

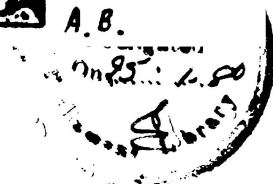
10th March, 1947

**THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES
Official Report**

Volume III, 1947

(10th March, 1947 to 24th March, 1947)

**THIRD SESSION
OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
1947**



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

President :

The Honourable Mr. G. V. MAVALANKAR.

Deputy President :

Khan MOHAMMAD YAMIN KHAN, M.L.A.

Panel of Chairmen :

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Mr. P. J. GRIFFITHS, M.L.A.

Sardar MANGAL SINGH, M.L.A.

Shrinati AMMU SWAMINADHAN, M.L.A.

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Mr. N. C. NANDI.

Marshal :

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

Committee on Petitions :

Khan MOHAMMAD YAMIN KHAN, M.L.A. (*Chairman*).

Syed GHULAM BHIK NAIRANG, M.L.A.

Shri Sri PRAKASA, M.L.A.

Mr. C. P. LAWSON, M.L.A.

Sardar MANGAL SINGH, M.L.A.

CORRIGENDA

to

Index to Legislative Assembly Debates, Volumes I to V, 1947

(3rd February, 1947 to 12th April, 1947)

- Page 11, transfer line 9 above line 6.
- Page 13, omit line 12 from bottom and transfer line 11 from bottom after line 32 from top.
- Page 17, omit line 6 from bottom.
- Page 19, insert "Reserve Bank of India (Second Amendment) Bill. 3092, 3095-96, 3099, 3104." above line 20 from bottom.
- Page 27, insert "Publicity by certain newspapers of the recommendations of the Select Committee on — before the presentation of the report. 1538-39." over line 2 from bottom.
- Page 29, omit existing line 9 and in existing line 25 for "BISCUIT(S)—" read "BIRD(S)—".
- Page 36, omit lines 7 and 8.
- Page 42, after line 16, insert "CIVIL SUPPLIES—".
- Page 43, for line 2 under "COACH(ES)—", read "Air conditioned — on G.I.P., B.B. & C.I., M. & S.M. Railways. 2905-06."
- Page 46, above line 4 from bottom, insert "Terms of reference of Armed Forces Nationalisation Committee. 2940."
- Page 51, under "COTTON—", in line 3, for "907-07" read "906-07".
- Page 58, above line 12 from bottom, insert "Capital Outlay on Civil Aviation. 1966."
- Page 60, for existing line 5, read "Functions of the Commodities Prices Board and matters connected therewith. 1626-42."
- Page 62, under "DEMONETIZATION—", for "2399" read "2390".
- Page 65, last line, for the illegible figure read "3140".
- Page 78, under "FORCES—" after line 3, insert "See also 'Army(ies)'".
- Page 80, in line 3, for "Allied" read "Armed".
- Page 84.—(i) omit line 2;
(ii) above line 32 from bottom insert "Consideration of Clauses. 510, 528, 945."; and
(iii) omit line 30 from bottom.
- Page 86, under "GOVERNMENT SERVANTS—" after line 4, insert "See also 'Employee(s)'" and omit line 6 from bottom.
- Page 100, under "HOUSING—" in line 2, after "re-housing" insert "scheme".
- Page 103, in line 9, for "1958-69" read "1968-69".
- Page 107, for line 28 from bottom, read "INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES BILL—"; and omit line 24 from bottom.
- Page 110, above line 11 from bottom, insert "Motion re—".
- Page 122, at the end of last line, read "Simla. 3068-69."
- Page 123, omit line 3 from top.
- Page 127, under "LANGUAGE—" after line 3, insert "order in addressing the House in a vernacular and ruling by Mr. President that an Honour-".
- Page 134, omit line 5 from bottom and in last line, for "890-92" read "990-92".
- Page 138,—(i) under "MANUFACTURE—" in lines 13 and 14, for "dry-stuffs" read "dyestuffs";
(ii) under "MANU SUREDAR, MR.—" omit line 4, and in line 5, insert "2753 59" before existing page numbers.
- Page 140, in line 35 from bottom, for "drystuffs" read "dyestuffs".
- Page 144, under "MATTHAI, THE HONOURABLE DR. JOHN—" after line 3, insert "Construction of new lines. 1950."

- Page 149, under "MOMBASA—" for the illegible figure read "96".
- Page 153, under "MUTINY—" after existing figures read "763-64".
- Page 154, for existing line 10 from bottom read "Recommendations of the Armed Forces Nationalisation Committee. 1758." and omit line 8 from bottom.
- Page 156, under "NAVY, ROYAL INDIAN—" in line 7, for "the Committee" read "the report of the Committee".
- Page 161, below last line, insert "See also 'Factory(ies)'"
- Page 162, for existing line 16, read "OUDH AND TIRHUT RAILWAY—" and omit lines 1 and 2 at top of the page.
- Page 169, under "PIPERADIH COLLIERY—" for "3389" read "3388".
- Page 172, omit line 7 and transfer the next line after line 1 under "POSTAL EMPLOYEE(S)—".
- Page 173, under "PRESS(ES)—" omit line 1.
- Page 180, for line 7 from bottom, read "Increase of — fares below Re. 1. 1228-29."
- Page 184, in line 10, the missing figure is "1097".
- Page 191, in line 18, for "2920" read "2926".
- Page 199, omit last line.
- Page 204, omit line 3 from bottom.
- Page 205, for existing line 3 from bottom, read "strike. 19-20."
- Page 206, at the end of last line, insert "Provinces. 169-70."
- Page 214, for existing line 18 from bottom read "SKELTON—".
- Page 220, at the end of line 9 from bottom, insert "1313-14".
- Page 223, in line 21 from bottom, for "strike as" read "strikers at".
- Page 224, under "SUGAR—" insert "Question re—" as first line.
- Page 226, under "SUNHEMP—" for "1608. 07" read "1606-07".
- Page 232, in last line, for "89" read "88".
- Page 251, line 19 from bottom, for "3396" read "3395".
- Page 252, after line 7, insert "Motion re—".

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Monday, 10th March, 1947

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Mr. G. V. Mavalankar) in the Chair

MEMBER SWORN:

Mr. Krishna Prasada, C.I.E., M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official).

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(a) ORAL ANSWERS

REVIVAL OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

†771. ***Maharajkumar Dr. Sir Vijaya Ananda:** Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state whether Government propose to consider the advisability of reviving the Planning and Development Department which was abolished by the Caretaker Government?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: The question of the future machinery of Planning was referred to the Advisory Planning Board recently appointed by Government. The Board has presented its report which is being examined.

LACK OF COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORT IN NORTH KANARA DISTRICT

772. ***Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Transport please state if it is a fact that the North Kanara District is lacking in sufficient means of communication and transport and if so, what steps Government propose to take to provide the necessary facilities?

(b) Do Government propose to introduce railway communication in the district as a measure of post-war re-construction and, if so, when and to what extent?

(c) Will Bhatkal an important centre in the district be linked up with the proposed railway line? If not, why not?

(d) Have the Government of India received any proposals in this respect from the Government of Bombay, if so, what are they?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the answer given to question No. 98 on the 8th February 1946, reproduced in Vol. I, No. 13 of the printed Debates. In giving more upto-date information now, I shall also repeat the gist of that answer.

(a) It is difficult to determine without a full survey the means of communication that would be sufficient for any given area. As regards roads, the requirements will be covered by the five-year road development plan of the Government of Bombay when that is finalised.

(b) The survey investigations of the proposed railway from Alnar to Karwar have been postponed for the present as the preliminary investigations reveal that (i) the potential passenger traffic is expected to be negligible; and (ii) the prospects of goods traffic, which depend entirely on traffic from forest industries, are not expected to be bright since the provincial Forest Department's scheme is not likely to develop for another five or ten years.

(c) There is no proposal at present under consideration to construct a railway line to Bhatkal. It is considered premature to order a survey in this area without some consideration of the future of Bhatkal port.

(d) The Government of Bombay have probably studied this matter in the course of the preparation of their road plans. Their original road plan, which is under revision, included the development of a Provincial Highway going north from Bhatkal to link up with the National Highway system.

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

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May I know whether there is a proposal to connect the last point on the railway line in South Kanara to the nearest point of the Bombay Presidency?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Not to my knowledge.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Has there been repeated representations to the effect that this short distance should be covered by rail, so that passengers from Mangalore to Bombay might not have to travel the distance via Madras circuitously?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I am not aware whether any representations have been received.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Is it not a fact that this question was raised during the budget discussion?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: You mean the linking up of South Kanara with the rest of the Bombay Presidency?

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Yes.

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I cannot remember the details.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Will the Honourable Member please state what might be the distance from the last point in the railway line in South Kanara and the nearest point in Bombay?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I cannot answer the question offhand.

FACTORY FOR THE MANUFACTURE OF SPINDLES IN INDIA.

773. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies please state if it is a fact that an agreement has been reached by the Textile Delegation to the United Kingdom to the effect that Textile machinery manufacturers in England and India are to establish a factory for the manufacture of spindles in India?

(b) If so, what are the details of the agreement and the number of spindles expected to be manufactured every month?

(c) What will be the capital of this concern and what will be the extent of capital to be subscribed in Britain and India?

(d) What help have Government offered for the establishment of this factory in money and materials?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: (a) Yes, Sir, the Government are informed to this effect.

(b) The Government have seen a record of decisions reached at a meeting between the members of the Indian Textile Delegation and the Textile Machinery Makers, Ltd. The decisions provide that, while 74 per cent. of the shares and the controlling interest will be held by Indians, the English manufacturers will have a 26 per cent. financial interest in the company and will be represented on its Board up to a fourth of the total strength. The company is expected to manufacture 40,000 spindles per month.

(c) It is stated that the company will be formed with a capital of Rs. 1½ crores. Of this the English company Messrs. Textile Machinery Makers Ltd., will have shares of Rs. 89 lakhs, which will consist of Rs. 18 lakhs worth of shares to be subscribed for in cash and fully paid-up shares of Rs. 26 lakhs free of payment in return for goodwill, patent rights, technical assistance, and benefits of all past and future research.

(d) The Government of India have only helped by arranging passages, exchange facilities, etc. No help has been given in money or material.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will the Honourable Member please state how the production of spindles by this company will be co-related to Government's policy of restricting the amount of machinery imported and generally of limiting licenses with regard to textile mills?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: The supply of machinery for replacement and such other services will not in any manner interfere with the Government's plan but if there is any difficulty the matter will be examined then and decided and it is premature to discuss it just now.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Will the Honourable Member please state what is the expected production of spindles per annum by this company and whether that will be sufficient to replace all the spindles that will require to be replaced during the year?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: This is only one company and it is not intended or expected that it should supply all the requirements. Other companies also are likely to come up.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Has the Honourable Member considered the desirability of taking up this matter as a State enterprise instead of leaving it to private enterprise?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: The suggestion will be considered along with many other suggestions that have been made for state enterprise in industry.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: In view of the fact that till now there has been no private enterprise in this direction, will Government consider the advisability of giving priority to this particular matter?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: There is a concern already at work in this direction but every assistance is given to this company also.

CAUSES OF AIR MAIL DELAYS

774. ***Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer:** (a) Will the Secretary of the Communications Department please state whether he has seen letters in the *Times of India*, dated the 16th January, 1947 from various correspondents under the heading "Air mail delays" complaining against the delay in the delivery of air mail letters?

(b) If so, what are the causes of the delay and what steps do Government propose to take to see that air mail letters are delivered without delay?

Mr. Masarrat Husain Zuberi: (a) Yes, but only two letters appeared in the *Times of India*, dated 16th January, 1947, of which one was from the Honourable Member himself.

(b) Air mail letters are occasionally delayed for the following reasons:—

- (1) misdirection of air mails by inexperienced staff on some occasions,
- (2) air mail articles sometimes get mixed up with surface mail articles,
- (3) air mail labels are not sometimes affixed to the articles,
- (4) late arrival of planes,
- (5) breakdown of transport.

The following steps have been taken to prevent delay to air mails:—

- (1) staff has been sanctioned for the office of each Postmaster-General for the preparation of air mail sorting lists for the guidance of the sorters,
- (2) instructions have also been issued for the proper supervision of air mail sorting work by the Inspectors,
- (3) it is under consideration to introduce special air mail covers and envelopes so that the sorters are able to distinguish them easily from the surface mail labels,
- (4) it has also been decided to provide special letter boxes for important towns for the posting of air mail articles.

Mr. Mann Subedar: Will the Honourable Member explain how an air mail letter sent from here to Bombay with the object of reaching there quickly reaches there after four days and how this could have possibly occurred in the series of causes which he gives?

Mr. Masarrat Hussain Zuberi: This can be found out only if the Honourable Member supplies me with the cover of the letter.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: With regard to the reply to part (a) of the question where the Honourable Member states that only two letters appeared in the *Times of India*, may I ask whether his Department is subscribing to the *Times of India* or the *Times*, London—because I know that twelve letters have appeared in the *Times of India* on this subject.

Mr. Masarrat Hussain Zuberi: I was confining myself to the *Times of India* of the 16th January 1947.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Is it possible that many other letters addressed to the *Times of India* have been delayed?

Mr. Masarrat Hussain Zuberi: I have no information, Sir.

REDUCTION OF AIR MAIL POSTAGE FROM INDIA TO LONDON, CEYLON, ETC.

775. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: (a) Will the Secretary of the Communications Department please state if it is a fact that air mail postage rates from Britain to India, Ceylon, Malaya, Hongkong, Egypt, Palestine and Iraq have been reduced from 1 sh. 3d. to 1 sh. for a half-ounce letter and from 7d. to 6d. for a post card?

(b) What is the present rate of postage by air mail for letters of half-ounce and postcards from India to London, Ceylon, Malaya, Hongkong, Egypt, Palestine and Iraq?

(c) Do Government propose to consider the advisability of reducing the postage rates for letters and postcards by air mail from India to London, Ceylon, Malaya, Hongkong, Egypt, Palestine and Iraq?

Mr. Masarrat Hussain Zuberi: (a) Yes. The rates for air mails to Egypt, Palestine and Iraq have been reduced by the British Post Office to 6d. for half ounce for letter and 3d. for postcards

(b) A statement is placed on the table of the House.

(c) The air mail surcharge for Ceylon is the same as the surcharge for inland air mails. The question of the reduction of the surcharge for other places is under examination of the Government.

STATEMENT SHOWING AIR MAIL RATES FROM INDIA TO LONDON, CEYLON, ETC.

Serial No.	Destination	Rate per half ounce for letters excluding postage	Rate per postcard including postage
		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1	England	0 14 0*	0 4 0
3	Ceylon	0 1 0	0 1 0
3	Malaya	0 14 0*	0 4 0
4	Hongkong	1 2 0	0 8 0
5	Egypt	0 14 0*	0 4 0
6	Palestine	0 14 0*	0 4 0
7	Iraq	1 0 0	0 8 0

*Inclusive of postage.

Shri Sri Prakasa: How is it that the postage from India to other countries is higher than the postage from those countries to India?

Mr. Masarrat Husain Zuberi: It is so in some cases. The rates were fixed under the old Empire Air Mail scheme which is now being wound up. The entire rates for the countries outside India are under examination by the Government and we hope to announce the reduced rates soon.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Is there not a convention that postage should be uniform for all countries?

Mr. Masarrat Husain Zuberi: It has been so far under the Empire Air Mail Scheme. The rates were reduced by Britain only on 17th January 1947.

DISPOSALS ENQUIRY COMMITTEE

776. **Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies please state the reasons for appointing a Committee known as "Disposals Enquiry Committee"?

(b) What was the composition of this Committee and did all the members attend the sittings of the Committee and go on tour to different provinces?

(c) What are the findings of the Committee?

(d) What is the total expense incurred up-to-date by Government on account of this Committee?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: (a) On a consideration of the problems arising in disposals, and of complaints about disposals practice, Government decided that it would be in the interests both of the public and of the Department to appoint a Committee of persons outside the Department and commanding undoubted public confidence to make a study of the Disposals Organization and its working, and to furnish Government with their conclusions and recommendations. Government therefore constituted in October, 1946, the Disposals Enquiry Committee.

(b) The members of the Committee were Sir Maurice Gwyer and Dewan Bahadur Sir T. Vijayaraghavacharya, K.B.E., Mr. S. Bhoothalingam, O.B.E., I.C.S., was appointed Secretary to the Committee. In the initial stages Sir Maurice Gwyer was unable, owing to illness, to take active part in the proceedings. From the beginning of December 1946 however he was able to associate himself fully with the work of the Committee in Delhi, although it was not possible for him to join in the tours.

(c) The Committee's Report was received on 1st March 1947 and is receiving immediate attention. The Report will be considered by the Disposals Board at a meeting on 14th March in which the Defence Department is also represented. On receiving the recommendations of the Disposals Board, Government hope to publish the Report and the decisions on the Report before the end of the month.

(d) Rs. 24,748 up to the end of January, 1947.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: May I know why no younger officers were appointed to the Committee and whether it is the policy of the Government to appoint old men over 65 years of age on these Committees who cannot attend to the work and attend the meetings?

Mr. President: Order, order.

Mr. Manu Subedar: What is the Disposals Board which the Honourable Member spoke of? Is it the Central Advisory Committee for advising the Disposals Department, or is it a Committee of the Cabinet? What is this Board which is going to consider this Report?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: It is not a Committee of the Cabinet. It is the existing Board going by the name 'Disposals Board'. It consists of officials of various Departments who are interested in this, and it is a Board that sits periodically over all the disposals.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Does the Honourable Member propose to put this Report before the Standing Committee of the Industries and Supplies Department? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: It has first to be placed before the Disposals Board in any case, and if the Standing Committee so desire they will also have it before them when they meet. But I do not think that we should delay disposing of the recommendations till the Standing Committee meets. But if that is the desire of the Standing Committee, it will be so done.

Mr. Mann Subedar: In what form will this House see this Report, and Members be able to contribute their judgment and their considerations on this Report, so that Government may also take those into account?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: If, Sir, it is the desire of the Members of the House that their Standing Committee of the Department of Industries and Supplies should have an opportunity of seeing this, it will certainly be placed before them.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: May I ask the Honourable Member why one of the Members of this House was not associated with this Enquiry Committee?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: The entire object and the reasons for the appointment of this Committee have already been explained. It is a matter of experience and sound judgment, and youth is not necessarily a qualification, or old age a disqualification in this respect.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Is it not a fact that these two Members have no experience of business? Why were people with business experience not appointed to the Committee?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: Business is always inter-related with jealousies and therefore in this matter I avoided businessmen.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Pending the arrival of the Report of this Committee, will the Honourable Member order the stoppage of the destruction of materials that is taking place on a large scale?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: If the destruction of any material is recommended, it has to receive attention. Of course it is wrong to destroy anything prematurely.

Shri Sri Prakasa: The Honourable Member may perhaps recollect that I put a question about the destruction of masses of aeroplanes at the Bamrauli aerodrome, Allahabad, to his predecessor in office who is sitting next to him. May I know whether he has stopped the destruction of such valuable material that could be used for civil purposes in peace time, pending the report of this Committee? Masses of bicycles are simply being mowed down by tanks at the various places. Should not that be stopped?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: If the matter had already been put in a question and the Member in charge had then answered it, I do not venture to answer it at this stage.

Shri Sri Prakasa: The Honourable Member had promised to enquire. May I know whether the enquiry has been completed and whether the present Member is in a position to answer the question?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: I would like a notice of the question put down, Sir.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Is it not a fact that the meeting of the Standing Committee can be convened at short notice, because all the Members are here, and even earlier than a meeting of the Disposals Board? Will not the Honourable Member therefore consider it proper to place the report of the Committee before it is placed before the Disposals Board?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: I have said that the Disposals Board Board that deals with such matters from time to time and it is right and proper that I should place the recommendations before them. But if prior to that, the Standing Committee of the Legislature would like to see it, i.e., even before the Disposals Board sees it, I have no objection. But as I have said, it is on the 14th of March that the Disposals Board will consider it and it is now really an academic question.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: May I ask the Honourable Member whether it is not fair that importance should be attached more to the Standing Committee of this House than to the Disposals Board; and may I ask whether he would consider the desirability of placing the matter first before the Standing Committee and then before the Disposals Board?

Mr. President: The question of importance is a matter of opinion.

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: I can put a thought to the Honourable Member. If the Standing Committee sits after the Disposals Board, the Standing Committee would be in a position to advise Government even upon the recommendations of the Disposals Board, whereas in the other case the Disposals Board would be sitting in a sort of *quasi* appeal over the recommendations of the Standing Committee.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: May I take it that the recommendations of the Disposals Board will not be final and binding?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: Certainly, Sir. The recommendations will be only in the nature of advice to Government.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Does the Honourable Member admit that bicycles have been destroyed?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: I have not admitted it.

Babu Ram Narayan Singh: Is the Honourable Member prepared to do at least one thing—I mean prevention of destruction till the disposal is sanctioned by the Disposals Board?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: Possibly useful articles are not destroyed. Explosives and things like that may be destroyed. Broken down Fighter plane will have to be made into scrap. Really useful articles, as far as I am aware, cannot be destroyed and are not being destroyed.

SIR SRI RAM'S STATEMENT *RE* IMPENDING CLOTH FAMINE IN INDIA

†777. ***Seth Govind Das:** Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware of Sir Sri Ram's statement about the impending cloth famine in India; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to take steps to stop the production of greater quantities of fine cloth?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: (a) and (b). Government agree with Sir Sri Ram that there is a tendency on the part of mills to produce relatively finer varieties of cloth at the expense of relatively coarser varieties, though they do not agree with his reported opinion that this is the main reason for the present cloth shortage. Government are investigating the possibilities of further rationalisation of production so as to concentrate it on varieties most in demand, and also of a rationalisation of prices which would remove any inducement to switch from one type of production to another to the detriment of overall output.

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

PRODUCTION OF CHEAP MOTOR CARS IN INDIA.

†778. *Seth Govind Das: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a delegation of leading Indian motor car distributors signed an agreement with the Austin Motor Export Corporation for cars to be manufactured and assembled in India;

(b) whether Government are aware of the negotiations between Mr. Ali Ahmed of Bombay and Grautteen Productions Limited, to produce a cheap 'Peoples car'; and

(c) if so, whether Government propose to declare its intentions regarding the production of cheap cars in India with Indian capital and personnel?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: (a) The report of the Automobiles and Tractors Panel contains the following:

"It has been reported to us that the Austin Motor Car Co., has entered into an agreement with their Indian distributors for erecting a plant at one of India's main ports for the output of a minimum of 3,000 vehicles a year. It is reported that the proposed Indian company will be financed and controlled by Indians, but Austins will send out technical experts and adequate jigs and machinery to facilitate an early start. It is reported that every model in the Austin range will be assembled and progressively manufactured in the Indian plant."

(b) and (c). I have no information about any such negotiation but last year an application was received from Mr. Ali Ahmed, Bombay, for a licence to import a complete plant for setting up a factory for the manufacture of 'Kendall Cars' and Tractors in India. The exporters are Messrs. Grantham (not Grautteen) Products, Limited, England. A decision on the application of Mr. Ali Ahmed has been held up pending consideration of the report of the Automobiles and Tractors Panel. The general policy of Government in regard to the development of this industry will also be considered in the light of this report.

QUOTA OF STEEL FOR NEW INDUSTRIES

†779. *Seth Govind Das: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies please state:

(a) the quota of steel allotted for the year 1947 for industries that are being expanded or newly installed under various development schemes of the Government of India;

(b) how much of this quota has already been reserved by industrialists and for which industries; and

(c) whether Government have taken steps to see that this steel is utilized only for the purpose of constructing buildings for these industries and is not held up in store for a long period?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: (a) 50,000 tons.

(b) Due to the late introduction of the new scheme for distribution of steel for 1947, the whole allotment of 12,500 tons of steel for industrial development was not allocated for delivery in Period I. The distribution of this allotment was:

	Tons
Cement	2,966
Textiles	1,240
Paper	324
Rubber	400
Boots	360
Electrical	1,612
Miscellaneous	3,898
Total	10,800

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

The balance is being added to the quota for Period II, making 14,200 tons in all.

(c) All demands for steel for industrial development are scrutinised by sponsoring authorities, such as, Textile Commissioner, Electrical Commissioner, Coal Commissioner, D. G. I. & S., Sugar Controller and Iron and Steel Controller, and these authorities ensure that the minimum quantity of steel is allocated for immediate use. The sponsoring authorities see that the work for which steel has been allotted is carried out.

INCREASE OF FACILITIES FOR THIRD CLASS TRAVEL IN INDIA

†780. *Seth Govind Das: Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware of the past promises made by Government to increase the facilities of third class travel on Indian Railways;

(b) whether the Standing Finance Committee for Railways which met recently, made any recommendations regarding this matter; and

(c) if not, what steps Government of India propose to take to better the conditions of third class travel and when they will be taken?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) Yes.

(b) No.

(c) Government are doing everything possible to make more passenger accommodation available in order to reduce the overcrowding which at present exists. 1,075 trains have so far been restored or extended providing an additional daily mileage of 68258 and more will be added as soon as more rolling stock can be made available. Provision was made originally in the budget for the expenditure of approximately rupees one crore on amenities for passengers during the financial year 1947-48; but as Honourable Members will recollect, I gave an undertaking that we will endeavour to spend twice this sum, provided the required materials are available.

Government's post-war plans are directed towards improving the conditions of III class passenger travel. More seating space per passenger, more comfortable seats, more and better lavatory accommodation, wider doors, improved lighting and water in compartments for washing purposes are to be provided. This will be facilitated by an increase in the width of stock on the Broad Gauge to 11' 8" overall, and on the Metre Gauge to 9' overall. Details of the design of such coaches are now being worked out and it is hoped that new coaches of this improved design will begin to make their appearance sometime next year. Government have also under consideration certain long term proposals, which include the provision of sleeping accommodation for a considerable number of lower class passengers, fans in lower class compartments and more commodious waiting halls with better facilities.

ADVANCED STUDIES IN AGRICULTURE IN U. S. A. FOR INDIAN STUDENTS

†781. *Seth Govind Das: Will the Secretary of the Agriculture Department be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware of the statement given by Mr. Sundaram, Government of India's Educational Officer on special duty, in England, about the advanced studies in agriculture of Indian students in U. S. A.; and

(b) if so, whether Government consider the advisability of sending students for specialised studies in Agriculture to U. S. A. as other departments of Government of India are doing?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government have already sent some 80 students to the U. S. A. for training in Agriculture (including Animal Husbandry).

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

INCREASED QUOTA OF CLOTH FOR RURAL AREAS

782. *Pandit Sri Krishna Dutt Pallwal: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies please state:

(a) whether Government propose to increase the quota of cloth for the rural areas; if so when and how much; and

(b) whether Government propose to arrange for sufficient supply of dhoties, sarees and other requisite cloth to the village people in the near future?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: (a) The Government of India allot cloth to provinces and States in accordance with a quota system worked out for the total population, both rural and urban. It is for the provincial or State Government concerned to decide how this quota should be distributed within the areas administered by them. The Government of India have pointed out to them on various occasions the importance of taking steps to see that rural areas get their adequate share.

(b) There have been complaints recently that the supplies of Dhoties and Sarees are inadequate. The Chairman of the Textile Control Board has now issued instructions to all mills to increase their production of Dhoties and Sarees so that at least 75 per cent. of the looms capable of producing Dhoties and Sarees produce these against the present percentage of 60 per cent. Provincial and State allocations of cloth will therefore in future contain a higher percentage of Dhoties and Sarees than at present and this should help them to see that larger supplies of these are made available to rural areas.

Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai: Is it a fact that some mills were pulled up for producing more dhoties and sarees?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: Does 'pulled up' mean reprimanded?

Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai: They were asked to produce less than they were producing.

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: If it was so done, I am sorry.

Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai: Will the Honourable Member make inquiries?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: Yes.

Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad: May I know whether the quota for each province is fixed by the consideration of the requirements of the provinces and not simply by counting heads, because the requirements of the N.-W. F. P. are different from those of South India?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: The requirements of a whole province can be most equitably determined by counting heads but if the Honourable Member will give me any other method of finding out the requirements of a province more correctly, I shall have it duly considered.

Shri Sri Prakasa: In view of the fact that the Members of the Council of State have to go to the black market in Delhi in order to meet the requirements of dhoties and sarees in their own houses, will the Honourable Member kindly consider the desirability of lifting all control and stopping this nonsense.

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: Probably the members referred to by the Honourable Member require very special fine cloth. The production that is required and which the Government wants to encourage is coarser cloth.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Member referred to, required only coarse cloth for his servants. Will the Honourable Member now kindly consider the desirability of lifting all controls?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: If Honourable Members as a whole are fairly unanimous and want the control to be lifted, the matter will be given very sympathetic consideration.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will the Honourable Member tell us, apart from merely asking Provincial Governments to be more careful in distributing to the rural

areas, whether the Government of India are considering any other measures in order that cloth of suitable quality may reach the villages and whether their attention has been drawn to the committee which has recently reported in Bombay and which has made recommendations on some of these other measures and whether the Government of India will examine them?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: If the Committee has suggested a definite plan by which the rural areas could be given their adequate share effectively, it will be duly considered. But I may point out that there is very great danger in making such arrangements, because it is well known that there are people who will specially exploit the rural area and make it a black-market-commodity tapping area.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: In view of the fact that the dealers in towns who are expected to supply the stuff to the rural areas are playing so much mischief by not supplying them, will Government consider the advisability of seeing that dealers in villages are given the necessary permits and the cloth is supplied to them directly, so that there may be some better chance of this cloth being distributed among the rural people?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: It is the province of the Provincial Governments to arrange for the distribution of the quotas that are supplied to the provinces. If the suggestion of the Honourable Member to give the permits direct to the rural dealers is a sound one, it is open to the provinces to take it up as we are not dealing directly with the retail end of the transaction from the Centre.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is the Honourable Member aware of the fact that in Madras Food Councils are appointed in every village and these councils are entrusted with the task of distributing this cloth among the villagers with the help of the local rural dealers and the distribution as between the towns and villages is decided upon by the District Food Council?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: I should like to have definite information as to what the public of that area feel about the agency just now described by my Honourable friend.

Mr. Manu Subedar: In view of the fact that yarn is now reaching only a very small fraction of the handloom weavers and that a great majority of them are idle because yarn is not reaching them and in view of the fact that handloom cloth, not being controlled, is more likely to be available to rural areas, will the Honourable Member tell this House what steps Government are taking in order to see that yarn reaches right to the fullest requirement of every handloom weaver in this country?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: I am very well aware that handloom weavers are not now having enough yarn for the full capacity they can put forth. Every effort is being made to get as much yarn as possible out of the mills for distribution to the handloom weavers but the matter is beset with many difficulties, of production especially; and every effort is now being made to find out all possible ways and means by which we could increase the amount of yarn available for handloom weavers. I am particularly examining the question from this point of view and I wish to assure Honourable Members that it will have my most earnest consideration.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: May I inquire if his department calls for periodical reports from the Provincial Government as to the method of distribution followed?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: They do get reports.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: When was the last report received?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: I am not able to say offhand?

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Does the Honourable Member's department also bring to the notice of the Provincial Governments that complaints are made to his department about maldistribution or inequitable distribution in the Provinces?

The Honourable Sri O. Rajagopalachari: Complaints are there in quite a large number. Honourable Members need not imagine that it is necessary for the Central Government to write to the Provincial Governments about it. The complaints are there in very great number and abundant enough to bring the matter to the poignant notice of the Provincial Governments.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: I am referring to the complaints of chambers of commerce and industrial concerns and not of ordinary citizens. When such complaints are forwarded to the Honourable Member's department, what is the procedure adopted with regard to investigation and redress?

The Honourable Sri O. Rajagopalachari: The complaints are generally about shortage and want of adequate distribution. The whole matter is at present under active consideration apart from shortage there is no other special complaint for investigation that is involved. The whole question turns on the question of production and every effort is made to increase that production and the several ways in which that can be done is now under very active consideration by all the people concerned.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will Government examine also the proposal which has been made in Bombay to requisition yarn from the mills as an absolute priority so that no handloom will be idle and the mill people may be left to adjust to their own purposes?

The Honourable Sri O. Rajagopalachari: If the suggestion is that the mills should be compulsorily ordered to surrender the yarn and keep their own looms idle, it will have to be worked up with a little more care. It is better to have it as a voluntary arrangement. Efforts are being made to procure free yarn in the largest measure possible.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May I know if any effort has been made to reduce the number of various varieties of cloth which are about 500 so that larger quantities of yarn may be released for handlooms?

The Honourable Sri O. Rajagopalachari: That is one of the first things that have been taken up for consideration.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May I know for how long this has been under consideration and when are the handlooms likely to be benefited by it?

The Honourable Sri O. Rajagopalachari: The number of varieties produced by the mills has no connection with the amount of yarn available for the handlooms, but the number of varieties has something very closely to do with the total yardage produced by the mills. In that way, it is connected perhaps in a distant manner with the amount of free yarn available for handlooms. The whole matter is being actively examined from this very point of view, namely, the reduction of the number of varieties that should be produced in the mills, and going from fine to coarse as far as possible and thus releasing as much yarn as possible.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Has the Honourable Member examined that when mills go on 60's, they produce only 1½ to 1¾ ounces per day but when they get on to 20's and 14's, they produce eight ounces and more per day? Therefore, those looms of mills who fear on account of the requisition for handloom, will not be idle, but this step will compel the mills to go on coarse count. Will Government therefore give the scheme which they are now formulating close examination from this point of view?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: Yes, Sir, close examination is being made of the problem of stepping down in the counts. It will perhaps not be possible to step down, from 60 to 20, but a certain amount of stepping down is possible.

FAIR PRICE FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE

783. *Pandit Sri Krishna Dutt Paliwal: Will the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture please state the steps Government have taken or propose to take to determine and enforce fair prices for agricultural produce?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: The steps in question are mentioned in the reply given to question No. 457 of Mr. Sanyal on the 21st February, 1947.

Pandit Sri Krishna Dutt Paliwal: How long will it take for the Government to reach a final decision in this matter?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: I hope that a decision will be arrived at not very long after the report of the Krishnamachari Committee is received.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Why the Central Government is taking into its own hand the fixation of prices instead of leaving it to the Provincial Governments to fix the prices of paddy and rice produced in their own provinces?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: The matter was discussed at an All-India Food Conference some time ago, and the general feeling was that it would be better for the Central Government to take up the matter so as to secure a certain amount of uniformity in prices in the different provinces.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: If it is a uniformity of prices that is kept as a sort of desired end, why is it that the Government does not allow the Madras Government to raise the prices of paddy and rice to the same level at which the prices of these commodities are prevailing in most of the provinces except Orissa?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: It is the policy of the Government at present to prevent a rise in prices in order to prevent inflation.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Are we to understand that their policy of preventing the rise in prices of foodgrains is not to maintain a fair price to the agriculturist but a fair price which may be suitable in order to prevent inflation?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: That, Sir, is a matter of opinion. In the opinion of the Government the present prices are considered to be fairly reasonable for the agriculturist.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is it not a fact that the Madras Government and the Government of India have not agreed as to what is to be treated as a fair price for paddy as well as rice?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: The matter has now been referred, or at least will shortly be referred, to the Commodities Prices Board which has been recently set up and they will go into the whole matter and determine what should be the price.

Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai: Will the Honourable Member inform us whether agricultural indebtedness has increased or decreased among the paddy growers of Madras?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: I believe an inquiry was made about 18 months ago when the Gadgil Committee looked into the matter, and the opinion they came to then was that the indebtedness had decreased to a considerable extent in the first few years of the war, i.e., till 1944, but thereafter the decrease had ceased.

Sri V. Gangaraju: What is the percentage of rise on the previous prices that Government think will be reasonable in order to make the prices remunerative to the agriculturist?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: That matter will be gone into by the Commodities Prices Board.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Does not the Honourable Member know that the great difference of prices of paddy that is prevailing in the United

Provinces and Madras leads to a lot of difficulties to the producers and it prevents them from growing more paddy in the southern part of the Presidency which is famine-stricken?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: Government are aware of the fact that there are wide differences in prices and they hope that it will be possible to bring down the prices in the areas where the prices are too high.

SUPPLY OF CATTLE FOOD IN INDIA

784. *Pandit Sri Krishna Dutt Paliwal: Will the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) the steps Government have taken or propose to take to ensure sufficient supply of cattle food in the country; and

(b) the results achieved so far in this direction?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) 11,613 tons of wheat have been imported from the Argentine and a further 4,462 tons are expected. The International Emergency Food Council has also been asked for an allocation of another 40,000 tons. 7,861 tons of oats have been imported from Canada. 5,000 tons of cottonseed are being imported from Portuguese East Africa. The I.E.F.C. have been moved to allot another 125,000 tons of cottonseed for 1947-48. 100 tons of corn gluten feed are being imported from U.S.A. for experimental use as cattle feed.

The export of cattle feeds is prohibited except under licence. The export of oilseeds is also restricted and it is proposed to allow the export of only about 110,000 tons of groundnut apart from 76,000 tons of groundnut oil.

A Basic plan for the distribution of cottonseed and oilcakes from surplus to deficit areas is in operation since November last. 1,60,701 tons of cottonseed and 1,61,401 tons of oilcakes have been allotted to various deficit provinces and states, for the year ending 31st October, 1947.

Other cattle feeds such as gowara, chunis, brans, husks etc., are being allotted from surplus to deficit areas on an *ad hoc* basis. Since August last 97,383 tons have been allotted to deficit areas.

The increased production of cereals and pulses under the Grow More Food Campaign is expected to result in increased supply of fodder and concentrates.

Schemes for rotational grazing have been sanctioned for certain areas with the object of making more fodder available.

(b) It is not feasible at the present stage to estimate the results achieved.

Mr. Vadilal Lalubhai: What use is being made of deteriorated foodgrains? Are they destroyed or are they made use of in some way?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: The best possible use is made of all foodgrains.

Mr. Vadilal Lalubhai: Is nothing destroyed?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: Only if it cannot be made use of.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Do you get some fodder value out of it?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: Wherever fodder value is possible, it is being utilised?

Mr. Vadilal Lalubhai: What kind of foodgrains and in what stage of deterioration are they destroyed?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: I will lay a statement on this subject on the table of the House.

Mr. Tamisuddin Khan: In view of shortage of fodder in this country, will the Government consider the advisability of stopping export of cottonseeds altogether.

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: I believe cottonseeds are not allowed to be exported.

Sri M. Ananthasayam Ayyangar: Are Government aware that large quantities of maize imported from Argentina are not being used in Madras owing to

recent crops of bajra and other food crops and as such maize is being allowed to rot, there is no demand for it even from northern India, nor are they taken back from Madras?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: The Government are not aware of this fact. I will make enquiries.

Shri Sri Prakasa: May I know if imported wheat is meant for cattle? The question deals with cattle fodder.

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: There is no wheat which is being imported for cattle. The article which I referred to is wheat bran.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Are Government aware that there is regular fodder famine in certain parts of Madras presidency owing to failure of several food crops? Are Government aware that ryots feel great difficulty in taking steps to get fodder from other places on account of railway wagon shortage?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: Government are aware that there is shortage of fodder, but I have no information about shortage of wagons for the transport of fodder from other parts. But so far as actual allocations are concerned, we try our best to arrange for transport of fodder from surplus areas to deficit areas, and if any particular shortage or lack of wagons is brought to our notice, we shall take steps to enquire into them.

Sri R. Venkatasubba Reddiar: In view of shortage of oil cakes, will the Government consider the advisability of preventing export of oil seeds from India to other countries?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: The export of oil seeds has been restricted very considerably and the figure which had at one time gone up to a million tons has been reduced to just over 100,000 tons.

Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad: May I know if Government are charging any export licensing fees and if these licenses are transferable, may I know at what price they are sold to other persons?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: I have got no information on that point.

Pandit Sri Krishna Dutt Paliwal: Have the steps taken by Government resulted in any appreciable reduction in the price of cattle fodder in this country?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: I do not think that the steps taken will immediately result in a reduction of price. That is bound to take some little time.

IMPROVEMENT IN MILK SUPPLY AND TRANSPORT FACILITIES FOR MILK AND MILCH CATTLE.

785. ***Pandit Sri Krishna Dutt Paliwal:** (a) Will the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) the steps Government have taken or propose to take for utilising the present Goushalas in order to increase and improve the milk supply and cattle wealth of the country; and

(b) the railway transport facilities available for the transport of milch cattle, milk and milk products and cattle food?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) The Honourable Member may kindly see the reply given to part (a) of starred question No. 649 asked by him on the 3rd March 1947.

(b) For movement by rail cattle-food and fodder are allowed Class I priority when sponsored by Government and Class II priority in other cases. Livestock, milk and milk products are given Class II priority.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is any financial assistance given to gaushalas in view of the fact that they serve a very useful purpose?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: I gave an account of the steps taken to help gaushalas in reply to a question the other day. If I remember right, the amount of financial assistance is about Rs. 120,000 per annum.

Shri Sri Prakasa: With reference to the earlier reply to which my Honourable friend referred, will he encourage these gaushalas to use these dry cattle for agricultural purposes? Is it not a fact that experiment has shown that dry cattle when used for agricultural purposes become milch cattle?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: I do not quite understand how dry cattle can become milch cattle.

Shri Sri Prakasa: By physical exercise, dry cattle become milch cattle. In gaushalas there is no physical exercise for the cows. This experiment has been tried in the Punjab and found successful.

NEWSPRINT QUOTA TO NEWSPAPERS AND REFUSAL OF ADDITIONAL QUOTA TO EXISTING PAPERS.

786. *Sri R. Venkatasubha Reddiar: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) the number of daily newspapers which were newly started in 1946-47 with the permission of the Government of India, their names, names of the proprietors and the Provinces to which they belong;

(b) the quantity of news-print allotted to each;

(c) the number of applications received from each Province for starting dailies which were rejected; and

(d) the reasons for granting permission to new papers while refusing additional quota to existing dailies and periodicals?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: (a) A statement giving the required information is placed on the table of the House.

(b) The monthly ration of any newspaper is treated as confidential and it is regretted it is not possible to divulge the information asked for.

(c) The collection of the information regarding the number of applications rejected would involve an outlay of time and labour which Government do not consider justified in present circumstances.

(d) Permission to new newspapers has been given very sparingly and on the grounds that they would propagate the viewpoint of an important political party or group whose views were not being adequately represented in the existing press or that they would serve some definitely useful purpose. The rations of the newspapers other than those which were permitted to start publication as a special case were fixed in accordance with a general scheme on the basis of their actual consumption during the basic period. In view of the difficult supply position of newsprint their applications for increase in the quota were generally refused. Additional quotas were, however, allotted in certain cases where it was felt that a real hardship was involved. It has since been decided to relax the existing control on the procurement and use of newsprint with effect from the 1st April 1947. Newspapers and magazines will then be free to build up any paid circulation. An announcement to this effect has already been made by means of a Press Note.

Statement showing the names of daily newspapers which have newly started publication on newsprint during 1946-47 after securing the permission of the Central Government.

Serial No.	Name of the Newspaper	Name of the proprietor or party.	Monthly ration allotted.	Remarks.
AJMER-MERWARA				
1	Navajyoti, Ajmer	Mr. D. P. Choudhry	0-6-1-0	Conversion from weekly into daily
2	Naya Rajasthan	Mr. Ramnarain Choudhry	0-5-0-0	New newspaper

Serial No.	Name of the Newspaper	Name of the proprietor or party	Monthly ration allotted.	Remarks
BENGAL				
1	Ittihad, Calcutta	Ittihad Printing and Publishing Co.	3-0-0-0	New newspaper.
2	Swaraj, Calcutta	Mr. Humayun Kabir	2-0-0-0	Do.
3	Usha, Calcutta	Mr. A. C. Mookerjee	1-0-0-0	Do.
BIHAR				
1	Navarashtra, Patna	Mr. Devabarta Shashtri	1-0-0-0	Do.
BOMBAY				
1	Navayug, Hubli	Mr. T. R. Neswi, M. L. A.	1-10-0-0	Revival.
2	Free India, Bombay	M/s Akil Bharat Ltd.	4-16-0-0	New newspaper.
DELHI				
1	Millat, Delhi	Mr. Mohd. Jaffri	0-10-0-0	
2	Al-balal, Delhi	Mr. Mahjabin Hussain	1-10-0-0	New newspaper.
3	Azadi-Hind, Delhi	All India Muslim Majlis	1-10-0-0	Do.
4	Aljamait, Delhi	All India Jamiat-ul-Ulema	1-0-0-0	Do.
MADRAS				
1	A new Tamil daily, Madras	Mr. K. T. M. Ahmad	3-0-0-0	
2	Deshabhimani, Calicut	Communist Party	2-0-0-0	Conversion from weekly into daily.
N. W. F. PROVINCE				
1	Abul Kalam, Peshawar	Mr. Mohd. Yunus	3-0-0-0	New newspaper.
PUNJAB				
1	Azad, Lahore	Ahrar Party (Mr. Mrzhar Ali Azhar)	4-0-0-0	Do.
2	Ranjit, Lahore	Northern India Newspapers Ltd.	3-0-0-0	Do.
3	Pakistan Times, Lahore	Provincial Muslim League	8-0-0-0	Do.
4	Bande Matram, Lahore	Mr. Mohan Singh Sahini	3-10-0-0	Conversion from weekly into daily
5	Urdu daily log, Lahore	All India Ahrar Party (Mr. Aziz-ur-Rahman)	1-10-0-0	
6	An Urdu daily from Lahore (Jai Hind)	Mr. Virendra M. L. A.	4-0-0-0	New newspaper.

Serial No.	Name of the Newspaper.	Name of the proprietor or party.	Monthly ration allotted	Remarks.
		SIND		
1	Hilali-Pakistan, Hyderabad	Provincial Muslim League	1-10-0-0	New newspaper.
		UNITED PROVINCES		
1	Quami Awaz, Lucknow.	U. P. Congress	6-0-0-0	Do.
2	Bharatvarsh, Cawnpore	Mr. H. S. Vidyarthi	1-0-0-0	Do.
3	Prakash, Agra	Mr. M. L. Kela	0-2-0-0	Do.
		INDIAN STATES		
1	Pasban, Bangalore	M/s Hassen Mussana Nadvi and Ismail Tablish.	0-8-0-0	Do.
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Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: What is the position of newsprint today?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: It is better today.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: What percentage of previous quota is available?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: I cannot give the percentage. It is very much better. Some dealers are actually getting newsprint from Russia though at a slightly higher cost.

Shri D. P. Karmarkar: Why is the monthly ration of any newspaper considered confidential?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: It is a question of a particular newspaper's circulation capacity being told to other people. I think it is generally considered wrong that circulation figures which are given for a particular purpose should be given greater publicity than for the purpose for which it was originally given.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will the Honourable Member tell us why permission is given for newspapers to use ordinary printing paper while removing control from newsprint generally? This seriously affects the quantity available for book publishers?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: Newspapers have been specifically told not to use other than newsprint. Permission is not given for printing newspapers on ordinary printing paper.

Mr. Manu Subedar: I am glad to hear that; but is the Honourable Member aware that *Capital*, *Indian Finance*, and a couple of dozen other newspapers and high class weeklies are all printed in printing paper and not newsprint and that this is a depredation on ordinary printing paper the production of which has fallen last year? And why is the community being thus deprived of the very restricted supply of printing paper in favour of newspapers?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: The word 'newspaper' was used in this connection by me and in the communiques with reference to daily newspapers. If the Honourable Member is referring to weekly or monthly periodicals, it would be a hardship to compel them to use newsprint. But no orders can be passed with reference to particular newspapers. If we do not allow

printing paper to be used by weeklies and monthlies and compel all of them to use newsprint, only it would create a great deal of hardship.

Mr. Tamizuddin Khan: Will the restrictions on the starting of fresh newspapers be removed or relaxed from April next?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: Any person may start a daily newspaper from the 1st April 1947 if he is able to get newsprint and subscribers.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Are Government satisfied that by such relaxation there will not be a scramble in the market for newspapers and some of the poorer newspapers will not be starved while the richer ones may be able to get much more than the quota?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: That was one of the considerations to be weighed in the balance; but on the whole all the people concerned were in favour of relaxation.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Was not there any dissentient voice from the smaller newspapers and the more recent newspapers?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: When I last met them the smaller newspapers were well represented and they did not raise any dissentient voice. Of course there might have been doubts in their minds but they did not press them.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Will the Honourable Member lift control from other things also in the same way?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: A question or a Resolution may be put down on that point.

Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad: Is it not a fact that Government have complete control over the issue of newspapers because they have control over the distribution of newsprint, and without newsprint they cannot start a paper?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: The control over the newsprint is retained to some extent but not with reference to particular newspapers.

OVER-STAFFED SUPPLY DEPARTMENT.

787. *Sri R. Venkatasubba Reddiar: Will the Honourable the Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state whether Government are aware that the Supplies Department is over staffed?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: No, Sir. All posts have up to now been on a temporary basis and are extended from time to time only after their necessity has been established. The strength on 1st September 1945 was Executive 2,313, clerical 41,725. On 1st January 1947, Executive 1,071, clerical 24,718. All existing sanctions expired on the 28th February, 1947, and the staff to be retained after that date is being examined in detail to ensure that only those posts which are really necessary shall be retained.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: When does the Honourable Member propose to close this department?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: If it is the general desire that the department should be closed it will be closed provided it is consistent with efficiency of administration.

Mr. Manu Subedar: How does the Honourable Member explain the fact that for next year the budget grant in his department is higher than for the previous year, and how does he propose to reconcile that with his statement that he is reducing both executive and clerical staff?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: I said that on 1st September 1945 the strength was respectively 2,313 and 41,725 and that on 1st January 1947 it was 1,071 and 24,718. I am not quite able to see the connection between this and the budget provision; but if the Honourable Member will put down a question I will be able to look into the matter.

Shri Sri Prakasa: What is the available number of hours that each member of the staff is expected to work per day?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: The working hours fixed for offices are being followed; and the working period may be easily calculated.

* IMPROVEMENT OF OLD BENARES ROAD BETWEEN CHANDITALA AND SHEAKHALA.

788. ***Mr. Nagendranath Mukhopadhyay:** (a) With reference to the reply given on the 11th November, 1946 to unstarred question No. 44 regarding improvement of old Benares Road between Chanditala and Sheakhala will the Honourable Member for Transport be pleased to state whether he has received any reply to the Government of India letters No. R-5 (46) dated the 2nd and 9th January, 1947, from the Bengal Government in connection with the petitions, dated the 13th and 26th November and 30th December, 1946 addressed to the Honourable Member by the persons living in the Hooghly District? If not, do Government propose to call for a reply in the matter?

(b) Has the attention of Government of India been drawn to the *Nationalist Calcutta*, dated the 27th December, 1946 and the *Hindustan Standard*, Calcutta dated the 29th December, 1946 publishing communications from the persons living in the Hooghly District?

(c) Are Government aware that the Chanditala-Sheakhala portion of the Old Benares Road is an important one, both for industrial and agricultural purposes, as is admitted by the Europeans and the Indians as well as Government officials, and as such, the scheme was approved and sanctioned by the Government of India in 1939 and the work of construction was taken up in 1940 and the amount of Rs. 1,78,000 was spent from the Central Road Fund by the Bengal Government?

(d) If the answers to (b) and (c) are in the affirmative, do Government propose to inform the House when the work will be re-started by the Bengal Government for the improvement of the Old Benares Road between Chanditala and Sheakhala?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) No. The two letters referred to did not call for a reply.

(b) Yes.

(c) and (d). The importance of this road has been urged in the press reports mentioned in part (b) of this question and also in representations received from the inhabitants of the locality. I would refer the Honourable Member to the replies given in this House to his questions Nos. 48 and 44 on 27th February and 11th November 1946. I have nothing further to add.

Shri Sri Prakasa: May I know how this road is called the Old Benares Road and what has Benares to do with Chanditala-Sheakhala?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I imagine it is part of the Grand Trunk Road that passes through or near Benares. That is my impression.

SUPPLY OF UNIFORMS TO POOR PAID STAFF OF THE ENGINEERING DEPOT ON THE HOWRAH DIVISION OF E. I. RAILWAY.

789. ***Mr. Nagendranath Mukhopadhyay:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether Government are aware of the fact that the East Indian Railway have sanctioned uniforms to be supplied to poor paid staff of the Engineering Department?

(b) If so, are Government aware that the Howrah Divisional Authorities are not giving effect to those orders?

(c) Do Government propose to supply the said staff with the uniforms?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) On the presumption that the question refers to the supply of uniforms to such lower paid Permanent Way staff of the Engineering Department as are not entitled to them under existing orders, the reply is in the negative.

(b) The allegation is not correct.

(c) The question of supplying certain items of clothing as uniform to Permanent Way Mates, Keymen and Gangmen is now under consideration by the E. I. Railway Administration.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Will the Honourable Member kindly see that the amount of cloth consumed in these uniforms is not more than the amount granted to the civilian population on an average?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I should think it extremely unlikely that it would exceed that.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Are we to take it seriously that in 11 yards of cloth a full uniform can be made?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: As a matter of fact the uniforms in question are woollen clothing and supplied only once in four years.

ASSISTANCE TO THE BIO-CHEMICAL AND SYNTHETICAL PRODUCTS LTD., HYDERABAD (DECCAN).

790. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Secretary of the Food Department be pleased to state the nature of the assistance, which Government have agreed to give to the Bio-chemical and Synthetical Products Ltd., Hyderabad (Deccan)?

(b) Is this company registered in British India or in Hyderabad (Deccan)?

(c) Is the dominant interest in this company Indian or non-Indian?

(d) What is the progress of this company in the matter of production?

(e) When is the supply expected to be available?

(f) At what price will this supply be made available to Provincial Governments, who wish to use it to improve the diet of the people?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: (a) The Food Department have assured the Biochemical and Synthetic Products Ltd. that they would support their legitimate requests to other Departments and the province concerned for expediting the construction and maintaining the production of the proposed factory.

(b) The Company is registered under the Indian Companies Act (1913), with its registered Head Office at Secunderabad.

(c) Government have been informed that it is exclusively Indian.

(d) The Company has sent one of its Directors abroad for purchasing machinery and is negotiating with the U. P. Government for a suitable site and for reservation of the requisite quantity of molasses.

(e) It cannot be said when the factory will be in production, but the Company is proceeding with all possible speed.

(f) There is no commitment that the Provincial Governments will buy the product, but the Company has given an assurance that they will try to make supplies available at -/6/- per lb., which is the rate suggested by the Special Officer appointed by Government to inquire into this industry.

