

6th November 1946

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

Official Report

Volume VII, 1946

(28th October to 11th November, 1946)

SECOND SESSION
OF THE
SIXTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
1946



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CORRIGENDA

**In the Legislative Assembly Debates, Autumn Session, 1946—
In Volume VII—**

1. No. 1, dated the 26th October, 1946—
 - (i) Page 71, In the footnote, for "Excluding" read "Including".
 - (ii) Page 118, line 15, for "joint" read "join".
2. No. 2, dated the 29th October, 1946—
 - (i) Page 174, line 3, for "the" read "they".
 - (ii) Page 186, line 3, from bottom for "an soul" read "our souls".
 - (iii) Page 187, line 4, for "preceed" read "proceed".
 - (iv) Page 198, line 24, for "18:48 crores" read "18.48 crores". ✕
3. No. 3, dated the 30th October, 1946—
 - (i) Page 271, line 8, for "chose" read "choose".
4. No. 7, dated the 6th November, 1946—
 - (i) Page 577, last line, for "appreciable" read "appreciate".
 - (ii) Page 601, line 15, for "infstation" read "infestation".
5. No. 8, dated the 7th November, 1946—
 - (i) Page 655, line 23, for "shatrus" read "shastras".
6. No. 10, dated the 11th November, 1946—
 - (i) Page 754, second line, heading to starred question No. 870, for "CASE", read "CASTE".
 - (ii) Page 818, insert the top heading "STATEMENT OF BUSINESS" between lines 2 and 3.

In Volume VIII—

7. No. 1, dated the 12th November, 1946—
 - (i) Page 884, line 14 from bottom for "iability" read "liability".
 - (ii) Page 886, line 29, for "evatars" read "avatars".
8. No. 2, dated the 18th November, 1946—
 - (i) Page 926, the first line of part (c) to Starred Question No. 486 should read "(c) Are Government aware of the fact that earlier in 1939-40, Government".
 - (ii) Page 986, line 15 from bottom for "took" read "look".
9. No. 3, dated the 14th November, 1946—
 - (i) Page 1015, in the table under "Pre-war" for "General Wagons Service" read "General Service Wagons".
 - (ii) Page 1027, line 28, for "supar" read "sugar".
 - (iii) Page 1067, line 6, for "person" read "persons".
 - (iv) Page 1048, in heading to Starred Question No. 568, for "se" read "re".
 - 7/ (v) Page 1012, line 10 from bottom delete the asterisk. ✕

(vi) Page 1077, for the last 6 lines *substitute* the following lines—

“Regarding the powers of the industrial tribunals, the Government has put in in clause 15, that they will accept the decision of the tribunal wholly or in part. If you appoint high eminent judges to decide the disputes, I cannot understand why the Government desires that they may ask the industry to implement the decision wholly or in part. I feel that it is possible that the Government may also find itself in difficulties. Government owns so many industries. They”

10. No. 4, dated the 15th November, 1946—

(i) Page 1100, line 15, for “preter” read “prefer”.

(ii) Page 1116, for the existing heading to Starred Question No. 616, read “HOUSING OF INDUSTRIAL WORKERS”.

11. No. 5, dated the 16th November, 1946—

Page 1211, in the *last but one* line of the quotation in small type for “all” read “small”.

12. No. 6, dated the 18th November, 1946—

(i) Page 1237, under the heading “INSURANCE (SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL”, *delete* the fifth line.

(ii) Page 1265, line 27, for “countdy” read “country”.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 6th November, 1946

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. President: A representation has been made to me that Mr. Chanda is not in a fit state of health to walk the distance to the table and should therefore be permitted to take the oath from his seat. I grant him that permission.

Mr. Arun Kumar Chanda, M.L.A. (Surma Valley *cum* Shillong: Non-Muhammadian).

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(a) ORAL ANSWERS

HYDARI MISSION REPORT

201. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies please state:

(a) whether Government will place a copy of the Report of the Hydari Mission in the Library of the House for the use of the members of the Central Legislature; and

(b) whether all consumer goods mentioned in that Report have actually been received in India; if only some portion of those goods has been received, how much more goods are yet to come and whether arrangement reached then will be adhered to?

