 (Upto 31st October 1944)	1,71,258	11 0	1,15,989	11 0	2,87,248 6 0
GRAND TOTAL	5,42,311	4 0	3,37,347	1 0	8,79,658 5 0

(b) Statement showing the expenditure of the Special Tribunals, Calcutta, Lahore and Lucknow from September 1943 to October 1944.

Year	Pay Rs.	Allowances, etc. Rs.	Total Rs.
From September 1943 to October 1944	2,47,420 0 0	63,970 0 0	3,11,390 0 0

(N.B.—The above figures are approximate).

(c) Statement showing number of cases investigated by the Special Police Establishment from the 1st March 1944, to date, and their result.

Sent up for trial			Depart- mental action	Filed for want of proof	Under investi- gation	Total Number of cases
Convicted	Discharged	Pending trial				
11	1	25	17	6	114	174

TELEPHONIC MESSAGE TO SPECIAL POLICE ESTABLISHMENT, DELHI RE HARASSMENT OF MILITARY OFFICERS BY RAILWAY STAFF.

44. Sardar Mangal Singh: (a) Will the War Secretary please state if it is a fact that on the 24th September, 1943, the War Department made a telephonic communication to the Special Police Establishment, Delhi, to the effect that military officers were being harassed by the Railway staff as they had to pay money for reservation of berths? If so, (i) who telephoned the message, and (ii) who gave the information to the War Department that military officers were being harassed and was the payment of money for reservation of berths unlawful?

(b) Was the information reduced in writing?

(c) Was any complaint lodged by any of the Military officers? If so, what is that in original?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) No such telephonic communication took place.

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

MATERIAL SUPPLIED TO CERTAIN ACCREDITED PRESS CORRESPONDENTS.

45. Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting please lay a statement of the material supplied to the Accredited Press Correspondents who were awarded category (A) privileges, and the extent of that material used by them?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: A statement giving the required information in respect of the period March 1944 to October 1944 is laid on the table of the House. Government do not feel that the labour involved in the collection of the information asked for in the latter part of the question would be justified in war time.

Statement of the material supplied to the Accredited Press Correspondents during the period March 1944 to October 1944.

Month	Number of publicity items distributed to Press-Representatives
March 1944	343
April 1944	300
May 1944	266
June 1944	245
July 1944	282
August 1944	283
September 1944	375
October 1944	362
Total	2,456

REVISION IN THE DIVISION OF ACCREDITED PRESS CORRESPONDENTS.

46. Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting please state if any revision in the division of Accredited Press Correspondents has since been made? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: No. The matter is under consideration.

STATEMENTS LAID ON THE TABLE

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ON RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FOODGRAINS POLICY COMMITTEE

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava (Food Member): Sir, I lay on the table a Memorandum showing the summary of the progress made up to the end of October 1944 on the recommendations of the Foodgrains Policy Committee.

SUMMARY OF THE PROGRESS ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FOODGRAINS POLICY COMMITTEE.

CHAPTER 2.—STATISTICAL POSITION

As mentioned in the last report on the progress made on the recommendations of Foodgrains Policy Committee steps are being taken in the permanently settled areas to obtain correct acreage statistics by field enumeration as is done in the rest of British India. Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Assam are taking active steps to introduce a system somewhat like that prevailing in the U. P. and the Punjab for reporting correct crop areas. Experimental work is also being done in Bengal and Bihar on a randomised sample survey basis to determine both acreages and yields, at least of the major food crop *viz.*, rice.

A large scale experimental scheme costing about Rs. 90,000 in one year sanctioned by the Government of India has been carried out by the I. C. of A. R. to determine the yield of wheat in the major wheat growing districts of the Punjab and the U. P. It has been estimated that the technique adopted is a good one giving an error of not more than 1 per cent. Arrangements have been made to obtain from two reliable banks fortnightly reports regarding crop and stock holding tendencies in the principal producing areas.

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 kharif foodcrops 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 also be taken up shortly.

CHAPTER 3.—GROW MORE FOOD CAMPAIGN

1. *Distribution of improved seed.*—In 1943-44 the Government of India helped in the multiplication and distribution of improved seed by granting loans to the extent of Rs. 93.72 lakhs and grants of Rs. 18.42 lakhs from Central Revenues in addition to Rs. 3.47 lakhs from the Cotton Fund. As a result 17.26 lakhs maunds of improved seed were distributed.

In 1944-45 further financial assistance has been given to the extent of Rs. 75.1 lakhs as loans and Rs. 25.5 lakhs as grants out of Rs. 1.56 and Rs. 47 lakhs respectively of loans and grants sanctioned from Central Revenues and 4.34 lakhs from the Cotton Fund for the multiplication and distribution of improved seed to cultivators on a subsidised basis. It is expected that as a result some 6.5 lakhs of additional nucleus seed of rice and wheat will be available; and that 18.81 lakh maunds will be distributed to ordinary cultivators. As a result of these measures production is estimated to increase by 4 lakh tons of grains.

Production of vegetable seeds of European type vegetables has been undertaken in Kashmir and Baluchistan. Financial assistance has been given to these two areas and it is expected that they will be able to produce 4,50,000 lbs. of such seed this year and to be largely independent of imported seed in subsequent years. Steps have been taken to ensure that all sales are made through Directors of Agriculture. Maximum prices have also been fixed for these seeds.

2. *Compost from Town refuse.*—Under a scheme arranged by the I. C. of A. R. on behalf of the Central Government, on receipt of a special grant for the purpose, a number of biochemists deputed by all the Provinces have undergone a six-months course of training in the Bangalore process of composting night soil and town refuse. The trainees will inaugurate this work on those lines in selected Municipalities of their respective Provinces and would train others for the work. The work of manufacture of compost has now started in several municipalities in each province and it is expected that some 20,000 tons of such compost will be available for rabi sowings of 1944-45. Grants have also been given to the provinces for the production of compost from vegetable waste.

The use of green manure and oilcakes as manure has also been encouraged. Some 25,000 maunds of green manure seeds have been distributed and 9½ lakh maunds of oilcakes and 9,000 mds. of bone meal given out to cultivators on a subsidised basis in 1943-44. In the current year schemes have been approved for the distribution of 28.9 lakh maunds of oil cakes, 40,000 maunds of bone meal and 28,000 maunds of green manure seeds. The export abroad of all kinds of manures (bone meal oil cakes, etc.) has been strictly controlled.

3. *Chemical Fertilisers.*—Supplies of chemical fertilisers from abroad are now beginning to arrive. All the indigenous production of sulphate of ammonia which could be made available for agricultural purposes has been arranged to be taken over by the Government

of India. The supplies from these two sources have been pooled and quotas assigned for various Provinces and States on the pre-war consumption basis.

The question of producing Ammonium Sulphate in India has been actively pursued. At a meeting held in April 1944 with representatives of provincial governments it was provisionally decided that the plant for manufacturing ammonium sulphate should preferably be owned by Government and that technical experts from the U. K. should be asked to come out to India and advise about the nature and location of the necessary plants. The technical experts have toured all over India and their report is awaited.

The financial assistance given for manurial schemes Rs. 53½ lakhs as loans and Rs. 27 lakhs as grants. The extra yield expected is about one lakh tons of foodgrains.

4. *Irrigation and Drainage Schemes.*—In order to bring new land under cultivation several minor irrigation schemes for pumping water from tube wells and river beds have been launched, help given to provinces in securing priorities for the release of plant, equipment and material, loans and grants sanctioned for the construction and repair of tanks, for the sinking and improvement of surface wells and for the reclamation of waste lands and field embankments. Altogether the loans sanctioned for these items come to nearly Rs. 63,73 lakhs, the grants sanctioned from Central Revenues Rs. 64 lakhs and from the Cotton Fund to Rs. 18½ lakhs. As a result, it is expected that a million acres of unirrigated land will be brought under irrigation, giving nearly 200,000 tons of extra food.

5. *Depletion of India's milch and draught cattle.*—The cattle position has become acute on account of increased demand for animals for cultivation, transport, milk and meat. An increase in the production of cattle cannot be dealt with in the same way as the increased production of food crops, breeding being a long range matter. It is proposed shortly to make some suggestions to provinces and States on this important matter.

In the meantime the military authorities have agreed not to slaughter (1) all cattle under three years of age, (2) male cattle between three and ten years of age which are used as or are likely to be used as working cattle, (3) cows between three and 10 years of age which are capable of giving milk, other than those unsuitable for bearing offspring, and (4) cows which are pregnant or in milk.

Provinces have been asked to issue similar instructions in respect of civilian slaughter houses and to establish some meatless days in a week where possible. A number of provinces have already introduced the latter.

6. *Iron and steel for agricultural implements.*—It has been estimated that 25,000 tons of iron and steel per quarter are required to meet the minimum demands for the whole country for implement-making and repair. Owing to the very difficult supply position regarding iron and steel it was not possible to secure for the whole country more than 6,872 tons for the third quarter of 1944 and 13,996 tons for the fourth quarter of 1944, of iron and steel of controlled categories, in addition to some tonnages of scrap and defective iron and steel which will become available during these periods. For the first quarter of 1945 a combined allotment of 25,271 tons of 'good' steel and 9,020 tons of 'defectives' and cuttings of different categories has been obtained for the whole country for the purpose of (a) Agricultural Implements, (b) Consumer Goods, and (c) Unlicensed Sales. The various Regional Deputy Iron and Steel Controllers will distribute these tonnages in consultation and close co-operation with the Provincial and State Governments within their circles. The procedure for obtaining regular supplies in future has been explained to the Provincial Government and States who have been requested to furnish timely details of their actual requirements to the Deputy Iron and Steel Controllers in order to enable them to prepare correct forward estimates for obtaining the requisite quantities from the Priority Authority.

7. *Supply of Fuel and Lubricating Oil to Agriculturists.*—Under the decentralised control system, all Controllers of Supplies are now giving first priority to fuel oil genuinely required by agriculturists. The distribution system is understood to be working satisfactorily.

8. *Regulation of Crop Production.*—In order to get more out of the land already under cultivation steps have been taken to ensure that of the present cultivated area, an adequate part is sown with food as opposed to money crops. Provincial Governments have already co-operated in reducing the area under short-staple cotton and some of them have introduced or are considering introduction of statutory crop regulation.

Action for the compulsory restriction of the acreage under certain varieties of short staple cotton was first taken by Madras. It provided that if cultivable land is not cultivated, it may be taken over for a certain period by the State and handed over to suitable persons for cultivation. It was also made compulsory for landlords to keep their irrigation works in order, failing which the State would do the work and recover the cost from the landlords.

Bombay also passed an Act in May 1944 to regulate the cultivation of crops with a view to grow more food, providing for the maintenance of the existing proportion of growing food crops and for guarding against diversion of areas under food crops to non-food crops by prescribing a minimum proportion of food crops to be grown.

9. *Land settlement in Assam.*—As mentioned in the last progress report monthly reports were called for from the Government of Assam on the progress of land settlement in that Province. These reports show that the total area newly settled during the period September 1943 to the end of August 1944 is 111,114. In addition to this, old encroachments have been regularised by granting settlement on 7,358 acres.

10. *Undermilling of Rice.*—It was reported in the last progress report that most Provinces and States had followed the example of the Madras Government and had issued orders making compulsory the undermilling of rice. Certain other Provinces and States have followed suit after the said report. At present undermilling is enforced in Madras, Bombay, C. P., U. P., Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Orissa, Baluchistan and Coorg.

11. *Stores for Rice Mills.*—A committee has been formed consisting of representatives of 3 firms, which are among the largest importers and manufacturers of rice mills machinery in India to advise the Food Department on the best method of securing and distributing spare parts for rice mills, indents for which were collected from all Provinces and States. The Committee met on 16th September 1944 and its various recommendations are under examination.

In the meantime provision is being made for the importation of rice mill machinery and spare parts from the United Kingdom and North America in larger quantities.

CHAPTER 4.—EXPORTS AND IMPORTS

Exports.—There has been no marked departure from the declared policy of the Government of India with regard to exports, which is that India shall cease to be a net exporter of foodstuffs and that during the present emergency no exports whatever of foodgrains shall be permitted except for the immediate requirements of ships, aircraft and isolated communities in neighbouring countries which depend on India for supplies. Recently it was found possible to allot 25,000 tons gram to Ceylon after meeting the requirements of deficit areas. There was no market for this surplus gram in the country and it would have gone bad if not put into consumption immediately.

Imports.—The Government of India are fully alive to the importance of arranging for imports and are continuously pressing upon H. M. G. the urgency of foodgrain imports on a scale adequate for current consumption, including military requirements and the establishment of reserves.

6,49,520 tons of foodgrains, mostly wheat, have been imported during the 12 months ending October 1944. In addition, approximately 380,000 tons wheat and wheat products are expected to be received during November, December and January. Thus the total quantity of foodgrain imports will amount to nearly 10,30,000 tons by the end of January next. H. M. G. will review the position again in November.

CHAPTER 5.—ARMY PURCHASES

Co-ordination of the army demands for foodgrains and pulses is secured through the Food Department's Basic Plans. As regards other foodstuffs, Co-ordination Committees have now been set up at all Command Headquarters and these have split themselves up into provincial, regional and functional sub-committees. Altogether about 40 such bodies are working. They provide a clearing house of information and an authoritative forum for resolving difficulties and for the expression of the view points of Civil Administrations and States. They are securing a unified and co-ordinated system of procurement and the various purchasing agencies are now working hand in hand and paying particular attention to the requirements of civilians as well as the necessity for conservation of stocks for breeding and for seed purposes. The main objective is that the requirements of the Army are met with minimum disturbance in the markets and every effort is made to increase production by the Army units so that the Army offtake from available supplies is reduced to the minimum.

CHAPTER 6.—PROCUREMENT

As reported in the last progress report 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 reason of the time factor. Since then the matter has been given considerable attention and the problems that have to be faced in proceeding towards a system of monopoly purchase have been examined. These are (a) finance, (b) storage, (c) likelihood of deterioration; (d) difficulty of finding experienced staff, (e) effect on public confidence, and (f) public co-operation.

It was decided to examine, in Provinces where monopoly purchase schemes are in force, how the practical difficulties have been surmounted by the various administrations. For this purpose a senior officer of the Food Department was deputed to visit those Provinces and States which have already established monopoly purchase schemes or a compulsory levy of grains from cultivators for the purpose of gaining first hand knowledge of the schemes in operation. He has just returned from tour and is compiling his report, which, when finished, will help Government in formulating future policy.

2. A Central Foodgrains Reserve approximating to about 5,00,000 tons was recommended by the Committee. A Depot was established at Karachi to hold a part of this resources; but storage accommodation available at other ports was neither adequate nor satisfactory. The Central Government have therefore embarked upon a scheme for the construction or acquisition of additional storage accommodation for imported foodgrains at certain port towns and elsewhere. The scheme has received the approval of the Finance Department in principle, and will provide storage accommodation for a total of 1,40,000 tons. At the same time it is proposed to extend the Depot already established at Karachi to its full capacity of 2,00,000 tons and make all preliminary arrangements for an additional 50,000 tons.

In addition a scheme for the construction of more and better storage accommodation for 175,000 tons at strategic points including railway stations, in the surplus producing areas is under consideration. It is proposed that the cost of construction for this scheme be shared equally between the Government of India and Provincial Governments. Replies from all Provincial Governments received in this connection are under examination.

A senior Officer of the Department of Food has also been placed on special duty to progress the various proposals for construction of storage at the ports and in various provinces.

3. The procurement systems set up by the administrations of Provinces and States show a marked diversity, varying from complete Government monopoly, as in Travancore and Cochin to the loosest form of Government Control as in the N.-W. F. P. All procurement systems in force pre-suppose a certain measure of movement control—the control being stricter as the scope for private trade diminishes and progress is made towards a system of monopoly buying. Movements of grains under Government programmes are given a higher degree of priority by the railways than movements by private trade in cases where such private movements are still permissible. To enable the Central Government to exercise direction, superintendence, and control to a degree which is necessary to secure the effective discharge of the Central Government's responsibility for the success of food administration in India as a whole, the Provincial Governments have been asked to keep the Central Government closely in touch, through the Regional Food Commissioners with any important proposals for the modification of their existing procurement arrangements, and wherever possible, to obtain the Central Government's approval before actually introducing major changes.

4. Judicious requisitioning as an aid to procurement has been tried on occasions and has resulted in an improvement in supplies.

Supply of consuming goods.—(a) *Cotton Textiles.*—Ceiling prices were again reduced in September 1944. The reduction was at the rate of one anna in the rupee on the previous reduced prices as regards cloth and somewhat more as regards yarn.

Government's action hitherto in the sphere of control of cotton textiles has been directed mainly to ensuring that adequate quantities are supplied to the Indian Civil market as a whole and at reasonable prices. Government have now however decided to take on a further responsibility, to wit, that of ensuring that every part of India receives its due share of cloth. To this end India has been divided into certain zones, and Government will ensure that each zone receives its quota, of cloth determined on the basis of population. Proper distribution within the zone will be the duty of the Provincial and State Governments concerned. The proportion of India's output of cotton textiles which is available for civilian consumption after Defence requirements and certain essential civil exports have been met works out to about 12 years per head of the population per annum. This *per capita* availability has been taken as the basis of the quotas allotted to the various zones, but has been varied in certain places where the average normal consumption of the population is either somewhat greater or somewhat less than the rest of India.

(b) *Drugs.*—A marked fall in the prices of drugs has been noticeable during the past few months. This applies particularly to pharmaceutical chemicals and the important group of sulphur drugs. The fall is partly due to the import on Government account of large quantities of these items which are already being released to the trade. The supply situation in respect of proprietary medicine has on the whole radically improved although certain particular items such as Glucose 'D', Emstine and Infants Milk Foods are still in short supply.

(c) *Footwear.*—The position remains the same as previously stated.

(d) *Woollen goods.*—Towards the end of last year, roughly 50 per cent. of the pre-war capacity of woollen goods in India was released for the manufacture of woollen goods for civilian consumption. To take up this released capacity, the Industries and Civil Supplies Department placed orders on mills for certain popular lines of civilian woollen goods. That Department has so far been arranging sale of these goods to the public through a limited number of dealers appointed by the Central Government. The quantities of these goods available, which has not so far been very considerable, have been allotted to dealers in different towns in proportion to the population of the town. In the colder provinces we have extended this scheme more fully than in the warmer Provinces. The Central Government have appointed dealers in all towns in Northern India having a population of more than 50,000. The goods are supplied to the dealers selected, at a price fixed for mill-station, and they have to sell them in retail at a price fixed by the Industries and Civil Supplies Department which allows a margin of profit of 12½ per cent. over the f.o.r. mill-station price. In order to keep the goods moving into the market as quickly as possible and to keep the financial liabilities of the selected dealers as low as possible instructions have been given to mills to despatch the goods to the dealers in small lots as and when ready according to the transport facilities available. In 1945, it is hoped it will be possible to obtain a release of a capacity equivalent to 100 per cent. of pre-war production for the civilian consumers.