Mr. Manu Subedar: May I know what steps Government are taking to ensure purity of the articles produced and also to ensure that unreasonable prices would not be charged, since this is not a competitive production in India?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: The company has not been given any guaranteed offtake by Government. It will therefore be in its own interest to prepare a product which conforms to the specifications of food-yeast and to prepare it at a fair price.

Mr. Manu Subedar: What sort of standard or inspection will Government impose on this company, as these articles will go into the dietary of people, to see that the yeast and various other things produced will be of suitable quality and suitable standard and not deleterious to the people?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: The same check on the products will be applied as in the case of other products manufactured in this country.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Has this company asked for any financial help from the Government of India?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: No, Sir.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Are they getting any financial help from the Government of Hyderabad where it has been put up; If so, what is the amount of Hyderabad State interest in this company?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: I have said that the company is registered in Secunderabad. We have no information whether it has received any financial assistance from any other source.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: What are the peculiar natural facilities in Secunderabad by way of raw produce, in order to start such an industry there?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: The company actually proposes to start a factory in the U. P. The only facility at Secunderabad for registration is that the promoters happen to be there.

FIXATION OF FODDER PRICES.

791. *Sri V. C. Vellingiri Gounder: Will the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture be pleased to refer to his answer to starred question No. 119 asked on 7th February 1947, regarding the fixation of fodder prices and state:

- what are the schemes for importing fodder;
- the kind of fodder proposed to be imported;
- the source from which it will be imported;
- how its cost will compare with the rates prevailing in different parts of the country for different kinds of fodder; and
- the places to which Government propose to supply the imported fodder?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a), (b) and (c). Information on the three points raised is given in my reply to part (a) of Question No. 784 asked by Mr. Paliwal today.

(d) and (e). A statement is placed on the table.

Statement

	Import price per maund C. I. F. Bombay.	Internal price per maund.	Allocations in tons from what has been received.
Wheat bran	Rs. 8/2/-	Rs. 4/4/- to 10/-/-	Sind : . . . 6287 Bombay . . . 3751 N.W.F.P. . . 1000 Delhi . . . 500 States . . . 75 Total. . . 11,613
Oats	Rs. 11/1/- . . .	Rs. 6/10/- to 16/-/-	Bengal . . . 5000 Bihar . . . 1150 Sind . . . 500 Baluchistan . . 40 States . . . 671 Total . . . 7,361
Cotton Seed.	Rs. 9/13/- . . .	Rs. 4/12/- to 16/-/-	Bombay . . . 5,000
Corn gluten . . .	Rs. 7/13/- plus freight and insurance.	...	Bombay . . . 100

Sri V. C. Vellingiri Gounder: May I know what subsidy Government are paying to equalise prices as between imported and indigenous products?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: I believe a certain amount of subsidy is given to provincial Governments for such distribution. I have not got the figures with me now.

(b) WRITTEN ANSWERS —**FOOD FACTORIES STARTED DURING THE WAR.**

792. *Sri V. C. Vellingiri Gounder: Will the Secretary of the Food Department be pleased to state:

- (a) the number and varieties of food factories started during the war;
- (b) how many have stopped working now;
- (c) what are the factories the Provincial Governments intend acquiring;
- (d) where these factories are situated;
- (e) what help Government are giving to factories which are catering to the needs of the civil market;
- (f) to what extent the food requirements of the Army are met by these factories as compared with the imported food stuffs; and
- (g) how Government propose to dispose of the rest of the factories which are not working now?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: (a) During the War, Government maintained 21 installations and obtained supplies from 515 private factories, the majority of which were started during the War. Details of these factories are given in the statement laid on the table of the House.

(b) Only two installations are now maintained by Government and supplies are obtained from 46 private factories. The number of private factories which have stopped working is not known.

(c) and (d). Provincial Governments have already taken over the Cheese Factory at Anand and the Fruit Processing Factory at Peshawar. The N.W.F.P. Government have offered to take over the Fruit Canning Factory at Nasarpur.

(e) Government have made available to the extent possible controlled materials required by these factories and have appointed five planning panels to recommend plans for development of food products manufactured in these factories.

(f) Lists of items supplied by Indian factories and those imported from abroad are placed on the table of the House. It has now been decided that imported items should in future be procured in India to the extent these items satisfy the prescribed specifications.

(g) Surplus factories have been reported to the Director General, Disposals, who is responsible for the disposal of surplus Government installations.

STATEMENT I
Section 'A'—List of Government Factories.

	Government installations utilised during war (1)	In production at present (2)	Stopped production (3)
Meat Dehydration Factories	9	Nil	9
Dehydrated Onions & Potatoes	3	Nil	3
Fruits Dried	1	Nil	1
Fruits Tinned	1	Nil	1
Cheese Factory	1	Nil	1
Ghee (Milk)			
(Blending Factory)	6	2	4
Total	21	2	19

Section 'B'—List of non-Government Factories.

Foodstuffs	Total number of factories utilised during war	Number of factories, supplying Government at present
1. Amla Sweet	1	Nil
2. Ascorbic Acid Tablets	1	"
3. Baking Powder	4	"
4. Barley Pearl	3	"
5. Beer and Rum	9	"
6. Biscuits Shakapara	12	"
7. Butter Tinned	2	"
8. Chutney and Pickles	26	"
9. Cigars	3	"
10. Cigarettes and Tobacco	17	1
11. Cinnamon Powder	1	Nil
12. Coffee Ground	10	"
13. Condiment Powder, Curry Powder, Mustard and Pepper Ground Refined.	72	3
14. Corn Flour	4	3
15. Custard Powder	1	Nil
16. Egg Powder	2	"
17. Essence of Chicken, Lemon, Vanilla, etc.	5	"
18. Fish Dried and Smoked	3	"
19. Fruits Tinned	2	"
20. Gelatine	1	"
21. Golden Syrup	4	"
22. Honey	1	"
23. Jams and Marmalade	12	"
24. Jellies Assorted	1	"
25. Lime, Lemon Juice and Cordials	10	"
26. Margarine	1	1
27. Marmalade	6	Nil
28. Malt	3	Nil
29. Oatmeal	1	Nil
30. Oil cake	49	5
31. Oil Cooking Refined (Groundnut and Salad Oils)	13	Nil

Foodstuffs	Total number of factories utilised during war	Number of factories supplying Government at present
32. Onions, Potatoes and Vegetables Dehydrated	83	Nil
33. Rennet Powder/Tablets	2	1
34. Sago	1	Nil
35. Salt Refined	16	5
36. Sauces Table.	7	Nil
37. Sugar	94	14
38. Tomato Tinned	7	Nil
39. Vanaspati	22	16
40. Vinegar	1	Nil
41. Yeast Extract	2	Nil
Total	515	46

Statement II

Items required for the Army which are obtained from Indian Factories.—Cigarettes, Vanaspati, Refined salt, Margarine, Rennet Tablets, Curry Powder, Pepper Ground Refined, Mustard, Sugar.

Items required for the Army which are imported from abroad.—Bacon Tinned, Baking Powder, Beans Canned, Beef Pres, Mutton Pres, M. & V., Variety Meats, Luncheon Meat, Biscuits fancy, Biscuits Service, Cheese Tinned, Chocolate Vit., Cocoa Powder, Cornflour, Herrings Tinned, Salmon Tinned, Fruit dried, Fruit Tinned, Jam, Marmalade, Golden Syrup, Honey, Margarine, Milk Powder Skim, Mustard, Oatmeal, Onions Dehyd. Pickles, Potatoes Tinned, Potatoes Dehydrated, Sausages Tinned, Veg. Tinned, Veg. Dehydrated Yeast Dessicated, Arrowroot, Bengers Food, Gelatine or Jelly Crystals, Malted Milk, Meat Extract, Ovaltine, Vinegar, Lime Juice Cordial, Campagne, Compound Vit. Tabs.

SCARCITY OF IRON PIPES, SHEETS, FENCING WIRE, ETC., FOR FARM USE.

793. *Sri V. C. Vellingiri Gounder: (a) Will the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture be pleased to state whether Government are aware of the difficulty experienced by the agriculturists on account of the scarcity of iron pipes, sheets, fencing wires, etc., for farm use?

(b) Do Government propose to allot more of such things to the Provinces?

(c) Do Government propose to consider the advisability of ear marking such allotments separately for Agricultural purposes and supplying them through the Provincial-Agricultural Departments?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). Government have allotted 200,000 tons of steel to Provincial Governments to meet the requirements of small consumers and for private building. Provincial Governments are being asked to make suitable allotments for this amount for agricultural purposes. This steel is made over by the Controller to licensed dealers in such categories as may be desired by Provincial Governments and the latter will then arrange for the further distribution of this steel for agricultural purposes either through retail dealers or through their Agriculture

Departments. In addition quotas have been given for steel processing industries which manufacture implements and machinery, including those required for agricultural purposes. It is not considered feasible at the present stage to increase the Provincial allotments as other essential requirements have also to be met.

DELAY IN PAYMENTS OF DUES TO DISCHARGED STAFF OF THE CALCUTTA BRANCH OF TIMBER DIRECTORATE.

794. *Sri R. Venkatasubba Reddiar: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to an article under the heading "Round the Metropolis" and sub heading "Efficiency" in the Evening News of the *Hindustan Times*, dated 4th February, 1947, relating to the delay in the payment of dues of many of the staff who were discharged from service as a result of the abolition of the Calcutta branch of the Timber Directorate at the end of 1945;

(b) if the facts stated therein are true, the reasons for the delay in payment and the persons who are responsible for such delay; and

(c) whether any steps are being taken to expedite payment and whether any action is being taken against those responsible for the delay?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: (a) and (b). Government's attention has been drawn to the article in question. The fact is that while claims relating to pay, bonus and gratuity of the retrenched employees in question were settled claims relating to the payment of increased Dearness Allowance sanctioned at a later date with retrospective effect were not settled. The delay is unfortunate, and is regretted. Dearness Allowance with retrospective effect from the 1st July 1944 was sanctioned by the Government of India on the 22nd March 1946 only. The preparation of bills for this claim could not be taken up before August 1946 due to abnormal rush of work owing to amalgamation of the various regional wings (D.G.M.P., C.C.P.M., etc.) with the D.G.I. & S. This bill was unfortunately returned by the C.S.A. Calcutta, on the 22nd November 1946 with some audit objections, and for recasting. It has subsequently been resubmitted to the C.S.A., Calcutta, early in February 1947.

(c) Yes, Sir. Steps have been taken to expedite payments. The officers who were looking after this work have already left our Department or are dead and at this stage, it is not considered worth while to pursue this matter further.

QUALIFICATION FOR THE POST OF CHIEF MEDICAL AND HEALTH OFFICERS ON RAILWAYS

795. *Seth Sukhdev: With reference to the reply to parts (a) and (b) of starred question No. 113 asked on 31st October, 1946, regarding the qualifications for the post of Chief Medical and Health Officer on Railways, will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a general rule on the Railways that new conditions be relaxed in favour of employees who joined service prior to the date of the orders prescribing such conditions; if not, why a special exemption was made in favour of Medical Officers;

(b) if the reply to the first portion of part (a) be in the affirmative whether Government propose to apply such exemption in the case of employees of the North Western Railway, who under a recent order are required to pass the First Aid examination as a condition for getting increments and promotion;

(c) the budgetted amount of expenses during the year 1946-47, for (i) sanitation, and (ii) medical relief on the North Western Railway;

(d) whether it is a fact that sanitation has recently been transferred to the medical department on the North Western Railway; and

(e) whether Government propose to create a post of Deputy Chief Medical Officer, for Sanitation and Public Health work on the North Western Railway; if not, what other steps are proposed to be taken to ensure proper sanitation?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) It is the general practice when new conditions are introduced not to apply them in such a way as to cause hardship to persons already in service. Each case is, however, dealt with on its merits.

(b) No. It has been made obligatory for staff of certain categories to pass in first aid in the interests of the welfare of the travelling public. It has, therefore, been found necessary to make the grant of increments and promotion to all such staff irrespective of the date of appointment, dependent on the passing of an examination in first aid.

(c) The budgetted amount of expenditure during the year 1946-47 is as under:—

	Rs.
(i) Sanitation	15,85,000
(ii) Medical relief	12,51,000

(d) The control of sanitation of the larger colonies and larger stations has been transferred to the **Medical Branch**.

(e) No. The Chief Medical Officer has sufficient theoretical and practical training and experience to look after the sanitation of the railway. The latter portion of the question does not arise.

ABOLITION OF THE METHOD OF SELECTION IN N. W. RAILWAY FOR POSTS IN A SALARY OF RS. 400 OR MORE

796. *Seth Sukhdev: Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to an article under the heading "Competitive Examination only Test for merit" appearing in the *Railway Herald*, Karachi, dated the 6th January 1947 regarding the method of selections to higher grades based on confidential reports on the North Western Railway;

(b) whether Government propose to dispense with the system of maintaining confidential reports for staff; if not, why not; and

(c) whether Government propose to abolish selections for posts carrying a salary of Rs. 400 or over, if not, what improvements are proposed to be made in the matter of selections?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) Government have seen the article referred to.

(b) No. Very definite instructions regarding the preparation of confidential reports have been prescribed by Government and these emphasise the responsibility of reporting officers in exercising care and judgment when reporting on persons under them. In this connection, attention is invited to rules 1615 and 1619 of the State Railway Establishment Code, Volume I. As confidential reports form the basis of assessing the work, ability, conduct and fitness for advancement of both gazetted and non-gazetted railway servants, Government do not propose to do away with them.

(c) No. Government have no reason to believe that there is any lack of confidence among staff regarding selections for promotion and accordingly do not consider that any change in the present system is called for.

RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION OF STAFF ON N. W. RAILWAY

797. *Seth Sukhdev: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the proceedings of the Hindu and Sikh Railwaymen's Federation meeting held at Lahore on 25th December 1946?

(b) What policy do Government propose to pursue in view of the complaints in Resolution Nos. 1 and 2 regarding the methods of recruitment and promotion of staff in the North Western Railway on a communal basis?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) Yes.

(b) As regards the first Resolution, I would refer the Honourable Member to paras. 5(b) and 6 of the Memorandum of Supplementary Instructions issued in connection with the Government of India, Home Department Resolution No. F 14/17-13/33-Ests., dated the 4th July 1934, a copy of which is in the Library of the House. Para. 5(b) referred to prescribes the minimum percentage fixed for the recruitment of Muslims on the N. W. Railway. In regard to the second Resolution, the rules for the constitution of Selection Boards are designed with the object of giving persons of all communities a fair deal and Government do not consider that Selection Boards on the N. W. Railway act contrary to this policy. Government do not consider the complaints made in the latter part of each of the Resolutions mentioned justified and do not, therefore, feel that a change in the existing rules and procedure is called for.

LATE RUNNING OF TRAINS ON E. I. AND O. T. RAILWAYS

798. *Mr. Madandhari Singh: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether Government are aware that the trains on the East Indian and the Oudh and Tirhut Railways run late?

(b) If so, what are the reasons therefor?

(c) Do Government propose to take steps to see that these trains run in time?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) Some of the trains on the East Indian Railway and O. T. Railway have been running late.

(b) The chief causes of unpunctuality are, heavy loads of trains, poor quality of coal, engineering restrictions, frequent misuse of alarm chains, delays at stations to accommodate heavy passenger traffic and occasional civil disturbances.

(c) The running of passenger trains is closely and regularly scrutinised by officers of the Transportation Departments and disciplinary action is taken against staff responsible for avoidable delays.

Railway Administrations are doing everything in their power to ensure punctual running of trains and the latest reports from the E. I. and O. T. Railways show that some improvement in punctuality has been made.

PROFIT TO DELHI RATIONING DEPARTMENT IN HANDLING WHEAT AND RICE

799. *Mr. Madandhari Singh: (a) Will the Secretary of the Food Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Delhi Rationing Department have made a profit in handling wheat and rice for consumption in the city?

(b) If so, what is the amount of profit?

(c) Why was this profit made?

(d) How do Government propose to utilize the amount?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given by me to starred question No. 557 by Shri D. P. Karnarkar on the 25th February, 1947.

LIFTING OF CONTROLS ON GROUNDNUT OIL AND CAKE, SUNHEMP SEEDS, COCONUT, ETC.

800. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Secretary of the Food Department be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the controls over the supplies, movements and prices of groundnut, groundnut-oil and cake, sunhemp seeds, coconut, coconut-oil and cake have been instituted in Madras on the advice of the Government of India;

(b) whether Government are aware that the prices of all these articles have gone up by nearly 25 per cent. after the controls were instituted and that most of the semi-manufactured items of these controlled goods have gone out of the market;

(c) whether Government are aware that while the price of groundnut is fixed at Rs. 11 per bag, that of groundnut cake is fixed at Rs. 7-8-0 per bag; and

(d) whether Government propose to consider the advisability of lifting these controls in view of their defects?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: (a) Control over the movement and prices of groundnut, groundnut oil and coconut oil was introduced by the Government of Madras on the advice of the Central Government, following the resolutions passed at the Conferences of representatives of the Provincial Governments and the States concerned. Control over groundnut cake, coconut and coconut cake and sun-hemp was instituted by the Government of Madras without reference to the Central Government.

(b) Complaints of rising prices were received in regard to edible oils and groundnut kernel. Only coconut oil was reported to be not available in the free market.

(c) Ex-mill prices of groundnut cake ranged between Rs. 6-1-0 to Rs. 7-7-0 per bag of 160 lbs. as against Rs. 16-8-0 per bag of unshelled groundnut.

(d) The Government of India have re-examined the whole question and have announced their decision to decontrol entirely all edible oil-seeds and oils except copra and coconut oil. Oil cakes are being controlled by the Provincial Governments.

CONSTRUCTION OF RAILWAY LINE BETWEEN ONGOLE AND CUMBHUM *via* ADDANKI AND DARISI.

801. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that there was a scheme for constructing a Railway line between Ongole (in Guntur District) and Cumbhum (in Kurnool District) *via* Addanki and Darisi;

(b) whether Government are aware that this hinter-land, which produces tobacco, groundnut and paddy crops and which is also liable to famines at frequent intervals is badly in need of such a railway both for developing its resources and also as a famine-insurance measure; and

(c) whether Government propose to investigate this scheme again?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthaj: (a) No, Sir. There has been no proposal for constructing a railway line from Ongole (in Guntur District) to Cumbhum (in Kurnool District) *via* Addanki and Darisi, nor is such a project in view at the present time.

(b) Government have no information in this regard but the area mentioned by the Honourable Member is served by a Broad Gauge line on the east and a Metre Gauge line on the west separated by about 60 miles and *prima facie* it seems that the area could be developed adequately by road transport.

(c) Construction of this line was not mooted by the Provincial Government at the general meeting with the Railway Board in November 1944 when considering the question of post-war railway development in the province of Madras. As there has been a change in Government since then, the Madras Government were addressed recently asking whether they would like to add to or amend in any way the list of approved projects framed as a result of the previous meeting in November 1944. A reply to this communication is still awaited and if as a result of this reference, the Provincial Government recommended the investigation of this project, Government would no doubt consider the question favourably.

NON-ISSUE OF RAILWAY TICKETS FROM RAIPUR STATION

802. *Mr. G. B. Dani: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether Government are aware that railway tickets were not issued for many stations from Raipur Railway Station during the month of December, 1946?

(b) Are Government aware that one receipt for four or more passengers was issued instead of one ticket or one receipt for each passenger?

(c) Are Government aware that passengers had to search for companions bound for the same destinations and at times had to suffer loss when they could not find such companions, and obtain receipts or tickets for their destinations?

(d) What is the reason for the shortage of tickets and receipts?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) No. Government are informed that passengers from Raipur station have not been refused railway tickets, although on occasions, printed card tickets have not been available for certain destinations and paper tickets have been issued instead.

(b) Yes. In some instances, paper tickets have been issued to groups of passengers.

(c) Paper tickets have been issued to individual passengers as well as to groups; but it is possible that the issue of tickets to groups caused inconvenience to certain members of the travelling public.

(d) The shortage of printed tickets on the B. N. Railway has been due to (i) enhanced demand in consequence of the heavy increase in passenger traffic, and (ii) dislocation in the B. N. Railway Printing Press following communal disturbances in Calcutta. Happily the position has now improved and sufficient stocks of printed tickets are available at all stations on the B. N. Railway, including Raipur.

GRANT FOR IMPROVEMENT AND PRODUCTION OF BETEL-NUTS

303. *Sri A. K. Menon: With reference to the reply to part (a) of my starred question No. 405, asked on 11th November, 1946, regarding the grant for improvement and production of betel-nuts, will the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether the grant of 5 lakhs referred to therein as being proposed to be made for the purpose of financing measures designed to improve the production and marketing of betel-nuts has been made for the year 1946-47; if not, when it is going to be made; and

(b) whether the scheme for the improvement of production and the organisation of betel-nut marketing has been drawn up by Government; if so, whether Government propose to place it on the table of the House and if it is not yet ready, when it is likely to be ready?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) A grant to the I.C.A.R. of Rs. 5 lakhs for 1946-47 has been sanctioned from which it will finance the necessary measures.

(b) Government have received various proposals which are being examined in detail. It is hoped that a suitable final scheme will be evolved in a month or two.

MALABAR ARECANUT GROWER'S ASSOCIATION.

304. *Sri A. K. Menon: (a) With reference to the reply given to part (c) of my Starred Question No. 405 asked on 11th November, 1946, regarding the grant for improvement and production of betel-nuts, will the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture be pleased to state whether Government have made enquiries of the Madras Government regarding the working of the Malabar Arecanut Grower's Association?

(b) If the result of the enquiry is satisfactory, have Government rendered the Association any aid?

(c) If the report is not satisfactory, in what respect is its working unsatisfactory?

(d) Have Government received representations for help from the above Association and did Government promise help to them? If help was promised, why was it not given?

(e) Are Government aware that the scope of the Association was developed in anticipation of the aid promised by the Government of India?

(f) Do Government propose to help them now?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a), (b) and (c). A reference was made to the Madras Government in November last. Their reply is awaited.

(d), (e) and (f). A representation has been received. There is no record of any promise but the question of giving a grant will be examined on receipt of the reply of the Madras Government.

GOVERNMENT POLICY re POSTAL EMPLOYEES SENT TO MALAYA AS COMBATANTS IN 1941

805. *Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: Will the Secretary of the Communications Department be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that postal and Railway Mail Service employees of different grades such as, Inspectors, Clerks, Postmen, got enrolled as combatants during the last war, that they were sent to Malaya in June 1941, and that when the British forces surrendered to the Japanese in February 1942, the entire postal unit became prisoners of war;

(b) whether Government are aware that when Burma and Malaya were recovered about one hundred persons of the said postal unit who had joined the Indian National Army in the meantime were also recovered;

(c) whether Government are aware that these men after discharge from the Army service were directed to report themselves to their respective departmental superintendents, and were furnished with travelling facilities for proceeding to their original civil appointment stations;

(d) whether Government are aware that after these men reported themselves as directed, they have been kept on leave on half pay when leave on half pay is due, or on a subsistence allowance, when no such leave is due, and that they are neither being asked to join, nor are they receiving their dues or any amenities; and

(e) if so, what Government propose to do in the case of these men and what is their policy in the matter?

Mr. Masarrat Husain Zuberi: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). The facts as stated by the Honourable Member are substantially correct.

(d) The employees in question have been kept on leave due, or, when no leave was due to them, under suspension pending enquiry and the issue of final orders as a result of the review of the whole position.

(e) The policy of Government in regard to the employees of the Civil Government who collaborated with the enemy during the war and were subsequently recovered was recently reviewed and it has been decided that there shall be no ban on the re-employment of such persons except such of them as were guilty of acts of brutality, and this applies to the persons about whom the Honourable Member is enquiring.

GRADUATES AS 'B' GRADE GUARDS ON E. I. RAILWAYS, DURING WAR PERIOD

806. *Sjt. Seth Damodar Swroop: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state how many young graduates were appointed as 'B' grade Guards on the East Indian Railway during the period of War?

(b) Are Government aware that their salaries range from Rs. 40 to Rs. 50 p.m.?

(c) Are Government aware that recently the East Indian Railway Administration advertised vacancies in the posts of 'A' grade Guards and Transportation Apprentices calling for applications from graduates only and that

the 'B' grade graduate-Guards who have been working for the last 5 to 7 years are shown no consideration?

(d) If so, do Government propose to consider the desirability of promoting as many 'B' grade Graduate-Guards to the posts of 'A' grade Guards and Transportation Apprentices as are duly qualified instead of appointing new men?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

(b) The employees concerned draw pay in the scale of Rs. 40—42—3—45—5—60 plus mileage and dearness allowances and interim relief.

(c) As regards the first portion, Government are informed that the E. I. Railway Administration advertised a certain number of posts of Grade "A" Guards, to be filled by persons holding a degree, under the general scheme of reserving 20 per cent. of the vacancies in each year for direct recruitment to the intermediate grades. A degree has also been specified in the case of recruits for the posts of Transportation Apprentices. In regard to the latter portion, Government understand that Graduate grade 'B' guards working against temporary vacancies and other temporary graduate employees are allowed to compete with outsiders for posts of "A" grade guards provided they possess the necessary qualifications and are below the age of 28 years. Grade "B" guards are also eligible for promotion as Grade "A" Guards in their turn against 60 per cent. of the vacancies occurring in the year. For posts of Transportation Apprentices all graduate "B" grade Guards and other Graduate employees are allowed to compete if they are between the ages of 18 and 25 and are recommended by the Divisional Superintendents or Heads of Departments.

(d) Government consider that the existing provision for the absorption of Graduate Guards, in "B" grade, in higher posts is adequate and do not propose either to make any change in the system of recruiting persons direct to intermediate grades, or to give graduate grade "B" guards preference in the matter of appointment as Transportation Apprentices.

EXPORT TO ENGLAND OF INDIAN IRON AND STEEL AND MATERIALS

807. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Iron and Steel or materials made out of them, are being exported to England; and

(b) if so, why and in what quantities?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: With your permission, Sir, I shall reply to both parts of the question together.

No export of Indian Iron and Steel to U. K. is being licensed.

As regards manufactured articles of iron and steel, there was no control on their export up to the 8th February, 1947. No information is, therefore, available of any such exports before that date. There have been no exports since the date referred to above.

RESERVATION OF UPPER CLASS BERTHS ON THE EAST INDIA RAILWAY FOR MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY

808. *Sjt. Seth Damodar Swroop: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether Government are aware that black-marketing is prevalent in reservation of upper class berths in the East India Railway and that even the Honourable Members of this House are refused

reservation on ground of 'no vacancy' while berths are reserved for those who pay extra money for reservation?

(b) What steps, if any, Government propose to take to provide necessary facilities for travelling to the Members of this House and the public in general?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) No, Sir. If the Honourable Member will assist by quoting specific cases, I will certainly have the matter investigated in detail.

(b) Principal Railway Administrations have been instructed to extend so far as Honourable Members of the Central Legislature are concerned, the period in advance of the actual date of travel within which tickets may be purchased, and also afford to Honourable Members all reasonable assistance in securing reservations for journeys to and from Delhi in connection with the sessions of the Legislature. I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to Railway Board's circular letter No. 3058-TT of the 21st December 1945 addressed to all Members of the Council of State and of the House. The public in general can make reservations by purchasing tickets ten days in advance. Station masters are required on request to intimate by telegram to junctions and stations *en route* particulars of onward accommodation required by passengers in connecting trains.