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

(b) In respect of consumer goods, the object of the Hydari Mission was to stimulate the flow of consumer goods into India in the year 1945. No precise undertakings were entered into as to what quantities would be sent from the U.K.; the Mission indicated the main types of goods of which India was in need and indicated also India's approximate requirements. Since that time the system of Open General Licence has been widely extended, and the position now is, as regards consumer goods in general, that importers in India are at liberty to import whatever quantities they can locate, without any interference by Government. As the Honourable Member is no doubt aware, the supply position of consumer goods in India has very greatly improved. If the Honourable Member wants to ascertain exactly what quantities of any particular types of consumer goods have been imported recently into India, I would ascertain statistics from the Commerce Department and let him have them.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will the Honourable Member tell this House, if he has got the information ready with him now, whether it was not one of the objects of the Hydari Mission to get special machinery and equipment which would expedite coal production? I should like to know whether such machinery was imported and also whether some of this machinery after importation was found to be useless.

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I should like to examine the matter and give the information to the Honourable Member.

Seth Govind Das: How are these imports of consumer goods going to affect our sterling balance with the United Kingdom?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I think it is much too soon to answer that question at present.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May I know if the present Government have reviewed the list and is taking care to see that such categories of goods as are produced in this country are not affected by importation?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: That is a matter which we keep constantly under review.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: If so, has the Honourable Member removed from the list any categories of goods so far?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: It is not a question of removing goods altogether from the list. The matter has got to be determined with reference to the actual production in India of that particular class of goods and the extent to which India's requirements exceed the production. It is a matter which, I think, has got to be examined on the merits of each case.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: It is a question of regulating the quantity; what steps are taken by Government?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: That is roughly the principle on which we proceed.

Sardar Mangal Singh: May I know whether the Government of India will give first priority to the import of agricultural implements and agricultural machinery?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: That, I think, is an important matter which we will certainly keep in mind.

COMMISSION TO BRITISH FIRM FOR PURCHASE OF MACHINERY FOR FERTILIZER FACTORY AT SINDRI

202. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies please state:

(a) whether the transaction relating to the purchase of machinery for the erection of the Fertilizer Factory at Sindri has been completed or whether it is still in the course of negotiations;

(b) what part of that machinery has been purchased from the United Kingdom and what parts from the United States of America and India; and

(c) what will be the estimated cost of machinery and what amount will be paid as a commission to the British firm which negotiated the purchase for the Government of India?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) Orders for about 50 per cent. of the plant required have already been placed.

(b) Of the items so far covered, orders have been placed in the U.K. to the value of Rs. 3.13 crores, in the U.S.A. to the value of Rs. 48.4 lakhs and in India to the value of Rs. 8.4 lakhs. Tenders have been called for in India for a considerable amount of additional equipment and buildings. Tenders so far received and under consideration amount to Rs. 12 lakhs and enquiries outstanding to a further Rs. 15 lakhs. Further substantial orders will be placed in India as information is received from the designers of the plant.

(c) On the basis of information so far available, the approximate cost of the whole machinery is expected to be about Rs. 8.02 crores. A commission of two per cent. is being paid to the British firm for negotiating the purchase of the plant.

Mr. Maru Subedar: Have Government received any representations to the effect that the British consulting firm which has got an office in India is discriminating against Indian manufacturers and firms and is not giving them full and adequate particulars of manufacture for this purpose of all the plant and equipment which they are capable of manufacturing?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: If the Honourable Member will be so good as to give me particulars of any case I shall certainly look into it.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May I know if the Honourable Member has looked into the list of articles or machinery, tools and plant, which are being brought to this country from Germany by way of reparations? If so, which of this plant and machinery will be useful for starting similar industries in any other part of India?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: On the information that we have at present I do not think it is possible for me to answer that question.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May I know if it is not useful to decentralise, and instead of spending eight crores on a single plant or machinery at one place to have small suitable machinery in various parts of India?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: That is a question which has been often considered. It is a matter on which it is possible to entertain different views. But from a certain point of view I think there is a good deal to be said, when you are undertaking an enterprise of this kind, for the view that production for the sake of economy should be organised on as large a scale as possible. But that is not a final view to take of the matter. In certain cases I think the circumstances may be such that decentralisation would be possible and would be desirable. But, as I said, it is a matter on which it is possible to hold different views.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Is it expected that this single factory at Sindri will be able to provide for the needs of the country as a whole?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: No, Sir.

Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi: As America is the greatest expert in the production of fertilisers, will Government kindly explain why the percentage or the value of the orders placed in the United Kingdom is higher than those in the United States of America?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: This is a matter regarding which a decision was taken long before I assumed responsibility, and I am not in a position to answer the question.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable Member make enquiries and satisfy himself that the machinery which is being purchased from the United Kingdom is not more costly than we could have purchased from the United States of America?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: On all these matters a good deal of enquiry was made and on the results of such enquiry, I presume, the Government then in power took the decisions they did.

CIVIL AVIATION CONFERENCE

203. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Secretary of the Communications Department please state:

(a) when Government are calling the Civil Aviation Conference and, apart from representatives of Provinces and States, what other elements are being invited to this Conference;

(b) whether Government are aware that the most vitally concerned element is the travelling public, and whether their representatives will also be invited to participate in the deliberations of the Conference;

(c) whether the agenda of the Conference includes discussion on the question of nationalisation of Civil Aviation; and whether it will be open to the Conference to make a definite recommendation to Government to operate Civil Aviation lines themselves and not hand over this business to private companies;

(d) if the answer to (c) above be in the negative, why this Conference is being debarred from expressing an opinion on this question; and

(e) if the answer to (c) above be in the affirmative, then why the Government of India have come to the conclusion that this business will be done by private companies and not by the State before the Conference have had occasion to express their views on the subject?

Sir Harold Shoobert: (a) The question of calling a Civil Aviation Conference is still under consideration.

(b), (c), (d) and (e). Do not arise.

Sardar Mangal Singh: May I know whether the Government of India have decided to call a conference or the very calling of the conference is under consideration?

Sir Harold Shoobert: The very calling of the conference is under consideration. Perhaps I should explain that the late Honourable Member in the Communications Department, Syed Ali Zaheer, had decided to call a conference, but since then there has been a change in Government and there has been no time for the present Honourable Member to come to a decision upon the subject.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Do I understand the Honourable Member to say that Syed Ali Zaheer when he was the Honourable Member had decided to call a conference, and he announced it publicly, and is it a fact that later on this decision was upset?

Sir Harold Shoobert: There is no question, Sir, of the decision having been upset. The matter is still under consideration as I stated.

IEWS OF INTERIM GOVERNMENT ON NATIONALIZATION OF TRANSPORT SERVICES

204. ***Sardar Mangal Singh:** Will the Secretary of the Communications Department please state:

(a) whether the following sentence from his own statement represents the official view of the Interim Government on the subject of nationalisation, or it is his personal view only:

“The Government hopes that on account of the private enterprise greater facilities, efficiency and courtesy will be available to the passengers than if the services were to be nationalised at this stage”; and

(b) if it be the official view of Government as a whole, whether this observation applies to the Civil Aviation alone or also to other key industries such as Railways, Motor Transport and Posts and Telegraphs Departments?

Sir Harold Shoobert: (a) and (b). The sentence quoted by the Honourable Member is from a statement issued by Mr. Ali Zaheer, the last Member for Communications. Since that statement was issued, there has been a change in the Government. Sardar Mangal Singh is moving a resolution on 8th of November on the question of nationalisation of air services. I hope to be in a position to indicate the new Government's policy then.

Sardar Mangal Singh: My question was whether the policy stated in the announcement of Mr. Ali Zaheer represents the attitude and the policy of the Government of India? To this the Honourable Member has not replied.

Sir Harold Shoobert: Sir, I am afraid the Government of India has not been in a position to let me know whether this does represent the present policy. As the Honourable Member is aware, the Member in charge of the Communications Department, after only having held charge for a few brief days, has gone away from Delhi on business of urgent public importance, and this is a matter upon which Government has to formulate a policy. Whether that policy will be the same as the policy of the last Government or whether there will be any kind of revision of the policy—at present we are unable to state.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: May I ask the Honourable Member whether it represented the Government's policy when this statement was made?

Sir Harold Shoobert: Yes, Sir.

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee: Do I take it that the policy of the Government is to artificially keep up the high fares by reason of the control which

they now exercise or will they be willing to review these fares? Air transport companies are prepared to offer passages at a much lower rate, but they are prevented from doing so because of the prices fixed by Government.

Sir Harold Shoobert: That is a matter which will undoubtedly receive consideration.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Will it not be correct to say that until a change is made, the policy of the Government remains what was enunciated by Syed Ali Zaheer?