(e) *Cement.*—On account of shortage of supplies of cement for some time past, cement for civilian users was released in small quantities and no cement was released for building of private houses or for essential repairs to private buildings. From the beginning of

this year, it has, however, been decided that 75,000 tons of cement per month should be released for civilian users out of which 20,000 tons should be allotted for essential repairs to private buildings. Although allotments to this extent have been made every month, on account of transport difficulties, it has not been possible to move the full monthly allocation. Efforts are being made to ensure that as large a quantity as possible of cement for the civilian user actually moves to centres in which it is to be used.

The prices of cement have also been fixed [vide Industries and Civil Supplies Department, Notification, No. 129-C(4)/44, dated the 30th September 1944].

(f) *Electric bulbs*.—Electric bulbs are now being supplied to the civilian consumer at 29.1 per cent. of the total imported and indigenous production. The supply position has improved of late and there appears to be every likelihood of an overall average of the allotment to the General public being raised in future to about 33 per cent.

(g) *Paper*.—At present, only 30 per cent. of the Indian mills production of papers is available for non-Government consumption. This is far short of needs. It was accordingly decided that in order to release larger quantities for the civilian consumer, Government should import, for meeting their needs, 20,000 tons and release a corresponding quantity from the percentage of Indian mill production reserved by them. Orders have already been placed for this quantity which is expected to arrive in the near future. As soon as it is received, the release from indigenous production for the civilian consumer will be effected. This will increase the civilian consumers' share of Indian production to 50 per cent. Ceiling prices for all varieties of Indian mill made paper, as well as strawboard and millboard and for principal varieties of imported paper have also been fixed. A scheme for the distribution of paper for non-Government requirements under which, quotas have been fixed for each Province and State on the basis of supplies available and estimated requirements, has been put into operation with effect from 1st October 1944. The Provincial and State Governments will mainly be responsible for the equitable distribution of the quotas within their respective territories. Stringent measures for enforcing economy in the use of paper by civilian consumers have also been introduced by the issue of the Paper Control (Economy) Order, 1944, on 12th June 1944, so as to make available larger quantities and paper for more essential purposes.

(h) The position regarding matches, cutlery, crockery, plywood, enamel ware, electric fans and other electric goods, and domestic holloware remains the same.

(i) *Kerosene*.—With a view to increase the present available supplies for Kerosene oil, the Government of India have decided to reduce their reserve stock which would make available about 9 per cent. extra kerosene during the winter months from 1st October 1944 to 31st March 1945.

(j) *Import of consumer goods*.—The imports of consumer goods from United Kingdom and U. S. A. in larger quantities are coming forward.

(k) *Prices under the Hoarding and Profiteering Prevention Ordinance, 1943*.—During the last 11 months of the operation of the Hoarding and Profiteering Prevention Ordinance, ceiling prices have been fixed for the following articles:—

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|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (1) Photographic materials. | (14) Electric bulbs. |
| (2) Cigarettes. | (15) Vegetable seeds. |
| (3) Razor Blades. | (16) Toilet articles. |
| (4) Wines and Liquors. | (17) Condensed milk. |
| (5) Tinned Provisions. | (18) Bicycles and spare parts |
| (6) Boot polishes. | (19) Battery cells. |
| (7) Imported woollen goods. | (20) Vegetable ghee. |
| (8) Arms and Ammunitions. | (21) Camphor powder. |
| (9) Fountain pens and inks | (22) Sissoo Timber. |
| (10) Sports goods. | (23) Camphor tablets. |
| (11) Leather. | (24) Imported thermos. |
| (12) Japanese staple fibre yarn. | (25) Clock. |
| (13) Silk fabrics. | (26) Radio tubes and spare parts. |

Consumer Goods—Control of Distribution—Supplies.—Under the Hoarding and Profiteering Prevention Ordinance, prices for the articles referred to in the preceding paragraph have been fixed and the upward trend of prices in the civil market has been arrested. Experience, however, has shown that with the control of prices of a particular commodity its available supplies have a tendency to go underground. While the Industries and Civil Supplies Department have taken action to increase the supplies of consumer goods in the country, price control to be really effective must be implemented by a control over distribution of supplies. This is particularly necessary in the case of imported articles.

In order to enable them to do this the Central Government have passed the Consumer Goods (Control of Distribution) Order on the 15th July 1944. The Order applies to such imported articles and articles made in India as are mentioned in the schedule attached to it. These include, for the present, a limited number of articles in common use and later on it is intended to add other articles to the list as and when necessary.

Importers and producers of scheduled articles are required to give intimation of arrivals and productions to the Controller General of Civil Supplies. Importers of scheduled

articles will not be at liberty to dispose of their goods after arrival except in accordance with the instructions of the Controller General of Civil supplies. For internal distribution the Controller General will appoint approved dealers throughout the country and it is only to them that the importer or producer is allowed to sell his articles.

To implement the provisions of this Order suitable machinery consisting for the present, of an Additional Controller General, 3 Deputy Controllers General and 3 Assistant Controllers General has been added to the Organisation of the Controller General of Civil Supplies.

CHAPTER 7.—DISTRIBUTION AND CONSUMPTION (INCLUDING RATIONING)

Transport.—As already reported in the last year's statement of progress made on the recommendations of the Foodgrains Policy Committee, a Director of Movements was appointed to take charge of the Transport Branch of the Food Department. His close association with the distribution problem at every stage has helped to plan allocations under the Basic Plan in which the transport aspect has been given adequate consideration. The Basic Plans have, therefore, been more readily accepted by the War Transport Department. A further progress has been made in getting the Provinces to prepare their programmes of movements in a manner suitable to the railway requirements. With the close watch on the progress of programmed movements it has been possible to anticipate difficulties and to obtain special measures of assistance from railways through the co-operation of the War Transport Department.

2. Special mention may be made of the action taken to secure increased shipping at Karachi in order to relieve railways of the difficult all rail movements from the North to the South. Experience showed that despatches from the North to the South were generally behind programme and without this special assistance there was little prospect of meeting the full requirements of the south from the northern Provinces. An arrangement has now been arrived at with the War Transport Department whereby 60,000 tons of foodgrains will be despatched monthly from Karachi by steamers and country craft. This will make it possible to despatch foodgrains to the deficit areas of Travancore/Cochin, Deccan States, Malabar, Kathiawar, Bombay, etc., from Sind, Punjab, etc., by the sea route.

3. Maximum use is also made of the river transport available in the Eastern parts of the country. Boats available in Bengal and Assam are being utilised for moving rice from Assam to Bengal in addition to the local movements within the two provinces. An appreciable proportion of the Assam food supplies from the U. P. and Bihar is also arranged by the river route.

4. Now that the prospects of the Lease/Lend vehicles for civil requirements have improved, the Provincial Governments have been requested to make increasing use of road transport for the movement of foodgrains. A number of Lease/Lend lorries are now operating in the Eastern States, Orissa and Rewa State, where crops could only be obtained in the interior far away from rail-head stations. These lorries have been of material assistance in easing procuring operations.

Rationing.—

(A) *Progress of Rationing.*—1. All the Provincial/State Governments in the country have accepted the need for food rationing of towns and cities and there are now 460 towns and municipal areas fully rationed or about to be rationed, representing a population of approximately 42,000,000 people who are covered by an assurance of sufficient food at Controlled fair prices.

2. Bombay have already rationed 6 of their important towns, viz., Bombay, Ahmedabad, Surat, Poona, Nasik and Sholapur, also 91 smaller towns covering 90 per cent. of the urban population therein. In the Madras Presidency, 34 towns have already been rationed and district-wide rationing of Malabar was inaugurated from 15th October 1944. Rationing in Greater Calcutta including the industrial area is working satisfactorily and the rationing scheme has been extended to Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, Mirsarai, Sita Kund, Double Mooring, Puchalaish, Hathazapi, Fatickchapi, Raosan, Ramgunia, Patiya, Anwara, Boalkhali, Banekhali and Satkania. Preparations for the introduction of rationing in Dacca and Narayanganj are in hand.

3. The Punjab, although a surplus province, has inaugurated rationing in Rawalpindi, Amritsar and Lahore, and is shortly extending the scheme to five more of its largest towns, viz., Multan, Ludhiana, Simla, Sialkot and Jullunder. Sind, another surplus province has rationed Karachi and Hyderabad. Nagpur and Jubbalpore have been rationed in C. P. Enumeration has already been completed by the N. W. F. P. in Peshawar and all steps have been taken for the introduction of rationing there shortly.

4. Travancore and Cochin have introduced state-wide rationing which means both urban and rural population. Mysore has already rationed its four important towns and has a scheme for state-wide rationing.

5. Rationing was introduced in Delhi on 29th May, 1944. Quetta has been rationed in Baluchistan; Ajmer will be rationed shortly but partial rationing has already been enforced there from the 1st of May 1944. The Assam Rationing Scheme is operating in 8 towns of Assam partial rationing in 6 towns. Shillong has not, however, been rationed as yet

but preliminary steps have been taken. Abu, Mhow, Secunderabad and Civil and Military Station Bangalore have also been rationed.

6. The U. P. Government have introduced partial rationing in 39 regulated towns covering over 80 per cent. population in five towns, viz., Cawnpore, Lucknow, Allahabad, Gorakhpur and Jhansi and 50 to 60 per cent. in the rest. Its two towns, Azamgarh and Mau which are situated in deficit areas have been fully rationed. A scheme for full rationing of 11 towns has now been prepared. The other Provinces and States which have introduced rationing are Kashmir in Srinagar, the Deccan States, Hyderabad, Central India and Western India States in certain towns. Bihar have introduced full rationing in Patna and Jamshedpur and partial rationing in 10 other towns. Gwalior and Rampur have also been rationed.

7. The extension of rationing has brought to the forefront several rationing problems which have been under examination, e.g., rationing scales and composition, treatment of children and heavy manual workers, use of substitute grains, subsidisation, retail prices, industrial canteens and milk supplies.

(B) *Scales of Ration.*—1. The minimum basic standard per adult per day has been laid down by the Foodgrains Policy Committee to be 1 lb., that is roughly $3\frac{1}{2}$ seers per week. In actual practice, some provinces have given a slightly higher ration than the standard mentioned above. While others have not found it possible to give this standard, the tendency of surplus provinces being to give ration somewhat higher than the standard recommended by the Food Grains Policy Committee.

2. The Government of India in the early stages have advisedly not tried to impose strict restrictions upon the different Governments as local conditions have varied and it has required a good deal of effort to win over the people for introducing rationing.

3. The question of equalisation of ration scales is not so simple as would appear at first sight. All the foodgrains are not rationed everywhere, and at different places the question of preponderance of the industrial population varies. In the Punjab only wheat and wheat atta are rationed; in Delhi rice is included whereas in the Madras Presidency (excluding Madras city) only rice has been rationed. Moreover, the Northern and the North-West provinces claim that their people are physically so constituted as to require a relatively greater proportion of foodgrains than the people in the Southern parts.

4. The question was placed before the Central Food Advisory Council at its meeting held on 20th July, 1944, which recommended as follows:—

"The Council is of the view that the present burden of an over all deficiency of foodgrains should be shared evenly by all parts of the country and deprecates the existing disparity of ration scales. It therefore, recommends that full rationing should be introduced in every province in all urban areas and that the basic ration per head should be uniformly 1 lb. per adult per day. It presses the Government of India to bring about uniformity in both these matters throughout India without delay".

5. The Government of India is disposed to accept the recommendations of the Central Food Advisory Council these have been communicated to all Provinces/Administrations/Residents, who have been asked to communicate their views urgently. The whole problem revolves round the supply position and the demands likely to be made by the deficit areas for increased quantities to raise the minimum size to 1 lb. per day. So long as there is any part of the country where the ration is lower than $3\frac{1}{2}$ seers per week there appears to be little justification for having a bigger ration anywhere else.

6. The present aim in view of the overall shortage of supply (i) to equalise the size of the basic ration everywhere to the recognised minimum of $3\frac{1}{2}$ seers per week per adult; (ii) to include all grains moving under the basic plan in the ration everywhere; (iii) to ration pulses as separate from the cereal group and (iv) guided by the supply position, to allow the consumer to draw any proportion of his ration in any item within the group.

(C) *Composition of Rations.*—1. So far as the composition of rations is concerned the policy of the Foodgrains Policy Committee has been to include all major foodgrains in general use in the particular areas concerned. In the Bombay Presidency, Sind, Hyderabad (Deccan) and C. P. wheat, rice, and millets have been rationed; in the Punjab and Baluchistan only wheat or atta; in Delhi and Bengal wheat and rice, and in Madras Presidency excluding Madras, only rice. Madras City has also rationed wheat with effect from 22nd October, 1944. In most of the States wheat and millets have been rationed while in others rice has been added. In the States of Cochin and Travancore, rice, wheat and dry grains have been rationed whereas in Mysore it is rice, wheat and ragi.

2. It will thus be seen that the composition of rations has depended upon the staple foodgrain of the area. It will not be an easy task to include all the foodgrains, although it would be advisable to do so.

3. As rice is in acute short supply the proportion to rice that can be drawn out of the group cereals is lower than that allowed for the other foodgrains. For instance, in Bombay out of $3\frac{1}{2}$ seers it is allowed to the extent of 1 seer and 10 chataks and in Calcutta up to $2\frac{1}{2}$ seers as against $3\frac{1}{2}$ seers of wheat. In Delhi rice is allowed upto 2 seers out of 3 seers and 15 chataks. In Cochin 5.3 ozs. is allowed out of a total ration of 12 ozs. The only place where it is allowed in a greater proportion is in Travancore where it is 8 ozs.

out of a total ration of 13 ozs. Cochin has now been asked to raise the rice proportion to the Travancore level of 8 ozs.

4. In the Southern areas, including Travancore and Cochin, efforts are being made to introduce alternative foodgrains on account of acute scarcity of rice. From among the dry grains the people there prefer jowar better than bajra and in allocating the millets people's preferences for a particular kind of foodgrain are taken into consideration.

(D) *Quality*.—1. The Foodgrains Policy Committee had recommended that due attention must be paid to securing adequate quality (Page 68 of the Report). The main problem that was faced in this connection was the time lag between the purchase of the initial stocks and their being actually put into the hands of the retail dealers for distribution amongst consumers. Every attempt has been made to reduce this interval to the minimum so that the quality may not be affected by prolonged storage.

2. This problem of time affecting quality gets resolved as rationing progresses and the continuity of receiving fresh stocks at regular intervals is established.

3. Quality classification of the foodgrains made in several places meets many such complaints. The grains are also now being issued after being cleaned.

4. Inspection by the receiving agent at the railway station of delivery succeeds a prior analysis at the Government laboratory of the Province where the purchases are made. Subsequently, when the grain is stored or distributed, the rationing inspectors go round for constant inspection to guard against adulteration. At the retailers shops samples are kept in sealed bottles for verification and comparison by anyone who desires to do so.

(E) *Treatment of Children*.—Generally speaking in most of the Provinces 50 per cent. of the adult size of the ration has been fixed for the children and a child has been defined as a person between the age of 2 and 12 years. Several Provinces are now examining the possibility of giving full adult ration to children from 8 years and half rations from 0 to 8 years.

(F) *Use of Substitute Grains*.—1. The Foodgrains Policy Committee has laid down that rationing should cover all major foodgrains in general use in the particular areas concerned and that, as far as possible, the taste and habits of the various communities should be respected; but it is also stated that no guarantee can or should be given to any section of the community that its habitual foodgrains would be forthcoming in the usual quantities. This has been necessitated by the acute shortage of certain foodgrains, chiefly rice.

2. This shortage of rice has greatly accentuated the problem in the South, especially in Travancore, Cochin and Mysore. Efforts are being made to substitute rice by the other grains which are available, e.g., wheat and millets. This involves publicity, practical demonstrations and laying down proportions of the ration for each grain so that these other substitute grains may be taken up by the people. The change in diet cannot be brought about suddenly, but urgent necessity requires urgent methods of treatment. The main problem, is to substitute other foodgrains of equal or better nutritional value for rice.

3. Nutritional experts by devising planned alternative combinations of foods with equal or even better nutritional value, have prepared actual recipes which have been circulated to the Provinces and States concerned for practical demonstration and propaganda purposes.

4. Governments in the Southern parts of the country are trying to persuade the people to realise that by mixing the so-called coarse grains with their diet, they make it more balanced and not one which almost entirely consists of carbo-hydrates.

5. Cochin State have started a scheme under which free meals consisting chiefly of bajra preparations are served to school children suffering from mal-nutrition.

6. A Nutritional Section has been attached to the peripatetic War Services Exhibition in which actual demonstrations will be given for preparing dishes from nutritional foodgrains which will be served out to the people from an attached restaurant.

(G) *Milk Supply*.—1. The question of milk supply has come to the forefront due to the acute shortage of milk in almost all the big towns of the country. Milk is not only short in quantity but it has deteriorated seriously in quality. In certain towns the poorer section of the people are unable to buy milk for their children due to the prevailing high prices. The question of increasing the supply of milk is not a simple one as it involves the improvement and conserving of cattle, cattle fodder and pasture.

2. Some Provinces have started tackling this problem by distributing milk at subsidised rates to children and/or prohibiting use of milk for such purposes as ice creams, etc. In Bombay, a 17 lakhs scheme has been enforced for supplying $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. milk to the children at subsidised rates on issue of milk cards. In several other places export and slaughter of useful cattle have been prohibited and other measures have been taken to stop the use of milk for non-essential purposes.

3. The problem, however, requires concerted action between the Provinces and the Government of India. The question of increasing the production of milk lies within the area of Education, Health and Lands Department and the distribution with the Food Department. The Food Department is immediately concerned with providing pure milk at reasonable prices to priority consumers like children, hospitals, schools, and maternity welfare centres.

4. The Government of Indian have asked for information from all the Governments in the country with a view to increasing the present short supplies in big towns and issuing model order for:—

(a) Control of the use of milk in industry for purposes other than food, e.g., plastics and glues.

(b) The control of milk supplies to confectioners, hotels, restaurants and canteens and its use for such purposes as ice cream, cream cakes, and sweets.

(c) The co-ordination and control of fresh milk supplies to the Defence Forces by local purchases.

6. The Education, Health and Lands Department which is responsible for increasing the production of milk has recently appointed a Dairy Development Adviser who will examine the present schemes and put up new ones for actual working.

7. Similar schemes are being prepared or envisaged for the big towns in the country like Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras.

(H) *Subsidisation and Retail Prices.*—1. The question of subsidising the foodgrains sold under the rationing schemes is cropping up now and again. In most of the provisioning schemes in U. P. and Bihar the sales at least in the initial stages have been on subsidised rates, till it has been possible to bring the market prices down. Subsidisation is bound up with the price control schemes and to the extent that the prices are effectively controlled subsidisation may be rendered unnecessary.

2. At present foodgrains are sold at subsidised rates to certain categories of the essential civil personnel, e.g., to the Central Government servants drawing less than Rs. 300 p. m. to Railway employees by the Railway Department through their own distributing stores and to the coal mine labour under what is commonly known as the "Young Plan".

3. In the case of coal mine labour the standard ration is given at the controlled rates and $\frac{1}{2}$ seer of rice per attendance is given free. There is also some extra monetary payment made for attendance according to the size of the family dependants.