REVENUE FROM SALE OF POSTCARDS SINCE REDUCTION IN POSTCARD RATES

809. *Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Will the Secretary of the Communications Department be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of post-cards sold since the reduction in post-card rates and the number of cards sold during the corresponding period in the preceding year; and

(b) the effect on the revenues on account of the reduction in the post-card rates?

Mr. Masarrat Husain Zuberi: (a) Statistics of postcards actually sold are not maintained.

(b) The loss on account of the reduction of the postcard rate during nine months of the current year is estimated at Rs. 94 lakhs.

RESTORATION OF THROUGH TRAINS BETWEEN PATNA AND RANCHI

810. *Mr. Habibur Rahman: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state:

(a) whether Government are aware that there used to be a through train between Patna and Ranchi in the pre-war days and that this train was later on withdrawn because of the wartime difficulties; and

(b) if so, whether Government now propose to consider the desirability of restoring the above-mentioned train?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The restoration of the Patna-Ranchi through train has been accorded a high priority by the Railway Administration and this train will be reintroduced as soon as the necessary coaching stock becomes available.

REFUSAL OF PERMISSION TO THE SENTINEL OF RANCHI FOR CONVERSION INTO "DAILY" OR "BI-WEEKLY" OR "TRI-WEEKLY"

811. *Mr. Habibur Rahman: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the weekly newspaper the *Sentinel*, published from Ranchi, applied for permission for conversion into a daily or tri-weekly or bi-weekly, if so, when and how many times did it apply?

(b) Is it a fact that Government have been declining to grant permission on the ground that they had no newsprint to spare?

(c) Have Government granted permission for the publication of new dailies and periodicals in Bihar and other Provinces during the last two years; if so, what are those papers?

(d) If the answers to questions (b) and (c) be in the affirmative, on what grounds have Government been refusing permission to the *Sentinel*?

(e) What reply was given by Government to the last representation from the *Sentinel* for permission to convert the paper into a bi-weekly and for the allotment of the necessary newsprint quota?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: (a) The first request of the *Sentinel* for conversion into a daily or bi-weekly or tri-weekly was received through the Provincial Government in January 1946 and was followed by two similar requests in March 1946 and January 1947 respectively.

(b) Answer is in the affirmative.

(c) Yes. A list is placed on the table of the House.

(d) Permission to new newspapers has been given very sparingly and on the grounds that they would propagate the viewpoint of an important political party whose views were unrepresented in the existing press or that they would serve some definite useful purpose. The case of the *Sentinel* was different from such newspapers.

(e) The reply given to the last representation of the newspaper on the 5th February 1947 was to the effect that the supply position of newsprint continued to be difficult and the Government of India regretted their inability to accede to the request. The journal can convert itself to a bi-weekly from the 1st April 1947 without any permission from Government.

Statement showing Province-wise the names of the newspapers permitted to start publication during 1945-46

Ajmer-Merwar

1946.—(1) Navajyoti, Ajmer. (2) Naya Rajasthan, Ajmer.

Assam.

1945.—1. Shillong Times, weekly, Shillong.

Bengal.

1945.—(1) Dacca Mail, daily (English), Dacca. (2) Millat, weekly, Calcutta. (3) Chinese Government Gazette, and Chun Wah Yough, Calcutta. (4) Swadhinata, Calcutta. (5) Calcutta Edition of the Globe. (6) A newspaper to be published by India China Division Air Transport Command, Calcutta.

1946.—(1) Ittihad, Calcutta. (2) Swaraj, Calcutta. (3) Usha, Calcutta.

Bihar.

1945.—(1) New Life, weekly, Patna. (2) Parijat, Bankipore.

1946.—(1) Navarashtra, Patna.

Bombay.

1945.—(1) A monthly Bulletin started by the Marathi Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Poona. (2) Indians Women's Magazine, monthly, Bombay. (3) Hindu Sangathan, weekly, Bombay. (4) A weekly, the Bharati in Gujarati to be started by M/s. Anand Mudralaya, Ahmedabad. (5) A weekly in Concanim, Bombay. (6) Dalit Bharat, fortnightly, Asoda. (7) Bombay Labour Bulletin, Bombay. (8) Al Hafiz, monthly, Dhulia. (9) Challenge, Bombay. (10) One Nation, weekly and the Indian Market, Bombay. (11) Akash Vani, Bombay. (12) Bombay Edition of the Globe. (13) Belaka, Dharwai (Bombay). (14) Torch, Bombay.

1946.—1. Ambassador, Bombay. (2) Navayug, Hubli. (3) Free India, Bombay.

Central Provinces.

1945.—(1) Wikas, weekly, Nagpur. (2) Jai Hind, daily, Jabulpore.

Delhi.

1945.—(1) Aditi, quarterly, Delhi. (2) Indians Overseas, Delhi. (3) Bang-i-Dara (Urdu) and Clarion (English), Delhi. (4) Registered Accountant, monthly, Delhi. (5) Rural People's weekly, Delhi. (6) Daur-e-Jadid, fortnightly, Delhi. (7) Bharat, weekly, Delhi. (8) Anwar-i-Sahar, Delhi.

1946.—(1) Millat, Delhi. (2) News Chronicle, New Delhi. (3) Al-Balal, Delhi. (4) Azad-i-Hind, Delhi. (5) Aljamat, Delhi. (6) An English daily from Delhi by Dr. Syed Hussain. (7) Dastur, Delhi. (8) Greater India, New Delhi.

Madras.

1945.—(1) Janmabhoomi, daily, Bezwada. (2) Morning Star, daily, Madras. (3) English daily to be started by Mr. Thirumala Row from Bezwada. (4) Registered Accountant, monthly, Madras. (5) Bala, monthly, Madras. (6) South Indian Journal of Economics, Guntur. (7) Jai Bheem, Ramchandrapura. (8) Church Messenger, Cudalore. (9) A weekly journal in Telugu and English from Madras to be started by the Rayalaseema Mahasabha. (10) A Telugu weekly, to be started by N. V. Seshaisb, Madras. (11) Pudo Oolagam, Kumbakonam.

1946.—(1) Viduthalai, Eroda. (2) A new English daily, Madras. (3) Vinochanum, Madras. (4) Deshabhimani, Calicut.

North-Western Frontier Province.

1945.—(1) Dusra Sarhad, weekly, Peshawar. (2) Nation English daily, Dera Ismail Khan. (3) Kurram Magazine of S. D. College, Bannu. (4) National Industry and Finance, Peshawar.

1946.—(1) Abul Kalam, Peshawar.

Punjab.

1945.—(1) Monthly News, Simla. (2) Tijarati Mukhbar, quarterly, Qadian. (3) Sant Sepahi, monthly, Amritsar.

1946.—(1) Azad, Lahore. (2) New India, Lahore. (3) Pakistan Times, Lahore. (4) Ranjit, Lahore. (5) Bande Matram, Lahore. (6) Siyasat, Lahore. (7) Urdu daily log, Lahore. (8) Shamsheri Hind, Lahore. (9) A daily in English from Lahore and an Urdu daily from Lahore.

Orissa.

1945.—(1) Nation English daily, Cuttack.

Sind.

1945.—(1) Sind Times, Karachi.

1946.—(1) Hilale Pakistan, Hyderabad.

United Provinces.

1945.—(1) An Urdu monthly journal to be started by the Hindustan Cultural Society, Allahabad. (2) Lehar monthly in Hindi from Allahabad. (3) Sanmarg daily, Benares. (4) Tanvir daily, Lucknow. (5) Yug Vani, Etah. (6) Garhwal Samachar, Garhwal.

1946.—(1) Telegraph, Cawnpore. (2) Qaumi Awaz, Lucknow. (3) Bharatvarsh, Cawnpore. (4) Congress Patra, Meerut. (5) Prakash, Agra.

Indian States.

1945.—(1) English and Hindi monthly proposed to be started from Belaspur. (2) Pashar, Bangalore, Mysore State.

1946.—(1) Pasban, Bangalore.

DIRECT ALLOTMENT OF QUOTA TO ASSAM GOVERNMENT OF CORRUGATED IRON SHEETS, BRASS SHEETS, CYCLES, TOOLS, ETC.

812. *Sreejuti Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state whether any quota of corrugated iron sheets, brass sheets, cycles, accessories and tools, umbrellas and materials for the manufacture of umbrellas, have been allotted direct to the Government

of Assam, for the year 1947 or do Government propose to make the supplies through the merchants of Calcutta?

(b) If the answer to the latter portion of part (a) in respect of any of the articles be in the affirmative, what are the reasons therefor?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: (a) The position is as follows:—

Galvanised Corrugated Sheets.—Assam has been allotted a quota of 1080 tons for the first half of 1947. This allotment will be supplied to Registered Stockists in Assam nominated by the Provincial Government by either Calcutta or Chittagong Member of the Bengal Galvanised Sheet Merchants' Association.

Brass Sheets.—No quota has been allotted direct to the Government of Assam for the year 1947. It is, however, proposed to place the quota intended for the Provinces at the disposal of the respective Provincial Governments. The actual quantity of release will depend on the total quantity available from imports and indigenous production.

Cycles, their accessories and tools and umbrella ribs.—The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the first part of para. (a)(ii) and (iii) of the reply given to his starred question No. 402 answered on the 11th November, 1946.

Umbrella Cloth.—Arrangements have been made for the supply of 1,05,000 yards to Assam through that Government's nominees at Bombay. 55,610·5 yards have already been supplied.

(b) In so far as corrugated iron sheets are concerned, the procedure followed is the normal channel of distribution and is in accordance with the Producers' prewar arrangements of distributing all galvanised sheets for Eastern India exclusively through this Association.

In so far as other articles are concerned, the question does not arise.

EXPORT OF PADDY AND RICE FROM ASSAM

§13. *Sreejut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri: (a) Will the Secretary of the Food Department be pleased to state how much rice and paddy were exported in the years 1945 and 1946 from the Province of Assam and to what Provinces?

(b) What was the price charged per maund?

(c) What is the control price of rice and paddy in Assam?

(d) Is it a fact that the Government of Assam recommended, that in the interests of the peasants of the Province, the control price of paddy should be raised and that the Government of India did not accept the recommendation?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: (a) to (c). A statement containing the required information is laid on the table of the House.

(b) Yes, Sir.

STATEMENT
(a) and (b) The quantities of rice and paddy exported from Assam during 1945-46 and the price charged per maund.

Recipient Area	1945			1946		
	Quantity supplied	Prices charged per maund		Quantity supplied	Price charged per maund	
		Naked grain	Incidental charges		Naked grain	Incidental charges
Bihar	4,798 tons	Rs. a. p. 12 3 0	Rs. a. p. 1 1 6	11,971 tons	Aman paddy . 5 4 0	Rs. a. p. 0 14 0
U. P.	4,909 "	" . 12 3 0	1 1 6
Bengal	4,457 "	" . 12 3 0	1 1 6	8,700 tons	Aman rice . 11 2 0	1 4 0
Bombay			11,586 tons	Aus rice . 9 4 0	1 2 0
					Aus paddy . 5 4 0	1 0 0
					Aman rice . 11 2 0	1 2 0
					Aman paddy . 6 8 0	0 15 0
					Aus rice . 8 3 0	0 15 0
					Aus paddy . 4 9 0	0 13 0
Madras				25,010 tons	Aman rice . 11 2 0	1 2 0
					Aus paddy . 5 4 0	0 14 0
					Aus rice . 9 4 0	1 0 0
Mysore				10,885 tons	Aman rice . 11 2 0	1 2 0
					Aman paddy . 6 8 0	0 15 0
Defence Services	52,662 tons	Aman rice . 12 8 0	1 3 0	10,873 tons	Aman rice . 11 2 0	1 2 0

(c) Control prices of rice and paddy in Assam.

	Rice	Paddy
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
(i) For all varieties other than Aus and Boro—		
For sale by producers	11 10 0 to 12 6 0	6 0 0 to 6 7 0
For sale by wholesalers	12 0 0 to 13 0 0	6 5 0 to 6 14 0
(ii) Aus and Boro—		
For sale by producers	9 0 0	4 8 0
For sale by wholesalers	9 6 0	4 11 0

CONSTRUCTION OF RAIL-ROAD BRIDGE OVER THE GANGES NEAR PATNA

814. *Mr. Madandhari Singh: Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state the decision of the Government of India regarding the construction of a rail-road bridge over the Ganges at or near Patna?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I would refer the Honourable Member to the question put by him in the House on the 6th November 1946 and to the reply given.

The project is still under examination.

TEACHING OF TELUGU IN HIGH AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN THE BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY ZONE

815. *Sri V. Gangaraju: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state how many High Schools and Elementary Schools there are in the Bengal Nagpur Railway Zone?

(b) In how many schools Telugu language is being taught?

(c) What is the total number of students who are learning Telugu?

(d) Are Government aware that Telugu is being taught only up to the third standard in the schools in the Bengal Nagpur Railway Zone?

(e) If so, do Government propose to instruct the Bengal Nagpur Railway authorities to introduce Telugu in the higher classes in all the schools managed by the Bengal Nagpur Railway authorities?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I have called for the information and will lay a statement on the table of the House in due course.

GERMAN INDUSTRIALISTS TO HELP FOR TRAINING IN THE MANUFACTURE OF TEXTILE MACHINERY AND BUILDING FACTORIES IN INDIA

816. *Maharajkumar Dr. Sir Vijaya Ananda: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state whether Government are aware that the former German Industrialists are now prepared to help India with trained men to manufacture textile machinery and build factories in India, if the Government of India would interest themselves in the matter?

(b) If so, do Government propose to take steps to secure the help and co-operation of the German Industrialists?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: (a) Government have not received any specific offers from German Industrialists but it must be understood that German Industrialists are not at present free agents. Through the Allied Control Council, the services of German technicians and scientists are being made available to the Allied Countries which require such services. The Government of India are taking steps to secure the services of certain classes of technicians including experts in the manufacture of textile machinery.

(b) Government are not taking any steps to secure the help and co-operation of German Industrialists, but steps are being directed towards securing the services of technical experts.

ESTABLISHMENT OF AIR TRAINING CENTRE IN INDIA

817. *Maharajkumar Dr. Sir Vijaya Ananda: Will the Secretary of the Communications Department be pleased to state whether in view of the shortage of air and ground personnel, Ground Engineers and other crew, and the growing number of air services and the increasing volume of traffic, Government propose to take steps (i) to establish full-fledged Air Training Centres in different parts of the country for training Indian young men at a reasonable cost in all spheres of air-line operations; and (ii) to attract suitable young men by the introduction of state scholarships, allowances, for giving training in all branches?

Mr. Masarrat Husain Zuberi: The Honourable Member is referred to the replies given on the 12th February 1947 to parts (b) and (c) of Pt. Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava's starred question No. 242.

The terms and conditions of admission of trainees to the different schools are under consideration by Government. A system of scholarships will also be considered.

AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY IN INDIA

818. *Maharajkumar Dr. Sir Vijaya Ananda: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state whether any steps have been taken to establish an Aircraft Manufacturing Industry in India?

(b) If not, why not?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: (a) Yes. On the recommendation of the U. K. Aircraft Mission an aircraft Manufacturing Industry is being established at the Hindustan Aircraft Limited, Bangalore. The company has entered into an assistance contract with Percival Aircraft Limited, U. K. for the production of Percival "Prentice" Trainer aircraft for the R.I.A.F. This provides for the supply of all technical data and assistance that may be required by Hindustan Aircraft Limited and for the training of Hindustan Aircraft Limited employees at Percival Aircraft Limited. In the beginning the first aircraft will be manufactured from components supplied by Percivals but as the production of the components is developed at Hindustan Aircraft Limited the supply of components from Percival Aircraft Limited will be rapidly eliminated. It is hoped that all the components for about half the aircraft will be made in India before the contract is half completed.

(b) Does not arise.

QUOTA OF SUGAR TO SWEETMAKERS IN DELHI

819. *Babu Ram Narayan Singh: Will the Secretary of the Food Department be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of sugar allotted for Delhi including New Delhi;

(b) the amount of sugar allotted to sweetmakers (Halwāces);

(c) the basis on which the quota of sugar to each sweetmaker was originally fixed;

- (d) the circumstances in which the quota fixed has been and may be altered; and
- (e) any payment the sweetmakers had or have to make in order to get a favourable quota?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: (a) The total nett allotment for the sugar year (December 1946 to November 1947) is about 14,900 tons for the rationed area of Delhi Province comprising of Old Delhi, New Delhi, Shahadara and Delhi Cantt.

(b) The amount of sugar allotted to sweetmeat-makers (Halwais) of that area is about 710 maunds per week.

(c) Original quotas for sweetmeat-makers were fixed by the Director of Civil Supplies on the recommendations of representative agencies, such as Halwai's Union, Ward Committees, Municipalities, etc. Reductions were made in these quotas where considered necessary on the basis of the actual offtake during the first few weeks of rationing.

(d) The quotas are subject to revision in the light of available supplies, actual consumption and the relative need of different classes of sweetmeat-makers; but owing to continued short-supplies, cuts, uniform in their incidence, have had to be imposed from time to time.

(e) No, Sir.

EXPORT OF GROUNDNUT OIL AND KERNEL TO OTHER COUNTRIES

820. *Babu Ram Narayan Singh: (a) Will the Secretary of the Food Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that Government have decided to export groundnut oil and groundnut kernel and if so, (i) in what quantity (ii) for what consideration, and (iii) to which countries?

(b) Are Government aware that in this country groundnut is also used as food and if so, what are the circumstances which lead or force Government to export it when the country itself is in need of it?

(c) What is the purchasing price of groundnut in this country and what is its selling price in the countries to which it is exported?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: The question should have been addressed to the Honourable the Commerce Member. It has accordingly been transferred to the list of questions for the 19th March, 1947, when it will be answered by the Honourable the Commerce Member.

SALE AT UNAUTHORISED RATES OF VEGETABLE OIL PRODUCTS BY CERTAIN VANASPATI MANUFACTURING COMPANIES

821. *Babu Ram Narayan Singh: (a) Will the Secretary of the Food Department be pleased to state whether Government are aware that the agents and distributors of Amrit Vanaspati Manufacturing Company Limited, Ghaziabad, Ganesh Flour Mills Company Limited, Delhi, Hindustan Vanaspati Manufacturing Company Ltd., Bombay, Modi Vanaspati Manufacturing Company Ltd., Begamabad and also other vegetable oil producing factories are selling vegetable oil products at unauthorised rates and also granting receipts for their sales and if so, do Government propose to enquire into this and take steps to stop this practice?

(b) Are Government aware that Messrs Behari Lal Bansi Dhar, Delhi have twice or thrice submitted a written complaint on the subject referred to in part (a) to the Vegetable Oil Products Controller for India and that copies of the same have also been forwarded to the Honourable Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the Food Minister and if so, what steps have Government taken to enquire into the allegations?

Mr. K. L. Panjabi: (a) and (b). Only one instance of unauthorised prices being charged by a vanaspati manufacturing concern has come to the notice of the Government. The explanation of the Company concerned is that those sales were made to retailers and consumers direct and the firm charged the sanctioned wholesale and retail prices to cover the cost of this service. The case is under consideration by Government.

ACQUISITION OF LAND FOR PIPERADIH COLLIERY IN HAZARIBAGH DISTRICT

822. *Babu Ram Narayan Singh: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state:

- (a) the extent of lands acquired for Piperadih Colliery within the limits of the Gomian Police Station in Hazari Bagh District;
- (b) the date on which they were acquired;
- (c) the classes of lands acquired;
- (d) the number of tenants whose lands have been acquired; and
- (e) whether the value of the lands has been paid to the tenants either in full or in part, if not, why not?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: Necessary information is being collected from the Bihar Government and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

WANT OF WAGONS FOR COAL AT JHARIA AND DHANBAD COALFIELDS

823. *Babu Ram Narayan Singh: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state whether Government are aware of the complaints of the Colliery owners and merchants of Jharia and Dhanbad and other coalfields regarding the non-availability of wagons, and if so, the steps Government have taken, or propose to take, to remove these grievances?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Government are aware of complaints from the Colliery owners and merchants of Jharia, Dhanbad and Raniganj coalfields regarding the short supply of wagons.

The supply of adequate numbers of wagons for coal loading has been affected by slow movements on the East Indian Railway due to many factors including communal disturbances, labour strikes, increased movement of other high priority traffic and sickness amongst staff affecting general operating conditions.

To make more wagons available for coal loading the East Indian Railway have had to restrict loading of other important goods traffic on several occasions.

An allotment of more wagons to the East Indian Railway from the wagon pool has recently been made with a view to improve coal loading. Action is also being taken by the East Indian Railway to improve the turn-round of wagons and it is hoped that these measures will help in the availability of more wagons for coal loading on that Railway.

RESTRICTION ON BOOKING OF GOODS ON E. I. RAILWAY.

824. *Sjt. Seth Damodar Swroop: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state:

(a) whether war-time restrictions on booking of goods on the East Indian Railway are still in force;

(b) whether it is a fact that at the Railway Booking Office at Hardwar not more than 10 parcels per day by Passenger trains and at the Jwalapur Railway Booking Office not more than 5 loads per day by Goods train, from any one firm are accepted for booking;

(c) if so, the reasons for these restrictions; and

(d) whether any representation was made to the Divisional Superintendent Moradabad by the authorities of the Gurukul Kangri Pharmacy against these restrictions on the booking of goods; if so, the result thereof?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) A few of the war-time restrictions, imposed by the Regional Controller of Railway Priorities on the booking of goods traffic on the East Indian Railway are still in force, while most others have been withdrawn. Certain restrictions imposed by the Central and Provincial Governments are also in operation.

(b) Restriction on the booking of parcels by passenger trains to the extent of ten consignments—each consignment consisting of not more than ten packages—from any one consignor, operates at all stations on the East Indian Railway and Hardwar is no exception to this. In the case of local booking however this restriction was withdrawn with effect from the 1st January 1947.

*There are no restrictions other than those referred to in (a) above on the booking of goods at Jawalapur station.

(c) Restrictions were imposed to limit the acceptance of parcels and goods for despatch to the extent of transport available and thereby avoid congestion and consequent delays at despatching stations. Restrictions imposed by the Central or Provincial Governments however do not come under this category.

(d) A representation from the Gurukul Kangri Pharmacy was received by the Divisional Superintendent, Moradabad, for the posting of an additional goods clerk at Jawalapur station alleging that the present incumbent was unable to cope with the work of booking all consignments offered. This is receiving the attention of the Railway Administration.

COOLIE CHARGES FOR BOOKINGS AT RAILWAY BOOKING OFFICE, JAWALAPUR.

825. *Sjt. Seth Damodar Swroop: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state:

(a) whether Government are aware that at the Railway Booking Office, Jawalapur half-anna extra per Railway receipt is demanded as coolie charges and booking is refused if the same is not paid; and

(b) whether Government are aware that the wages paid to the coolies at the above railway station are too low to attract sufficient number of coolies for loading and unloading goods; if so, whether Government propose to enhance the wages?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) The levy of coolie charges is not authorised in connection with the booking of goods at Jawalapur station and Government are also advised that no such charges are demanded at this station.

(b) The loading and unloading of goods at Jawalapur station is done by a contractor who provides sufficient labour; the present rates for the contract are considered adequate.

PROPOSED STRIKE OF ORDNANCE FACTORY WORKERS DUE TO RETRENCHMENT.

826. *Sjt. Seth Damodar Swroop: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to a news item from Cawnpore published in the *Hindustan Times* of 23rd February 1947 to the effect that a century wide strike of Ordnance Factory workers is to be launched soon as a protest against the present retrenchment policy of Government;

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take to avert the threatened strike and whether they propose to invite the representatives of the workers with a view to arriving at an amicable settlement on the question of retrenchment;

(c) whether it is a fact that a deputation of the Ordnance Factory workers recently waited on the Honourable the Vice President of the Interim Government and the Honourable Member for Defence and suggested an alternative proposal for awarding six months pay to the retrenched personnel with a view to helping them to establish themselves elsewhere; and

(d) if so, whether Government have considered the proposal and come to any decision on the point?

The Honourable Sri C. Rajagopalachari: (a) A report appeared in the *Hindustan Times* of 27th February 1947 that the All India Ordnance Employees Federation had taken a decision to this effect.

(b) The All India Ordnance Employees Federation is an unregistered and unrecognised union. Obviously, Sir, Government cannot settle the question of retrenchment by amicable settlement but as many men should be retained as there is really work for.

(c) and (d). I understand that this is so. But Government regret they cannot agree to this proposal. If such a concession were granted it would have to be extended to all Departments and Government installations and would impose a financial burden on the country which is not justified. Retrenched personnel have all been paid war bonus or war gratuity where admissible and every effort will be made through Labour Exchanges to find them alternative employment.

REPORT OF PAY COMMISSION *re* RAILWAYMEN'S PAY.

827. *Sree Satyapriya Banerjee: Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Pay Commission has submitted its preliminary report regarding Railwaymen's pay to the Government of India;

(b) if the answer to part (a) be in the affirmative, whether Government propose to state (i) the recommendations of the Pay Commission thereon, (ii) how and when Government propose to implement the recommendations, and (iii) the general policy of Government with regard to these recommendations?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) and (b) (ii). The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply given by the Honourable the Finance Member to starred questions Nos. 311 and 767 on the 14th February 1947 and the 5th March 1947 respectively.

(b) (i) and (iii). The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the Communique issued by Government on the 6th March 1947, copy laid on the table.

PRESS COMMUNIQUE

Central Pay Commission Report.

Government are conscious of a natural desire on the part of their employees in the various services for the publication of the Report of the Central Pay Commission at the earliest possible moment. They appreciate the great personal interest which all Government servants must necessarily have in the outcome of the Commission's labours and are accordingly pleased to publish the following statement for their information.

The Report will be in three parts. Part I will be mainly historical. Part II will deal in a general way with pay, allowances, leave, pension and other conditions of service as applicable to all departments of the Government of India. This part will deal with the main aspects of the problem and in particular with questions such as the classification of services, the minimum and the maximum pay to be fixed, suitable pay structures and the like. In Part III, the Commission will deal with each important department and will make detailed proposals in respect of the salaries to be paid to the employees of each of the principal sections of the public service in the light of the general conclusions reached by the Commission in Part II.

So far advance copies of Part I and of that portion of Part II which deals with pay and allowances and of portions of Part III relating to a few departments only have been received by Government. The Commission have adopted this procedure to enable Government to begin the detailed examination of their proposals at the earliest possible moment, but they have informed Government that they reserve the liberty to make minor corrections or rectification in the portions so far sent to Government, when the Commission are considering their Report as a whole. From a recent enquiry made by the Government, it is learned that the Commission expect to submit their complete and final Report by the end of April or early in May, and, although meanwhile Government will be examining and formulating views on the portions of the Report as they come to hand, it is clear that publication of fragments of the Report as and when they become available and before they have been finalised by the Commission might lead to an incorrect appreciation of the Commission's proposals as a whole. Government servants are aware that pay constitutes only one element in their total emoluments. Leave, Pension or Provident Fund and other conditions of service are also important elements in their total remuneration. To publish only the proposed pay scales would therefore not give a correct and balanced picture of the Commission's full recommendations. Government expect that by the time the final report is

received they will have formulated their decisions on the major issues and these will be published together with the final report early in May.