Mr. President: That is a matter of interpretation.

CORRUPTION IN RAILWAY DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

†205. ***Sardar Mangal Singh:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

(a) whether Government intend to take any special measures to eradicate the evil of corruption from the Railway Department employees; and if so, what those measures are, and when they will be actually put into effect;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government intend to make bribe taking and giving a cognizable offence; and

(c) whether Government intend to bring forward any special legislation for this purpose this session or the next?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) This question should really have been addressed to Honourable Home Member, but in so far as it concerns the eradication of corruption in the Railway Department it is the prior determination of Government to intensify the existing measures for checking it. In addition to use being made of the Special Police Establishment set up under the Home Department to deal with this evil, a stern warning has been issued to the staff of all ranks to the effect that very severe action will be taken against any railway servant found guilty of having received illegal gratification or of having indulged in corrupt practices. A Complaints Section has recently been set up in the Railway Board's Office and arrangements have been made to set up similar sections on railways to deal with complaints of all types, including complaints of bribery and corruption.

(b) The reply is in the affirmative.

(c) Government are about to introduce in the current Session of the Legislative Assembly a Bill to amend the Criminal Law in order to make it more effective in dealing with cases of bribery and corruption among public servants.

INTRODUCTION OF CO-OPERATIVE FARMING IN CENTRALLY ADMINISTERED AREAS

206. ***Sardar Mangal Singh:** Will the Secretary of the Agriculture Department please state:

(a) whether Government have considered any scheme for introducing an improved method of farming in the Centrally Administered Areas; and

(b) whether it is contemplated to make co-operative farming compulsory in the villages in the Centrally Administered Areas so as to serve as a model for Provincial and State Administrations to follow; whether Government intend to bring forward any legislation for this purpose this session or the next?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) It has been decided recently to take up pilot experiments in co-operative or joint farming in the Delhi Province to determine the type of farm management most suitable for adoption on a large scale under local conditions. The question of preparing a scheme for this purpose is under consideration.

A scheme to introduce mechanical cultivation in selected areas in Baluchistan is also under examination.

(b) There is no proposal at present of making co-operative farming compulsory or to enact legislation for this purpose.

† Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner having not put the question.

FACILITIES FOR PASSENGERS IN NEW DESIGN THIRD AND INTER CLASS COACHES ON RAILWAYS

207. *Pandit Sri Krishna Dutt Palwal: Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

(a) if Government intend to provide new designs for third and Inter class passenger coaches; if so, when;

(b) the facilities these new design coaches will provide to the passengers; and

(c) if fans will be provided in third and Inter class compartments?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) It is the Government's intention to provide new designs for all classes of passenger coaches. A number of new designs have been prepared but it is not expected that these can be put into service until early 1948. The primary need at the moment is to provide more coaches, and coaches to the pre-war design can be manufactured without initial delays and more rapidly than could coaches of the improved* designs.

(b) The facilities which it is proposed to incorporate in the new III class designs include more comfortable seats, more space per passenger, more latrine accommodation, wider doors, improved lighting, water for washing etc. The financial implications of these amenities are now under examination and it is contemplated that it will be necessary to associate their introduction ultimately with increased fares.

(c) Government are considering the practicability of installing fans in III class carriages but no decision has yet been taken. It is proposed with the introduction of new coaches to abolish Inter class.

Seth Govind Das: Will the Government think it advisable to provide sleeping accommodation in these new third class coaches on extra payment?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: That question is under consideration at present, and I think it will be possible for Government to provide sleeping accommodation for 60 per cent. of passengers.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Is it not a fact that these new designs have been on exhibition for three years now, but no attempt has been made to remodel or manufacture new coaches of these new designs?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: I am afraid, Sir, my Honourable friend is thinking of the exhibition coach which he once asked to see.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: No, no.

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: As a matter of fact, during these three years the repair programme has been exceedingly heavy and it is not possible for the workshops to turn out new coaches in large numbers while other coaches are being repaired.