4. The policy of the Central Government is to discountenance any increase in dearness allowance in the shape of money as that would retard all anti-inflationary measures. Subsidisation on the other hand, is primarily an anti-inflationary measure and a question to be considered is how far and to what categories of the people should subsidisation be extended, if at all. Its present existence in the case of the essential civil personnel is with a view to ensure that there is no weakening of such categories of workers as are essential to the national and to the war effort.

(I) *Retail Prices.*—1. It is necessary that under rationing these prices should be kept as low as possible to enable every one to buy foodstuffs. At present the prices that are fixed at different places depend upon the cost of the foodgrains procured and the differentials allowed to the wholesalers and the retailers. These differentials differ in various provinces due to the local conditions but the differences should not obviously be very great.

2. There is of course no question of any local Government making a profit out of the rationing scheme but fixation of prices, which are revised at regular intervals, is bound to bring in a certain amount of temporary profit or loss on account of the time lag involved. This in the long run is expected to get squared up. The prices fixed on the introduction of rationing are on the basis of the previous costs of stocks purchased at higher rates. These can be high as compared to the prices ruling at the particular moment.

3. The solution of the problem of keeping the prices as low as possible is, therefore, their periodic revision in conformity with the actual costs; which is being done.

(J) *Heavy Manual Workers.*—1. The idea underlying the grant of a supplementary ration is that it should be given to the heavy manual workers who need a greater quantity of the cereals. Generally 50 per cent. of the basic ration is given as supplementary.

2. One of the main difficulties has been to define a 'heavy' manual worker. In some cases it is not easy to draw a line between the heavy manual worker and the manual worker. The policy is that under rationing schemes there should be no provision for allowing any privileges to any class of persons not enjoyed by all other consumers, with the exception of defined heavy workers.

(K) *Industrial Canteens.*—It has been decided in consultation with the Labour Department that (i) Industrial Canteens should be encouraged, (ii) additional quantity of rationed foods should be supplied to such canteens to be served as cooked foods over and above the supplementary ration for heavy manual workers where such quantities are now permitted.

(L) *The future outlook.*—1. Rationing has brought into the forefront some very important problems that the country will have to face in the near future and also when peace comes. Some of these problems are the increased production of foodstuffs, the development of cultivation of foodgrains and vegetables, the manufacture of chemical manure, of agricultural implements and other consumers goods necessary for the cultivator, the long range production of milk of involving the development of cattle fodder, pasture lands and quality of cattle breeds, the raising of the nutritional level of the diet for the majority of the at present under and mal-nourished populations, the substitution of particular kinds of

foodgrains with a higher nutritive value for those which have become and will remain in acute short supply for a considerable time to come, the introduction of communal feeding not only in the industrial centres but also in the schools and other similar institutions and the popularisation of alternative dishes that could be prepared out of nutritionally superior foodstuffs amongst people who have been used to eating a nutritionally deficient diet.

2. Such problems have been brought into prominence as the direct result of control of foodstuffs by the Government and the introduction of rationing on a large scale. It is obvious that these will require long range planning.

CHAPTER 8.—PRICES

The Food Department set up a Price Advisory Committee under the Chairmanship of Sir Theodore Gregory, Economic Adviser to the Government of India designed to provide the Government of India with expert non-official advice on prices which would reflect the point of view of producers and of the trade. The first meeting of the Price Advisory Committee was held on the 15th March, 1944 and on the recommendations of the Committee, the Government of India fixed the statutory maximum prices for wheat for the next twelve months at Rs. 9-8-0 at the primary assembling markets in the Punjab, and Sind; at Rs. 9-10-0 in N.-W. F. P. and at Rs. 10-4-0 in the U.P. Maximum prices for barley and gram were fixed at 7/10ths and 8/10ths respectively of the maximum for wheat. The statutory maximum for coarse rice in the Punjab, U. P. and N.-W. F. P. was also fixed at Rs. 13-8-0 per maund. Differentials on basic prices were allowed for deficit districts in the different provinces. The Indian States were asked to fall into line with the British Indian territories.

At the second meeting of the Price Advisory Committee held in August 1944, the Committee recommended that as it was impracticable to fix the prices of pulses on an all-India basis, the Provinces which had not yet controlled prices at reasonable levels should be asked to do so in consultation with the Government of India, keeping in view the controlled prices of cereals. This recommendation is being implemented by the Government of India. The Committee also considered the question whether trading in futures or options in foodgrains should be prohibited. Opinion was divided and the whole question is being re-examined.

The question of fixation of prices for Kharif grains was considered at the third meeting of the Price Advisory Committee held on 9th October, 1944. The recommendations made by the Committee are under consideration and a final decision will be taken shortly.

2. The Government of India also considered the question of fixing minimum prices for major foodgrains and made an important announcement in April 1944 designed to support the wheat market in the interests of the cultivators in which they guaranteed to purchase all wheat of fair average quality offered in the main assembling markets of the Punjab, U. P. and Sind at Rs. 7-8-0 per maund.

In May 1944, in order to support measures to encourage the diversion to foodcrops of land under short staple cotton, the Government of India announced their willingness to purchase all jowar and bajra of the 1944-45 crop offered in the main assembling markets at the floor prices of Rs. 5-8-0 and Rs. 6 respectively throughout British India except Bombay. As regards Bombay, it was felt that special prices would have to be announced in view of the measures which were being taken to compel the cultivation of foodcrops and accordingly the Government of Bombay have announced that the price of the 1944-45 millets crop will not be less than the current statutory prices.

The offer to purchase millets at floor prices was extended to the Indian States.

CHAPTER 9.—BASIC PLAN

In the formulation of the Kharif Plan (1943-44) and the Rabi Plan (1944-45) the Food Department have generally followed the formula recommended by the Foodgrains Policy Committee. The first version of the Kharif Plan was issued in October 1943. A revised version of the Plan was issued to Provinces and States in April, 1944. In view of the admitted drawbacks of Indian agricultural statistics and the difficulty in assessing the requirements of the increase in population, natural or otherwise, it has not been found possible in practice to ask every area to accept the statistical surplus or deficit revealed by the formula. It is of interest to note that the rice surplus increased from the original figure of 768,000 tons to the revised figure of 919,000 tons as a result of efforts made by the Central Government to secure improvement in the declared surpluses in the light of the statistical position.

2. The Kharif Plan operative from November, 1943 to October 1944 and the Rabi Plan operative from May 1944 to April, 1945 cover about 2.9 million tons of Kharif (rice, millets and maize) and Rabi (wheat, gram and barley) grains including the requirements of the Defence Services. Against this total movement target, about 1.6 million tons were despatched under the two plans up to 5th October 1944. Out of the total quantity despatched the shares of the principal deficit areas were as follows:—

Bengal	280,000 tons.
Bombay	334,000 tons.
Tr. & Cochin	187,000 tons.

The details of quotas and despatches are given below :—

(In '000 tons.)

Foodgrain	Total quota allotted (15-10-44)	Total despatches up to 5-10-1944	Percentage of despatches to quota
Rice	980	714	73
Millets	271	175	61
Maize	67	55	82
Wheat	1,207	645	54
Gram	357	56	16
Barley	61	26	43
Total	2,943	1,671	57

CHAPTER 10.—FOOD DEPARTMENT

In order to associate public and expert opinion as closely as possible with the Central Government's policy for food administration, the Government of India decided to replace the old Central Food Advisory Council by a more widely representative body specifically to advise and assist the Departments of Food and Education, Health and Lands in the tasks relating to the country's food problems with which they have to deal.

The first meeting of the Council was held in the 3rd. week of July 1944 in which about 40 non-official members participated.

A Sub-Committee of the Council has been formed to look into the question of procurement and to advise Government as to the best methods of ascertaining and securing the surpluses of the growers and linking up production with procurement.

CHAPTER 11.—FOOD GRAINS CONTROL ORDER

As a result of a close examination of the various suggestions made from time to time by the Provincial and State Governments for the improvement of the form of the Foodgrains Control Order, it was decided that the existing Order, which had been promulgated by the Central Government and brought into force by the notifications of the Provincial Governments, should be progressively replaced by new Orders framed by Provincial Governments in the light of their own requirements and adapted to suit local conditions, but based on the existing Order. The application of the Central Order to the particular province will be cancelled by notification simultaneously with the promulgation of the local Order.

The Provincial Governments and Administrations were also requested to consult the Government of India before finally publishing their versions of the Order. Draft Orders from some Provinces have been received and are being scrutinised. The Central Order will cease to be in force in the N.-W. F. P. from 21st October, 1944, on which date the Provincial Order will come into force.

The penal clause of the existing Foodgrains Control Order has been amended so as to make it compulsory for the Court to order forfeiture of stocks in case of a contravention of the Order unless, for reasons to be recorded in writing, it is of opinion that the direction should not be made in respect of the whole, or as the case may be, a part of the property.

The Provincial Governments and Administrations have been requested to make a similar provision in their Foodgrains Control Orders.

States have also been requested through the Residents to take action on the same lines.

The functions and duties of Regional Food Commissioners have been reviewed afresh and Food Regions reshuffled in consequence of which the old Rajputana Region has been abolished and in its place following four food regions have been set up with their Residents as Regional Food Commissioners :—

- (i) Rajputana Region.
- (ii) Central India States.
- (iii) Gwalior States.
- (iv) Western India States.

The food regions generally conform to the groups of States with which Residents are in political relationship.

All correspondence between the Central and Provincial or States Governments has to be conducted through the Regional Food Commissioners and Residents acting as Regional Food Commissioners.

The staff of the Regional Food Commissioners has been greatly strengthened and it is proposed to appoint Deputy Regional Food Commissioners at all Provincial Head quarters.

LATEST RICE PRICES IN DISTRICTS OF BENGAL

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Sir, I also lay on the table a statement showing the latest rice prices in the districts of Bengal.

Statement showing the latest rice prices in the districts of Bengal

Districts	Prices (wholesale) (in Rs. per maund).	Date
Jalpaiguri	13 0 0 (R)	31-10-44
Birbhum	11 14 0 (R)	1-11-44
Midnapore	10 10 0	29-10-44
Bakerganj	10 8 0	1-11-44
Dinajpore	11 12 0 (M)	31-10-44
	9 8 0	31-10-44
Dacca	to	to
	10 0 0	1-11-44
	7 8 0	30-10-44
Tippera	to	to
	8 0 0	1-11-44
	10 0 0	
Chittagong	to	30-10-44
	12 0 0	

Prices are wholes le except when (R) is mentioned against the quotation, in which case it is retail.

(M)=Medium quality.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, in view of the fact that there will be a debate now, will the Honourable Member circulate copies of the statement just now?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: It has been laid on the table.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: We cannot read it now. To facilitate the perusal and study of it, will the Honourable Member see that copies are circulated to Members, especially as we are now engaged in the food debate?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): How many pages is it?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I have just handed it over—it is the only copy I have: it runs into many pages—17 pages of type. I shall have to find out how many copies I have got. I understand there are only six copies.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask, is this the way that Government should treat the Legislature—laying a statement on the table while the debate is going on, without supplying copies to the Members?

MOTION RE FOOD SITUATION—contd.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The House will now proceed with the debate on the motion that the food situation in India be taken into consideration. I think Mr. Deshmukh was in possession of the House.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, last time I dealt with the long range policy regarding food which should have been begun long ago, and I pointed out that His Majesty's Government was not co-operating with us in earnest, and I gave an illustration that we were not supplied with tractors which were very necessary to carry out this plan. I also said that the demand for the reduction of prices of agricultural produce was most unreasonable. The amendment which I support says that at present the prices are so uneconomical that they hit the growers hardest: of course it also speaks for the consumers; but I will let the consumers look after themselves—I am more concerned with the producers. At present things are like this: if any tenant wants to take land on lease for the purpose of cultivation—say about 12 or 13 acres—he divides it into cash crop and food crop and fodder crop, in order to meet his expenditure and other necessities. He retains half of the crop for himself and pays the other half to the owner of the land. Out of his 50 per cent. he has to meet the expenses of the cultivation. And in places where land is not cultivated under irrigation, this eventually results in

[Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh.]

a net loss of two to three rupees per acre. You have merely to make inquiries and you will find it is so; where there is no irrigation and where people carry on dry farming, there is no guarantee that the cultivator will get a normal crop. A shower more or a shower less may dash his hopes. Under such circumstances he is worse off than the person who cultivates his land with the help of irrigation. In either case the lessee who takes the land on lease or the tenant cannot meet the expenses out of the produce which he gets out of the land. Not only that, not only he incurs loss, but he has no reserve to fall back upon. We know the veterinary service is not efficient in the villages: supposing his bullocks die, how can he replenish a pair of bullocks or any other material—for instance, his agricultural implements? He has no reserve or depreciation fund to fall back upon or to look after his children if they get ill. Even on the present basis of prices the agriculturist, an agriculturist, who has no profession either of money-lending or is not a lawyer or doctor or has no other subsidiary means but merely depends on his agriculture,—he is in the worst possible position. Having nothing to fall back upon, he has to borrow from somebody—a co-operative bank or the ordinary moneylender, as the only source of meeting these necessities. Therefore it will be found that prices are most uneconomical even at this stage; and yet what is the procedure followed by the Food Member: Every year when the crops are going to be reaped, he revises the prices and he reduces the prices because the demand is for the reduction of prices.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava (Food Member): For your benefit!

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I am not benefited. I am an agriculturist. You may be doing it in the name of the consumers. I asked a question—No. 129—yesterday—How do you bring down the cost of living. The answer was 'by reducing the prices of agricultural produce'. You have done almost nothing to bring down the prices of other articles. I cannot go very deeply into that just now, but fortunately for me my question was answered yesterday; and the Honourable Commerce Member said "This is all that I can do". But what has he done? He has brought down the price of rice from the level of 30 or 40 to the level of 20. It is not in the interests of the agricultural producer. You should have brought down the prices of other articles more than you have done. He says to me "You refer to the other departments". In other words, the only remedy to satisfy the demands of the non-producers is to reduce the price of agricultural produce—a very ruinous policy. As I said, there will be no incentive to produce. Are you going to rely on the cultivator whose strength you have sapped, whose life-blood you have sapped, because he cannot even get enough food for himself and his family?

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

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: He cannot get anything to rely on. He has no food to maintain himself, let alone nutritious food—and you expect these despondent and disheartened agriculturists who have nothing to maintain themselves on, to feed you. I say, therefore, that it is a most ruinous policy to bring down the prices. The present prices are most uneconomical and in the interests of the producer, the prices should not be reduced hereafter. What happens in England and other countries? There they have given a guarantee that the prices shall not be reduced but here the Food Department of the Government of India reduces prices every year when the crops are in sight. This is a very bad policy. (An Honourable Member: "What is the remedy you suggest?") As I said last time, Government should subsidize the agriculturist. You must give something to the agriculturist for the purchase of cattle, seeds, grains and other amenities of life. Your present policy will not do.

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

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar (Salem and Coimbatore *cum* North Arcot Non-Muhammadan Rural): I have given notice of an amendment. I have given the required notice under the Standing Order.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I cannot allow that at this stage. If I allow it now, I cannot prevent the speakers who have already spoken from speaking again on this amendment.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: It is open to you, Sir, not to allow them to speak but under the Standing Orders I am entitled to make this motion even after the discussion has begun.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I cannot allow the speakers who have already spoken to speak again on this amendment. That is the difficulty.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: We have no objection to that.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If they insist on speaking, I cannot prevent them. I cannot therefore allow the amendment to be moved at this stage.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I will not speak again.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Under the Standing Orders I am entitled to move an amendment.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): This comes too late. If it were a consequential amendment, that would have been a different matter. But if the speakers who have already spoken will not speak again, then I will allow this amendment to be moved.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Very well Sir. I move:

“That the following be added at the end of the motion:

‘having considered the same, this House is of opinion (1) that the prices fixed for paddy and other food grains should be revised in view of the present circumstances, and in considering the level of prices of food grains appropriate to a particular area, regard should be had to (a) the cost of articles entering into the cultivators’ cost of production; (b) cost of articles entering into his standard of life and (c) cost of cultivation of marginal lands, as it obtains at present cost levels;

(2) that having in view the enormous amount of corruption created by the fact that revenue and other officers have been entrusted with the duty of issuing licences for purchasers and distributors of paddy and rice, wheat and other food grains, these licences in the districts and taluks shall be issued on the advice of the advisory board, attached to the districts and taluks and to co-operative societies wherever available;

(3) that peasants shall be given the choice of supplying food grains either in the shape of paddy or rice, wheat or atta and thus be entitled to eliminate the profiteering now being made by millers; and

(4) that every effort be made to review and reduce the margins of profits now allowed to various agencies of middlemen;

(5) that the responsibility of the Central Government should not cease with mere allotment of food grains but it should extend to seeing that their allotments reach the deficit or needy areas and that no invidious distinction shall be made in distributing rations between civilian population and those who are the relatives of people in the armed forces and also between the urban and rural peoples, and that all needy peoples, whether living in town or villages be granted equal rations.’

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The remaining portion of para. (5) cannot be moved, as it raises other matters.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: I will omit that portion.

‘(6) that in cases of districts experiencing great scarcity, district-wise and equitable rationing shall be organised;

(7) and that to meet the food deficit in this country, apart from the measures taken to tide over the present difficulties.’

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That cannot be moved.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Why, Sir? This refers to the long range policy. The Food Grains Policy Committee has made mention of this.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That may be but this is a different question.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: All this is connected with the question of increased production of food. The Honourable Member spoke about all these in his opening speech. He is looking far ahead.

Prof. N. G. Ranga (Guntur *cum* Nellore: Non-Muhammadan Rural): He is looking very far ahead.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Very well, I will allow it in that case.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:

'other measures of a permanent character such as that of new irrigation schemes, manufacture of fertilizers, fixation and maintenance of minimum prices of food grains shall also be taken up as soon as possible'.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Mr. Chattopadhyaya will now move his amendment.

Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya (Burdwan Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I move:

"That the following be added at the end of the motion:

'In view of the fact that the system of procurement and distribution of essential food-stuff adopted by the Food Department of the Central Government has not succeeded so far to alleviate the difficulties and inconveniences of consumers in Bengal and in other affected provinces as well the co-operative system of production, distribution and consumption be introduced and adopted in the affected provinces specially in Bengal by setting up Co-operative Producer, Distributor and Consumers' Society registered under the Co-operative Societies Act.'