The task set for the Commission was one of great magnitude and complexity and Government trust that this frank explanation of the stage at present reached and of the action that Government are taking in the matter will reassure their employees that everything is being done and will be done to make known the proposals of the Commission and Government's decisions thereon at the earliest possible moment. Government would again remind their employees that the revised pay scales will have retrospective effect as from the 1st of January last.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT,
New Delhi, March 6, 1947.

UNSTARRED QUESTION AND ANSWER

RECRUITMENT OF SINDHIS TO RAILWAY SERVICES IN SIND AREA

76. Seth Sukhdev: Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Railway employees in the lower subordinate service came in contact with the rural public in the course of their duties;

(b) whether Government are aware that for service in the portion of the North Western Railway passing through Sind area, mostly Punjabis are recruited;

(c) whether Government are aware that such Punjabi recruits are unable to understand the language of the rural population who do not generally speak Urdu;

(d) whether Government are aware that shortage of recruitment of Sindhis is due to the office of the North-Western Railway Subordinate Service Commission being at Lahore; and

(e) whether it is proposed to issue instructions to the Subordinate Service Commission on the North Western Railway, that adequate number of Sindhis be recruited to Railway service in Sind area; if not, what other steps are proposed to be taken to post people at wayside stations who know the language of the populace using the railway transport in that area in Sind?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) Generally speaking, all railway staff come in contact to a varying extent with the public, both rural and urban, in the course of their duties.

(b) Government are informed that this is so, due to the majority of the applicants for appointment being Punjabis.

(c) Government are aware that language difficulties exist on all railway systems. They understand, however, that the N. W. Railway have not received any complaints regarding the Sind area in particular.

(d) It has been the experience of the N. W. Railway Service Commission that the number of qualified Sindhi candidates applying for posts on the N. W. Railway is small. In order, however, to make it easy for people residing at distant places from Lahore to appear for interview before the Service Commission, Government have recently sanctioned an additional Member for the Commission to allow of recruitment being undertaken at selected centres away from Lahore. One of these centres will be Karachi.

(e) According to the policy of Government, recruitment and posting of railway employees is not influenced by Provincial considerations, but they have issued instructions to the railways concerned that due consideration should be given to the recruitment of people of all Provinces served by those railways. They hope, therefore, that the arrangements referred to in the reply to part (d) will result in a larger number of qualified Sindhis becoming available for service on the N. W. Railway.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT

Decision of the Government not to Publish the Recommendations of the Central Pay Commission so far received by them.

Mr. President: I have received a notice from Mr. S. Guruswami of his intention to move an adjournment of the House to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely "the situation arising out of the latest Press Communique issued by the Government deciding not to publish the recommendations of the Central Pay Commission so far received by the Government until sometime in May thereby resulting in possible dislocation of work in Railway Postal and other Services."

When was this communique published in the Press?

Mr. S. Guruswami (Nominated Non-Official): It was published on the 7th,

Mr. President: When the Honourable Member refers to possible dislocation, I take it he means the possibility of strikes.

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan (Finance Member): Sir, I am sorry I have not received a copy of this adjournment motion and I am told by the Government Chief Whip that he has not received any copy either, but any how I would like to say this much that so far the Government have not received the final report from the Pay Commission and it was considered necessary that a communique should be issued which was done explaining the position as it is. The Government have no intention of keeping the report unpublished for a day longer than it is absolutely necessary. We are informed by the Chairman of the Pay Commission that he expects the final report to be submitted to the Government by the 1st week of May. Preliminary report has been received. As a matter of fact, it is a kind of advance copy of the report subject to this that the Commission keep the right to themselves to make any alterations till the final report has been submitted. In view of these facts I am afraid it is not possible for the Government to publish the report till they have received the final copy from the Pay Commission. I can assure my Honourable friend, however, that the Government are as anxious as anybody else to see that the Report is published as soon as it is possible and in any case whatever is the decision of the Government on the recommendations of the Report will be given effect to from the 1st of January 1947. So the employees of the Government will not be effected adversely by the non-publication of the report till may. I have explained the position and I hope the Honourable Member will be satisfied and he will appreciate the difficulty of the Government in not being able to publish the report as desired.

Mr. S. Guruswami: I would like to point out first of all that I delivered personally a copy of this notice of adjournment motion at the room of the Honourable the Finance Member at 10.30 a.m. today, and I am very surprised that he did not receive it. Secondly, regarding the urgency of it, I have received information from different parts of India—as I have toured different parts of India recently—and I know personally the extent of indignation that prevails among the employees of the Government, about the delay in the publication of the report. Unfortunately.....

Mr. President: The Honourable the Finance Member has said that what they have received is perhaps a draft of the report.....

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan: It is an advance copy, a kind of draft.

Mr. President:and the report as finally accepted by all the Members of the Pay Commission has not yet been received by the Government. It is therefore premature to raise this question on the basis that the report has been received by the Government. So there is no basis for the Honourable Member's motion till the final report is received. He need not think of the subsequent consequences at this stage. I do not think any further discussion on this point is necessary and I do not give my consent to the motion.

GENERAL BUDGET—LIST OF DEMANDS

SECOND STAGE.

Mr. President: The House will now discuss the Demands for Grants. I understand that the agreed time-table in regard to the moving of Cut Motions has been circulated to Honourable Members.

As regards the time-limit for speeches, I suggest that, as usual, the mover of cut motions will have about twenty minutes, and the Government Member replying will have about twenty minutes or more, if necessary. Other speakers will be limited to fifteen minutes.

I trust this will suit Honourable Members.

CHANGE IN PROCEDURE IN RESPECT OF MOVING OF DEMANDS

Mr. President: Now as regards the moving of the Demands, if the Honourable Members are agreeable I suggest a slight change in the procedure. The Demands will be moved one after the other and then, of course, cut motions will be taken up. That will prevent any confusion in the minds of Honourable Members as to which particular Demand is moved or not moved.

Mr. C. P. Lawson (Bengal: European): If all the Demands are moved at this stage, there will be a very serious loss of time.

Mr. President: I do not mean all the 91 Demands: I mean all those Demands—17 in all—in respect of which cut motions are to be moved.

Mr. C. P. Lawson: I have no objection.

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan (Finance Member): I will be very quick in moving them.

Mr. President: I do not know if the Honourable Member would agree to yet another change in the procedure, which I would like to propose. Instead of the Honourable the Finance Member formally moving each Demand and then the President reading out the same to the House, we may adopt the House of Commons practice where the Chairman of Ways and Means reads out these motions and so long as the consent of the Crown is signified, nobody moves them formally.

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan: Yes, I think this would be better.

Mr. President: Then I will read out these Demands. The demands that I will read out to the House will be Nos. 9, 11, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 48, 54, 55, 57, 70, and 88. I will read out the first Demand in its usual form, and after that, I will only read the number of Demand and the amount.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar (Madras Ceded Districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Many of these cut motions may not be reached at all. The Chair might save its own time and the trouble of reading out all these Demands in advance.

Mr. President: I said I shall read out only the first Demand in the usual form and then I shall merely say Demand No. so and so, with so much amount.

(The Honourable the President then read out the following Demands.)

DEMAND NO. 9—INDIAN POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 24,81,25,000 be granted to the Governor-General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1948, in respect of 'Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department'."

DEMAND NO. 11—CABINET

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,60,000 be granted to the Governor-General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1948, in respect of 'Cabinet'."

DEMAND No. 15—HOME DEPARTMENT

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 15,55,000 be granted to the Governor-General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1948, in respect of ‘Home Department’.”

DEMAND No. 16—DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 37,58,000 be granted to the Governor-General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1948, in respect of ‘Department of Information and Broadcasting’.”

DEMAND No. 21—DEPARTMENT OF COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 7,57,000 be granted to the Governor-General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1948, in respect of ‘Department of Commonwealth Relations’.”

DEMAND No. 22—FINANCE DEPARTMENT

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 31,96,000 be granted to the Governor-General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1948, in respect of ‘Finance Department’.”

DEMAND No. 23—COMMERCE DEPARTMENT

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 37,89,000 be granted to the Governor-General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1948, in respect of ‘Commerce Department’.”

DEMAND No. 24—DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 19,06,000 be granted to the Governor-General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1948, in respect of ‘Department of Labour’.”

DEMAND No. 25—DEPARTMENT OF WORKS, MINES AND POWER

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 15,26,000 be granted to the Governor-General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1948, in respect of ‘Department of Works, Mines and Power’.”

DEMAND No. 26—DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 5,07,000 be granted to the Governor-General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1948, in respect of ‘Department of Communications’.”

DEMAND No. 28—FOOD DEPARTMENT

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 50,92,000 be granted to the Governor-General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1948, in respect of ‘Food Department’.”

DEMAND No. 48—PUBLIC HEALTH

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 42,90,000 be granted to the Governor-General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1948, in respect of ‘Public Health’.”

DEMAND No. 54—BROADCASTING

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,01,68,000 be granted to the Governor-General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1948, in respect of ‘Broadcasting’.”

DEMAND No. 55—DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIES AND SUPPLIES

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,34,51,000 be granted to the Governor-General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1948, in respect of 'Department of Industries and Supplies'."

DEMAND No. 57—COMMERCIAL INTELLIGENCE AND STATISTICS

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 23,68,000 be granted to the Governor-General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1948, in respect of 'Commercial Intelligence and Statistics'."

DEMAND No. 70—RESETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 6,95,30,000 be granted to the Governor-General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1948, in respect of 'Resettlement and Development'."

DEMAND No. 88—PAYMENTS TO RETRENCHED PERSONNEL

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,88,000 be granted to the Governor-General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1948, in respect of 'Payments to Retrenched Personnel'."

DEMAND No. 11—CABINET.

Function of the Commodities Prices Board and matters connected therewith

Mr. C. P. Lawson (Bengal: European): Mr. President, I move:

"That the demand under the head 'Cabinet' be reduced by Rs. 100."

The object of this cut motion is to induce discussion and if possible to obtain a statement from the Government side on what is no more, no less than the cost of living in this country and the possibility of stabilizing that cost of living: indeed, if possible of reducing it.

The background against which we have to consider this question is a somewhat distressing one. I do not know whether Honourable Members have yet had time to read the report of the Advisory Planning Committee over which the Honourable Mr. Neogy is sitting. If so, I would advise Honourable Members to consider the Resources Budget which is included at the end of this report. Now, Sir, that Resources Budget shows very clearly that for sometime to come this country is facing some very severe shortages, principal amongst which I would mention the coal shortage. The report shows quite clearly that we may expect an annual shortage for sometime of something like 4½ million tons of coal; and the report goes further to trace the repercussions of this shortage on various other materials, such as steel and so on. It comes in fact to the conclusion that steel, even with very adequate coal supplies, will be half a million tons short; that cement will be half a million tons short and shorter still unless coal supplies are adequate: that bricks will be short. That, Sir, is bound to have serious repercussions on all internal production and quite apart from this, imports will be restricted by currency restrictions and by the inability of countries abroad to supply this country with what we want. We know very well of numerous shortages of goods all over the world. It will be sometime before those shortages disappear. So, Sir, I think there can be very little argument that during the coming year, the work of this Commodity Prices Board will be extremely important and indeed I am sure that they must be appalled by the magnitude of the problems that face them. Clearly, Sir, the result of this situation must be a tendency towards inflation. There may be money to buy things with, but nothing to buy. And I was much impressed by the statement made by the Honourable Dr. John Matthai the other day to the effect that to some extent leisure was being purchased by the money which would otherwise go towards the purchase of

consumer goods. That seems to me, Sir, to point to a possibly dangerous spiral. Because there is nothing to buy, leisure will be purchased, production will drop, and indeed, Sir, there is only one cure to the situation which faces us. Everything that this Board will be able to do will be no more than a palliative. The only real cure will be production, production and again more production. I will not at this stage discuss whether the conditions following upon the Honourable Member's budget are entirely favourable towards production, production and again production. But there is no doubt whatever that therein lies the only cure and until the cure comes about we are reluctantly compelled to agree that control will be necessary. I may say at once, Sir, that we on this side do not like controls and we hope that at the earliest possible moment these controls will go. The effect of controls is to produce blackmarkets, to interrupt the basic laws of supply and demand, and to introduce a new method of breaking of the law. Indeed, Sir, perhaps the most serious aspect of modern times is the way in which the term 'blackmarket' has become almost a household word. Quite openly as Honourable Members will know, people say "I cannot get such and such a commodity. I cannot run my factory. I cannot make this and I cannot make that unless I go to the black-market to buy my supplies." It seems almost incredible that in that almost daily utterance is entailed a clear breaking of the law. For that reason and for many others we want to see the end of all controls as soon as that is possible. Controls, amongst other things, lead also to the hoarding of supplies, supplies which would otherwise go into consumption and relieve the already short position: As I have said before in this House, if every body put aside one week's supply of food only, one million tons of food-grains would be taken off the market, and that is another reason for getting rid of these controls as soon as it can be done.

But, Sir, we certainly admit that in the meantime the cost of living must be kept within bounds. We must, if possible, stabilise the cost of living and when it is humanly possible, reduce the cost of living. Now, Sir, the terms of reference of this Commodities Prices Board although not very adequate have been published and perhaps I might quote them:

"At the request of the Central Government to advise in the light of all relevant data and of cash conditions as may be specified, what prices or price limits should be fixed for commodities, the price of which is controlled by the Central Government or by the Provincial Government;

2. To keep under constant review the movements of commodity prices in India and whether at the request of the Central Government or of their own volition to advise the Central Government whether the price of any commodity not controlled should be controlled and, if so, what price or price limits should be fixed for that commodity."

• **Prof. N. G. Ranga** (Guntur *cum* Nellore: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Are these your recommendations?

Mr. O. P. Lawson: No, Sir, The Honourable Member may possibly recognise the press communique that was issued by Government sometime ago.

Now, Sir, there is no mention in this regarding quantity control. The Board is merely to advise on questions of price but I take it that the interpretation there will be fairly liberal. I cannot, for instance, imagine that any body can adequately advise upon a price structure unless they knew what the quantity control will be and indeed their recommendations, presumably as regards quantity controls, need to be considered together with their recommendations regarding prices.

What are the categories of the commodities which will need to be controlled? First of all we have those commodities which are now covered by statute and controlled by Government. These come under the Essential Supplies Act which covers foodstuffs, cotton and woollen, textiles, paper,

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petroleum and petroleum products, spare parts of mechanically—propelled vehicles, coal, etc. Those are items admittedly of absolute necessity which are controlled by statute. Infringement of the law in this connection leads to prosecution; it also of course leads to black-marketing and to a number of other abuses. The control of course is necessary and the situation must presumably continue for the present.

There is a second category of goods which, though under no statutory control, are generally controlled by agreement between Government and the people who have those goods for disposal. That has behind it no statutory sanction. A man could not be fined in the courts or proceeded against for infringing his agreement with Government but, *ipso facto*, to my mind, it is a better form of control, because the sanction behind it is that the person who has these goods for distribution may refuse to distribute them where there is profiteering or mishandling. I say that in some ways it is a better form of control, because it brings me to my third category, the category of completely uncontrolled articles. It would, in my opinion, be entirely impossible to apply price control even to all the articles in this country which are in general use. They are so numerous and the field is so wide, the sources of supply and distribution are so diverse that I see no prospect of any kind of adequate control over the whole field. If the goods which are now controlled to some extent by agreement between Government and the producers were handed over to statutory control, the administration would become more complicated and more difficult, indeed further black markets, further proceedings, further bribery and corruption would ensue. So the Commodity Prices Board have to my mind to consider what is the optimum of effect that they can have. They cannot control every thing. Whatever they do, they can only hope, in a general way, to control the most important products in daily use and hope thereby to induce a general feeling of stability which will affect ancillary consumer goods. The main need of course is to correlate the prices and it would be interesting to hear from the Government side how they propose to proceed. One might, in fact, have a situation at present, in which one shop selling controlled goods might be alongside another shop selling uncontrolled goods. You might have one proprietor earning a very moderate pittance on his business and the proprietor next door earning enormous profits and earning them quite legally because there would be no control over his goods. Clearly, therefore, the efforts of this Board should be directed towards bringing all prices to some correlated level.

What would be the basis that would be used to bring these prices together? We have of course those items to which I have already referred, that are already controlled by statute. Their prices are already controlled and a certain basis has been established. There may be inequalities in that basis. There may be inequalities in the industrial basis as compared with the agricultural basis but at least in the statutory field there is some basis established and presumably it will be the intention of Government to bring items which are at present uncontrolled somewhere in relation to the controlled field.

Perhaps I might now say a very brief word about agricultural prices in their regulation with industrial prices. I do not know whether it will be within the terms of reference of the Commodity Prices Board to examine this question and to see whether the price levels are reasonably equal. Are agricultural prices on a higher level or on a lower level than the industrial prices which have now been fixed? I have been impressed by the Honourable the Finance Member's statement to the effect that some 17 crores of rupees have been paid out to stabilise agricultural prices. Perhaps in due course we may have from

the Department of Agriculture or the Department of Food itself some statement as to exactly how that Rs. 17 crores was spent. It was spent presumably to reduce the price of imported foodstuffs so that they were on a level with the indigenous prices. I do not quite know how that will work. I suppose that some imports from, say, the Argentine may be more expensive than imports from, say Canada or Australia. Whether any or all three of these imports were higher or lower than the indigenous price I do not know. But what I do know is that although the Rs. 17 crores seems to be a very large sum it amounts to nothing more than 6 annas a maund on the amount of total grain production of this country which is sold. Taking into account that 75 per cent. of the 60 million tons of grain that this country produces is consumed by the agricultural population, on the 25 per cent that is sold the 17 crores comes to little more than 6 annas per maund. Although that Rs. 17 crores may make a very considerable difference to the Honourable the Finance Member's budget, I am inclined to think that with careful equalisation of prices all over the agricultural field, it might be dissipated into a form in which it was negligible. That is why I would be interested to know just whether the scope of the Commodities prices Board will cover some such examination. I admit, Sir, that it will be a very big matter and a matter which would take them probably a considerable time.

I have so far dealt merely with the functions of this Board in the direction of checking inflation. The functions of this Board must however clearly be flexible to deal with sudden movements the other way. There may be many developments in this country, industrial budgetary and otherwise, which may induce the bottom to fall out of certain markets. The effect of a sudden movement of that type might be just as damaging as a movement in the upward direction. For instance a drop of Re. 1 a maund in the price of food-grains, I calculate, would involve the sellers of the agricultural produce, quite apart from the consumers, in a loss of something like Rs. 42 crores—a very severe loss which might clearly upset the economic balance of the trade. I hope therefore that the functions of the Commodities Prices Board will not be too rigid.

They are an expert committee. I would be glad if the committee was a little bit bigger because of the diversity of their functions and these, I think, will be so great that without having recourse to considerable technical assistance it would be very difficult for them to encompass the task which they have before them. That task is in its ultimate solution impossible. They can never, I think, bring everything under control. Their only hope is to bring a certain number of articles in general consumption under control—articles which themselves may involve ingredients which may be controlled by Government, half controlled by mutual agreement, or under no control at all. Soap strikes me immediately as an article in point depending to some extent on tallow which to the best of my knowledge are not controlled at all, on caustic which is controlled by mutual agreement and on oils and so on which are under Government control. There you have the diversity of the problem. I hope that the Finance Member will be able to tell us that quite apart from having an adequate and as indeed they are, a high-level standard of membership they will also have access to expert advice in respect of particular commodities.

One further point, Sir, and I have done. The first part of the terms of reference that I read appears to indicate that the Board would not be required to give unsolicited advice to Government. But the second part, I think, corrects that and indicates that unsolicited advice may, and should, be given. On receipt of that advice in respect, say of prices in a certain Province, I would be glad to know how Government will proceed. If they propose to take action on the advice of this Board in respect of prices ruling in a certain

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province, I take it that consultations with the provincial authorities will be necessary.

Those, Sir, cover the points which I wish to make to give rise to discussion and to draw a statement from the Government Benches. I think that the main wish that the whole House will have is that the cost of living in this country shall be stabilised as much as possible and that in good time it should also be possible to reduce the cost of living. Apart from that, the field before this Commodities Prices Board is now open and a very wide field it is. They certainly have the European Group's hearty good wishes and to a very large extent their sympathy in the almost Herculean task which confronts them. Sir, I move.

Mr. President: Cut motion moved:

"That the demand under the head 'Cabinet' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I welcome the proposal of the Honourable the Finance Member for establishing a Commodity Prices Board. I very much appreciate the viewpoint which he has before him. His object is to reduce the price index of various commodities which have gone up by more than 300. But I have two serious difficulties in my mind to which I would like to draw his attention. The first is this. I said in 1942, when Diwan Bahadur Mudaliar for the first time fixed the price of wheat at Rs. 4 a maund, that he was putting the cart before the horse, because to fix a price without the control of the stock will not be workable. The result of fixing the price without controlling the stock is that all the articles are transferred from the front shop to the back shop, which you call the black market. If you go to the front shop in any place where there is price control and ask for a thing the answer is 'No' but if you walk inside, in the second chamber where no accounts are kept, where receipts are not given and where any amount is demanded, the commodities are all there. Fixing the price without controlling the stock is like putting the cart before the horse. Although price control is intended to benefit the consumer, in practice he can get the things only from the black market—from the second chamber. I should like to know what precautions this Board propose to take about controlling the stock so that the black market may be avoided. There must be severe penalties. Some methods must be devised for controlling the stock before orders are issued for the control of the prices. I hope the Board will go into this question thoroughly.

My second difficulty is this. At present the only measure you have got is your paper rupee which is an indefinite quantity. Every mathematician and scientist, when he wishes to measure a thing, lays down his unit of measurement, which is a fixed quantity. Your unit of measurement, which is the paper rupee, has not got a fixed value. If you fix the prices on the basis of the paper rupee, the prices will vary because of inflation and deflation. This is a very important thing. The first condition precedent is that the price of the paper rupee ought to be fixed in terms of gold and silver. If you allow your paper money to find its own level in terms of these important commodities by which the prices in the world are always compared, you will always fail in your efforts. If you really mean to do something, the first effort of this Commodity Prices Board should be to fix the value of the paper rupee in terms of gold and silver which are the only units adopted in the world for comparing the prices of commodities in the world market.

I suggested this to the Governor of the Reserve Bank when he was going to New York on behalf of the Government of India. I asked him to press this point before the International Bank but I am sorry he has not done it and he

forgot it entirely. The International Bank has fixed the purchasing power of gold but they have not fixed the sale price of gold. Unless you fix the sale price of gold at the same time, it will not be possible to fix the price of gold in terms of the currency of every other country.

I should like the Finance Member to draw the attention of this new Board to this fact that the price of paper rupee should be fixed in terms of gold and the first step which ought to be taken is to press on the International Bank that they should fix the sale price of gold and also the purchase price. As a corollary to that bullion exchanges would have to be closed down. I very much appreciate what the Finance Member said about the abolition of the stock exchanges and I say that along with that the bullion exchanges should also be abolished. Without abolishing the bullion exchanges it is impossible to fix the price of your paper rupee in terms of gold and silver. You cannot be gambling on your unit. The unit should be a definite quantity. I should like to hear from my friend on this point.

Without stabilising the price of the paper rupee, it will be exceedingly difficult to stabilise the prices. Wheat and rice are the two important commodities by which the prices of your other foodstuffs should be judged. If you fix the prices of wheat and rice, the prices of the other foodstuffs will be automatically settled.

The third thing is the fixation of the prices of piecegoods and along with that the price of cotton will also be fixed. If you do this, you will find that the prices of all the other articles will be automatically adjusted. Mr. Lawson mentioned that there are innumerable other articles whose prices cannot be fixed but there are certain key articles in terms of which the prices of all other articles can be fixed. If you fix the price of wheat and rice, the prices of nearly every other eatable commodity will be adjusted. Therefore I say that if you fix the price of gold and silver, rice and wheat, cotton and piecegoods, all other things will find their own level.

If you begin to take up sugar, for example, you will never succeed. Wages cannot also be fixed, because the wages are entirely dependent on the price index of the commodities which the workmen require for their use—the articles necessary for their living.

I therefore beseech this Board in the first instance not to think of the fixing of price without controlling the stock. If they can do it without controlling the stock, let them come and discuss it with us and if they can convince us that the thing can be done. We will support them. We ought also to bring down the price index to a reasonable level. It was 130 in 1939. This has also to be done gradually and it cannot be done all at once. I remember the late Finance Member, Sir, Jeremy Raisman, also said that the price index ought to be somewhere between 125 and 140. I think my Honourable friend Dr. John Matthai, when I had a talk with him some time ago, was also of the opinion that this should be the standard which we should aim at when we fix our index price, that is, 125 to 140. In order to achieve this object, they cannot take up any commodities they like, otherwise that commodity will go to the black market and in practice the price will be much higher than what it was before the control. So, they should take up only the three articles which I have mentioned, namely, gold and silver, wheat and rice and cotton and textiles and leave the other things alone. I very much welcome the step which the Honourable the Finance Member has taken. At the same time, the recommendations of this Board will not be very effective and will not be of material importance to us unless they take precautions on the points which I have just mentioned. With these words, I support the motion.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Sir, there seems to be a sort of a general drive in favour of stabilisation of prices and stabilisation of the cost of living as my Honourable friend Mr. Lawson has put it. And when it is put like that nobody will be able to object to it. But how is it going to work out in its effects on different classes of people? It is a notorious fact that whenever prices rise, the agricultural prices are the last to rise and the same is the case with agricultural wages and industrial wages. They are also too slow to rise. But when prices begin to fall, it is the agricultural prices which fall more quickly and precipitately in the end. That has been the experience not only of our own country but of all countries in the world. Even in regard to the war inflation, that has been the experience. Every one has admitted that during the first three years of the war, agricultural prices had not risen half as high as the industrial prices, particularly cloth. And when prices have begun to fall, it is, again, the same experience. Although it may be said by some of the people of the towns that agricultural prices are not falling, actually they begin to fall much more quickly. Now, if we are anxious to achieve the stabilisation of prices, how are we to achieve it? My Honourable friend Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad has stated that we should try to stabilise the prices in proportion to the prices of wheat and rice and cotton and textiles to start with. Therefore it stands to reason that you have to settle what prices you are going to pay for wheat and rice and for cotton and textiles? How are you to settle it? There was a Committee appointed by Government over which Sir V. T. Krishnamachari presided and it has suggested the manner in which fair and remunerative prices can be fixed for agricultural commodities. It has also suggested how the administrative machinery, which is to assist the Government, has to fix these prices. But what is it that the Government of India has done? It has more or less shelved that report and has put it in cold storage or rather by-passed it by appointing this Commodities Prices Board. This Board is expected to control the prices or to fix the prices not only of agricultural commodities but of all commodities. Who has suggested this, we do not know? But then, why is it that this Board has been appointed in place of the other organisations that the Krishnamachari Committee has suggested? That Committee has suggested the appointment of a Price Determination Commission and also a Commodity Corporation and later on an All-India Agricultural Prices Council. Nothing has been done to implement these recommendations, and this Board has been inflicted upon all of us. This Board, we are told, is also seized of the consideration of the price of wheat and is expected to begin to consider the prices of paddy and rice during the next month. Why this change has been made, we do not know? But I have a sort of a fear that with a view to bring down the prices of agricultural commodities first of all, this Board has been appointed in this manner by by-passing the recommendations of the other Committee. Secondly, how are these prices to be stabilised? In what way are they going to be done? The Krishnamachari Committee has suggested this:

"A fair price as we would define it, is such as would leave to the producer an income sufficient to maintain him and his family at a standard of life equivalent to that enjoyed by comparable classes of the population. This implies that due allowance should be made for the costs of such goods and services as make up a reasonable standard of living for cultivators as a class."