Sreejot Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri: May I know when we will have the pleasure of riding those coaches?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: As soon as they are ready.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: I am not referring to the Exhibition coach, but in the Railway Exhibition that was held here about three years ago some new model coaches were exhibited. They were also exhibited to the members of the Standing Finance Committee. I am asking the Honourable Member why, when there is nothing new about those coaches except more accommodation, it should take such a long time and why should we have to wait until 1948?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: I have already explained that question at length. It is not easy to make coaches of the new designs straightaway. It will mean some delay and naturally we are trying to build coaches of pre-war design for the time being, because our requirements are so heavy. We require something like 6,000 coaches straightaway, but we cannot produce them overnight.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Will the Honourable Member consider the advisability of abolishing the first or second class instead of the intermediate class, as that will affect the middle class more?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: If the House votes for the abolition of first and second class compartments, I shall certainly take that decision.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Will this question be brought before the House for consideration?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: There will be plenty of opportunity for the House to consider this question during the budget session.

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee: Have the new coaches got broader foot-board accommodation since so many people now travel on footboards.

Lala Deshbandhu Gupta: Is the Honourable Member aware that the third class coaches on the Nizam's Railways have already been provided with fans?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: I am fully aware of that fact.

Mr. Leslie Gwilt: May I ask the Honourable Member whether Government have considered whether the air-conditioning of coaches, at the time of building, is not going to work out very much more expensive than the installing of fans?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: We were talking about providing fans in third class coaches and not air-conditioned coaches which have nothing to do with the point.

Mr. Leslie Gwilt: I too am talking about third class coaches.

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: The suggestion is very interesting and will be considered.

INCREASE OF PETROL RATION OF MEMBERS OF LEGISLATIVE AND CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

208. *Pandit Sri Krishna Dutt Paliwal: Will the Honourable Member for Transport please state:

(a) whether Government intend to retain or withdraw the Petrol Control Order in the near future;

(b) whether they propose to increase the basic ration substantially; and

(c) whether Government propose to consider the advisability of increasing the ration for members of the Indian Legislature and the Constituent Assembly to at least one gallon per day?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) For the reasons explained in the Press Note dated the 3rd August 1946, it is not possible to withdraw petrol rationing in the near future.

(b) The basic ration for private cars has been doubled with effect from the 1st August 1946. An over-all increase of 30 per cent. in the volume of petrol released for civil consumption was made during the August—October 1946 Rationing Quarter, and a still further increase of ten per cent. has been made in the volume of petrol to be released during November 1946—January 1947 Rationing Quarter. The present position of supplies, storage and transport does not permit any further relaxation at present.

(c) The scale of petrol ration for members of the Indian Legislature and of the Constituent Assembly has recently been increased from half a gallon to one gallon per day when there is a sitting of the Council of State or the Legislative Assembly or the Constituent Assembly or any of their Committees.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Does the Honourable Member for transport expect Members of this Legislature to sit in their chairs all the time when the Legislature is not sitting and does he not expect that some of us may have friendly visits to pay, including a visit to himself?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: All these questions have been very carefully taken into consideration and the allocation the Government has made appears to me to be perfectly just.

Shri D. P. Karmarkar: Is the Honourable Member aware that this short supply of petrol has rendered the supply of certain essential commodities like foodstuffs, fuel, etc. very costly? Is he prepared to relax this short ration in respect of the transport of essential commodities?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: So far as the question of the transport of essential foodstuffs or fuel is concerned, I can assure the Honourable Member that the Government will always be prepared to concede whatever is legitimate. In fact I may inform him that while the South India Railway strike was going on we sanctioned 15,000 gallons a day for the movement of essential foodstuffs, etc.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: In view of the fact that the war is over and the demands of the military have been considerably decreased in regard to petrol, may I ask the Honourable Member whether he would consider increasing the basic petrol for civilians?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: As soon as there is a further reduction of military requirements, of which I cannot speak here, I am perfectly certain that the Government will be prepared to have a further relaxation in the rationing of petrol.

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee: Is the Honourable Member aware that there are already large stores of aviation spirit now not wanted by the military in this country? And will he consider the possibility of making them available for civil use since they are now being wasted and stored for very long periods?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: I am not aware of any very large quantities of petrol being held by the military which is surplus. I know that there is a certain amount of reserve kept both by the military and civil side, which we cannot dispense with.

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee: I did not mean petrol but aviation spirit.

President: Order, order. Next question.