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

"That the following be added at the end of the motion:

'having considered the same, this House is of opinion (1) that the prices fixed for paddy and other food grains should be revised in view of the present circumstances, and in considering the level of prices of food grains appropriate to a particular area, regard should be had to (a) the cost of articles entering into the cultivators' cost of production; (b) cost of articles entering into his standard of life and (c) cost of cultivation of marginal lands, as it obtains at present cost levels;

(2) that having in view the enormous amount of corruption created by the fact that revenue and other officers have been entrusted with the duty of issuing licences for purchasers and distributors of paddy and rice, wheat and other food grains, these licences in the districts and taluks shall be issued on the advice of the advisory board, attached to the districts and taluks and to co-operative societies wherever available;

(3) that peasants shall be given the choice of supplying food grains either in the shape of paddy or rice, wheat or atta and thus be entitled to eliminate the profiteering now being made by millers; and

(4) that every effort be made to review and reduce the margins of profits now allowed to various agencies of middlemen;

(5) that the responsibility of the Central Government should not cease with mere allotment of food grains but it should extend to seeing that their allotments reach the deficit or needy areas and that no invidious distinction shall be made in distributing rations between civilian population and those who are the relatives of people in the armed forces and also between the urban and rural peoples, and that all needy peoples, whether living in town or villages be granted equal rations;

(6) that in cases of districts experiencing great scarcity, district-wise and equitable rationing shall be organised;

(7) and that to meet the food deficit in this country, apart from the measures taken to tide over the present difficulties, other measures of a permanent character such as that of new irrigation schemes, manufacture of fertilizers, fixation and maintenance of minimum prices of food grains shall also be taken up as soon as possible.'

The next amendment moved is.

"That the following be added at the end of the motion:

'In view of the fact that the system of procurement and distribution of essential food-stuff adopted by the Food Department of the Central Government has not succeeded so far to alleviate the difficulties and inconveniences of consumers in Bengal and in other affected provinces as well the co-operative system of production, distribution and consumption be introduced and adopted in the affected provinces specially in Bengal by setting up Co-operative Producer, Distributor and Consumers' Society registered under the Co-operative Societies Act.'

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta (Chittagong and Rajshahi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I propose to place before the House the actual food position in Bengal and I shall therefore limit the scope of my speech. The Honourable the Food Member has said that so far as rice is concerned, the food position is now easy over practically all parts of Bengal. My submission is that it is not at all a fair statement of the position in Bengal. It does not bear the true picture of the Bengal food position. My contention is that so far as rice is concerned, there is still at least semi-famine in Bengal and so far as other foodstuffs—other than foodgrains—are concerned, there is the most acute famine in Bengal at the present moment. In fact, it is greater than what it was in 1943. Even now people are dying of starvation in Bengal. The

Calcutta daily papers publish every day the number of people who die of starvation in Calcutta. As regards the rural areas, of course we have not got the figures because there is no machinery for the death statistics of the rural areas. But in Calcutta the figures are published at the instance of the Calcutta Corporation.

Now, Sir, meetings of officials and non-officials are being held all over the province in order to discuss the ways and means to combat the scarcity of rice in several parts of the province. A public meeting of officials and non-officials was held the other day at Bakargunj and it was said by their District Magistrate that people were literally dying of starvation in various parts of the district. As you know, Sir, Bakargunj is the granary of Bengal and if that is the position there, we can well imagine what is the position in other districts.

Now, Sir, the Honourable the Food Member made a statement not long ago—probably it was in July last—speaking of the Bengal situation, that “admittedly the situation was serious in some parts still. I do not deny it”. That was his statement. He now says that it is easy practically all over Bengal.

Now, what is the actual position? The ruling market price today is at least four times the pre-war price. Of course, the price of rice has gone down as compared to the one prevailing in 1943. In 1943, the price was Rs. 25, Rs. 30, Rs. 35 and in some cases even Rs. 50 per maund. Now it has been reduced, according to the Honourable the Food Member, to something like Rs. 15. This has given some relief to that class of people whose power of purchase does not go up to Rs. 20, Rs. 30, Rs. 40 and Rs. 50 per maund, but it does not give any relief to those people whose power of purchase is not such as to be able to purchase rice at Rs. 15, and the vast bulk of the population belong to this category. The majority of the people cannot possibly purchase rice at the rate of Rs. 15 per month.

Now, Sir, the whole question is that the price now prevailing in Bengal is not such as to be within the reach of the majority of the population. We have to remember in this connection that even during the normal times many people had to go without a square meal and the price of rice then used to be Rs. 2-8-0 to Rs. 3-8-0 per maund. We also know that the *per capita* availability of rice even in normal times was very low. We have been told by the experts that there is a serious under-nourishment of about one-third of the population of India even during the normal times. Therefore, my submission is that although the price of rice has fallen, the relief has been afforded only to a handful of people and the vast majority has not got any relief. The difference between 1943 and 1944 is this. In 1943 the death was prompt: in 1944 the death is deferred. It is the gradual death, inch by inch. In this connection, I might be allowed to quote the statement of Mr. Amery which he made in the House of Commons some time ago, I think it was in July last. He said: “The number of deaths in Bengal famine exceeded the total casualties through enemy action during the first four years of the war throughout the whole Empire.”

The other day we were told by Sir Henry French that there was not a single case of death by starvation in Great Britain during the war.

The Honourable the Food Member has confined his attention and his activity to what is called the cereal food only. He has not given the slightest thought to what is called the protective food. Now, Sir, food in Bengal does not mean rice only. People cannot live on rice only. They must have other food-stuffs which are as essential for a man's life as rice is. For instance, they must have vegetables, milk, fish, meat, ghee, eggs and so on. Now, there is no manner of doubt that the price of this protective food has risen in 1944 considerably over the level of price during the famine time in 1943. A statement is published in the *Statesman* very lately which shows that meat and ghee are now prohibited luxuries, almost unobtainable, and that fish is selling now at a price which is 111 per cent. not above the normal price in normal times but above the price of 1943. The same is the case with vege-

[Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta.]

tables. On the average the prices of vegetables have gone up by 118 per cent. over the level prevailing during the dark days of the famine of last year. The rise in prices has involved self-denial in a variety of articles of food on the part of many people. The price of almost all foodstuffs other than rice have increased by 120 per cent. and in some cases by 200 per cent. Now what is the position in Bengal? My contention is that taking the two fronts of food, namely, cereal food and protective food, taking the food as a whole, the situation in Bengal is that the distress is far more acute in 1944 than in 1943. Unfortunately for us, it appears that the second food front has escaped altogether attention of the Honourable Food Member. He has not been able to achieve substantially and effectively anything as regards the staple food crop, not to speak of any other kind of food crop. A question was asked the other day and the Honourable Food Member showed his absolute ignorance of the position of other foodstuffs in Bengal. When his attention was drawn to newspaper reports, he said he didn't see them. I do not know if he has really examined the food position in Bengal. The Honourable Food Member was very eloquent and very enthusiastic with regard to future plan not only about cereal food but also about protective food. He says there must be definite plan for production, for procurement, for price control and for distribution not only of cereal food but also of protective food. The present does not seem to worry him at all.

I want to draw the attention of the House to one very important fact, namely, the waste of food that has been allowed in Bengal. Food has been allowed to deteriorate and decompose and reduced to a state absolutely unfit for human consumption. If the deterioration is confined to one or two instances or even to four or five instances, it might not matter so much. But it is clear that there has been waste throughout the country in 1944, not in one isolated instance, and in quantities which are not negligible, in huge quantities. Particularly we have to remember the waste in the Botanical gardens at Sibpur where decomposed foodstuffs had to be carried in about 200 lorries engaged throughout day and night for seven days consecutively in order to clear the decomposed food, to be thrown into the marshy places. A huge quantity was thrown out. We have been told that in the Government storage also a huge quantity of foodstuffs became unfit for human consumption and they are now being sold to people for non-food purposes. What happened in Khulna? In Behar, huge quantities were stocked for export to Bengal, but they were not sent. They got decomposed, unfit for human consumption. There is an interesting story about Narayanganj. Food in the possession of Government became rotten, unfit for human consumption, and the traders in rice were asked to purchase them. They refused to do so because the foodstuffs were unfit for human consumption. The result was that notice was served on the traders to show cause why their licences should not be cancelled as they refused to purchase the Government stock. We have heard the defence and the apologia of the Honourable Member about waste. The Honourable Member said it is unavoidable. My submission is, is this waste really unavoidable? It was said that the Government had no provision for accommodating the foodstuffs, and that there was no place for storage. If you have no provision for storage, why then do you store at all? Why not distribute them to all people who are dying for want of food? Deterioration and decomposition do not take place in the twinkling of an eye. It takes some time. Why don't you take some step when it appears that there is a likelihood of decomposition and deterioration? Why not hand it over to dying people, why not give this food to the dying people before it gets decomposed. Why do you distribute the food that is decomposed at a time when it is unfit for consumption? Is it merely to kill people by making them to eat the consumed food? So, it appears that two things are going on in Bengal, side by side: waste on one side and starvation on the other side. Scarcity in the midst of plenty. I ask why this state of things is allowed to happen. Is there no Government in this country to look after the poor people who are dying in

thousands. Why should the Government allow food to be wasted when people are dying? Is there no Food Department, is there no Civil Supply Department? Is there no civil administration, no military administration? There is a huge army of officers appointed recently on very fat salaries. What are these people doing? I must say that the food administration in this country is inefficient, indifferent, irresponsible, callous, inhuman and as rotten as the rotten food you want to dispose of. It is time that there should be a complete overhaul of the food administration.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Leader of the House): Where?

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: As I said at the beginning of my speech, I am confining my remarks to Bengal. If there is something rotten in Bengal, the Food Member cannot simply say it concerns Bengal and he has no concern in it.

Sir Oowasjee Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Does this foodstuff belong to Bengal Government or to the Government of India?

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: It comes to the Bengal Government from the Government of India.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): at a profit?

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: Yes, at a profit here and at a profit there also. The chief reason is the presence of the overseas forces. The whole Bengal is now an armed camp.

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

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: And their purchasing power has produced this state of things. It is very interesting to note that whereas Indian soldiers serving overseas are supplied food by India, the overseas soldiers resident in India are fed by us. The real fact is that the needs of the civilian population have been sacrificed to those of the military.

In conclusion I will say only this that the Bengal situation is still so very grave and so very complicated that I plead for rescue operations there as recommended by the Gregory Committee.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths (Assam: European): Sir, the subject of our discussion today seems to me on an entirely different plane from that of many other topics which from time to time engage our attention in this House. For with regard to many of those subjects there is room for reasonable difference of opinion, not only as to methods but even as to the aims and objectives which we should set before us. When, however, the issue is the food policy of the Government of India, there can be only one objective and one aim,—that aim is to secure that the people of this great country are fed and that we avoid a repetition of that great calamity which overtook us last year, a calamity which resulted not only in the deaths of many hundreds of thousands of people, not only in untold misery to countless others, but also in a very serious lowering of the prestige and the reputation of this country and its administration in the eyes of the civilised world.

In approaching such a subject we need necessarily do so in a spirit somewhat different from that which animates many of our discussions in this House. We are not here today to score debating points, to bait Government or to wrangle with this or that section of the House. We are here, as I see it, for three purposes; first, to give sober and careful consideration to the food policy of Government; secondly, to examine and appraise the administration of that policy; and thirdly, to suggest those changes which in our view are required both in policy and in administration.

We in this Group have paid the closest attention to the food problem, not only since the shortage became acute but from the days before that, when to the business world, though perhaps not to Government, it was clear that

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trouble was coming. There is a twofold reason for the particularly keen interest which we have taken in this subject. First there is the fact that as great employers of labour we are brought into practical contact with the actual difficulties that arise in time of shortage. In this connection I want to deal very briefly with the criticism which has sometimes been levelled at the Chambers of Commerce and at the other bodies which have thought it necessary to make forward provision for the food of their employees. We have been criticised; we have been told that we have acted unfairly, that we have laid up undue stocks, that we have been prepared to sacrifice the general public for the sake of our employees. Sir, I am not seriously disturbed by that criticism. If in an era like this, the worst charge which can be brought against the capitalist is that of being over-anxious and over-careful for the welfare of the labourer for whom he is responsible, I think no capitalist need be unduly troubled about an accusation of that kind. We do know our responsibility in the matter of seeing that those upon whose labour our profits are based are adequately fed. But there is a second reason for the particular interest we take in this problem; and that is the knowledge that in our own country, in spite of great shortage of supply, the food situation has been handled in a way which provides a model of good administration. We are impressed with the contrast between the administration of the food situation in Britain and that from which we have suffered in this country. Early in the present year I had the good fortune to pay a brief visit to my own country. I went with some apprehension; I went expecting to find that people were going hungry. I had not been two days in that country before I realised that in spite of great reduction of supplies there was no such thing as hunger; rich, poor and middle classes,—all were being adequately fed. The diet may be monotonous but there was no question of anybody going short. And I was tremendously impressed with the way in which the food administration of Britain had succeeded in bringing about complete equality of sacrifice. You are not better fed in Britain today because you happen to be better off than somebody else. The second thing that impressed me was the great routine efficiency in small matters of the food administration in my own country. Let me give you a small illustration. I went home by plane. I went straight from the aerodrome to the railhead nearest my own town and I arrived at that station at half past nine in the morning. By five minutes past ten I had received my identity card, my ration books for food and my clothing ration book. Contrast that with what happens in this country. Not so long ago I happened to be transferred from one large city to another. The rationing problem did not affect me personally as I was going to live in a club, but it affected my servant. It took three weeks, ten visits of my servant to the office and three personal letters from me before that unfortunate man could get his ration card. And he told me on the strength of his own knowledge of other people's experience, that he considered himself very lucky in getting it in three weeks merely because I had written to some of the people concerned. That is an example of the contrast between the efficiency of the administration of food in one country and another. It does indeed seem to be a paradox that in India which is very nearly self-sufficient in food, where the actual shortage is small in percentage, there has been starvation, chaos and confusion; whereas in Britain where supplies have been very severely reduced these evil features have not occurred. In saying this I am not unmindful of the tremendous difference in circumstances between the two countries. I am not forgetting the fact that it is far easier to control food supplies and distribution in a country where the number of farmers is limited, where most of the supplies depend on imports which can easily be controlled at source, as compared with this country where the food supply depends upon the efforts of millions of cultivators. I am not unconscious of that difference; nor am I unconscious of the fact that it is far easier for Government to administer food policy when it has behind it the support of a keen, alert public conscience, than in this country where,—I say this in no offensive spirit,—that conscience is not yet as highly developed as it will

have to become. (A voice: "That is the fault of Government.") It may be so. I am at the moment not concerned with faults but with facts. Whoever may be at fault, the fact is that in my own country the black marketeer,—and he does exist there as everywhere else in the world,—gets very short shrift from everybody concerned and from Government. When he is hauled up before a court he gets a sharp deterrent sentence; he is not let off with a nominal fine. But apart from the action of the courts he at once finds himself an object of social obloquy; he finds that the other people in his own neighbourhood do not want to have anything to do with him, and he has to go about ashamed of himself for some considerable time to come. In this country that does not happen. On the one hand the administration is lax in enforcing deterrent sentences against those who offend, and, on the other hand, that man does not receive sufficient practical condemnation from the people with whom he has to live. Let public opinion become real and alive on this subject and you will very soon find that administration has to respond. In most matters and in most countries administrations tend to lag behind public opinion.

In this matter if public opinion is active, I am certain that the administration will soon be forced into greater and more effective activity.

But in spite of all these differences in circumstances, it is still worth asking the question as to why food administration in this country has fallen short of the standards achieved in Britain. The first and main reason seems to me to be this: That in Britain food policy was thought out, and laid down, to its last details, before the onset of the present war. Staff was selected, trained, ready to take up its place the day war was declared. In this country, by way of contrast, we had a long period of hesitation, confusion, vacillation; an experimental period, a period of trial and error at a time when trial and error meant death for many people.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): It is still in experimental stages.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: I need only remind you of the different stages through which the policy of the Government of India and the Provincial Governments passed. I may say briefly that first you had what I call the 'comic period', although it ought perhaps to be called the tragic period. It was the period when, at any rate in the some provinces, the District Magistrate was a law unto himself.

An Honourable Member: He is still.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: In some matters he ought to be so, but not over food.

Sir, I toured through some parts of the particular province at the time concerned and in the space of two days I saw three different District Magistrates who held different opinions and acted on them. The first gentleman said that prices must be kept down to ease the situation and help the consumers. The second gentleman said that prices must go up to help the cultivator. Number three was a comfortable man who said, "I think on the whole the best policy is not to bother".

Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury (Bengal: Landholders): That is a recommendation for the I.C.S. officers.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: Sir, I cannot stop to answer that somewhat childish interruption.

It is not difficult to imagine what the result of this variation of policy was. Grain was pouring into the district boundaries with no arrangements for its distribution and sale. You had a great orgy of profiteering and speculation which months later began to make its effects felt on the unfortunate people who lived in those districts. That was the comic or tragic period, whatever you may like to call it.

Then you come to the attempt of Government to fix maximum wheat prices without getting control of stock and without any adequate control over movements. That was bound to result in confusion, as the result Government had to decontrol prices. That again led to the period of disaster from which Government tried to rescue us by the Basic Plan. The Basic Plan was excel-

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lent as a plan, but it quite ignored the fact that there is such a thing as provincial autonomy and that provinces might not accept the views of the Central Government as to how much grain a particular province could be expected to contribute. The failure of that plan led us into a stage where Calcutta was on the borders of starvation and many deaths due to starvation had actually taken place. Calcutta was rescued by Government's permitting temporary reversion to free trade. I personally believe that at that particular time reversion to free trade was necessary, but, nevertheless, we all know the disastrous consequences which it brought in its train a little later.

From that stage we came on to the evolution of free trade, to what I may call the New Basic Plan, or the plan which is now in force. There have been, as I said, two years of vacillation, hesitation and experiment. That phase, I am inclined to believe, has now passed. The Report of the Foodgrains Policy Committee last year, whatever its drawbacks may have been, did for the first time lay the foundations of a rational coherent food policy. I congratulate Government on at last having managed to evolve a policy of that nature and I would like to congratulate Dr. Sir Theodore Gregory for the part that he has played in it. I go so far as to say that if during his term of office as Economic Adviser he had done nothing else, the laying down of this coherent policy for the first time, would have justified his existence. I need only remind the House briefly of the five main points which comprise the policy laid down in that Report:

(1) The policy of increasing supply both by trying to step up imports and by increasing home production.

(2) The policy of making procurement a provincial matter based on an attempt to eliminate all competition and operating equally in all districts, whether those districts happen to be surplus or deficit.

(3) Extension of rationing.

(4) Better and more extensive price control was laid down as one of the aims.

and (5) A central foodgrain reserve was to be set up.

In the opinion of this Group, the policy laid down in that Report is sound. Indeed we associate ourselves with what is said in the Report that the ideal would be, under the present circumstances, for Government to take over the whole business of the purchase, distribution and sale of grain and foodstuffs. We recognize that it is not an easy thing to do, we recognize that the difficulties of complete monopoly are particularly great in those provinces where there is no elaborate revenue system, but our view, nevertheless, is that the more closely Government can approximate to the ideal of cent. per cent. purchase and distribution the nearer they will be to solving the difficulties of this country in the matter of food. And it follows, therefore, that we are wholly opposed to those who say that the time has come to remove regional control and to revert to the normal channels of trade. It is our view that any such reversion would be disastrous. The Report of the Gregory Committee really had the last word to say on this subject when it said:

"Free trade under conditions of scarcity on the one hand and fear on the other would be an open invitation for hoarders to hoard and for every rich man and speculator to invest or hoard or to do whatever satisfies him as most likely to be in his own interest."