This is their eighteenth recommendation. If we keep this in our mind and if we also keep in mind the very important consideration that the standard of life of all other classes will in the end depend upon the employment that they derive from manufactures and that the prosperity of manufactures will in the end depend upon the prosperity as well as the standard of life of agricultural classes, then it will be realised that it will be a very bad policy to try to bring down the agricultural prices in a unilateral manner.

It is a notorious fact that the past Finance Members, who were all Europeans, and the present Indian Finance Members, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan as well

as Dr. John Matthai. have thought that inflation should be checked and therefore prices should be brought down and in order to bring down the prices, the agricultural prices should be brought down first. I say this is a suicidal policy to pursue.

But, then, it is stated that if you were to allow the agricultural prices to remain at the level at which they are, then you cannot control inflation. Let me tell them that if they were to look into the *Eastern Economist* of two weeks ago they will find that the prices of a number of manufactured goods are going up and they have been going up for the last six or twelve months and no effort has so far been made to prevent the rise of prices of these manufactured commodities. In addition, to that, the prices which actually rule in the black markets are easily twice as high as the controlled prices. What effort has been made by Government to prevent this black-marketing? My Honourable friend Mr. Lawson wants these controls to be increased in number and to be spread over a number of other commodities. In short, he wants non-statutory controls in addition to the controls that are reached by agreement between the Government and the industrialists. It all comes to the same thing. The more controls you have the more black markets there will be. The more black market there is the higher will be the cost of the standard of life of the people and particularly the higher will be the cost of cultivation that the agriculturist will be obliged to meet. Therefore, until and unless Government are able to devise an administrative machinery by which they will be able to prevent this black market, at least to check it and, if necessary, to remove some of these controls, it would not be possible for them to stop this rising spiral of inflation.

Then, they may say: after all, the expenditure on food forms a very high percentage of the total expenditure of the industrial proletariat and therefore it should be stopped first. If they are serious about it, they should also be serious about the cost of standard of living of agriculturists themselves. Many of these industrial commodities, the agriculturists are obliged to purchase only in black markets. Therefore these prices are going up with the result that in its own turn the cultivation cost goes up and therefore the price of agricultural commodities go up. It is all working in a vicious circle. You must

1 P. M. break it somehow or other. Why do you want to break it only on the agricultural sector? In order to break the backbone of the agriculturists! Let it be remembered that there is a regular flight away from food crop cultivation. The present tendency of a peasant if he has any sense in any part of India is to break away from food crop cultivation and he is taking to cultivation of commercial crops like sugar, oil seeds, etc. Any crop that brings him money is easily taken up, because he has got to pay not only interest on debt, he has to pay land revenue, he has to pay the various sales taxes both provincial and central and on top of it he has to procure his necessaries of life at black market rates. Very soon you will be faced with a serious crisis in India on the food front which you cannot cope with merely by importing food-stuffs from abroad into this country. Even if you import food stuffs from abroad, you will not be able to import in such large quantities as to be able to tackle the prices. Therefore it stands to reason that you have got to tackle manufactures also. What are you doing on this front? So far as the industrial proletariat is concerned, you agree and reasonably too, to raise the level of wages from time to time. The professionals also get higher wages. When it comes to the industrialist, there is greater and greater exemption from taxation for him. So far as the agriculturists are concerned more and more taxes are put on them. The industrialists are highly organised and hence they are able to get concessions from the Government, whereas the agriculturists who are highly disorganised are left in the cold. Let me warn you about what is happening in Bihar. When the Food Member went recently to Behar, he found that control prices were not at all enforceable. They are not being enforced, they cannot be enforced. The Behar Prime Minister was obliged to threaten the peasants with the aid of the police and the magistracy and he had to use coercive

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processes in order to extract from them very small food surplus because the price level at which you control for the food grains is very very low, and very very unremunerative and unfair to the peasants. And to make it remunerative to the peasants, the crops have to be sold only at much higher rates than Control rates. That means that your controls are failing.

To the extent they succeed, they succeed only on the agricultural front I say this is most unfair.

The next point which occurs to me is this. I may be asked, in that case how is inflation to be stopped? What shall we do with it. I have got a solution to offer. You agree to pay remunerative price to agriculturist. Then you tell him that you are going to keep with yourself one rupee for every maund of wheat or paddy that the agriculturist sells to you. This one rupee per maund will be kept as a reserve, as a deposit with the Government who will be starting a number of agro-industries, oil crushing factories, rice mills, vanaspati factories, sugar factories and so on. The Government will be starting these factories with this deposit that they take for each maund of food crop that they take from the peasant. The Government will treat these deposits as shares in these industrial concerns of the respective peasants who contribute this. Any profits that are earned will go back in proportion to the monies taken from the individual peasants. In this way the Government can help the peasant. At the same time you are not putting this money into circulation.

Moreover so far as peasants are concerned, this money cannot be spent by **them on useless goods. In view of the scarcity of consumer goods these peasants will not waste their money on them and inflate their prices.** There will be no inflation because extra money that the peasants will get for their crops will not remain in their hands, they will be kept with the Government. This money will not be kept in banks but they will be utilised in productive industrial undertakings.

I should like my Honourable friend to come to one of our villages and see for himself whether the peasants are getting more and more money or less and less money. The peasants are obliged to work harder and for longer hours to produce enough for their sustenance because the prices that you pay for their agricultural products are very unremunerative. As regards the consumer goods that are necessary for them, they will have to purchase in the black market and so they are obliged to work much harder. The industrial proletariats have much more leisure. But they are a microscopic minority in this country. The greater bulk of the population in this country are agriculturists. If more money is put into the hands of agriculturists, it may be contended they may indulge in purchasing their needs in black markets. To that extent the inflation would go up. That is why I suggested that one rupee for every maund of food crops purchased from the peasant should be retained by Government and invested in useful industries to help the peasants. I was told that in U. P. and Behar a few years ago, a portion of the money that was being paid for sugar cane was being kept with the Government as a sort of reserve in the name of the peasants. It is no use putting this money in the form of national savings certificates. They should be invested in productive industrial undertakings directly and immediately concerned with agriculture so that the profits therefrom can be paid back to the peasants who have contributed this money.

Then, the next point I wish to refer to is this. Why is it that the Government of India have not chosen to implement the recommendations of the Price Sub-Committee. Those recommendations are not quite satisfactory to me because they suggest that we have got to wait for a number of years before this Agricultural Price Advisory Council is to be appointed. They suggest that immediately a price committee should be appointed to fix the price of these two commodities to start with. Is it not the duty of the Government to see that

such a commission is appointed in order to help the price Control Board. Instead of that they have appointed a committee composed of a High Court Judge and two other persons. Nobody who is connected with agriculture is on this committee. They expect such a Board to stabilise the price of agricultural commodities. Sir, I must emphatically protest against this procedure. I agree with Mr. Lawson that this Commodity Board should be augmented in its personnel, by adding one or two agriculturists, or economists with specialised training in agriculture. They should be assisted by an Advisory Council, whose members represent all interests, agricultural workers, landed peasants and so on, so that they can have the benefit of their experience.

Finally I suggest that this Board should be asked to take evidence from various people interested in various classes of production of various commodities in the same way as the Tariff Board is expected to work. In this regard I also wish to suggest that in view of the fact that the agriculturists in this country are less organised and that they are less experienced politically and economically, the Government should offer them every assistance by providing them with the help of competent Economists in the same way as the Government provides lawyers free of cost to poor litigants who are dragged into courts.

In conclusion I request the Honourable the Finance Member to give us an assurance that at the earliest possible moment the recommendations of Sir V. T. Krishnamachari committee will be implemented.

Mr. Manu Subedar (Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau: Indian Commerce): Sir, Mr. Lawson has raised one of the most important points so far as the functions of the Commodities Price Board are concerned. But I must congratulate the Government in the appointment which they have made. They have secured the services of one of the most outstanding public servants from Bombay and it was very necessary that a high level price-fixation was made. You will remember, Sir, that there was plenty of complaint with regard to fixation of price regarding paper, textiles and various other articles because these were only made in consultation with manufacturers and government departments. And it was alleged—it was certainly proved in the case of cloth because Government themselves changed within a fortnight their decision to increase the prices of coarse cloth—that sometimes Government were jockeyed into decisions unfavourable to the community. That is very important, as indeed the whole speech of my Honourable friend Mr. Ranga here shows the difficulty of balancing the consideration as between the producers on the one side and the consumers on the other. It is not merely the producers and the consumers; it is a question of balancing the supply on the one side and the demand on the other. The Commodity Prices Board will have to decide one of the most important issues, namely, to what extent subsidies can be given by Government with regard to imported grains when they arrive; and the whole question becomes one of subsidy when there is a difference of purchase price and the price ruling in this country.

Then there are decisions of the Tariff Board where also by force of circumstances when new articles arrive the whole basis on which the Tariff Board may have given decisions may be wiped out, and the question would again arise whether the previous fixation of prices was fair and proper to all the interests concerned; and this Board is not coming a day too soon. This country is already suffering from the spiral with regard to prices and wages. Wages have been increased all-round; Government themselves are anticipating an enormous increase in their salaries and demands; and as the salaries increase there is more purchasing power in the pockets of people who are in their turn demanding commodities which are not there. The tragedy is that actually in 1946-47 the production of almost everything that we reckon as organised production has fallen. In jute, cement, steel, sugar, paper, cloth and in various other articles everywhere the production has fallen. Actually when the whole world is having measures for increasing production, in India the production has fallen, and

[Mr. Manu Subedar]

of course the Honourable Member for Supplies does roll off the reasons, namely, reduction of hours and transport difficulties and so on. But these are the very reasons which we have been given for the last two or three years; and I say that since this Government have come into power it is their duty to go thoroughly into this and to see whether by any extraordinary measures the emergency arising out of reduced production can be overcome. Recently in the Standing Committee for the Department of Supply and Industries we were told about the deficiency in cloth, and—very cold comfort—there was a paragraph saying that when new machinery arrives from abroad more cloth will be produced. They were unable to say when this new machinery was arriving. Now, Sir, it does not behove a big Government to give views in public of that kind. We are not all that helpless that we cannot increase the production in this country if all put their heads together. And I fear I must reiterate the complaint which I made once before that the departments of the Government of India are working too much in water-tight compartments. Every one is concerned only with what he is about and does not think of the whole. Whereas the kind of topics which the Commodity Prices Board will have to consider necessarily are topics which will cover not one department but which will spread over five or six departments' activities. Now, Sir, the whole issue, as the Planning Advisory Board has suggested, is that there is a deficiency of supply. In steel alone this country is short to the extent of one million tons. This steel shortage is cumulative; it is not like wheat shortage. If I do not eat today my shortage does not go up to tomorrow. Not so with steel; if a house is not built today it will be built after one, two or three years. How can we make good this cumulative shortage of steel? The manufacturing processes may be examined; if the manufacturers can increase it give them a bonus or some other inducement. Give the workmen bonuses if there is extra work. Until there is more production there cannot be an end to black marketing or to control.

I have suggested before that Government should make special efforts to get imports and they should also negotiate barter agreements with other countries which can supply the goods. There should also be a certain amount of State trading which will add to the commodities in their hands. Sir, this Government has got popular support behind them and we will support all their measures here and outside. That reputation of theirs depends on what they are able to do in the matter of food, clothing, housing and above all to what extent they can reduce the black markets. For that I made suggestions once in the budget speech and I again suggest to the Finance Member to consider whether temporarily for a period of two years the duties on five or six articles like steel, cement, timber, paper, cloth, and sugar cannot be suspended. There is not much in the world that will come here, but they will certainly destroy the black market. Sir, I want Government to go thoroughly into the problems raised by Mr. Lawson's cut motion; but so far as the Commodity Prices Board is concerned I think it is an excellent measure and I congratulate Government on having taken that step.

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. President (The Honourable Mr. G. V. Mavalankar) in the Chair.

Captain G. T. B. Harvey (Madras; European): A few points which I wanted to place before the House have actually been touched upon from two or three different points of view by my Honourable friend the Deputy Leader on this side, Prof. Ranga and Dr. Zia Uddin, but there are certain other aspects which I think may not have been remarked and which I would rather like the House to consider.

In the Miscellaneous portion of his Budget speech, the Honourable the Finance Member—from whom of course all blessings flow—told us that he has already set up a Commodity Prices Board to advise him on a consistent price policy. I take it that controls will form most of the monopoly of this new authority and that out of the Honourable Member's cornucopia for this year, will tumble a perfect stream of ordinances, forms and officials, all labelled 'Controls'.

I expect, when the millenium comes, we shall look back on the epoch of controls—without pride, because controls denote the inability of this generation to adjust their economy properly without stringent compulsion, and its counterpart, selfish and crafty dodging of that compulsion. In late years we have had control after control in all forms and of various commodities, some of them fairly successful, some of them complete failures, due largely to unprincipled greed on the part of traders and the appalling venality of officials, both of which have already been recognized in this House. How does it come about, for instance, that a purely textile retailer should suddenly blossom out with a large line of imported fountain pens or cheap jewellery? Or why have manufacturers or importers of repute in the textile industry found it necessary, in order to protect their reputation, to break away from their own traditions and open retail shops to sell their goods at fair prices. In fact the proposed setting up of this Commodity Prices Board—purposely to interfere with what used to be considered the normal course of commercial intercourse—is in itself an admission of the feebleness both of the public conscience, and of official efforts to direct it. That, however, is nothing against the Board itself, and since controls of some sort seem to be inescapable for the moment, all the more power to its elbow. Let us have controls, as long as they are strong, hot and clean! It seems anyhow to have the opportunity of avoiding a fatal weakness of other Control Boards, in that it should be able to correlate the economies of several positive necessities of life which have hitherto been treated as if they were independent subjects, whereas they are essentially interdependent. Prof. Ranga quoted from the report of the Agricultural Policy Committee's Price Sub-Committee telling us about the machinery for the control of cereal foodstuffs—maximum and minimum prices, subsidies to compensate agriculturists, and reserve stocks with which to satisfy emergent public demands—in fact the whole apparatus for raising floors and lowering ceilings when the necessity occurs. I suggest that, if it proves practicable and if it is not already abandoned, it should not only apply to agricultural produce, but to other basic necessities forming the standard of life in this country. Certainly neither the special eggs of special geese, nor empirical ideologies should be given anything but the most justly proportioned weight in any policy to which the Board may commit itself.

To be more concrete, I am sure the House will agree that the general standard of living in this country depends largely on four factors—food, clothing, fuel and labour. The supply first, and then the cost of the distribution of these, not only vitally affect the people, but they vitally affect each other. And of the first three there is a serious shortage, with the result that that inflationary corruption-carrying demon sits on the neck of India at the moment. If all three could be adjusted, they would probably have a very mollifying influence when regulating—as it will have to be regulated—that most difficult and exacting fourth economic factor, Labour. Anyway the present-day result of controls is to my mind nothing to be proud of. I come from a part of the country, for instance, where my servant cannot by law buy more than one *dhoti* or one pair of cotton trousers in a year—five yards of mill made material being the legal limit—at what he thinks a reasonable price. He can buy more of a different manufacture at rather more than double that cost. I will come to that in a moment. I think the House will agree that in order to keep up appearance every man requires, say one *dhoti* in washing and one to wear, but by law he simply cannot buy it, except at a price which is beyond his means. You might say 'let him buy what else he wants at the other place', but how can he? I

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would like to point out that it is very difficult for a man with a family, because not only is his clothing costing him so much, but the ordinary cost of living which consists of other commodities which I have mentioned have already risen by perhaps 150 to 200 per cent. as compared to the prices prevailing in 1939.

• **Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra** (Calcutta: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Much more than that!

Captain G. T. B. Harvey: I said at least. The reason for a price-ticket of Rs. 17/8/- on a dhoti instead of Rs. 7/8/- is simply that it is made by an industry which is at present uncontrolled. I do not say that the industry is not desirable or its products are not efficient, but it does point to the non-correlation of controls. They may be all right, but they must bear a real proportion, the one to the other, and they to several others, before millions of people can possibly be expected to appreciate them or live at a decent standard.

I have not the time to go into all those subjects so I propose to stick to 'cloth' and see how the actual producer of these cloths has also suffered from the non-correlation of controls. Here is the whole country crying out for the supply of a reasonably-priced standard of cloth. Rs. 7/8/- for a dhoti is all right. Rs. 17/8/- is not good enough. At the former price we want all that you can give us. Why is there shortage? I suppose the textile trade is a matter of cotton growing, textile manufacture and distribution. All that is bound up with fuel and food and those have been already subject to controls. You will remember the grim days of 1943 when the prices of yarn and cloth soared inordinately. The extra demand that the war might create might have been foreseen beforehand. Nevertheless it wasn't, and the poor suffered and the wages bill rose and so did the prices of everything else following the inflationary law. In that year the Textile Control Board took over from the Cotton Textile Panel, whose duty had been mainly to fix the prices for supplies of yarn and cloth to the Defence Services, and with the help of conscientious millowners it became the spearhead of an official anti-inflationary drive. They apparently did inter-correlate cause and effect and industry with industry anyhow to some extent. The result was that between the months of April and December of that year, there was a drop in clothing prices of 40 per cent. Raw cotton prices also fell steeply and, I take it, on purpose, because when food was likely to be so short, Government wanted to switch the agriculturist from cash crops to food crops. A definite plan to reduce the cost of living seemed to be going well, so well that Government had to introduce a "floor" price for raw cotton, and they themselves bought three lakhs of bales. That wholesome tendency went on till March 14, 1946 when the cost of clothing to the people was only half what it was two years before, and this is roughly speaking, the level of prices in India today in spite of an authorised lift in the price of coarse Yarn in March 1946.

Here is my point for the need of constant review and the adjustment of three main commodities. While the cost to the poor man of cotton cloth, mill-made, remains comparatively reasonable—when he can get it—what has happened to the parallel basic commodities, both in relation to the public and the industry engaged in supplying the commoner types of textile. If you take 100 as the probable index figure, the following commodity prices appear in December 1946: Cotton cloth stands at 262, coal stands at 293, raw cotton is 316, and food, rice and wheat stand at 359.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Including tobacco!

Captain G. T. B. Harvey: If these figures are not quite up to date I must be excused; my main theme is the lack of correlation of controls. The net result of the absence of any comprehensive review is further indicated by the indices I can get of the cost of living. They are rather sporadic and hardly up to date but are nonetheless illuminating. They show that in July last year Bombay's figure had gone up by 28 to 268, Ahmedabad by 42 to 317, Nagpur

by 30 to 31½, Jubbulpore by 24 to 320, and Madras by 15 to 237, Bombay and Madras I find have risen since by 11 and 15 points.

You can see the grave effect of those figures on the business of those very industries to whom alone Government can look for the major provision of an essential and terribly short commodity such as cloth. They have had to face the higher cost of raw cotton without a corresponding rise to their retail price; they have had to pay heavy wage increases; and on top of these there are those concomitants of social legislation, (which in theory they should not object to, given equitable controls of the main commodity factors) namely shortened working hours, and holidays with pay—I am actually informed that there are mills today engaged on the coarser quality of cloth, who if they were buying raw cotton today, would have to turn out the stiff actually at a working loss. There is surely something wrong in that itself and there is something equally wrong in the handloom trade satisfactory as handloom products may be, and expanding as may be this favoured cottage industry. This uncontrolled industry contributes to the rising cost of living very much more obviously than do mill products, for mill cloth is only 160 per cent. above what it was before the war whereas handloom cloth is 300 to 600 per cent. above pre-war rates. And in the result you get an overall shortage of both mill and handloom goods, deficiency in distribution, and inadequacy of controls, and exactly those evils which the official onslaught in 1943 tried to defeat, namely an enormous blackmarket both for coarse yarns and cloth.

I began by saying that I dislike controls on principle. But if there is to be control, then I would ask the Commodity Prices Board so to advise Government that controls are first and foremost correlated and a equitable and that they are most exactly and indiscriminately administered, so that we get somewhere near a proper price and wage structure and a comprehensive rationalisation of production and living costs, together with the elimination of any unequitable competition, so that those large scale producers who alone can bridge the gap between demand and supply can be encouraged to do so.

Mr. Leslie Gwilt (Bombay: European): The question be now put.

Mr. President: The question is:

“That the question be now put.”

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan (Finance Member): I greatly welcome the discussion that has taken place in the morning and this afternoon. I am sure the Honourable Members would not expect me at this stage to tell them in detail as to how the Commodity Prices Board would function. As a matter of fact some very useful suggestions have been made by the Honourable Members of this House and I have no doubt that the members of the Board will give their deepest consideration to those suggestions.

I shall deal with Prof. Ranga first, because there is only one point which concerns his speech and that is mainly the question of prices of agricultural produce. My Honourable friend has expressed his great concern over the prices of agricultural produce. I can assure him that there is no criminal design on the part of the Government in appointing this Board to deprive the cultivator of his legitimate dues. The Board is not being appointed for the purpose of cutting down the prices of agricultural commodities. This Board is appointed for the purpose of correlating the prices of agricultural produce, industrial goods and other commodities and therefore he need have no fear on that score.

My Honourable friend Prof. Ranga also made a suggestion that some economic adviser should be provided by the Government to put the case of the agriculturists when this Board is considering the question of the price of agricultural produce and he brought in the comparison of a criminal court of law

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where a person who is being prosecuted is generally provided with a defence counsel, if he is not in a position to engage one for himself. I think Prof. Ranga is an economist himself and I have not the slightest doubt that the agriculturists would welcome his assistance and the Board will be only too glad to give him an opportunity to put the point of view of the agriculturists before it.

My Honourable friend Mr. Lawson has laid great emphasis on production. As a matter of fact he emphasised the need for production by repeating it three times—Production, Production and Production. I will say Production, more Production and yet more production. But side by side with it I would say, Distribution, equitable distribution and more equitable distribution. Therefore on that point there is no difference between us. I do realise that quite a lot of our trouble is due to the fact that there is shortage of consumer goods and it should be our effort to meet that shortage as far as possible. The controls have been criticised vehemently by my Honourable friend Mr. Lawson and his colleague who has just sat down. The Government, for their part, do not like controls but I am sure my Honourable friend would agree with me that if under the circumstances we were to remove the controls altogether, then the position instead of improving, will certainly become worse.

Babu Ram Narayan Singh (Chota Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): No, Sir.

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan: My Honourable friend says 'No.' I can assure him that if controls were removed altogether, the poorer classes will not be able to get even the few necessities of life that they are getting today and therefore while we are mindful of the deficiencies in the exercise of the controls, we feel that so long as it is necessary to keep the controls, they must be kept. The real reason for the appointment of this Board is because we found that there was no correlation between the prices of various commodities of various kinds and the Government felt that it was necessary to have a scientific method of stabilisation of prices. It is with that object that we have appointed this Board. My Honourable friend Mr. Manu Subedar has paid a well deserved compliment to the Chairman of the Board. We have got one of our first rate officers as Chairman of this Board, who has had experience of controls and of fixation of prices. He is not a judge of the High Court as my Honourable friend Mr. Ranga thinks. The other member of the Board is one of the greatest economists of this country.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar (Madras ceded Districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): May we know his name?

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan: He is Prof. Gadgil. I am hoping that when the third person is appointed he would be some one who would be interested in agriculture and would meet the demand of my Honourable friend Prof. Ranga.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Why not himself?

Prof. N. G. Ranga: No, no.

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan: Another suggestion was made by Mr. Lawson and it was supported by other Honourable Members. It was that a Board of three was not large enough to deal with such a big problem. I entirely agree with my Honourable friend and it is the intention of Government that if and when it is considered necessary to add more members to this Board they will certainly do so. But at the present to start with we thought that three would be a sufficient number to carry on the preliminary work of the Board.

I think my Honourable friend Mr. Lawson asked me how the correlation of the prices will be done and what basis will be used to bring these prices together. This is exactly one of the matters and the Board will have to examine how best this could be done.

My Honourable friend asked me whether it will be within the competence of the Board to examine the agricultural prices in relation to industrial prices. I can tell him that it certainly will be, because unless you can examine the prices of all kinds of production, whether agricultural or industrial, and correlate them, you cannot have any stabilisation of prices, and therefore it will certainly be one of the functions of the Board to examine the prices of agricultural produce and co-relate them with the prices of industrial goods.

Then, Sir, my Honourable friend made a suggestion that the function of the Commodity Prices Board should not be too rigid. I can assure him that it will not be kept rigid. The Board will be allowed as much freedom as is necessary to carry out the object for which it has been appointed and I would like to point out for the information of Honourable Members that the Board's function is to tender advice to the Government on these matters.

Sri Sri Prakasa (Benares and Gorakhpur Divisions; Non-Muhammadan Kural): What is the price of the Board?

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan: My Honourable Friend asks me what the price of the Board is. I take it he means what will be the cost of the Board. I am afraid I will be able to tell him next year if I am here, 3 P. M. because the Board has started only just now and they have not even got all the staff required. At present it is not possible for me to give him the actual cost of the functioning of this Board.

My Honourable friend suggested that the Board should have expert advice in respect of commodities. I am sure, Sir, that the Board will certainly avail itself of any expert advice that would be available to it when it is considering the question of fixing of prices of various commodities. As a matter of fact I am hoping that the Board will examine all these matters in a methodical and scientific manner and their enquiry will not be of a haphazard nature but will be scientific and thorough.

My Honourable friend asked me another question as to how the Government of India will proceed with regard to those matters that concern the provinces. With regard to that I would say that the Government of India can only proceed in dealing with the Provinces according to the machinery of the Government of India Act. And where the Government of India cannot interfere, it seeks the co-operation of the Provinces. I feel that as it will be in the interest of the Provinces themselves that there should be stabilisation of prices, the Provinces would and should co-operate with the Government of India.

Sir, my honourable friend Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad talked at great length about some abstruse economic theories, and I, not being a mathematician like my honourable friend Dr. Zia Uddin, am not able to deal with them because they fall outside the purview of the motion which has been moved before this honourable House.

My Honourable friend, Mr. Manu Subedar has stated that import duties on some of the articles should be suspended for two or three years. This is a matter that has engaged the attention of the Government, but as this question is going to be discussed at an international conference, the Government have decided not to do anything in this direction till the decision of the negotiations of this international conference is known.

I do not think there was any other point which was raised by any of the Honourable Members. The anxiety of the members with regard to this

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matter is genuine and the Government are as anxious as the Honourable Members of this House to find a way to stabilise the prices of all commodities at a reasonable level. I am glad that the appointment of this Board has received general support of the Honourable Members of this House, and I do hope that this Board will be able to discharge its functions satisfactorily. My honourable friend Mr. Lawson said that the Board has got a Herculean task.

Babu Ram Narayan Singh: What will be the life of the Board?

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan: It has been appointed in the first instance for three years.

It is indeed a Herculean task. But we cannot give up tackling any problem because it is difficult. More difficult a problem greater effort should be made to find a solution.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is the Board appointed in supersession of the other Boards suggested by the Price Stabilisation Committee?

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan: No other Board has yet been appointed. And let me tell my honourable friend that the appointment of this Board was considered before the report of that Committee was out. Therefore it will be for the Government to consider whether the functions which were supposed to be entrusted to that Board as recommended by that Committee should be entrusted to this Board or whether a separate Board should be appointed. At present this is the Board that has been appointed to deal with all the questions of price fixation.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Are the other recommendations under the consideration of the Government, or are they set aside?

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan: All the recommendations submitted by that Committee are being considered by the Government, and I have no doubt that the Honourable Member in charge will give very careful consideration to the recommendations that have been made.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Did Hercules himself ever do any such thing?

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan: Not having lived in those days like my honourable friend, I am not in a position to answer that question.

Shri Sri Prakasa: But Hercules does not live even now. Why do you take his name?

Mr. C. P. Lawson: I beg leave of the House to withdraw my cut motion? The cut motion was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

DEMAND NO. 9—INDIAN POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT

Inefficiency of the Postal, Telegraph and Telephone Services

Mr. M. A. F. Hirtzel (Bengal: European): Sir, I rise to move the cut motion standing in my name, namely:

"That the demand under the head 'Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Sir, the purpose of this cut motion is to discuss the inefficiency of the Postal, Telegraph and Telephone Services. I am afraid that discussing the inefficiency of this Department is rather like discussing the weather which is a limited subject and always consists of a comparison as to whether it is hotter this year than it was last year. I would like to assure the Honourable Member in charge of Posts and Telegraphs that it is definitely hotter this year, that is to say in relation to the Department's work inefficiency is greater this year than last. On the subject of their inefficiency, so far as I can see,

there is no considerable difference of opinion between us. If you read the fifteen-year post-war plan of the Posts and Telegraphs Department you will find that there is constant reference to the existing inefficiency of the Services. I do not, therefore, propose to attempt to prove that there is inefficiency by an accumulation of particular instances such as would appeal to certain friends on my left here. What I want to do is to raise a more general discussion as to what are in fact the fundamental causes of the inefficiency of these Services.

Now, Sir, the first thing that must strike one is that in proportion to the bulk of this Department in the varied life of the country and in relation to its resources, the amount of attention, serious consideration and active discussion which it receives on the floor of this House is certainly negligible, almost contemptible. We never have an opportunity to discuss it at all and this year, were it not for this cut motion, the Honourable Member would get away scot free, as far as I can see. Now, I submit that this is a very important aspect. We in this House can only deal with broad issues but in the case of this Department we do not even get an opportunity of dealing with broad issues. May I remind the Honourable Members that the Posts and Telegraphs Department are in a rather different position from most of the other Government departments. They are much more analogous to the Railways. They are a commercial department and they have a very large capital investment. Honourable Members are probably not aware that immediately before the war the capital investment was 17 crores of rupees and that by the end of last financial year it was 32 crores. When the 15-year plan is completed, the capital investment will be nearly 70 crores.

Now, Sir, an investment on this scale should certainly have much closer attention from this House. I heard it suggested this year that the time spent on the Railway Budget should be cut down. Well, I do not know whether that was a little whispering campaign on the part of the Honourable the Railway Member, but certainly, if it was, I think it was a very dangerous one. I think the time spent on the Railway Budget should not be cut down: it should be increased, and I think there is a very good case for putting the Budget of the Communications Department and the Posts and Telegraph services on the same basis as the Railway Budget. It would occupy a great deal more time of the Members of the House. It will be extremely inconvenient to the Honourable Members in charge. It will be very inconvenient to their staffs but I think in the case of a big national commercial investment the time should be found to conduct a closer examination of the issues involved. Now, I make that point because it has got a very direct bearing on the question of efficiency. The Honourable the Finance Member made some remarks in his Budget speech about regionalisation, remarks that have been variously interpreted in various quarters but I personally was very glad indeed to see them, because I have maintained for some time that this country is far too large to be dealt with by a single planning organisation. I think it is too big for a single administrative organisation, if we are to secure efficiency through the pressure of public opinion. That would apply particularly to the Posts and Telegraphs Department. It is very little use my asking a question about the state of affairs in a particular post office. If I go to the Director-General, he says 'I will write a letter and find out'. That is very unsatisfactory. We all know what happens when a subject like Panth Pipoda comes up for consideration. How many members of the House know where Panth Pipoda is? How many members of this House know where any particular post office is, apart from the main centres? Now, if there were some means by which the pressure of public opinion could be brought to bear in regions rather than over the whole field, then I think we might get a greater degree of efficiency, but at the present time the means by which we can bring our complaints to notice are very very limited and quite inadequate.

[Mr. M. A. F. Hirtzel]

Well, Sir, the need for efficiency is not merely engendered by our commercial and industrial needs but also by the taxpayers' need. The Posts and Telegraphs Department is analogous here also to the Railways, for at least for half of the last 20 years it has made no profit. It was fortunate in improving its position just before the war and it has improved its position very well during the war, but here again as I said in the case of the Railways the battle is essentially for solvency and efficiency and, if the battle is lost, it means a further burden on the taxpayer, who is already overburdened today.

I referred to the improvement during the war. It is well to remind Honourable Members that during the war very considerable progress was made in certain directions. I am referring to the Tele-communications Development Scheme which is gradually approaching completion and which has added something like 15 or 16 crores of rupees to the capital investment of the department. I would in particular like to know exactly how that scheme stands now. I observe it is stated in the post war plan of December, 1945, that the scheme was 3/4th completed. It is stated in the memorandum that was put before the Standing Finance Committee last month that the plan is 4/5th completed. During the war, this scheme has made progress which in comparison with the pre-war rate of progress represents 50 years' development. My friend Dr. Zia Uddin is not here but according to my mathematics the difference between 3/4th and 4/5th is 1/20th and it appears to me, therefore, that between December, 1945, and February 1947, only 1/20th of the scheme has been completed, as compared with 3/4th in the earlier period. That is to say, the department appears to me to be going back to the 50-year peace-time rate of progress.

The Honourable Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar (Member for Communications): When you climb up a mountain, the pace becomes slower.

Mr. M. A. F. Hirtzel: That may be so. But I happen to have looked up the proceedings of the Standing Finance Committee of February, 1946. I was looking at the programme of new construction of post offices, and so on, in various places like Quetta, Mirpur Khas, Lahore and so on. I thought the names were familiar and I took the trouble to check with similar statements placed before the Standing Finance Committee in February this year and I find that whereas all these schemes were put down for completion in 1946-47 the same projects are put down in the statements for 1947-48. I have not yet been able to fully master the Government system of finance. It always appears to the layman that the same schemes do go on recurring year after year and I would like to know exactly what the position is. Of course we recognise that there were serious disturbances during the year but none the less when an expenditure of the order of 35 lakhs is put down in the year and so little is apparently completed, an explanation appears to be very necessary.

Well, Sir, coming again to the post-war plan, it strikes me, as a very sound and a very comprehensive plan. We are very much interested in seeing it put into effect and I am very surprised that in the report of the Advisory Planning Board apparently no comment has been made at all on this big departmental scheme. Apparently, the Advisory Planning Board were very much more concerned with industrial development. I think it is unfortunate—I am sorry Mr. Neogy is not here to correct me if I am wrong—that the emphasis should be so much on the industrial side. We have here a comprehensive plan, which, as I said, is going to more than double the capital invested in the Posts and Telegraphs Department and it certainly does appear that it should have commanded more attention from the Advisory Planning Board than it has done. That is an aside, but it is an important point because it shows, what I think is the general tendency, that the work of this Department is disregarded.

Now, Sir, assuming that we all agree about the inefficiency of the Department, I want to try and set down a few of the causes of this inefficiency in the few minutes at my disposal. I would say that the causes might roughly be found under the following heads: lack of leadership, shortage of trained staff, shortage of equipment and lack of system.

Now, lack of leadership is a point that may perhaps strike some Members of the House as unduly sentimental; but it does not, in fact, strike the present personnel of the Department like that. The point is particularly stressed in the Post-War Plan. Now, I am very glad to see that the Honourable Member in charge of the Department has graced this occasion by his presence in this House. We see rather too little of the Honourable Members who sit in another place and I am very glad to see that he has been able to find a place on the front Bench. This is not a bit of joviality or geniality on my part, but I think it is a very serious point. If Honourable Members in charge of the Department do not come to this House or do not themselves answer on behalf of their Departments, the country is unaware of their existence except that it sometimes sees their photographs in the press in various attractive poses, in the cabbage-patch and so on. Now, Sir, it is a very important point, if we are to keep the service together, to make them feel the presence of the Member in charge either by his tours or by broadcasts or by his speeches in this House which are subsequently reported in the press. We all know that the present conditions are radically different from the conditions which hitherto prevailed and we think it highly undesirable that the Secretaries, however able they may be, should be called upon in this House to make speeches in the present political atmosphere and become involved in political matters. That is wrong in principle and we feel most strongly, particularly under present conditions, that the Members themselves should be here. That is one way in which I suggest the lack of leadership can be remedied by the Honourable Member himself coming down to this House and showing us what his ideas are.

Now, as regards the training of staff, this is also dealt with in the 15 year plan and we should like to know very much what is being done to increase the supplies of adequately trained staff. There is an important passage on page 39 of the plan which makes the point I am trying to make about the *esprit de corps* very clear, namely that it depends upon leadership.

Then, Sir, there is the question of shortage of equipment. We wish to know what exactly Government has done to place its orders in good time. As I mentioned before, India was fortunate—and it is a point worth remembering—in being able to increase her capital equipment during the war to the extent I have mentioned, even though that is totally inadequate to meet all needs. I should, however, like to know what the present administration has done or what did the previous administration do in order to get their orders on the order book in good time? That is a most vital question. One rather has the impression that the Departments of the Government of India feel that it does not matter how long it takes them to make up their minds because when they have done so all they have to do is to send a cablegram to X, Y, or Z country and they think they will get their requirements immediately. That is quite wrong. We are anxious to know that, if mistakes were made in the past in the way of unnecessary delay in getting their orders on the order book, adequate steps have been taken to see that those mistakes do not recur. I was surprised to find from a memorandum recently put before the Standing Finance Committee that in the case of the proposals for increasing the capacity of the Madras telephone exchanges orders are only now about to be placed for the necessary equipment. That is a comparatively big scheme, though it is not by any means the largest telephone scheme which is to be carried out, and we find that orders are only about to be placed. It is a pretty certain bet under present world conditions that it will be a matter

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of years before these orders can be executed. That also brings me to another point that the post-war plan lays particular stress on, namely, the expansion of demand for the various services which this Department provides. If there is to be a continuing time-lag and if there is to be a steady failure to execute schemes, not merely have we to make up the ground we have lost but we have to face the difficulty of meeting the expansion. I am sure the programme is likely to be very much larger in the end than it is estimated to be now as set out in the official plan. I am supported in that view by the fact that I have seen a memorandum that was placed before the Standing Finance Committee in February considerably enlarging the official scheme as it was published in December 1945. I have the feeling that with the delays that are going on we are steadily going to find ourselves faced with a larger and larger task, if we are to make good the ground lost and also to meet the expansion which the country requires.

Then, Sir, there is another question which arises and I am merely asking it for information as to whether any equipment is available from Disposals. That is a subject on which we know really nothing at all. It is extremely difficult for any one to know what there is and what there is not in Disposals. But I am informed on very reliable authority that there are at least two telegraph lines set up by the Americans in connection with their pipe-lines which are just going to pieces on the ground and they stretch from Calcutta to the northern end of Assam. That seems to the layman most wasteful.

Now, Sir, my fourth point was lack of system. The Honourable Member will remember that I suggested at the last meeting of the Standing Committee that a firm of technical advisers should be called in to advise the Postal Department, in particular, on their system or lack of system. Conditions in the post offices are deplorable and I think only one who is very ignorant of the ways of the country would venture into one and when he sees how the post offices work at the busy hour of the day he will feel as I do that it is like the gates of Hell as one imagines them on the Day of Judgment. So he very hastily turns back and says he will find a peon to send instead. Now there must be something radically wrong when conditions are like this. There are qualified technical advisers who examine and advise on business of this kind. They have done so in the case of other departments of the Government of India and I shall be surprised to learn that the results were not satisfactory. I strongly urge that such technical advisers should be employed in this department also.

Another grievance which I should like to ventilate is as regards the telegraph system. Telegrams are accepted even though the staff know that they cannot send them off by telegraph. They know perfectly well that they are going to despatch the telegram by post. Why should they accept the message and charge the telegraph fee? In commercial language this is called a swindle, whatever it is called in official language. I do not press the Honourable Member to tell us what is the correct official phrase, but anyhow we do not like to be swindled.

Then, Sir there is the question of local manufacture of telephone equipment. That is a subject that has often been raised on the floor of the House. We ourselves support the view expressed in the postwar plan that it would not be an economic proposition to try to manufacture equipment in this country for the automatic telephone system. I would however urge that if the Honourable Member wishes to expand local production, he might divert his attention to the manufacture of air-conditioning plant a considerable quantity of which is required for telephone services and which plant would undoubtedly have a very considerable local market outside the telephone and telegraph services. That would be a possible economic channel for further local development. But we have some doubt as to whether further development is

called for while the old question of the workshops at Alipore, Jubbulpore and Bombay remains unsettled. I hope when the Honourable Member replies to this he will particularly give us an answer to that question and give us an assurance that it is going to be settled soon if not settled already.

This covers all the points that I wanted to make this afternoon. In conclusion I would only say that I was unaware till recently that the Posts and Telegraph Department has a very pretty motto, "Service Before Self". I hope the Honourable Member will succeed in bringing home that motto to his various employees, to those who work under him whether it be in the Secretariat or wherever else they may be. Sir, I move.

Mr. President: Cut motion moved:

"That the demand under the head 'Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Mr. Leslie Gwilt (Bombay; European): I move:

"That the question be now put."

Mr. President: There has not been sufficient discussion on this motion and I cannot accept closure. The debate on this Cut Motion has to be finished by quarter to four. So, I propose to call two more speakers, one from the Muslim League party and the other from the Congress Party and I shall give them five minutes each. If necessary, I shall give some more time to the Government Member to reply.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer (Bombay Southern Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I rise to support this Cut Motion. In doing so, I shall confine myself to some smaller matters that face the public every day. I mean the question of telephones, telegrams and air mail letters. The Honourable Member Mr. Hirtzel has very widely dealt with the major problems. I shall therefore confine myself within the five minutes at my disposal to give a brief account of the grievances which the public have against this department. I am glad that the Honourable Member for Communication Department has taken the trouble to be present in this House this afternoon. It is very gratifying indeed to see him here. I hope he will see that all our grievances are redressed immediately and that the whole system is overhauled. The question of telephones is an old old question. There is a big waiting list for installing new telephones. It is said it is all due to shortage of telephone instruments. There are various grievances connected with this system of service. The subscribers have to pay very high rates. Because telephone service in this country is the monopoly of Government and there is no competitor in the field, the Government perhaps feel that they can deal with the public in a light hearted manner and overlook their grievances. We have to pay very heavy charges for trunk calls. If you book a trunk call, it always happens we have to wait for several hours before getting the required connection. We are always told by the telephone operators, most of whom are always rude to the public, that it would take a long time to get the trunk connection and so we are told to book an urgent call. In this way the public are hoodwinked and more money is taken from the public. This always happens. I submit that the Government should not do profiteering and this should be stopped forthwith. Several times we get wrong numbers. Whenever we dial, fortunately or unfortunately, we get some number where we listen to two persons speaking, sometimes wives are speaking to their boy friends when husbands are away; all these are dangerous things and I hope that the Honourable Member will see that all these inconveniences are put an end to immediately.

Next I should like to refer to the move that is on foot to introduce message rate system whereby we shall be forced to pay one anna extra for every call. This we will have to pay in addition to the monthly rental. I hope the Honourable House will see that this is opposed tooth and nail and I hope Honourable Members will see to it that this proposal to introduce the message system is scotched at the very beginning.

[Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer]

Next I should like to deal with the question of mail delays, so far as air mail is concerned. There is great delay in transmission of air mail letters from one place to another. This has been engaging the attention of the public and the public have been shouting against this delay from housetops. Air Mail letters should be delivered immediately, but nothing seem to have been done. I suggest that mails should be carried by both planes in different directions. I am indeed glad that the Honourable Member has agreed to that proposal and I hope he will put into practice immediately this arrangement whereby posts from one destination to another will be carried by both planes which are being flown from one station to another. Secondly I suggest that letters which go from Delhi by the afternoon plane and reach Bombay the same evening at five o'clock should be arranged to be delivered the same evening in Bombay instead of the next day as it is being done at present. I should also like to point out that the charges for air mail letters from India to U.S.A. are very high. At the present moment, the air mail post from India to U.S.A. is Rs. 1-7-0, whereas from New York to India it is only fourteen annas. I do not see any justification at all for the Government of India to charge a higher rate and do profiteering. Unless I am given satisfactory reply on this point, I will have no hesitation in calling this a profiteering by Government.

The next complaint is about the loss of magazines etc. in post. Very valuable magazines like *Time*, *Life* and other foreign magazines are stolen in transit. I speak this from my own experience. Many times, I have not been receiving my magazines regularly. I am sure the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs has received a complaint this morning from a well known firm of booksellers in Bombay that several *Times* magazines are pilfered in transit, several times wrong magazines are put in. This is the general complaint from many book houses in India. I hope the Honourable Member will see to it that this sort of stealing of magazines is put an end to forthwith.

The next point is about the rates for telegrams. The rates are very high. Sometimes telegrams do not reach their destination at all, sometimes they reach later than letters. I hope the Honourable Member will see to it that telegrams are despatched and delivered earlier than it is being done at present. Every time we go to send a telegram we are told that only urgent telegrams should be sent, as in the case of trunk telephone calls. I hope the Honourable Member will see that efforts are made to have the proper staff and that they are paid properly. The trouble is that these poor people are not paid properly. They should be paid well and paid extra for extra work done. I have brought this to the notice of the Honourable Member in the Standing Committee. I repeat that unless you pay them properly they will not work properly.

Sir, I support the motion.

Sreejot Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri (Assam Valley: Non-Muhammadan):

Sir, I rise to oppose this motion and for no other reason than this that some time ago the Honourable Member for this Department himself said in the course of a press statement that his department was quite inefficient and had not been able to reach the efficiency which they had before the war. In these circumstances it is sheer waste of time to make a motion of this kind; when an accused pleads guilty it is no use proceeding with the case against him.

Sir, while criticising the Postal Department for various acts of omission and commission Honourable Members who have preceded me have forgotten to take note of some of the admirable qualities which this department has developed specially after the war. I refer to the consistency and the spirit of determination which the department has shown. I will give some instances. For some time past I have been receiving letters in my quarters in 23¹/₂ Ferozé Shah Road which are addressed to others. I have tried to post them back

again in different letter boxes but with a spirit of admirable consistency these letters have always come back to me. There must be some agency at work which makes these letters sent to different addresses always come back to my place. Then, Sir, I will give an example of their determination. Some time ago I received a letter which was sent by air mail, and it was received two days after another letter posted on the same day by ordinary mail had been received. I wrote to the Postal Department sending the covers of both these letters but I have received no reply; and as a sign of their determination I have had several cases of that kind even till now. As regards this the Honourable Member had himself stated that the air mail was not only delayed but in some circumstances it had been lost. I do not understand how these letters can be lost; I have not heard of any air accident. I can only make one surmise. The air passengers are given periodicals and magazines to read which are sometimes very dull and stale because they had already been read by these passengers. Nothing is more interesting than other people's letters and so I believe these letters are distributed to these passengers to while away their time; and at the end they are not collected properly and that is how they get lost. Otherwise there is no reason why these letters should get lost, because there has been no case of accident, so far as I know.

As for telegrams, even now express telegrams take thrice more time than before; and as for ordinary telegrams it is better to say nothing because they take more time even than ordinary letters. As regards telephones I will say just one word. So far as trunk calls are concerned, in our mofussil towns practically no one gets any benefit out of them. Today the trunk is out of order because of a strong breeze; tomorrow it is out of order because of incessant rain and on a third day it is out of order because of too much frost in Shillong. Then again the trunk is out of order because there has been no rain and no breeze for some time. If a count is taken of the number of days on which the trunk has been out of order between Gauhati and Shillong and between Gauhati and Jorhat in Assam the truth of my statement will be borne out.

Sir, I oppose the motion.

Mr. Krishna Prasada (Government of India: Nominated Official). Sir, I am glad that a general discussion on Posts and Telegraphs has been raised because this department is one of the most important public utility departments and we have an opportunity of hearing the views of Honourable Members and of representing our own difficulties. I am in an advantageous position *vis-a-vis* other Honourable Members because this happens to be my maiden speech and I know that I shall have the indulgence of the House.

I have listened with much interest, amusement and profit to what has been said this afternoon. My Honourable friend Mr. Hirtzel's speech provided the spear-head of the attack. He has been very charitable, I think, because he is a good Christian. My room in the Western Court where he resides is next door to his and he has been a very good neighbour. His charity, however, combines with a wish for the betterment of the department. Sir, the Posts and Telegraphs Department is a very fortunate department and yet it is very unfortunate in some ways. It is fortunate in as much as it renders a service which is most essential to civilization; without it civilization cannot subsist for very long. This department touches very intimately the common man; the postman is the most welcome and greatly looked-forward-to visitor in every house. The department is however unfortunate because every single lapse on its part is noticed and attracts attention. Of virtuous men it is said that their good deeds live and are remembered and their bad deeds are forgotten. Perhaps the Posts and Telegraphs is not a virtuous department because its good deeds are forgotten and only the bad deeds are recounted. If a letter is delayed in transit or one which is expected does not reach even when it

[Mr. Krishna Prasada] is not posted, the P. & T. Department is blamed. And when it is blamed, the letters which have reached the addressee in time are conveniently forgotten. I wonder, Sir, how many Members of this House have an idea of the volume of traffic that this Department has to handle. The average of personal letters that I post would perhaps be two or three a day, but this Department in the year 1945-46 handled two thousand million postal articles.....

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: All from one post office?

Mr. Krishna Prasada: From everybody who posted.

As I was saying, the Department handled in the year 1945-46 two thousand million postal articles, sixty-six million money orders, thirty-one million telegrams, four and a half million trunk calls. I admit that the complaints which are made to us are not a correct index of the satisfaction which the public feel in regard to postal articles, but the complaints that we receive are registered and we maintain an account of them. This House will be interested to know that the percentage of complaints received in 1945-46 was .015 or, in other words, the complaints were 15 per one lakh of postal articles. In case of telegrams, the percentage was .12 or 120 complaints for one lakh telegrams. Sir, I do not want to take cover behind the fact that this percentage is too small. I admit that the service rendered by the Posts and Telegraphs Department is not as efficient as you and I would like it or as efficient as it used to be before the war. My Honourable friend, Mr. Hirtzel has referred to some of the causes which have occurred to him. His diagnosis is quite correct, and I shall, with your permission, amplify those causes and give some details so as to bring out the difficulties of this Department.

Number one is that there has been vast expansion of traffic. In 1945-46 I will give the percentage of increase as compared to the pre-war figures—there was an increase in the case of postal articles of 60 per cent; in the case of money orders 63 per cent.; in the case of telegrams 90.4 per cent.; in the case of trunk calls over 100 per cent. The trunk call revenue last year was five times what it was in the year 1938-39. These figures are staggering. We had great difficulty—and I am going to enumerate a few difficulties—in meeting this sudden increase of traffic.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Is it due to increase of population?

Mr. Krishna Prasada: Partly. We were called upon to increase our staff very considerably. At the end of 1945-46 the increase was, as compared to the pre-war year, of the order of 38 per cent. In certain cadres the increase was very considerable. Our Engineering Supervisors, who have to construct your telegraph and telephone lines, used to be 344 before the war. At the end of last year they were 698—more than double. Class II Engineering Officers, who were 85 before the war, last year were 289—or three-and-a-half times as many. Well, we have increased the staff, but the difficulty has been what has been referred to by my Honourable friend, Mr. Hirtzel: We have not been able to give sufficient training to our staff. In the case of Engineering Officers and the non-gazetted staff, it is most essential that they should be properly trained; if they are not trained, they cannot construct the lines and they cannot maintain them as well as the public expects or we want to do. Out of 350 Supervisors engaged during the war, only 46 we were able to train fully, or only 12½ per cent. This was a most appalling condition. It was not possible—you may ask why did you not train after all, you could open training classes—but, Sir, it was not possible to train the staff because we were confronted with a war and we had to erect lines for the defence of the country. The military wanted them and we had to put our staff through an abbreviated course of training and to rush them through their course. Then, Sir, to add to our difficulties a very large proportion of our staff is on a temporary basis. These people know that they are liable to be thrown out and so naturally they have not taken the

same amount of interest as they would have done otherwise. To meet the expansion of traffic and to house the additional staff one requires more accommodation in the shape of additional offices, additional quarters for the staff, additional accommodation in railway trains for parcels and letters, motor vans, equipment, and spare parts. These were almost unobtainable. Last year I visited Calcutta and my visit to the G.P.O. was *incognito*; I stood behind the people and I found that the queues were too long. I wrote to the Postmaster and I also instructed him personally that more offices should be opened in Clive Street from which most of the business came. We tried, and tried, and tried, and we sought the help of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, who of course wanted to help and they did say that they would help, but they were not able to find accommodation. We requested the Bengal Government and we tried through all sources, but we were not able to find accommodation. The difficulty was that we could not pay *pugree* which a man in the street can. There has been difficulty about equipment and spares because they could not be obtained from abroad, and the capacity of our workshops was all directed at turning out material for the defence of the country. Telephones were introduced into this country 66 years ago. The number of telephones at the end of the war were 1,20,000. We have got a very ambitious programme and our object is to have 1,53,000 new telephones within the next five years. This would mean that the number of telephones during the five years would be double of what it was at the end of this year.

4 P.M.

My time is up and I crave your indulgence to sit down. I oppose the motion, Sir.

Mr. President: I am not putting it to the House at all.

DEMAND No. 24—DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR
Labour Policy of the Government of India.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I move:

“That the demand under the head ‘Department of Labour’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

My object in proposing this motion is to discuss the policy of the Government of India in dealing with the labour problems. The function of a Government in dealing with labour problems is in my judgment twofold. Their first function is to take legislative and executive measures, to raise the level of the conditions of life and work for the working-classes so that in a measurable distance of time those conditions could be improved and the working classes brought to the level of equality with the other classes in the country. At least the working classes of this country should be raised to the level of the working classes of the advanced countries. I maintain that the working classes have a right to obtain a position of equality with the other classes in the country, not only in economic matters but also in social and political matters. This, Sir, is the first function of a Government in dealing with their labour problems.

The second function of a Government is under the present economic system, which is capitalistic system, to mediate between the class of employers and their employees so that any differences which may exist between the two may be settled fairly and justly. Sir, the conditions under which the working classes in this country live and work are extremely miserable. Their standard of life is extremely low and the conditions in our country are far behind those which exist in advanced countries. I shall not take much time in detailing those conditions. It will be enough if I say that if we compare the wages of the working classes in India and the wages of the working classes in the United States of America, you will find that the wages in the United States of America are at least ten times as high as the wages in India.