We believe with that Committee that the policy of free trade might work out its own salvation, but there would be in the meantime an era of starvation to large sections of people in this country. We associate ourselves entirely with the stand which has been taken by the Government of India in this matter and we congratulate them upon having at least evolved a sound and coherent food policy.

I have spoken about policy. I now turn to administration and here, I am afraid, I have no such bouquet to hand out to the Government of India or to the Provincial Governments. We may be satisfied with their policy, but we cannot pretend to be satisfied with the administration. It is very difficult to generalize on this topic, for naturally the standard of administration varies very much from one part of the country to another . . .

An Honourable Member: Not at all.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: . . . and, I suppose, all of us speaking here are prepared to pay a tribute to the excellent administration carried out by the Government of Bombay of the food problem there. Unfortunately we cannot extend the same praise to all other parts of India. We, all of us, know of provinces where there has been chaos, confusion, timidity and resulting loss of public confidence, and we know of other provinces where excessive parochialism has also been a contributory factor in making the food situation worse. It is difficult then to generalize, but I shall try to illustrate my statement that on the whole food administration has been poor, by referring to two or three of the main spheres in which it operates.

Let me take first the sphere of enforcement. I think I can say without fear of exaggeration that in many provinces the controls have become a joke. Not only are they not enforced, but the very machinery for enforcement does not exist. Let me take, for example that most excellent Order—the Food-grains Control Order—an order which if properly administered is the key-stone of the whole of the procurement system. It is not an order which deals mainly with stopping people from doing a particular thing or prosecuting them when they do it, but it is an Order which was issued to enable Government to keep an eye on the stocks—to know where the stocks of grain are—and the intention was that the returns supplied by the dealers of grain would be examined by the department and would be made, the basis of the organisation of procurement on the part of the agencies concerned. In practice, Sir, I know of at least two provinces in which those returns are merely filed in the office, examined by nobody, considered by nobody, not worth the paper on which they are written. And then again you turn to the Order in force in some provinces fixing a cordon round surplus districts. I quite understand that you cannot stop the occasional bullock-cart from sneaking across from the boundary of one district to another, but in the cases I have in mind it is not a question of an occasional bullock-cart; it is a question of thousands and thousands of maunds being moved from one district to another in complete defiance and disregard of that Order and with no action of any kind being taken by the authorities to try to bring the offenders to book. So I say that in the sphere of enforcement administration has been lamentably weak.

I now turn to the sphere of increased production. Here we must pay some tribute to what has been done. The Grow More Food campaign has achieved something. (*Several Honourable Members:* "No, no".) I am sorry

I must disagree when you say, no, no. I was going to say that it could have achieved very much more but for the weakness of the administration. We know individual cases all over the country where attempts to Grow More Food have failed for lack of seed. Provinces and the Central Government have failed to make seed available at the right time and in the right place and in the right condition and this criticism applies with particular force to the Grow More Vegetable campaign. The National War Front at one time tried to run such a campaign. It had some success but from hundreds of places came the reports that the people had prepared themselves for growing more vegetables but had failed to get the seed. This has been one of the most serious administrative weaknesses in connection with the food situation. Far more serious has been the failure of the Governments themselves to set on foot the large scale cultivation of vegetables by their own agencies. The Army has done something. In fact it has done quite a lot in this respect in certain areas. But the Civil Governments are content to sit back and do nothing. Why should there not be a large scale movement to that end organized and led by every Government in this country?

Let me remind this House of what happened in the United Kingdom in the dark days of the middle of the last war. Britain was being brought near to the verge of starvation by the U-boat campaign. People did not sit down and say 'what can we do'. Government and the people got together and organized the greatest allotment movement ever known in the whole of history. That

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movement through a dark and difficult period was the salvation of Britain. Why don't we do the same?

Dr. P. N. Banerjee (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): The Government does not work with us. We do not know the Government.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: Then why don't you and I—and even you Mr. President, if presidential duties are compatible with gardening,—determine to take part in a movement like this? It is no use sitting back waiting for Government. Governments will always be supine and particularly in this country. We cannot blame Government for this silence if we are supine ourselves. Let us get busy today and see that such extra food as can be produced in this country is in fact produced. I could go on giving examples by the dozen. I could talk of the possibilities of breeding fish in East Bengal. I could remind this House that as far back as 1928 the Royal Commission on Agriculture pointed out that fish culture would be the quickest way of improving the food-supply of this country. If only we had carried out 50 per cent. of its recommendations! (*An Honourable Member:* "You want boats.")—You do not want boats to catch fish from tanks! Then this country would have been in a better position than it is today. (*Interruptions.*) Don't let us always be talking about what somebody else ought to do. Let us talk about what we can do.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Oh, oh! But who are you? You are not an Indian?

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: I claim to be as much interested in saving the lives of people in this country as Prof. Ranga. If not, I should be ashamed of talking in this Assembly.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Anyone should be ashamed to talk as you do, especially when he repeatedly claims to belong to a foreign country!

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

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: There is plenty of room for more energy in the growing of more food in this country.

Now to turn briefly to procurement. Wastage in certain provinces has become a scandal. The official figures of wastage are far below the wastage really assessed by those who have expert knowledge of the trade. I am not being unduly critical because I recognise that for officials, trained as I was trained myself in an entirely different line of life, it is difficult to take over something new of that kind. My complaint against the official world is not so much its failure to do what was required as its failure at a sufficiently early stage to bring in those people who had the expert knowledge. They have started doing it now but they have done it late in the day. So in the sphere of procurement and storage, weak administration has been largely responsible for our troubles.

Then, I come to the sphere of price control. I cannot stop to talk of price control with regard to grain except to say that we have not made much progress towards that ideal of a uniform statutory price control which was set forth in the report of the Food Grains Policy Committee. But I want to talk mainly in the few minutes remaining to me about price control with regard to the non-cereal foods. The facts are too well-known. Everyone knows that in Calcutta today you pay Rs. 7 or Rs. 8 for a seer of fish and everyone knows that fish is passing out of the diet of the ordinary middle class person in Bengal. The Bengali community have been eaters of fish for centuries past. It may be said that to the Bengali fish-eating is as natural as making public speeches. But to-day in Calcutta it is a faculty for the exercise of which, unlike that of public speaking, he is not now being given the opportunity. Fish at Rs. 7 a seer, with no serious attempt made by Government to do anything about it, is in itself enough to condemn the food administration of this country.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: Government is not aware of it!

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: The Food Member is listening carefully now. Perhaps he will be aware of it!

I realise that rationing is out of the question. Where rationing is out of the question, there the strictest possible price control is all the more important.

I have spoken about fish. I could equally well have spoken about potatoes. They are selling for Rs. 2/8 a seer in Calcutta. The Government made an attempt to sell potatoes at ten annas a seer. Labourers, coolies and others lined up, bought the potatoes, then sold them to shop-keepers who in turn sold them at Rs. 2/8 a seer. Government must know of this fact. It has taken no deterrent action to prevent that. Even in Bombay there has been a failure in this matter of price control. Again and again the European Association of Bombay has forced on the attention of Government steps which might be taken to deal with the situation which has now arisen. Always the reply has been the same—that the measures suggested are impracticable: that the Provincial Government in consultation with the Central Government has taken all possible steps. This is an old phrase. We have heard it so often. I can only say this. If they have taken all possible steps and if they have failed to achieve any result, then for heaven's sake let them try some impossible steps. It is not so long ago that we were told that rationing would be impossible in India. When the various Governments were forced into it, the impossibility melted away.

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

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: To summarise what I have been saying. While we are satisfied with policy, we are not satisfied with administration. The biggest task lying ahead of the Government of India is to do something about strengthening the food situation at the Centre and in the Provinces in every possible way. If that means getting in more people, then more people must be got in. If these people are not available elsewhere they must be got back from the Army. Indian and European officers should be brought in from the Army to strengthen the food administration wherever necessary. This must be regarded as of paramount importance and an integral part of the war effort.

Finally, one problem to which I do wish to draw attention is the problem of Calcutta. The decision last year to take Calcutta out of Bengal and to supply Calcutta from outside was the greatest step forward in solving the food difficulties. Its effect was not only material but psychological. In my view it is essential that the Central Government should continue its policy of making itself responsible for the food supplies of Calcutta.

I notice the Honourable the Food Member looking worried. Let me assure him that other people will look far more worried if he tries to discontinue that policy.

Food is not a question of laying down a policy. It is a question of seeing that that policy is carried out. If the Honourable the Food Member can do this, if he can build up a sound, effective food administration, he will help to tide over the difficult twelve months that lie ahead and he will earn the gratitude, not only of this House, but of posterity.

Mr. Satya Narayan Sinha (Darbhanga *cum* Saran: Non-Muhammadan): I would be failing in my duty if I do not acquaint this House with the situation with regard to food in the part of the country from which I come, I mean Bihar. Perhaps, Sir, you are aware that this part of the country was so rich and fertile that it was rightly characterised "The Garden of India". Today it is a God-forsaken land. It is not possible for me, at any rate adequately to describe the miseries and sufferings of the people who are living there. They simply beggar description. The District of Darbhanga, which is my home district, was and still is a surplus rice-producing district in Bihar. But what do you find there today? In the last two and a half years a very large population is living on rotten potatoes and roots, which have absolutely no nutritional value and which were formerly consumed by animals only. The result has been that people have lost all power of resistance and they are dying of malaria and cholera like flies. The medical experts are all unanimously of the opinion that the prevalence of epidemics is due to malnutrition and nothing else. You must have read in the papers that epidemics in

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North Bihar have played havoc and still are playing havoc there. The Governor of Bihar who visited the area recently was constrained to admit that the situation was disturbing. He has candidly admitted at a public conference that the deaths due to epidemics in North Bihar were two lakhs in the course of a few months and who were these people? The poor *kisans* and *masJoors*. There are hundreds of villages which have been depopulated, hundreds of families have been completely wiped out. The tale of woe will stagger any man who has got a human heart.

Sir, you are aware that in Bengal last year lakhs of people died of starvation and I am told that deaths are taking place still today in that unfortunate province for want of food. I am an officer in charge of the North Bihar Co-operative Relief Committee, which has recently been organised to give succour to the dying people and I tell you from my own personal experience that in that area we distribute medicines and the patients are cured but they would get a relapse if they do not get proper diet. It is not possible for any non-official organisation to provide food for such a large population. It is the duty of the State and State alone. I would like to tell you that this condition has been brought about, in my humble opinion, due to the large purchases of grains made by the Government for purposes of hoarding and exporting them to foreign countries. It is a common secret that in the Government godowns lakhs of maunds of grains have decomposed and have been thrown away, while people have died of starvation. In the last month I had been to Calcutta and at a railway station the terrible stench coming out of the decomposed grains, which were thrown away, one could not easily stand. They could not properly estimate their requirements with the result that the large purchases by Government increased the price of food stuffs so much so that it went beyond the average reach of the ordinary people.

The second thing is this control business. It is my definite opinion, however good and useful the control policy may be, in actual practice in this country I find that it has proved ruinous. Only two classes of people have been benefited by it, *viz.*, the officials who are in charge of control and the agents who have the monopoly of the sale of those controlled goods. But have the real producers got anything? Nothing at all. As soon as any commodity is controlled, it has a knack of disappearing from the regular market and it can be obtained only from the black market at a rate which an ordinary man cannot afford.

About corruption in this Department the less said the better. It is a common talk in the streets that the new class of bribe-takers have beaten absolutely hollow the police of this country who are notorious for bribe-taking. Certain foods which are required first for patients and sick people find their way straight to the officials as soon as they are received in the market and the civilian population suffer terribly for want of them.

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

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

Mr. Satya Narayan Sinha: Mr. Deputy President, I was talking about this control business when the Assembly adjourned for lunch. Certain foods which are required first for the patients and the sick persons find their way straight to the officials as soon as they are received in the market, and the civilian population suffer terribly for want of them. I would give you, Sir, only one illustration: take for instance Horlick's milk. You know that in certain diseases it is very badly required for the patients, but what happens in our part of the country? As soon as tins of Horlicks which have become very rare are received in the market, they find their way straight to the houses of officials who, I know, use them for daily consumption in the place of milk.

Sir, we are today faced with a situation which is unprecedented in the history of any civilised country. Can you imagine, Sir, this state of affairs

being tolerated in any country except in this unfortunate country of ours? No Government worth the name can exist for a single day where people die in lakhs by starvation and diseases which can be easily remedied and cured. In this country, in the course of the last two years and a half, deaths due to starvation are many times greater than the total deaths of soldiers of the British Empire in this war. I ask if even Mr. Churchill, who is considered indispensable for his country, will be tolerated even for one day if even a thousandth part of the deaths which have taken place in this country take place in England. The old saying is more applicable to this House or rather to the Government of this country than anywhere else—when Rome was burning Nero was fiddling. While people are dying in lakhs, I find the people in charge of the life and health of this country are going on merrily. We know that our voice in this House is a voice in the wilderness. We quite realise our helplessness in this House and I find that the Members opposite feel that they are fully entrenched. It is a fact. But, Mr. Deputy President, we believe in a destiny which rules above everything, and I am quite sure that sooner rather than later the day of reckoning is bound to overtake them and they will have to give account for the deaths of the dumb millions which have taken place due to mal-administration and to callousness on their part. With these words I resume my seat.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi (Dacca *cum* Mymensingh : Muhammadan Rural) : Mr. Deputy President, my Honourable friend Mr. Griffiths who visited the United Kingdom very recently told this House this morning that so far as that country was concerned the Government there had completed food arrangements before the declaration of the war in 1939. The Government in India did nothing of the kind till 1942. They did not even have statistics as to what quantity of food was available and whether there was sufficient food for the existing population; they never considered that that population might be increased considerably on account of the war. From the very first, I should say, the Government should have realised that owing to the advent of a new consuming class and the arrival of a large army from outside in various branches of the fighting forces, India's economic difficulty would comprise not merely food grains but also such food articles as milk, fish, meat, poultry, vegetables, ghee, butter, etc.

Before proceeding to the point that I have just raised may I bring to the notice of this Honourable House a pamphlet in my possession as to what is the position in the United Kingdom since the declaration of war. The United Kingdom Government are not only looking to the proper quantity of food available for the Britishers but even to the proper quality. So far as quality is concerned we have done nothing. Quality is no consideration with us in this country. Rotten food is sold at prohibitive prices. I am talking particularly of Bengal. In the United Kingdom, apart from eggs, fruits and particularly oranges are being provided to every citizen. Government are providing vitaminised bread and margarine; they are also including some special body-building substance in the bread-flour which is being issued to the bakeries and catering establishments. The result in that country is that the health of the average Britisher today is better than what it was even before the war. Undoubtedly, I admit that a good deal has been done by way of better distribution of food grains throughout India, and particularly planning of transport for this purpose. But the net result in the production and distribution of other food articles is still unsatisfactory. I am putting a question to my Honourable friend the Food Member: Let him say how can a Government official or an assistant, drawing a pay of say, Rs. 100—the vast bulk is under that pay—make his two ends meet under the present circumstances. Sir, in 1943, the then Food Member, the Honourable Sir Azizul Huque visualised the difficulty, as regards food products other than the food grains. During the food debate in this House he specially referred to the question of production of vegetables in Bengal, particularly potatoes and onions. He referred that question to the

[Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi]

Bengal Government and warned them that it was high time they should try and, as far as possible, grow more potatoes and onions. What was the reply? The Government of Bengal in the beginning of 1943 did not think of taking any steps at all. On the other hand, they informed the Government of India that there was plenty of potatoes and onions in Bengal and that there need be no apprehension about their availability. What is the position today? Potatoes cannot be had at less than Rs. 1/4 per seer. What have they been doing? My friend Mr. Griffiths said that 'grow more food' campaign was a success to a certain extent. I say it is not only not a success but it has completely failed. The reason is this. The Provincial Governments have not taken that matter seriously. Apart from the seeds, what is the propaganda that the Provincial Governments are doing for the 'grow more food' campaign. So far as Bengal is concerned, the propaganda is a lecture or a speech at Peliti's or Firpo's to grow more food. That is my experience of Bengal. Whenever the Honourable Member has gone or even the present Member for Education, Health and Lands has gone to speak on the 'grow more food' subject, the meeting has taken place in a hotel. (*An Honourable Member*: "It is a call in the Hotel to 'Eat more food'".) Another difficulty which we are experiencing in Bengal is that hundreds of thousands of Americans have gone there—fighting men. They do not regard price as any consideration. Their instruction to their agents is this—we want so much cabbage and so much cauliflower at whatever price you can secure. The result is that a cabbage or a cauliflower cannot be had at less than Rs. 1/8 or Rs. 2. (*An Honourable Member*: "Do Americans live on cabbage? Are they vegetarians?") Sir, what is the result. So far as food grains are concerned, the position is better but surely man cannot live only on food grains. During the last famine, for want of food grains, we could see people dying in hundreds and thousands in the streets but now for want of protein food deaths are taking place daily at homes of which we have no statistics. Corporation Health Officer in Calcutta, Dr. Ahmad, in the course of a statement to the Press has said that the devitalization of the people in general at present is playing havoc in Bengal. And that is due to want of protein food. (*An Honourable Member*: "Fish?"). Yes. Fish is selling at Rs. 6 per seer. Here is a statement published in the issue of the *Statesman* of the 21st of April 1944. The rise in prices of articles of food in Bengal has shown an increase of over 250 per cent. over the level of 1941. It was much cheaper in 1939. It was still cheaper in 1940 but the biggest rise has taken place in 1941. Even these figures are much lower than what we are now asked to pay in my province. I will give one or two instances. Here is what the *Statesman* says. Mutton which was priced in 1941 at 6 annas per seer cannot be had now for less than Rs. 1/8. This figure is not correct, for it cannot be had for less than Rs. 2. That is my information. Then poultry and chicken . . . (*An Honourable Member*: "This is all rich man's food. Come to the common man."). Yes, I am coming to that, after disposing of the chicken. Eight annas was the price in 1941. It is Rs. 1/4 now. Fowl which was 8 annas is Rs. 3 now. I will not say anything more about this.

I now come to the common people's food. Leave alone vegetables like cauliflowers. Take ordinary vegetables like brinjals, ginger, green chillies, ladies' finger and so on. The price has increased 400 times over the prices in 1941: Take beans. It was 5 annas in 1941. Today it is 1/4 per seer. How can the poor man afford to buy and eat it at that price? These brinjals are ordinary food for the poor people and they could certainly grow more of them but they have not done it. The speeches that they make in the hotels or parties will not grow more food. The price of brinjals in 1941 was 2 annas a seer and before the war it used to be 2 pice per seer but it has gone up to 14 annas per seer. Then, take the case of *paluvals*. Their price was 3 annas per seer in 1941 and it is now one rupee per seer. Now, what is the cumulative effect of the shortage of other foods? It is this that doctors have said that not only in Bengal but everywhere people have not got the strength to bear any disease and they will die in hundreds and thousands, of which you will have no

statistics because they will be shown as having died of some disease. But their deaths will really be due to want of protein food which unfortunately they cannot get.