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If you take the houses in which the working classes in India have to live and the houses in which the working classes in the United Kingdom live, you will find that in India for one single room there will be at least two families living; while in England no working class family generally has less than four to five rooms. In England the working classes are given a fair measure of social security. In India there is absolutely no social security for the working classes. I feel that if these conditions are to be changed, it is the duty of the Government of India to make a plan by which the conditions of the working classes in this country will be improved and will be brought in a measurable distance of time at least to the level of the conditions under which the working classes in advanced countries work and live. The question of making a plan for giving social security to the working classes in this country was discussed in a Tripartite meeting I think about three years ago. The Government of India at that time said that they had no information. I do not know what their department was doing. They appointed a Committee to collect information. That Committee took some time. In my judgment it was too long a time. They made reports. It was thought at that time that the Government of India would appoint a Committee to deal with the planning of social security for the working classes. I heard, Sir, at one time that Professor Beveridge, a wellknown gentleman in England, who planned social security measures in that country, was to be brought here. But as a matter of fact, I found that the Honourable Member and his Department thought that there was no use bringing Professor Beveridge. They themselves were perhaps equally to Professor Beveridge as experts in labour matters. I heard again sometime ago that the Government of India had made a five-year plan. It is not a plan for five years but a bundle of few measures somehow brought together and not a plan and if it is properly carried out, promptly and vigorously, in my judgment it should not take more than six months. But the Government of India calls it a five-year plan. I shall leave it to the Honourable Member to give the details of his plan. If I say anything he may say that I have misrepresented him. I feel that the Government has not got a plan and if they have a plan, it is extremely inadequate and moreover they are following a method of carrying out of these small measures which cause unnecessary delay and waste of time. I shall give one instance. Take the question of hours of work. Sometime ago they passed a measure dealing with the hours of work in factories. I think they may after some time propose a measure dealing with the hours on railways. After some time they may have another third measure dealing with the hours in mines. Perhaps, after some more time they may deal with the hours of work of dock-workers, and so on. I think this method of dealing with subjects wastes time. It may give credit to the Government of India to say that they have three or four or five measures being discussed in the legislature but I feel it is a waste of time. I therefore suggest to the Government to make a plan which will be adequate and which will make for progress. Let them understand that the world has already advanced much and if we want to catch up with the world within a measurable distance of time we should march much faster than the world, to make up for arrears and catch up with the world. Therefore it would not be enough if we march at the same rate at which the world is marching, because we are behind times and we have to make up the distance of the first lag. I would therefore suggest to the Government to make a plan which will be a complete plan and which will be vigorously pursued and carried out within a measurable period of time.

Then the Government should deal with the question of wages first, wages not only as they are proposing in the sweated industries. In India all

industries are sweated. Therefore let the Government of India propose a measure by which workers in all industries will be given living wages.

Similarly I would like, in the first five years, the Government to give proper, decent living and working conditions to the workers in all organised industries, such as factories, mines, docks, plantations, motor transport and railways.

Then I would like the Government of India also to take up the question of housing. In my judgment both the Central and provincial Governments are playing with the problem of housing. This question was discussed at a tripartite meeting and a committee was appointed. The committee reported but I am quite sure the Government of India have not yet built even 1000 houses or rooms for the working classes. This is not dealing seriously with the problem and much less solving it. The Government should make a plan which can be carried out within five years for constructing at least decent homes for one million workmen. Then within the next five years another one million will be provided, so that within 25 years a fair proportion of the working classes in this country will be properly housed.

Similarly the Government of India should deal with the question of the health of the working classes. They have instituted a measure of health insurance but they are making the same mistake again in dealing with the problem of health insurance. They have a measure dealing with the health insurance of factory workers. Afterwards they will take up the question of the health of mine workers. I would like the Government of India to make a comprehensive plan for health insurance for all industrial workers.

Similarly I would like the Government of India to take up the question of formulating a scheme for unemployment insurance. Unemployment is appearing in this country and a very large number of people are thrown on the streets. We do not know what happens to them. The Government is not tackling the problem at all. I therefore suggest to them that during the first five years let them make enquiries and at least prepare a scheme which will be practicable and which they may be able to carry out after three, four or five years.

I would also like the Government to prepare a scheme of some kind of retirement benefits for the working classes. At present we do not know what happens to a worker in a factory after he is 55 or 60. This state of things cannot last. I therefore suggest to the Government immediately to take on hand the question and make a plan for introducing some system of retirement benefits for the working classes. If the Government makes such a plan and carry it out within the first five years, I think we shall have made some progress, which the workers in the country will appreciate.

Regarding the question of mediation between employers and employees in this country on a basis of fairness and justice to both parties, I do not want to deal with the problem today, because I have dealt with it on a previous occasion. I would now suggest to the Government of India to consider the question of the development of machinery to enable them to deal with the questions of social security for workers. The Government some years ago established a machinery called the Tripartite Labour Conference and the Tripartite Standing Labour Committee. In my judgment that machinery as worked by the Government of India is not at all very strong. It is lacking in personnel and vigour. I would therefore like the Government to take up the question of developing this machinery. I am one of those who feel that a tripartite machinery can do very useful work in planning measures for the uplift of the working classes of this country and for the establishment of social justice and thereby industrial peace in this country. Unfortunately this machinery is not functioning properly. It is not adequate. I would like to

[Mr. N. M. Joshi]

make a few suggestions to the Honourable Member for developing this machinery.

My first suggestion will be that this machinery should have an independent chairman. I greatly appreciate the fact that the Honourable Minister himself presides over this conference and the meetings of the committee but he must remember that as a member of the Government of India he cannot find time to preside over all the meetings of that conference and of the committee. If he must preside there will always be limitation on the functioning of this organisation. For instance, the I.L.O. conference sits for three weeks. I am sure the Honourable Member would not be able to find the time to preside over a conference for three weeks, which starts at 11 in the morning and goes day after day till 5, 6 or 7 p.m. Therefore it is better that this organisation should have an independent chairman.

My second suggestion is that not only there should be an independent chairman but there should be a Director of high status of this Organisation. For instance, the Director of the I.L.O. is paid a fairly high salary. In the Government of India they have a Director but his salary compared to that of the Director of the I.L.O. would rank him as a fifth or even tenth rate officer. If you want to develop this machinery and work it successfully, vigorously and usefully you should pay the Director a salary equal to that of a Secretary, and he should have the status of a Secretary. I should like this organisation to have sufficient staff. The I.L.O. organisation prepares the documents which are placed before the conference. They prepare reports of the work done, action taken and progress made from time to time. I would also like that the meetings of this organisation should be longer. Sometimes the conference lasts only for a day or two. What can be done in two days time? The I.L.O. conference meets for three weeks and yet it finds it difficult to deal with all the subjects properly. Therefore our conference also should meet for a longer time.

Then, Sir, the Honourable Member, in order to find time to be able to preside over the meetings of these Committees and Conferences is proposing to abolish the Standing Labour Committee. I think he is making a mistake. If there is no time for him to preside over the meetings of the Standing Labour Committee, accept my suggestion that there should be an independent Chairman. It is wrong to abolish the Standing Labour Committee which I am told his Department is proposing to do. The Standing Labour Committee has a very important function to perform. The Conference meets once a year. During the year the Standing Labour Committee can carry on the work of giving effect to the recommendations of the Conference. The Honourable Member's excuse for abolishing the Standing Labour Committee is that he is starting some Industrial Committees. He has started one. This morning he has announced that another is going to be started. But before both these Committees meet he has already abolished the Standing Labour Committee! I feel that it is a mistake and that the Honourable Member will not do it.

My last suggestion to the Government of India is this. The Honourable Member's Department is not strong enough to deal with all the labour problems of this country so that within the measurable period of time the working classes of this country will attain equality with the other classes in this country and with the working classes of the advanced countries of the world. His Department has got a number of officers, but in my judgment that Department is not strong enough. I suggest to the Honourable Member let him have special expert officers for the important items to be dealt with by his Department. I will suggest to him to have an expert on the question

of wages, an expert dealing with the question of housing, another expert dealing with the question of health, still another expert dealing with the question of unemployment, and yet another one dealing with the question of old age pensions and retirement benefits. I would also suggest to him besides having these experts for different items of work he should have different experts for different industries. There should be one expert for dealing with factories. I am told that his Department has got a Factory Adviser. I am glad that the Department has him. But the Honourable Member should have other experts in the Department, in the Secretariat here, who will deal with the question of mines, with the question of transport industry, with the question of plantations, with the question of agricultural workers. Sir, if he has got a sufficiently large number of expert officers in his Department I have no doubt that there will be much more progress than the Government of India is able to make with the present Department. I hope the Government of India will not mind the expenditure. The money spent on having these officers in the Secretariat who will promote measures for the social welfare of the working classes will not be money wasted. In my judgment it will be money saved. I therefore suggest to the Government of India not to mind the expense which is involved in keeping a sufficient number of expert officers in the Department.

Sir, one more suggestion before I sit down.

Mr. President: I have no objection to allow the Honourable Member if other Members have no objection. The Honourable Member has already taken 24 minutes.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: My last point is this. When you have expert officers, give them sufficient power to deal with the subjects which are entrusted to them and do not hamper their activities by what is called the Secretariat control. I am not against Secretariat. I fully realize the need of having a good Secretariat. But the Secretariat has a knack of preventing work being done. The Secretariats of the Government of India know one thing: they know how not to do a thing. I therefore suggest to the Government of India to leave these officers free so that they will make schemes and these schemes may be carried out in practice, so that the working classes in this country will benefit. I feel that the Government of India should give up the present policy which is a policy of inaction, which is a policy which in my judgment is timid and halting. They should adopt a bolder policy, a policy which will lead to the progress of the working classes in this country within a measurable period of time.

Mr. President: Cut motion moved:

“That the demand under the head ‘Department of Labour’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad: Sir, I agree with most of the arguments advanced by my friend Mr. Joshi. But I feel that he is living in the year 1946 and backwards and not in the year 1947. He has not sufficiently advanced. He must realise that in these days everything is decided by counting of heads and show of hands. In every political organisation all over the world labour will always defeat every other party by counting heads. Therefore the government in future will rest with labour and not with the persons who obstruct and stand in the way of the progress of labour. That is the principle in which, whether you like it or not, the world is moving from 1947 onwards. I suggested to him sometime ago—and I think if we adopt this principle most of his troubles will end—that labourers in every industry should be treated as business partners and not as employees of the capitalists. Once this principle is accepted a large number of things which he has suggested will follow as the logical consequence. I think the first thing that has started in the year 1947 is that labour will not allow itself to be treated as the servant of any class of people who

[Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad.]

will be in the minority in every legislature and everywhere. Therefore, the majority, which will be labour, will not allow itself to be ruled in their own way by the minority, which is the capitalists. Therefore, I beseech that if you really want to have a good atmosphere in the industrial development, then labour should be treated as business partner. Accept this principle and the other things will follow naturally. Everything which Mr. Joshi has suggested will either follow or will be unnecessary because some of the troubles mentioned by him will end if this principle is accepted.

I entirely agree with Mr. Joshi that housing should be treated as an important problem. No factory should be recognised as a factory unless it has sufficient hygienic and comfortable accommodation for every employee—I use the word 'employee' for the time being—or worker in the factory, may be he is the Director or may be he is the last labourer. This should be a condition precedent for the recognition of any factory in this country.

The second thing is that it is not the business of the Government but it is the business of the industries themselves to provide all the amenities for their labourers. I mean education for adults, social clubs and all such facilities are to be provided there. Labour should feel that the factories are their homes and are not jails for indentured labour. This is the atmosphere which we ought to create in every factory. Then and then alone will the atmosphere which Mr. Joshi has in view will be created. He suggested some time ago—I did not follow that part of his speech—and I agree with him and I say now that in every factory an elected representative of labour should sit in the Board of Directors. He must be a Director there. In addition to this one Director, there should be a Director appointed by the Government. It is like the Director appointed by the Secretary of State on the Company-managed railways to act as the watch-dog of the Indian taxpayers. So, he will be the watchdog of the Legislature and the watchdog of those organisations which look after the interests of labour. If you have these two representatives, a representative of the workmen and a representative of the Government, on the Board of Directors, many of the existing evils will disappear. The Companies Act should be amended accordingly in order to secure this object. I understand that this thing is necessary and probably many other things are required which necessitate the amendment of the Companies Act.

The other thing is that these labourers should have a common mess. It may be vegetarian or non-vegetarian. Once or twice a week, the directors, all the high officials and even the managing directors must have meals together, so that they may meet on the same level. If the managing director sits on the 7th Heaven and the labourers on the 1st Heaven or even below the earth, there will not be created the necessary atmosphere which will conduce to harmonious relationship. They should meet as equals and business partners. Subject to the prejudices which are sometimes unavoidable in connection with social societies, there should be a common mess in which all these people should have meals.

The next thing is that if we want our industries to be in a flourishing condition we must have both internal and external markets. For the internal market we must raise the standard of living, increase the purchasing power of the labourers who form the bulk of the population of the country. I go one step further and I do not know whether my friend Mr. Joshi will agree with me. You must not be satisfied only with the internal market. You must also capture the external market. Otherwise the industries will not flourish. In order to capture the external market it is very desirable that the cost of production should be as cheap as possible, because most other countries are using machinery and we employ only man power. It is therefore necessary that our workmen should work harder. We ought not to teach them to be lazy, only

to demand facilities and do no work. We must train them to do harder work than they have been doing so far. I am not in favour of 56 hour week or 48 hour week or 42 hour week. I never like a thing of this kind. In a factory everybody must have two months of holidays and it should be open to him either to enjoy the two months on full pay or if he wants to work he must be given double pay for these two months. The factories must be kept going all the year round. There should be no holiday in the factory. We may employ extra staff in order to relieve the men but the factory itself should not be closed even for one minute, consistently with the life of the machinery and other traditions. These labourers should work in the same spirit as the capitalists. We know that the capitalist works up to 2 in the morning in order to close and adjust his accounts. If you want the labourer to be treated as a business partner and give him all the amenities, you must at the same time make him do the work with the same enthusiasm and in the same spirit as the capitalist. If the cost of production goes up, you will not be able to compete with the world markets. As far as the internal market is concerned, we can adjust the thing by means of import and export restrictions but with regard to the external market we must try to make things cheaper. That is the thing which I would like to insist upon.

I entirely agree with my friend in regard to the I.L.O. and other conferences which he mentioned. If you treat labourers as business partners then the necessity for many of these things will disappear or will be minimised. Everything will be solved by the labourers themselves in their own way and the question of adjudication or the interference of the experts will not arise at all.

At the same time there should be frequent conferences between employers and employed, and also the consumers. All these people should be represented, so that we can consider the progress of the movement as a whole. You cannot consider only one aspect, leaving out the others. The consumers are in a majority and yet their interests are always neglected. That is because they are not organised properly. That is a thing which we have got to consider if we want to compete in the world markets and also in the markets inside the country.

If labour is treated as a business partner, then the labourers should work with the same enthusiasm as the capitalist and not insist on working only a particular number of hours a day, it may be 8 or 6. They must be prepared to work longer hours according to the necessities of the moment. This should be the feeling of every labourer in a factory. Only if this feeling is created, can we hope to compete in the world markets and then alone shall we be able to obliterate altogether the differences that now exist between employers and employees. These two words will then disappear from the Webster's dictionary and will have no meaning. With these words, I resume my seat.

Mr. S. Guruswami (Nominated Non-Official): I rise to support the motion moved by my Honourable friend Mr. Joshi. In doing so, I fully realise that the Honourable the Labour Member has not been long enough in office and I shall not be as harsh towards him as I should otherwise like to be. The social policy of the Government will be judged by its labour policy. Therefore the Member in charge of the Labour Department holds the most responsible position in the Government of India. We expect much from him because he represents a popular Government. Last year I had the honour of moving a cut motion criticising the previous Government for its failings. On that occasion I had the fortune of being supported by the Congress Party. I would like Honourable Members representing the Congress Party to fully support the criticism which I made against the previous Government in regard to its policy or absence of policy in regard to unemployment. The problem that is going to

[Mr. S. Guruswami]

immediately present itself is the problem of unemployment. Due to the war, nearly five million workers got additional employment. Due to post-war conditions, sooner or later there is a threat to the employment of these men. Not only that, industrial workers who would otherwise have obtained employment, will not have the avenues of employment which would normally have been open to them but for these post-war conditions. In these circumstances, I shall be failing in my duty if I do not emphasise the seriousness of the threat upon employment and urge upon the Labour Member to take active steps to meet that problem before it is too late. In the latter portion of the year 1945 the Labour Department issued circulars to various Departments of the Government asking for information about the probable post-war unemployment that might be caused by the discharges of workers in various Departments. They have constituted Employment Exchanges, but I would like the Labour Member to tell this House what is the exact position of those men who have been thrown out of employment in the post-war period and what are the prospects of employment awaiting them? Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad said that he was against the reduction of working hours. We are for the reduction of working hours and that for a very big principle. Abraham Lincoln said that as long as there are able-bodied men willing to work, but unable to find employment so long the working hours are too long. I want the Labour Member to accept this principle and to promote actively the policy of the reduction of hours so that employment may be shared by all the able-bodied men. That is a point which I would like to emphasise very often because if it is not tackled from now, it will become impossible for the Labour Member to tackle it later on.

Then, Sir, the Labour Member has been responsible for introducing several labour measures, but most of them were formulated by his predecessor. As a Congressman myself, I want to be the supporter of one of his measures for which the Congress itself can take sole credit by promoting a scheme of social security, by providing unemployment insurance, by providing against risk of old age and the death of the bread-winner of family. Unless these steps are taken, labour will not be satisfied. India is going to get freedom next year, but her International status will be judged by the number of the ratifications of the International Labour Conventions undertaken by the Labour Department. Sir, the Government of India is the greatest labour employer in this country. I am glad that there is one good point about the Trade Disputes Bill which might become law very shortly, namely, that it covers workers not only in factories but also in agricultural undertakings and in civil service. I want him to promote joint standing machinery which would deal with problems as and when they arise without causing unnecessary friction between the employer and the employed. There should be well laid down targets which must be achieved within five years.

He has been convening labour conferences, but I am sorry to say that an organisation of the standing of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation, which represents a million workers, has not been consulted. I do not know what is the five years plan which is being discussed with the other organisations. But I would request him to consult an organisation like the All-India Railwaymen's Federation and also to consult organisations which deal with plantation labour and also to promote organisation of labour in agricultural undertakings. Under the provisions of the Trade Disputes Bill agricultural workers are also included. It would be good if the Government took active steps to promote a Labour Code like the French Labour Code or the Code which is prevalent in many of the South American States which would lay down the policy regarding the minimum conditions of service that should subsist in a particular industry. I want him also to say another thing, whether he would not modify the factory

legislation to remove the lacuna that has been frequently complained of, namely, what is not being done to dock workers and the port workers under the provisions of the Factories Act. Today thousands of industrial workers, like the dock workers and the port workers, have not got the benefit of the limitation of working hours and other benefits of the Factories Act. I want him not to delay the introduction of necessary legislation for bringing this class of workers within the provisions of the Factories Act and also to provide a proper labour standard for those workers who have been outside. Lastly, I want him again to place before himself the idea that he should within a period of five years promote a comprehensive scheme of social security. This is a thing which even the Tory Governments of other countries have achieved. I know that this Government represents leaders who have suffered for the country and who have sacrificed for the country and therefore it should not lag behind those countries where even the Tories have been able to promote such social legislation. I would therefore appeal to them within the short space that is available to them to promote an active policy of social security and also a policy of increasing the standard of life of the so-called industrial workers and also the agricultural workers and to define a living wage on the principles which are defined in the Australian legislation. The mere introduction of a legislation providing for minimum wages by which nothing is meant is of no use. The objective of the Government should be to promote legislation to secure an equitable standard of living of the workers consistent, of course, with the economic conditions of the country. But that does not mean that they should be made to accept starvation wages when other classes are enjoying luxury. There must be a policy of even a capital levy in order to secure for the workers a condition where living wages are attained and where social security is recognised as an integral part of the Government legislation. With these words I support the cut motion that has been moved by my Honourable friend Mr. Joshi.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Sir, our friends who have spoken have to recognise that it is not only the industrial proletariat who are to be treated as proletariat in this country but there are also various other classes who are obliged to eke out their living both by wage labour and also in cottage industries. I am glad my Honourable friend Mr. Guruswami has this time made a prominent mention of the existence of agricultural labour and I think the House ought to congratulate itself upon having accepted the suggestion of the Government themselves to include labour within the terms of the Industrial Disputes Bill. This is a very great departure indeed and a very happy departure too and I trust that the Government of India will hereafter try to pay as much attention to the needs of agricultural labour as they have done so far to industrial labour. But in addition to industrial as well as cottage industrial workers, we have another very important section of workers and they are the forced labour. Very little attention has so far been paid to their welfare. Recently we have heard that Government were thinking of appointing a Committee to inquire into their conditions, but so far nothing tangible has happened. I want Government to do something very active in this direction.

Coming to agricultural labour again, I wish to suggest to Government that it is their duty, as they have considered it to have been their duty in the past in regard to the industrial proletariat, to try to encourage the organisation of the agricultural labour. They have not been able to organise themselves so well and therefore the Government ought to go out of its way in order to provide necessary steps for their betterment. They ought to go and carry on necessary propaganda amongst the agricultural labour and encourage them to organise themselves. Then, there are the cottage industry workers. In England there is an institution known as Trade Boards. When they were organised, the Government specifically stated that one of the objects with which the Trade Boards were being established was to help those labourers, who

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were found to be unorganisable, to organise themselves under the auspices of the Trade Boards. Similar institutions will have to be organised and similar efforts will have to be made to encourage our agricultural labour to organise themselves.

A large portion of our cottage industrial workers happen to be wage labourers and today they derive little protection indeed from the Factory Act or from any other labour legislation. The Workmen's Compensation Act and the various other Acts have to be extended to agricultural labour as well as cottage industry workers. At present they have not been extended with the result that they are not able to take advantage of this legislation.

I do suggest that there should be joint standing labour committees, they must be organised not only for organised industries, but also for other industries.

The most important thing is the provision of housing. I should like to warn the Government that whenever they provide housing for labour in this country, they should not confine their attention only to towns and factory labour alone. Agricultural workers in our villages happen to be living in hovels and mud huts and in any scheme of providing housing for labour the first priority should be given to agricultural labour. The Government should set apart funds for providing housing for agricultural labour first. Last year we were told by the Honourable the Finance Member that large sums of money were being set apart in order to encourage provincial governments to provide housing establishment for lower middle classes and also for labour. But we have not been given detailed information at all as to the progress made in that direction. I therefore wish to suggest that whenever the Government spend money at all on improvement of housing conditions for labour, a major portion of it should be spent over villages for the improvement of housing conditions of our agricultural labour and second priority alone should be given to industrial labour.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I may assure my Honourable friend that I am not at all against agricultural labour.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Merely because industrial labour is more vociferous, their needs are better attended to.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I can assure my Honourable friend that I also stand for agricultural labour more than I stand for industrial labour. I can give this assurance straightway.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: I am glad to have this assurance now. I only wish that my Honourable friend Mr. Joshi took this stand consistently for the past 25 years during which he has been working for labour. He should have taken up the cause of agricultural labour also and in that case, their position would have been much better than it is now. Unfortunately my Honourable friend and other leaders of labour in this country, whenever they talked of labour, they were concentrating more upon industrial labour than upon agricultural labour and my warnings given both here as well as outside in regard to agricultural labour have gone in vain. Fortunately now the National Government has begun to pay some special attention to agricultural labour and therefore I congratulate this Government. Then there is the question of social securities, old age pensions and retirement benefits. I want all these things. The trouble is that these facilities must be provided for all classes of labour. If any priority were to be given, it should be shown to the class of people called agricultural labour and forced labour, not so much to industrial labour. The industrial labour is paid twice or thrice as much as agricultural labour. Nobody pays any attention to the poor agricultural labour at all. Neither the provincial government nor the Central Government did anything for them

till now. Therefore I suggest when you demand this costly service, for Heaven's sake, be moderate in your demands, and if you grant these benefits to labour, then grant it to all classes of labour in this country and give such standard of social securities to labour so that the Government would not get broke by the heavy expenditure. After all we have got to consider the finances of the country, the funds that are at the disposal of the country. We have now come into our own. We have to get into grips with our finances. We have to find out what is the total amount of money that we might be able to get from the provincial governments and the Central Government for the welfare of labour. Let us first of all consider that. Let us fight to get more and more for labour. Once you get the money, let us see how best we can distribute it in various directions for the social welfare of labour generally. In that also we have to decide which particular class of labouring class or working class should have first priority. If you keep all these considerations in mind, then it will be possible for any one to see this thing in the proper perspective and realise that industrial labour has got to make up its mind to wait a little longer before it can ask for more privileges and in this way industrial labour should help agricultural labour and cottage industrial workers to come to their own.

Chaudhury Sri Chand (Nominated Non-Official): (The Honourable Member spoke in Hindustani. For Hindustani text see Appendix to the Debates for the 10th March 1947. English translation given below.—*Ed. of D.*) Sir, my learned Friend Prof. Ranga has made a true statement. In fact no provincial government pays any heed to agricultural labour and, perhaps, the Central Government do not even know that cultivators require labourers or that there are any labourers in the villages and the condition of those who are there. Since the last few months the condition of Agricultural labour has greatly improved. Unfortunately, some persons have made it a means of their livelihood to collect contributions in the name of the Congress or some other body. They go to the villages and incite the farmers, the cultivators and the labourers against one another and these quarrels have all the more deteriorated their condition. I want to draw particular attention of the Government to these people who by false propaganda want to create friction between the cultivators and the labourer in the villages. These men go to these uneducated poor people and collect thousands of rupees in the name of some organization from them. In view of the poverty of these people Government should take immediate steps to safeguard them.

There is another thing to be considered. It has already been said on the floor of the House that after the war a great number of people will be thrown out of employment, and that the Government will have to find work for them. Keeping this in view I want to draw the particular attention of the Government to the fact that in Delhi Province cultivable land of fifteen villages, which is a source of livelihood to the people of those villages, is being acquired throwing nearly twenty-five thousand cultivators and labourers out of employment. They are being given no land in exchange. It is said that the land acquired from them will be converted into a green belt of gardens, etc. Efforts are being made to take land from the villagers for the benefit of the towns people without giving them any land in exchange or making provisions for their livelihood. It is said that they will be employed by the Government and the profit from the produce of the land will be distributed among them and thus they will become rich. So far as my experience goes about the Government Agricultural Farms they are all run at a loss. I have seen no agricultural farm yielding any profit. In view of this Government is deceiving those people by holding out prospects of profit. Thus, they are being ruined. I particularly request the Labour Member not to acquire the lands of the cultivators of Sultanpur and Lailoti, but instead of it acquire the lands of cultivators round Aligunj. The land of 128 villages on Muttra Road may be acquired. Why do you acquire land which is better cultivable. I inform the Labour Member that the

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25,000 people who will be thrown out of employment will swell the number of unemployed after the war.

Now consider a while. People working in factories when come out of their workshops do not appear as coming out of a factory but they look as if they were coming out of a hospital. They look withered and unhealthy. There is no arrangement for the education of their children. We hear everyday that Government of India takes great interest in the welfare of the labourers. These are mere words and no action. Government reach there when there is a strike or any other such thing to order firing at them. They have no place to live in. Some sleep in the factory, and some on the footpath. They work all the day long in the factory. They get no milk, no *ghee*, etc., nor is any heed paid to the education of their children. I request the Labour Member to watch the people coming out of a factory and see their plight with his own eyes. I request that something should be done to better their condition. Increase in their pay and reduction in the hours of working will do them no good if no arrangements are made for the education of their children.

Government must take some immediate steps to stop the efforts of the mischiefmongers in the villages. They should acquire some other lands in the Delhi Province instead of the lands they are planning to acquire because Government have plenty of land.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, the 11th March, 1947.