My Honourable friend Mr. Griffiths has informed the House and I agree entirely with him and I would like also to give the same warning. Calcutta and the Greater Calcutta must be fed by the Centre.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official) Why?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: I will tell you why. If you leave it to the Bengal Government . . .

Mr. N. M. Joshi: You have no confidence in it?

Sir Abdūl Halim Ghuznavi: Nothing of the kind. If you leave it to the Bengal Government, the result will be that for feeding Calcutta and the Greater Calcutta they will have to purchase rice in the mofassil and it will be sold at a much higher price in Calcutta, and the Greater Calcutta is a suburb of Calcutta where the mills are situated. Therefore, my point is: feed it from the Centre. You buy the surplus grains which are available in Bengal and stock it but do not allow the Province to interfere with the feeding of Calcutta and the Greater Calcutta. I give you this warning that the famine of the type we had in 1943 will come again. But the Government of India can surely buy any surplus food grains that may be available in Bengal.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Honourable Member has one minute more.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Very well, I will finish my speech in one minute. What was the population of Calcutta in 1939 before the war? The population of Calcutta then was 18 lakhs and today it is 36 lakhs. It has been doubled. The army and the men who have come to work in connection with the war effort and the increased number of mill hands have doubled the population. On the top of that there is the army which has come.

Sir, I have finished.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa: Muhammadan): Sir, I do not propose to discuss at length the points that have already been dealt with. I am certainly glad that my Honourable friend Mr. Griffiths has made the position definitely clear as it exists today, and if a man in his position can understand the gravity of the situation, you can imagine what experiences we have to relate here. But I have neither the time nor a desire to dilate on them at length. The only point which I want to bring home is that in the last debate which took place in November 1943 the Honourable the Food Member gave us an assurance that under the revised basic plan they will secure as clear an account as possible of the surpluses and deficits and will move the surplus to the deficit areas without much delay. He did not make any categorical statement of the efforts that were made by his Department to implement the assurance that he gave to the House. Mr. Griffiths has, of course, pointed out that the different provinces were asked to file their lists of production, but there was none to verify them or to find out whether the statements that were filed were even worth the paper on which they were written.

Sir, I want to make out the point that although we have been having the discussion of the food situation for over two years now in this House and at different stages the Government Members had been giving us assurances, yet they have not been able to either convince their own selves or this House that they have acted in the manner in which they proposed to act or they acted in the spirit in which they gave the assurances. Mr. Griffiths has pointed out that in England where conditions are more difficult to manage and where the food position should have been far worse than in a country like India which had been self-sufficient from the point of view of the food supply, things have not been at all very bad. On the other hand, we notice that the conditions in United Kingdom are definitely better. The other day Sir Muhammad Azizul Huque in reply to a question of Mr. Manu Subedar said that in America the index prices have increased by only 26 per cent. whereas in India the index

[Mr. Muhammad Nauman]

price today is at the level of 182 per cent. as compared to index of prices in 1939. And this is calculated on the basis of the control rates of commodities that the Civil Supplies Department and the Food Department have published. We all know that probably 90 per cent. of the commodities of civil supplies have had to be purchased in the black markets in spite of all the paraphernalia of staff the Civil Supply Department has got for the so called "Control". The same is the story so far as non-cereal commodities are concerned. There also the black marketeers were encouraged and they have thrived at the connivance of the Government, whether it was the Provincial Government or the Central Government or whether it was the case of a few individuals who were in charge at different places, or whether it was the Sub-Divisional Officer or the District Magistrate or some other officer of a higher status and position; the fact remains that there has not been any appreciable improvement anywhere in the matter of lowering the prices. It may be argued by some people that if a control was not introduced and if the Food Department had not come into existence, things would have been still worse. For arguments sake I may concede that point. But we have got to see what you have been able to do after making such an elaborate arrangement and after having such a big paraphernalia of the two Departments and the control orders issued by the Central Government in Consultation or in Co-operation with all the Provincial Governments. The three essential points are procurement, distribution and,—an important or impertinent point,—wastage. About procurement it was suggested by Sir

3 P.M. Cowasjee Jehangir in November 1943 that it should be made at the base, that is, directly through the agriculturists and at prices which could reasonably be fixed in consultation with the agriculture interests. This was not done. The Provincial Governments were authorised to procure these food grains in any manner they thought fit. There have been definite allegations that they were making profits at the cost of the consumer and of the peasants and there was agitation in the press about it for a long time. This matter was brought to the notice of the Government of India by definite expressions of opinions but Government attitude was that no notice of these would be taken.

The other point is about wastage,—I shall speak about distribution later. As regards wastage, it was brought out only the other day through questions that thousands of tons of wheat flour which were stored in Calcutta and other places had to be burnt or sold for manure purposes. The most pertinent point is that whatever was sold in Calcutta ration shops was in many cases not at all fit for human consumption. And it was not consumed by the public but thrown away. No statistics of that was kept or prepared by Government, although on many occasions letters were sent to the different departments, allegations were made in the press that the quality of rice and flour and pulses was extremely bad. No heed was paid to all that. In a ration shop you were forced to take what was placed for your use; whether it was fit for consumption or not was no concern of that shop or of this Government. The poor man who paid for it had to throw it away or take it at the risk of his life.

My friend Mr. Satya Narayan Sinha has correctly dealt with the situation in Bihar, how malaria, cholera and other diseases prevail as the immediate after-effects of malnutrition, supply of deteriorated and rotten stuff. This is creating far more havoc than the condition of famine would create. There are medical opinions that the quality of the food has deteriorated and it is deficient in the necessary vitamins and proteins on account of the high rates existing for non-cereals commodities like vegetables, etc.

I will now deal with the question of distribution. The cities and towns have got rationing arrangements now and I have experience of two cities, Calcutta and Patna. In Calcutta the quality of food that we get is definitely far inferior to what we get in Patna or Delhi. So Patna is in that respect better off under Rai Bahadur Mazumdar, the Controller; but the point is what price we have to pay in these ration shops. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in London said on the 26th June 1943 that prices in England were only about

15 per cent. over the pre-war prices of 1939. The index price in America is today only 26 per cent. over the 1939 figure but in India it is 182 per cent. higher in spite of controls. The price of food grains has gone up by about 300 to 400 per cent. Hapur wheat used to sell for Rs. 8/4 a maund, and now it sells at Rs. 11. At Patna good quality rice used to be sold at Rs. 4 per maund and now it is Rs. 12 at ration Shops. The Food Member felt happy in saying that there has been a reduction in the price by a few annas and he wanted to take credit for that. But does he know that even now the consumer is paying 400 per cent. over the 1939 prices? Of course you cannot reduce the price of foodstuffs alone because that will make the condition of the agriculturist very much hopeless and perilous. You must bring down the prices of all other things like medicines, coal, cloth and, etc., and the other essentials of life like kerosene oil, etc. The index price should be brought down to the 1939 level which Government can do if they wanted to do. But there is no honesty of purpose and no sincerity of desire to do so. The whole purpose of control or fixing a ceiling price should be to bring back pre-war conditions, not only in one commodity but in all commodities simultaneously which this country can produce or procure. Of course it may be said that you cannot control articles that are imported and which you are compelled to purchase at the price demanded by foreign markets. That is not the issue here. The point is that you have controlled all the commodities that this country is able to produce. At what prices have you done so and at what prices are you maintaining them? You are not importing wheat except to a very limited extent. You are not importing sugar, you are not importing cloth. Most of them are Indian produce and Indian manufacture and Indian made and you can very well control them.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Does my Honourable friend suggest that we are not importing wheat?

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: I said you are importing a very limited quantity of wheat. I want to make it clear that in the case of these commodities the Government have fixed the ceiling price and they are not trying to bring down prices to the normal level by and by. Within these two years have you been able to do something more in the direction of bringing down the prices? Not at all, otherwise they would not have been what they are today. The Honourable Food Member may say that at one time rice was not being available even at Rs. 30 per maund in Calcutta. That is not good enough. It was chaos, it was famine then. It was not a condition expected of any civilised Government. What I want to impress is this. That was an unnatural condition and no reliance can be placed on those conditions or on prices then raging for a few days or few months.

The question of cereals and non-cereals has already been discussed. I would say that not only food grains, but also vegetables and allied articles of food are being sold at exorbitant rates. In Calcutta, mutton is selling at Rs. 3-8-0 a seer. Fish which at one time used to sell at six to eight annas a seer went up to Rs. 10 a seer on a particular day. In Patna, meat which used to sell at four to six annas per seer is now about Rs. 1-8-0. There is no control of any kind and all these commodities are being consumed by the military department, I mean the personnel who are engaged with the military in India. With the inflated currency, the military people are able to purchase at any price, outbidding common people. Under such circumstances, what is the duty of any Government? It is no use issuing ration cards for wheat, rice and sugar only and for nothing else on this earth. That is the ration in Delhi, in Patna and everywhere. Is a man expected to live only on these two or three commodities? They may be essentials of the highest importance, but is it not necessary that if you want to have control and distribution on a wider scale, you should include all the commodities that are necessities of life in the ration list. A word about 'grow more food' campaign.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member has one minute more.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: This question of 'grow more food' has received only lip sympathy. The Government made no arrangement to give financial aid to agriculturists for the procurement of seeds, manures and other things necessary for the 'grow more food' campaign. With these words, I resume my seat.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall (Member for Railways and War Transport): Do I understand the Honourable Member to say that the price of food grains should be brought down to pre-war level?

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: Provided the prices of all other things are also brought down to the same level.

Mrs. Renuka Ray (Nominated Non-Official): With your permission, I should like to place before this House first of all my actual experience of the conditions I found during my tour of the interior districts of Bengal in September last. I think we are all aware that there is a general deterioration of the food situation in the whole country, and although it is no doubt far more acute in the areas that I visited we must not forget that Assam, Orissa, Malabar, parts of U. P., and parts of Bihar are almost in the same condition as Bengal. We are apt to come to conclusions and make hasty generalisations about conditions in our country from what the conditions are in cities, or at the most our vision may extend to urban areas. But at the risk of repeating a trite but true fact, I should like to say that we forget that India is a land of villages and the village is the backbone of our economy. Sir, the plight and the condition of the cities or whatever complaints the city dwellers may have in regard to food situation can give no indication of the plight of the villages of India. Enforcement of the Vagrancy Act in Calcutta has made it still more difficult for city dwellers to understand what is happening outside and they will no doubt be protected now from any very harrowing sights of the type they saw last year. The Honourable Food Member told us, and it is no doubt true that there has been daily effective price control in regard to food grains, that rice is selling at Rs. 13 to Rs. 15 a maund. How has it benefited the village population in this country? In the areas and the places, that I have visited particularly in villages, I found men, women and children utterly destitute, and these, I may remind the House, are not proverbial beggars about whom we have wonderful complacency. These are village folk who two years back had a definite place in the village structure, who had homestead in the villages, but today they are homeless and wandering. Sir, we see women and children devitalised, emaciated beyond control, wandering in the village homeless, living on rice water, begging from door to door, sleeping under the open sky in rain and storm. As regards the men folk some of them died in the last famine, others were ailing. We heard the most pitiable tales from these women. Many of them have had to sell themselves, or their daughters, so that the family should survive. This is not only true of the villages, but perhaps it is even more true of the urban areas, and this is a problem which has become more and more acute. The shame that covers them is a shame that covers every Indian woman today and the indictment against those who are responsible in the way that they tolerate such things, whether they be the authorities or the richer classes in the country, is a very heavy one indeed. Death by starvation is no doubt on the decline, but death from malnutrition, death from effects of undernourishment and disease has taken a very heavy toll in the districts. It may be said that when there is bumper crop, bumper harvest in Bengal, why is it not possible for the agriculturist to come to the aid of those who are destitute by giving them employment and thus saving the rural village economy? Sir, the answer lies in the fact that it is only the price of certain foodgrains that has been controlled and prices of other food-stuffs are soaring high. I won't go into details because previous speakers have told you the conditions. Prices in cities, let me tell you, are far worse than in villages, when incomes are compared. You must also remember

that there are very large numbers of these agriculturists who are very small cultivators. The yield of their cultivable land is not very much and leaves very little surplus over their own requirements for sale, and it is not possible for them to meet their own necessities. How can they meet the necessities of others? I think the number of small holdings is 40 per cent. and neither these small cultivators nor the landless labour can be benefited very much by the control of foodgrains in this country. Turning to other articles of food, we find that salt is selling in some places at Rs. 1/8 to Rs. 2 per seer. We know that there is fish famine and milk famine. The condition is even worse in the villages, especially of artisans and of fishermen. Those who know Chandpur in the days of old and how the fishermen flourished there, can tell from a superficial survey of that part of the country that things are very different now. Last year I saw no boats in the rivers of Bengal. This year there were some here and there, but the beautiful scenes of hundreds and hundreds of sailing boats on the rivers of East Bengal are still absent. We hear so much that boats are being constructed, but no one knows how long it will be before we have enough of them and, in the meantime, these people starve and consumers are faced with fish famine.

Sir, we hear a great deal about rehabilitation and we realize its urgency. Let me tell you on behalf of those voluntary organisations and individuals who actually do the rehabilitation work how great the difficulties are. I do not say that it is true only of voluntary organisations, but I have seen officials—responsible officials—both in districts and in sub-divisions who have initiated work and are trying hard to ease the situation and it is not possible for them to do anything until the root causes are tackled and tackled effectively. I will give you an example of one village where we have been trying to work. It is the village of those who make cane products, such as baskets. When things are ready it is very difficult to transport them even to the next village. Marketing is very difficult and transport difficulties in the interior are acute. It is not enough to do rehabilitation work on these lines, although I do not want for one moment to say that those who are undertaking it are not doing something very useful. India, Sir, is a land of vast natural resources, a land which Nature intended as a land of plenty, but for more than a century it has become a land where food has gradually deteriorated and people are starving. I will quote an authority on this subject. A former Director of Public Health in Bengal said:

"That the people of this province are on a diet that even rats cannot survive for more than a few weeks. Eighty millions of the people of India are perpetually hungry. . . ."

And this was said in the days which we considered normal times and today in spite of the best efforts that may have been put in by the Government I claim that conditions are very much worse.

Sir, if we turn to the food policies of other countries like the United States and Britain, we find that they have been based on nutritional considerations and a well planned programme of food production and distribution, after an estimation of requirements has been followed. Price control over all commodities since the war began has been effective. Mr. Griffiths spoke this morning and said that these things were more effective in England because public conscience was aroused. Well, that certainly is true, but you have also to consider that that is a country where there is 98 per cent. of literacy. In India the standard of literacy is 8 per cent. How can you expect public conscience of villagers of this country to go up to the level of the United Kingdom? Quite apart from public conscience, let me tell you that even there people alone could not have done anything. The success that they have achieved is due to the fact that Government is giving generous subsidies. We find that huge and generous food subsidies are paid. In so small a country a subsidy of 102 million pounds was paid in 1942 to the growers of food and that naturally makes the Grow More Food campaign a real and a living thing. It is also perhaps the most effective way by which prices can be lowered for the consumer without hurting the cultivator. If

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prevents anti-social hoarding, distributes the burden and makes it possible for food to reach all.

Then, Sir, 70 million pounds is paid in Britain for giving free and cheap milk to children. This brings me to the most important problem in this country—milk famine. I would draw the attention both of the authorities and of the public to this, for if the present situation continues—it is becoming more and more acute in villages, in towns, in cities, everywhere—decay and deterioration of our race is certain. It is for this reason that the All-India Women's Conference has placed this as a major item of work for the year. First of all, I think, we must have the slaughter of cattle entirely banned. Cattle farming and care of cattle should be encouraged by giving generous subsidies to farmers. Milk subsidies should be encouraged and the most important point is that there should be strict rationing of all milk available today. Milk should be made available for children, for nursing mothers, and for invalids. Luxury products—food for the rich—should be entirely banned until such time as there is enough food for the babies of India. Distribution should be properly adjusted. There should be a sufficient number of cheap and free milk canteens for children. I would appeal to every Member in this House not to rest content until we are satisfied that we have been able to obtain enough milk so that our children can survive, so that they can be able-bodied, so that they can be healthy specimens and pride of free India.

I would like very much to agree with the Honourable the Food Member when he says that public confidence has been restored. It may be true that panic to a large extent has been alleviated, but if the Government has to restore public confidence they must convince the people that they are working in the interest of the people, and they should get their co-operation, and then alone public confidence will be restored and then we can expect normal times to come back.

Mr. K. S. Gupta (Ganjam *cum* Vizagapatam: Non-Muhammadan Rural):

It is my lot to speak of two provinces. One is Orissa and the other is Andhra because my constituency spreads over the two provinces of old Ganjam and the present Vizagapatam. In my last speech, *i.e.*, on the food debate in November 1943 I expressed the woes of Orissa, how people were suffering from want of food, yet the Orissa Government was exporting rice in large quantities. Perhaps that speech of mine brought down the Orissa Premier from Orissa to Delhi and took Lord Wavell from Delhi to Orissa, that is Cuttack. They have seen with their own eyes the conditions prevailing in Orissa. Something was done but Orissa is still in the grip of a famine and the export of rice is still continuing. It is not a happy sign.

Coming to my district, here is a telegram from a far off place like Sompeta. Perhaps this is a copy of the telegram sent to the Honourable the Food Member:

Two coppers, rice taluqa people starving pray sanction more. Sinderi Ram Swami, Sompeta."

This shows how appalling are the conditions of the rural areas. How on earth can an adult get on with 1/8 measure? A measure is something like 40 tolas in my district and 1/8 means 5 tolas per head per day. If rationing is on this model let it not be prevailing in India. It may be child's play in England but it is the demon's play in India. If this is the kind of rationing that must be in the rural parts of my constituency, away with it.

The other day one of our friends on the other side asked me: How are the people getting on in your part of the country? I told him we are living on *gajarajaboga*. It has a very big and rough grain. It was given to elephants before the war and is now used by civilians, by gentleman of your and my stamp. This has been the root of the trouble of cholera spreading like wild fire in Vizagapatam, that famous place which was first visited by the Japs on the

6th April 1942 where the military is very strong. Cholera spread to the military—thank God! At once there was a flutter in the medical world, in the police world, in the military world. There was a great conference of all the medical men in the district. They found out that the supply of this abominable rice was responsible for the spread of cholera. It was stopped and the cholera stopped in a week. *Gajaraja* was sent to the forests!

In the papers we hear of hundreds of villages being depopulated. There is a place called Kottarevu in the coastal belt of Ganjam. It had a population of 2,000 before the war. Now it is near about 1,000. What has become of the other one thousand in four years? They have died of cholera, then malaria and afterwards from a peculiar disease which, in the beginning, is only a skin disease. It then develops into a sore. It spreads throughout the body until the whole of it becomes soft and the man dies within 24 hours of that. Here, Sir, I have got photos to show how appalling are the conditions of the people who are dying in thousands after suffering terribly.

(Exhibits photos to Assembly.)

There are rural dispensaries but they are apologies of dispensaries. They have neither medicines nor doctors. One doctor was telling me that it is impossible to find out what this disease is. He, however, felt that it was due to mal-nutrition that this disease was spreading. This remark was sent to the Health Inspector of the village and through him to the Tehsildar. He did not know what to do so he forwarded it to the District Magistrate. The next morning comes the Fatwa: "No such complaints hereafter. I cannot tolerate them. If there is malaria, there is the rural dispensary. If there is medicine they will get it, or else die." That is the attitude taken by the officials and the truth is not allowed to be given out. The members on the opposite may say 'there are no complaints'. How can you have complaints? If I write a letter from Vizagapatam, even about cholera, it is censored and I am sent to jail for it. And suppose the letter reaches, he cannot make a complaint to anybody else. Even officers are not permitted to make complaints. Such is the maladministration which is rooted deep in the rural administration of yours. You may be proud of it; you may be complacent about it. You may feel very happy for the coming era of plenty. Sir, you are disappointed. You will be deceived. Self-deception is the worst offence that one can commit. Please do not be a victim to it.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Hear, hear. Self-deception.

Mr. K. S. Gupta: There are certain villages which are deserted. Here is a photo of a deserted village—not of Goldsmith.

(Exhibits a photo to Assembly.)

These are the conditions. I will now tell you something of the urban areas. I come from a place which is so called urban. There we were getting half a seer of rice as ration. That is 40 tolas in weight. Sometime God knows why, it was reduced to half of 40, i.e., 20 tolas per day per head and 10 tolas for a child under 12.

Sir, we have got instead of one or two Tahsildars—several—1. the Distribution Tahsildar, 2. the Reception Tahsildar, 3. the Construction Tahsildar, 4. the Ration Tahsildar, 5. the Destruction Tahsildar, and so many other Tahsildars, yet the people are allowed to suffer. There is a village called Gajapatnagra, 14 miles away from Vizianagram. People come from that village to Vizianagram once a week to take their ration cards for 1/4 seer, i.e., 20 tolas of rice per day per week. They were sleeping on the road one night. It so happened that I had to pass through that road. I woke up some people there and asked them what they meant by sleeping on the roadside. They said "What are we to do? The Tahsildar who is in charge of rationing has got to do other business as well and he is absent. We have to wait till the morning". All of them were foodless—For 24 hours—They were sleeping on the hard metalled road without food. They have to go 14 miles up and down to take their ration cards. That is the condition in the rural areas.

[Mr. K. S. Gupta]

Here is another telegram from the producers. The consumers as well as the producers are suffering in the same manner. Perhaps the Food Member has also received a copy of this telegram. The telegram says:

'Andhra Kisans plead higher purchasing power through higher prices for agricultural goods to meet heavy cost of agriculture. Pray two maunds paddy minimum, Rs. 12 at kisan's home. Oppose asking lower prices food grains proletariat professionals may be given more wages but should not agitate lowering food prices. Letter follows: Subbiah, Secretary, Andhra Ryots' Association and Paddy Growers Council, Andhra.'

What becomes of the producer and the consumer? They are not taken into consideration. But who looms large between the two? It is the middleman. The Government has created a third class and that is the middleman's. Who is he? He acts as a buffer—between the Government and the producer. He always puts his trust in the Government and the Government trusts the middleman but not the producer. The producer has to part with certain stocks at a price less than what it costs him to produce. In these days when you cry hoarse with regard to the Grow More Food campaign, which is mere bunkum or humbug to expect the peasant to grow more food when he is not given the necessary materials? Not an acre has been added to the paddy-growing area. In Vizagapatam and Vizianagaram we were having beautiful rice, because we are midway between Berhampur and Jaipur. Excellent rice was available in the markets of Vizagapatam but all that is gone. But where has it gone, underground or overground, I am sure not on the ground. That was the question which one of the members on the other side put. I ask the same question. He gives no answer. If he does not know let him quit his post and someone who is better informed and who is in the know of things will take his place. What happened is this. All the goods are purchased by the military contractors and stored. Only rotten stuffs unfit for human consumption is released for civilian consumption. Do you call it humanity or chivalry? Whatever you call it, it is abominable negligence, it is atrocious and outrageous negligence on the part of the Government which permit only things unfit for human consumption to be released for civilian consumption. I read in the *Statesman* the other day that 40,000 tons of spoilt wheat was sold to a military contractor, who got it cleaned and again resold it to the Government for civilian consumption at a profit of Rs. 48,000. Is it not atrocious? Is it not abominable that what is unfit for human consumption should be sold to the civilian population at a price which is Rs. 48,000 higher? Similarly, I heard (of course it is a very reliable information) that 80,000 tons of dehydrated potatoes were sold in the market which was absolutely unfit for human consumption. Who asked the Government to dehydrate so much quantity which was not required by them and then when it got rotten and unfit for human consumption to release it to the civilian population? The other day at Vizagapatam I saw two tins of ghee reserved and preserved for the military being sold in the market. They contained worms 2 to 3 inches. If it had been sent in Burma where they make a feast of these worms I would have understood it. But please do not sell this dirty ghee in Vizagapatam for civilian consumption when it is unfit for human consumption.

Please note that in India there is a lot of disaffection on account of your maladministration. What is the remedy? You say you have planned. When do you start? When are you going to give effect to your plans? Your plans are wrong from the beginning and when they are administered the result is maladministration, and every thing *malafide* and not *bona fide* with the Government. Sir, Mahatma Gandhi in his letters to the Viceroy has suggested a splendid remedy. The real workers are not the Government and their underlings but those leaders and workers, the Congressmen, who are in jail. Release them. They will come to your rescue, to the rescue of the people who are suffering. They will do all the necessary work. If you don't it means that you do not want the people who are suffering to have their

sufferings alleviated and that you do not like that real workers should be out. But remember that does not go well with you any longer.

I will speak about Black market under the white administration. Palasa is a village, which is of course a railway station. There the black market is open and notorious. Officers of the Government know it, they connive at it and they encourage it. These are the conditions that are prevailing in the rural parts. My friend Mr. Sinha said that Bihar is God forsaken. I may tell you that my part of the country is not only God forsaken but man forgotten.

Mr. K. O. Neogy (Dacca Division; Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, my principal complaint about the speech which the Honourable Member in charge made last week is that it lacked a realistic background. When the Honourable Member made his speech, it seemed to me that it was intended perhaps to be sent to the India Office to serve as a basis for one of those self-righteous speeches of Mr. Amery in which he assures the world that all is well with India. When I read the few lines which the Honourable Member chose to devote to the position of Bengal, I wondered within myself as to whether the Honourable Member forgot the poignancy of the situation with which we are still faced in that hapless province. I am not going to refer to the tragedy that happened last year when, according to our calculation, 30 lakhs of people lost their lives out of sheer hunger. I know how that figure was sought to be minimised by the official statistical cooking agents; but I should on the present occasion begin by quoting the Governor of Bengal as my authority. The Governor of Bengal in a broadcast which he made about six weeks ago gave the number of persons who were on the dole at that time in one shape or another, as two and three-quarter lakhs. 2½ lakhs of people were on the dole in one shape or another about six weeks ago in Bengal. The Governor took care to add that he did not of course say that many more were not having a hard time of it, but that "the extent of distress approaching destitution is not sufficient to cause serious concern". When the Governor gives this figure, we, from our own experience of the policy of Government,—as also experience of the exact practice that obtains in these matters—know that if 2½ lakhs of people were on the dole, according to the admission of the Governor, a very much larger number were actually on the verge of starvation and destitution, who were not receiving the attention that they deserved at the hands of the Government. The Governor was good enough then to refer to the epidemic situation because he himself admitted that when considering the distress we should also consider the state of public health, and he said that malaria had unfortunately reappeared in an epidemic form in some parts of the province. This statement of Mr. Casey was challenged by no less an authority than Dr. B. C. Roy in a very long statement which I have before me now, in which he pointed out that it was wholly inaccurate to say that malaria had reappeared in Bengal, that if anything it was prevailing all the time and it had only reappeared in a much aggravated form. Furthermore, he made out that the number of people afflicted was almost unbelievably high; he gave certain figures and proportions, from which he came to the conclusion that the situation was indeed very grave. He further pointed out that it was wholly inaccurate to say that malaria had appeared in an epidemic form in some parts of Bengal, and asserted that with the exception of the Himalayan tracts in the north, the entire province of Bengal was in the deadly grip of the malaria epidemic. Dr. Roy further pointed out the difficulties in the procurement of medicines. He is at the head of a charitable organisation that is doing splendid work in Bengal, and he cited several instances to show that quinine was either non-obtainable or obtainable only with great difficulty. Only a few days ago, at a meeting of the upper House in Bengal, even the Leader of the European group complained that according to his information, Government's instructions in regard to the distribution of quinine and other anti-malarial drugs were not being properly carried out. I have another official statement before me to indicate that in the first five months of this year as many as 24,59,000 odd patients suffering from malaria had resorted to hospitals

[Mr. K. C. Neogy]

and charitable dispensaries of which statistics are maintained by Government. If about 25 lakhs of people actually resorted to public hospitals and dispensaries, how many more people were silently suffering and perhaps dying without any treatment? When this matter came up for discussion a few days ago in the upper House in Bengal, the Public Health Minister said that everything humanly possible was being done; but he added that so long as people could not be supplied with nutritious food, he did not think that it would be possible to solve the problem of malaria successfully.

If I were now to refer to the testimony of a military officer, Major General Stuart, who in a statement issued in January dealt with this situation, the House would observe how the situation has continued from bad to worse, from January onwards. Referring to his own experience in January—or rather the previous few weeks,—he made out that the mortality from malaria was very high; he also referred to the prevalence of small-pox; he complained that quinine was not available and whatever was available was not of the right kind. Then he said that in almost all the households he himself had visited more than one person had died of malaria and some more were down with it.

A few weeks ago there was a conference of medical men in Calcutta in which they came to the view that at least 40 per cent. of the people of Bengal must be suffering from malaria and that the supply of medicines was inadequate. Leaving aside the countryside, what about Calcutta, which manages to get some amount of attention at least, at the hands of Government? There are two wards in the city municipality of Calcutta which are at the present moment in the grip of malaria, and it has been estimated that about 70 to 75 per cent. of the population living in these two wards are afflicted with malaria; and the testimony of the city municipal health officer has already been quoted by my Honourable friend, Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi in which he has stated, referring to the prevalence of malaria in Calcutta, that one of the factors responsible is the devitalisation of the people in general.

I should like to refer now to another set of statistics. Honourable Members read every morning in their newspaper the number of sick destitute persons who are either admitted to the hospitals in Calcutta or have died in hospitals. I took the trouble of adding up the number for the month of October day by day; and this is what I find: in the month of October 968 sick destitutes were admitted to the hospitals in Calcutta, and 298 of such destitutes died in hospitals in that month. Sir, these figures relating to sick destitutes show that a large number of destitutes who are to be found in the city of Calcutta are dying every month and every day in the hospitals. From our experience we know that hospitals in Calcutta are not too generous in their treatment of the sick destitutes—I have my own personal knowledge in the matter. The House will therefore be in a position to realise from these two figures the extent of distress that prevails. Let the House not be under a misapprehension that these statistics relate to what are called the professional beggar class. They are people who come from all over the country in search of food in Calcutta, lured by the wealth of the city and the fact that it abounds in charitable organisations and charitably minded citizens. And some of them who fall sick and very seriously sick get admitted to the hospitals and they die in these numbers even today.

From all these figures and statements to which I have made reference, the House will know that there is no room for complacency. The situation in Bengal is very, very grave indeed. I am free to admit that more food grains have moved into Bengal. There has been a bumper crop of late and the prospects of the next crop are not altogether bad but, in spite of all this, we have to meet a situation which never arose in the history of British India. The tragedy of last year has left an aftermath which has got to be grappled with, with courage and fortitude on behalf of Government, and with the full co-operation of the people.

4 P.M.

This leads me to the point which my Honourable friend in charge relegated to the end of his speech by way of a peroration. The Honourable Member perhaps thought that his title to be called a Food Member might be challenged in this House. (*An Honourable Member*: "Not at all. He is so fat".) So far his responsibilities have not extended beyond food grains. He may truly be described as the Member for food grains. In order that he might justify his official title he referred to a Food Committee of the Executive Council which, I understand, are considering various matters at a very high level. He said that the principal object of the Committee was the co-ordination of policy at a high level. I am afraid that the height of the level may be so great as not to enable the Honourable Members to realise the miseries of the lowly. I am not going to repeat what has been said already by previous speakers regarding protective food, regarding balanced food and better food. I make bold to assert that if the food of the people of Bengal was not balanced last year, it is less balanced this year. If the people of Bengal did not have a sufficiency of protective food last year, the survivors of the famine have much less of protective food this year, and if the people of Bengal did not have food of the proper quality last year, they are having a much worse quality of food this year.

I might make a passing reference to the fact that, apart from the deterioration in the quality of the rice and the wheat stuffs that are supplied to us, we are accustomed nowadays to have a fair proportion of stone chips mixed with the rice that we take, and I am waiting for my Honourable friend to explain the vitamin value of pebbles.

My Honourable friend in his speech referred to the fact that wastage is a normal incident of storage, and that even before Government interfered with distribution and procurement, normally, taking the prewar figures, there was a wastage of about a million tons every year in the foodstuffs. I am prepared to admit the accuracy of the statement. I am very glad that my Honourable friend Mr. Griffiths said that figures given by Government as regards wastage have got to be taken with a grain of salt, and that the actual wastage perhaps is much more considerable than what appears from Government statements. But apart from that, in the past, before Government came to interfere with procurement and supply, the people were at liberty to pick and choose. It was not possible for the private trader to palm off bad quality of food. It was always possible for the consumer to have his say in the selection of the foodstuffs. Now, what is the present position? Due to Government control, and due particularly to rationing in those places where rationing has been introduced, bad food and unwholesome food is being rammed down our throats with the help of the Defence of India Rules. The question arose in several cases in Bengal as to whether the municipalities had their usual authority to inspect samples of food which were issued to the consumers in the Government controlled shops. There were several instances in which there was a tussle between the municipal authorities and the authorities of the Civil Supply Department, and in one instance I understand that the Advocate General of Bengal gave the opinion that if any action is authorised by the Food Control Act and such action is inconsistent with the Municipal Act, then the latter Act must give way. That is why I was saying that unwholesome food, bad food, is being rammed down our throats with the help of the Defence of India Rules. That was certainly not the position in the pre-war days to which my Honourable friend made reference.

Then again, we find how different departments of Government are at variance with each other over this point. The Mayor of Calcutta stated recently that although Mr. Holland, the Secretary of the Public Health and Local Self Government Department of Bengal, had told the Mayor that he had recommended that the Health Department of the Corporation should be allowed to take samples of foodstuffs from the ration shops, the view of the

[Mr. K. C. Neogy]

Rationing Department was that the Health Department of the Corporation could not be allowed to take such samples. The dispute is yet pending and the Corporation has not succeeded in asserting its authority in the matter in the interests of the consumers of the city of Calcutta.

A casual reference was made by my Honourable friend Mr. Gupta to the policy of censorship that is exercised over the publication of matters referring to the food situation. I have my personal testimony to give to this House. On one occasion, on return from a tour, I wanted a statement to be published on my own authority and the newspaper concerned definitely declined to publish the statement. That is the policy of Government. I would not call it censorship, but various instructions have been issued to the Press to be careful about allowing publicity being given to statements regarding the food situation, particularly the food procurement and food distribution system of Government. (An Honourable Member: "Is it a fact?") Yes. It is a fact. Unfortunately I have not got the instructions before me at the moment. I did possess a set of instructions which were issued to the Press in this connection. I have not got those papers with me at the present moment. I speak from recollection. In one of those sets of instructions, the Press Adviser advised the newspaper editors to be careful about publishing statements which may have been passed through the news agencies. That is to say, they did not want any prominence to be given to items of news which may have been even formally passed by Press Censors. Therefore it seems to me.

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

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I would like to wind up my remarks by saying that the Government must make up its mind to act firmly and solve the enormous difficulties that lie in the way of a complete success of their policy. If they hesitate to do so, then perhaps, behind the Imperial shield, millions of people will have to repose in the serenity of a grave-yard whose boundaries may coincide with the boundaries of the province of Bengal.

Mr. Muhammad Ashar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions; Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I listened with great attention to the speech of my Honourable friend Mr. Griffiths today. He was criticising every act not only of the Administration but also of the organisation of this Food Department and the Food Association. I agree with him so far as he had been attacking the Government and the Government policy. But when he launched in the realm of attacking the public of India, I differed from him entirely. He said that the public ought to co-operate in these food measures adopted by the Government of India and the Provincial Governments. My own assertion is that there are very few organisations in the provinces and I assert it on the floor of this House that the public of the provinces is not being taken into confidence at all. I stand here as a Member of this Assembly and I represent 12 districts of my province and I say it here that they have not approached a single individual who represents the public. This is my charge against the Government and I say it on the floor of this House that it is fact that so long as the Government does not take with it the public of India to organise and help in the organisation of this foodgrains business, it will be impossible to give good grain to the public of India.

Sir, I will quote from the very book which perhaps is under the direction of my friend Mr. Griffiths. It is the *Indian Information* dated the 1st September 1944. On page 202 it is said:

"Much controversy has centred round the question of the quality of foodgrains supplied to deficit provinces, by surplus areas."

So far so good. Then, it goes on:

"The recipient Administrations have complained that the grains supplied have generally been far below the average standards and that inspection arrangements have not worked satisfactorily."

My friend on the other side or even the Government Member cannot possibly deny that the foodgrains that have been supplied to the people of India have been below the eatable standard for human consumption. The report goes on to say:

"The Central Government's position as regards the responsibility for inspection was clarified by Mr. B. R. Sen, the Director General, Food, in the Council of State during food debate last month when he stated that the inspection before the despatch of grains from the supplying areas was a responsibility of the receiving Provincial Governments and not of the Central Government."

Now, Sir, this is the state of affairs. The Central Government is shifting its responsibility on the Provincial Governments and the Provincial Governments in their own way are shifting their responsibility to the Central Government. Is this the way in which the people of India are to be fed? I do not object that you should not feed your soldiers. You have to feed your soldiers but not at the expense of the whole of the Indian civil population. Where will you get your soldiers from afterwards, if you do not feed the civil population properly? Is that the way in which the Government of India should manage the food production and the food policy? There may be a policy, but we are not to eat the policy; we have to eat the foodgrains and I have shown how they are being distributed according to your own paper *Indian Information*.

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

It may be all right for our friends on the Government side to say that you are getting your rations. My friend Mr. Gupta has shown what is the condition in the villages. You say that you have advanced money to the provinces and they distribute this money for food production to the ryots in the provinces. But you put some money in one pocket of the ryot and from the other pocket you take out from the same ryot to the tune of 25 per cent of his rent for war subscription. Is that the way in which food production is to be developed? It is impossible. How can the poor tenant who has to pay 25 per cent. of his rent in my own province of U.P. thrive? The argument may be that because the tenants are making large profits over the prices of articles of food. If they are making money over the prices of their foodgrains, then they are at the same time paying much more for cloth and other necessities of life, marriages and death ceremonies.

Now, what is being sold in the villages? In my part of the province, Government has control in the cities and in some of the villages of water, light and even our food. The result will be that the people in the villages will die and die.

Now, my friend Mr. Neogy has given an illustration as to how people are dying from cholera. Yesterday I asked Mr. Tyson as to what was the condition in Gorakhpur. Hundreds of people are dying there of cholera. All this is due to the mal-nutrition which has been due to the bad administration in the villages and the cities. I remember the day when His Excellency the Viceroy visited Lucknow and you will be surprised to hear what happened. His Excellency the Viceroy went round Lucknow with His Excellency the Governor of the United Provinces. And what was the result? On the streets that the Viceroy or the Governor passes, the police is made to stand up and to guard the route. The moment the people come to know that the police is there to guard the streets, they know for a fact that there is some high official who has to pass those streets. So, the rationing shops make the arrangement to produce good articles for show only because they are not meant for sale. Is that the way in which the rationing shops are to be inspected? The best way for their inspection is not that His Excellency the Viceroy or the Governor of the province should go to inspect these shops. The moment they know that the Governor is coming they are bound to put good things in their shops.

[Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali.]

So does any of my friends like this inspection to be made by Government officials? The public have no confidence in Government which, as I said, is putting money into one pocket and taking it out from another pocket. Any one who travels on the railways has noticed lands by the side of the railway lines which can easily be cultivated by Government or with the help of cultivators. But that is not done. It is only on land which is already cultivated that they want to grow more food. Why not give good seeds and provide new land for cultivation? We cannot rely on the Agricultural Department and the Collectors about whom we have heard from Mr. Gupta. Mr. Griffiths also spoke about three Collectors whom he saw. Therefore the public must be taken into confidence, at least the members of the Assemblies should be taken into your confidence. The Assemblies may not be sitting now but Government knows them and the district officials can surely approach them as representatives of the people. But when you do not trust the public, how can you expect them to trust you? You may say that you have added new people to your staff on higher pay and imported experts from Europe and America. But they do not know the conditions in India. Have any of my friends in the European Group visited one single village here? I dare say they have not.

Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer (Bengal: European): On what basis does the Honourable Member make that statement?

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: You may go for a shoot but not to study their conditions. My Honourable friend Mr. Chapman-Mortimer and his friends can pay high prices for their foodstuffs and they do not care for the villages. Does any of them hold one single village? No. Therefore they have no sympathy for the Indian peasant; they only want to have experts from abroad and nothing more.

Sir, in my own town twice every week there is a market and contractors come with lorries and buy up everything for the army. And as a result potatoes sell at Rs. 2-8-0 a seer and tomatoes at one rupee per seer. How can you expect poor villagers or towns people to buy things at such prohibitive prices? Rich people in big places like Calcutta or Delhi may buy anything at any price but it is impossible for poor people.

Now as regards *atta*. Wheat is brought from the village to the towns and then it goes to the city. Now in big cities and towns in my part of the country, there are small mills put up by some contractors. I take 2 or 5 seers of wheat there for grinding and I put my bag there. What is the guarantee that he grinds good quality of wheat. He will always mix it up. Who is to inspect it? If I make a report I have to take the whole bag to the city to prove my case to the magistrate. These are our difficulties. Then in the villages they do not get kerosene oil and cannot light up their houses. With regard to grains also whatever they produce they take to market at once, keeping just enough to last them for one year. Mr. Kirby in a statement made at Bombay said that the responsibility is of Government to supply first-class quality to the consumer. Every one knows of course, that the consumer is helpless and has to take what is offered. He also says that it is the responsibility of the producer and the cultivator. I fail to see how it can be the responsibility of the cultivator. He has to sell good quality to the contractor who would not otherwise take it. So he cannot be responsible. It is the responsibility of the contractor who is enriched by Government contracts. It is also the responsibility of Government who have got their inspecting and organising staff. Sir, I have done.

Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj (Nominated Non-Official): Mr. President, from the trend of the speeches of most Honourable Members in this House from this morning, one would get the impression that in the first place, the food situation in India was brought about by the Food Department, whereas the

truth is that the Food Department is actually the product of the food situation, and secondly, that Bengal and Bengal alone is entitled to the consideration of the Government of India in the matter of the solution of the food problem, and further that the situation that existed last year with reference to Bengal continues to exist in Bengal today. Yet another impression was created by the speech of my Honourable friend Mr. Griffiths, that all the sins that have been committed with regard to the situation in India was committed by the Government of India and that compared to the way that the British Government and the British people have tackled the problem in their own country, the Government of India was a great sinner. I always held the view and still hold the view that the food situation in India was rather sprung upon the Government of India on account of lack of forethought and planning on the part of His Majesty's Government. In the first place, His Majesty's Government were in a position to know and they were the only people to know that there was going to be a war, and that consequently all preparations with regard to food supply and so on could be made earlier by them. I do not suppose the Government of India could have ever known that war was to be declared very soon and consequently the food situation in India was due, according to me, speaking in a way, to the fall of Singapore. The maintenance of the defence of Singapore was the entire responsibility of the British Government. I do not think the then Viceroy of India or the then Commander-in-chief of India, who now happens to be the Viceroy, would have even foreseen that the Japanese would be practically at the door steps of Calcutta in such a short time and in such a quick time as from December 1941 to April 1942. I attribute this unfortunate position with regard to food in India to the circumstances beyond the control of the Government of India. I rather got the impression that my Honourable friend Mr. Griffiths when he attacked with such vehemence the Government of India, he rather wanted to draw a blind as against this primary responsibility which lay upon His Majesty's Government and which responsibility His Majesty's Government did not discharge to the satisfaction of the people of India at all. However, I feel that between last year and now the situation has so considerably improved that the credit for that improvement ought to be given to the Government of India in some manner.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Always.

Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj: It may be that nature has also helped the Government of India in restoring the confidence of the people so far as the question of food supply is concerned. There can be no doubt that the people all over India have now reconciled themselves to the fact that there is shortage of supply, not due to the fault of anybody, but due to circumstances beyond the control of the Government and of the people of India and that steps are being taken, however feeble and however, probably so far, not quite effective, steps are being taken to see that every man gets an assured supply of food. It may be that it is much less than what the authorities will call the minimum necessary for nutritive or healthy diet.

There is a feature about food situation in India also. As has been pointed out by the Honourable Food Member, this is not a problem which is entirely new or which is entirely due to the war. As I already pointed out once before, the fact that it has shifted from the village to the city does not alter the position, namely, that all the time there were a certain number of people in India who never got any food at all, or who got very little food. This is unfortunately due to the structure of Indian society and the Indian economy for years and years. The Indian society has always kept at its disposal a certain section of the population to be offered as a sort of sacrifice whenever there was a terrible strain on its economy, especially food economy. Whenever there was famine, or flood or epidemic, there was always a certain section of people who were sacrificed and they were nearly all the same section of people. That is the people who always bore the brunt of these unfortunate emergencies. It is those people who always lived on the outskirts of villages. Today

[Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj.]

we hear many Honourable friends referring to the condition of the villages and all the steps that have been taken so far have been really to help the people residing in urban areas and the villagers have not been looked after. If that is the condition with regard to the regular people who are called peasants and who hold lands in the villages, then it must be worse in the case of those who happen unfortunately to be on the outskirts of villages, and always live as landless labourers. I appeal to the Honourable the Food Member to see that these people who live below, as I would call, the starvation line, or just above the starvation line are looked after in the first instance in any scheme that he may bring forward now or in the future to tackle the food situation in India. It is very important that those people who have got lower incomes or no incomes at all should in the first place be looked after by the Government of India. I need not say that most of these people happen to belong to the community from which I come.

As a feature of the food situation in India, the Honourable the Food Member pointed out to us that the majority, two thirds of the population in India live on rice, and that the rest of the population live mainly on wheat and that people who have wheat diet live in the wheat producing areas, which happen to be surplus areas and that people living on rice live in areas which are deficit areas, practically speaking. From that one can say that rice is in short supply, actually. I have a few suggestions to make to the Honourable the Food Member in the matter of attempting to see how more rice can be produced. In the first place, I would suggest to him that in what are called surplus areas, particularly wheat producing areas which also produce rice, the Government of India should formulate a scheme by which they can enlarge the scope of cultivation and increase the acreage of cultivation of rice in those wheat producing areas. Secondly, I suggest that the Government of India should undertake either by all-India legislation or by co-ordinated provincial legislation to see—as I was told it was done in the Bombay Presidency by the Bombay Government—that the lands which are now under what are called cash crops are gradually reduced and more lands are brought under cultivation of rice. In case people should say that they would suffer or lose by converting lands from cash crop cultivation to rice cultivation, the Government should also provide for subsidy by legislation.

The next suggestion that I would make to the Honourable Member would be to see that that even in these cases where lands are cultivated with paddy, the Government can offer to them a kind of bonus above a certain amount of production. For instance, if any person cultivates land and uses extra fertilisers or manure to produce more rice, I think if the Government offers him a bonus, he would attempt to produce more rice even on the existing land. I feel, Sir, that these are some methods by which more rice can be cultivated.

I will also join with the Honourable the Food Member in his appeal to those people who are living in wheat-producing areas and who have wheat as their main diet, to see, as far as possible, if they could not spare the rice that they produce in those areas.

Now, I come to the position in Madras, particularly in Malabar, and in those areas, as the Honourable Member has said, the quantity of food that is given is far below the quantity that they ought to take. I think in Malabar it is only about 12 ounces a day.....

Mr. Manu Subedar (Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau—Indian Commerce): Eight ounces.

Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj: It is about 8 to 12 ounces. That is a diet on which I do not suppose any person can live. Government was taking immediate steps to see that rice is taken to Madras, particularly to Malabar and Vizigapatam. In this respect I would appeal to my Honourable friends from Bengal not to overstate their case for Bengal. I personally think and honestly feel that the situation which existed last year does not exist today and as

everybody knows there has not only been bumper crop in Bengal but also quite a lot of tonnage of food has been taken to Bengal. I do hope therefore that both the Members from Bengal and the Government of India will change their attitude in the altered circumstances so far as Bengal is concerned, and send a portion of the food that is now being sent to Bengal towards Madras side where, as everybody knows, the situation is grave. Travancore, Cochin, Malabar and Vizagapatam are all going short of food.

In his speech the Honourable Member I think forgot to mention one other area—the Ceded Districts in the Madras Presidency. The Ceded Districts are notorious for famine conditions which continually exist in those parts. I do not know if by way of oversight he has not mentioned the Ceded Districts of Madras. I would, however, like to know the position with regard to the Ceded Districts. I unfortunately come from one of those districts.

Then with regard to the price. We are all accustomed to hear in this House different groups talking for themselves. The consumers said that prices must be fixed, the producers at once jumped up and said that their prices must be fixed, and the Government, as usual, said that they were trying to effect a sort of compromise between the two in order to arrive at an equitable price. In this country, those who have known the various kinds of land systems and land tenure that exist, are aware that it has always been only one set of people that have benefited by the holding of land, and if it is true that 90 per cent. of the population of this country live for their sustenance upon agricultural holdings, it will also be true that only those who have got the control of land can benefit by the produce of land. What has happened recently? We saw that all those people who are in the control of land, and consequently of the produce of land, withheld the produce from its normal circulation; they reserved something for their own consumption and the rest they sent to the blackmarket. We have all seen that and have tried to stop it. I have always felt that the system of land holding in this country has been such as to make only one class of people get the benefit out of the land and the rest of the population, who have nothing whatever to do with the land and who as a matter of fact are the only people who are responsible for the produce of the land, go without food. It has been so in the past. It is time that the Government of India took this position seriously into consideration and rectified the position. As long as that system exists, there will always be a class of people who will be thrown entirely out of any scheme which will provide food for the generality of the population.

I also want to impress upon the Government of India the necessity for seeing that wages for agricultural labour, whenever they are paid, are paid in kind. They ought to be paid in kind. A cry has been raised in this respect but it looks to me to be a city cry—"what is the use of paying even higher price to the producers or to the labourers; what the use of controlling the price of food-grains because everything else goes up in price." It was very curious that people while talking about food-grains—rice, wheat and things like that—should also talk in the same breath of Horlicks Malted Milk. I am only surprised that they did not talk of Talcum Face Powder or Cutex! And so, Sir, I feel that now the time has come when the Government of India should reverse its policy of food procurement and distribution. Last year they were perfectly justified in bringing to the cities and the towns the supplies that were available in the villages at a great cost and probably by paying high prices to the producers. Now the time has come for the Government of India to reverse that policy and take the food back to the villages, to see that the villagers, who draw lower income, and people who are landless labourers get their food. For, whatever may be said about these people, the fact remains that they are as much human beings as the Honourable Members in this House, as people in big cities and towns, and, if I may say so, as the Honourable Members on the Treasury Benches. The Government of India should also take steps to see that the Provincial Governments follow the principle of first

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settling the landless labourers upon the new land which is being brought under cultivation under the Grow More Food campaign.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Under co-operative system.

Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj: I know my Honourable friend, Prof. Ranga, is entirely in sympathy with my point of view, and I also generally endorse most of the statements that he has made today, except some of the vehemence with which he attacked the food policy of the Government of India, which I think was equalled only by the vehemence of my Honourable friend, Mr. Griffiths, the only difference being that the latter did not wear a Gandhi cap!

I would request the Government of India to see that if and when the Provincial Governments reclaim new lands under the Grow More Food campaign or give subsidies for bringing more land under cultivation, that the landless labourers in the villages are first settled on those lands and they are given the right to occupy and cultivate those lands.

With these words I congratulate the Food Member for what he has been able to do so far in improving the food situation in the country.

Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hedge (West Coast and Nilgiris: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I support the amendment moved by Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar. The first clause refers to the fixation of price and the attempt that is being made by the Central Government to bring down the prices in the provinces. While I was discussing this matter about a month ago with the Civil Supplies Commissioner, Madras, I came to know that the Regional Food Commissioner, who is a servant of the Central Government in Madras, was trying to bring down the prices now fixed in the presidency of Madras. We all know that the agriculturist class is going to be adversely affected by bringing down the prices. When we remember that the population of this country consists more than 80 per cent. of agriculturist, the price which is ultimately fixed must be a fair and reasonable one, so that this large class of people may not suffer. If there is a cry to lower down prices of grains it is the cry of the 20 per cent of the non-agriculturists, mostly town-dwellers and Government servants. The food policy as it has been followed so far has gone to satisfy in the first place the Government servants, in the second place the town-dwellers who are fortunate to have statutory rationing in their towns, and thirdly such class of vociferous people who could manage to get as much grain as possible. But people who reside in semi-urban areas and in the rural parts of the country are the people who are forgotten and their cries are not heard at all.

While fixing statutory price various factors must enter into proper consideration. The Central Government must give up their attempt to have a common price for the whole country. This is impossible to achieve because the productive capacity of the land in different districts is different and the pressure of population in different districts in this country is also different. Thirdly, the system of land revenue that prevails is different in different provinces, sometimes different in the different districts in the same province. Fourthly, the cost of cattle and the cost of cattle fodder which is prohibitive in these days must also be considered. Sir, it is a well known fact that in my constituency of Malabar and South Kanara the cost of cattle has increased by five or six times, my district was getting cattle from Mysore but for the last two years the Mysore Government has prohibited the export of cattle into my district. The result is the price today is nearly six or seven times the pre-war price; of the cattle fodder, particularly the horse gram, which we were getting from Bengal in pre-war days but which is completely stopped to day, the price has gone up by seven or eight times. Therefore, these are the real factors which should be considered while fixing a fair price for grain.

Sir, there is also the question of the living standard of the producers. Today we know, even in towns, it is very difficult to get medicine. To give you my own personal experience. Some three days back I went for medicine to the

famous Kemp & Co. I was refused the supply. I was directed to a doctor to get a prescription from him. If this is the condition prevalent in the town of Delhi, you can imagine the condition prevailing in the villages of this country. It is almost impossible for rural people to get medicine in the open market. They will have to buy their medicine in the black market and pay very heavily for it.

The second clause deals with the question of procurement and supply and to get rid of the middlemen in the process. I would very much like to recommend the method which we have followed in our district. We started a wholesale co-operative society some two years ago and to-day it is recognised by the Government of Madras and the entire grain available in the district and purchased from other districts by the district authorities is handled by this Society. Their transactions run up to a crore of rupees and no person, whether a trader or otherwise, is permitted to handle or deal with grains. This is a method which ought to be encouraged by the Central Government in all other provinces in the country.

But our experience with regard to distribution has not been happy, the distribution part of the work is being handled by the Revenue Department of the Government, we have found when the stock available in the district was dwindling the Government of Madras at one time refused to supply the necessary amount of rice to my district. You will remember on the last occasion I attempted to move two adjournment motions in this House. At the time of first motion a statement was made that this district was self-sufficient but at the time of the second adjournment motion my district was promised 1,500 tons of rice per month. But the rice due in March came in June and the rice due in June came in August and the rice due in August came in October: and to my surprise I found it was not only the railway that was responsible for the delay in transport but it also showed that the procurement machinery in the surplus districts of the presidency was faulty. What is more, the Honourable the Food Member has admitted that the Madras Presidency has been the second largest importer of rice in the pre-war days and in those circumstances it was a surprise to me when he said that the Government of Madras undertook not to make any demand from the Centre for its needs. I really do not know, especially when the Grow More Food campaign has achieved nothing in that province how the Government of Madras undertook to feed their population without any help from outside. I know they have been unable to do it. When my district had only five days supply I had to seek the protection of the Honourable the Food Member and it was only after his intervention that my district was supplied with two months further supply.

There is a tendency in the Central Government to overlook the question of distribution. If the food administration is going to succeed, 95 per cent. of its work ought to be in the matter of distribution. Procurement to my knowledge has succeeded very well because of the police force and the threat of the process of law that is used at the time of procurement. Today notices are issued to all agriculturists to part with their grain even before the harvest is completed and without any consideration whether what is left behind would be sufficient for him to keep his body and soul together until the next harvest. This policy of procurement without leaving sufficient to the producer is going to be a very dangerous game. You cannot kill the goose that lays the golden egg. Apart from the policy of Grow More Food campaign, the procurement policy which is followed today by the Madras Government is a very faulty one and no attempt is made to see whether the real grower has sufficient to maintain himself and his family until the next harvest.

Sir, I once more request the Honourable Member that the question of distribution must be really attended to by the Central Government. To my surprise I found when I came here that it is only after two days I could get my ration card. In my town where there is statutory rationing, I found that a boarding house consisting of 22 students had to starve three days before they got their rationing card. The rationing system which is followed today is

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definitely faulty and the cry of the semi-urban areas and the rural parts is really a cry in the wilderness. I can give you facts and figures to show that in the village within five miles from Mangalore town where there is no statutory rationing, to a population of 7570 people only 80 maunds of rice were supplied in the month of October. That comes to nearly two ounces per head per day. If this is going to be the kind of food administration we are to have hereafter, let God forbid, we do not want to have it.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Leader of the House): Sir, there is a general desire from all sections of the House that the question hour may be dispensed with tomorrow in order to enable the House to discuss the Food resolution the whole day. We shall be grateful if you would agree.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If that is the general desire of the House I am willing to comply with the request. The questions will be dispensed with tomorrow.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday the 9th November, 1944.