MONOPOLY OF MESSRS. A. H. WHEELER & Co. FOR RUNNING BOOKSTALLS ON MOST RAILWAYS

209. *Pandit Sri Krishna Dutt Paliwal: Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Messrs. A. H. Wheeler and Company have practically got the monopoly of running bookstalls on most of the Railway stations;

(b) the year in which the last public tenders for the contract to run those bookstalls on Railways were called; and

(c) the reasons for accepting the tender of Messrs. A. H. Wheeler and Company?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) Yes. Messrs. A. H. Wheeler & Co. have the sole right of selling newspapers, periodicals, books etc., on the Bengal Assam, East Indian, Bengal Nagpur, Great Indian Peninsula, Bombay Baroda & Central India and Oudh Tirhut Railways.

(b) Public tenders were last called for by the East Indian Railway in 1932, the Bengal Assam Railway in 1942, and the G. I. P. Railway in 1945. The other three Railways were associated with Messrs. A. H. Wheeler & Co. during the days of Company management, and they have not yet called for tenders since coming under State management.

(c) Messrs. A. H. Wheeler & Co.'s tenders were accepted in 1942 by the Bengal Assam Railway and in 1945 by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway because they were the highest. The East Indian Railway accepted Messrs.

A. H. Wheeler & Co.'s tender in 1932 because the only other tenderer had no experience of the work.

Seth Govind Das: Does the Honourable Member know that generally the literature which is kept by Wheeler & Co. is trash literature, especially of Hindustani and other Indian languages?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: If that is so, nobody need buy it.

Seth Govind Das: Does the Honourable Member know that they are not supplying right literature to the people, and isn't it the duty of that company to keep such literature which is useful for the public?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: I suppose they know exactly what their duties are.

Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi: Will Government inform the House whether Wheeler & Co. is an Indian concern or an Anglo-Indian concern?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: I am afraid I must ask for notice of that question. I did not know that I was going to be asked that.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Are these stalls maintained for private or public convenience?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: Obviously for public convenience.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: If it is for public convenience, why does not the Railway Department run these stalls themselves?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: This Department will be glad to do so provided my Honourable friend will point the way. I should like to know the gentleman who would be prepared to take it up.

Mr. Manu Subedar: In view of the assurance which his predecessor had given, will the Honourable the Transport Member seriously examine the position as to whether there may not be a fundamental change of the system and railways may not look to making money out of this great convenience to the public to get newspapers, and also whether in due course as an experiment on one State railway, Government may not experiment whether it cannot be done departmentally.

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: It is a rather large question. At present the Government are taken up with all sorts of questions connected with transport, and this after all is a side issue. But I agree with my Honourable friend that it is an experiment which may be tried whenever the occasion permits.

Khan Mohammad Yamin Khan: Has the Honourable Member seen a report of the Sub-Committee appointed by the Central Advisory Committee on this issue?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: I have gone through the report of the Sub-Committee and I find that my answer is fully consistent with what the Sub-Committee has done or said.

RAILWAY LINES DISMANTLED DURING WAR

†210. ***Shri Sri Prakasa:** (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to lay on the table of the House a list of Railway lines that were dismantled during the period of the war?

(b) What steps have been taken to restart these lines?

(c) When does he expect the following lines to start working (i) Cawnpore-Banda Section; (ii) Akbarpur-Tanda Section; and (iii) Bijnor-Chandpur-Siau Section?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) and (b). I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given by the Honourable the Railway Member to Mr. K. C. Neogy's unstarred question No. 26, on the 8th February 1946.

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

Out of a total of 984 miles of lines dismantled during the war the restoration of approximately 412 miles is now under investigation by railways. Restoration of the remaining 572 miles was not considered necessary by railways as they were unremunerative and were not supported by the Provinces.

A statement giving details of dismantled lines, the restoration of which is under investigation is placed on the table of the House.

(c) (i) *Cawnpore-Banda Section*.—The Branch line originally dismantled was Cawnpore-Khairada and not Cawnpore-Banda. It is anticipated that the line may be opened to traffic early in 1948 if there is no unforeseen delay.

(ii) *Akbarpur-Tanda Section*.—The restoration of this line was not recommended by the Provincial Government. However, as a result of representations from the Public, the matter has been referred to the United Provinces Government and their reply is awaited.

(iii) *Bijnor-Chandpur-Siau Section*.—The traffic survey of the line is in hand. The restoration of this line will be considered after a scrutiny of the traffic survey report which is awaited.

Stat ment

Province	Name of line	Approximate mileage	Remarks
1. United Provinces	Unao-Madhoganj-Balamau	78	Under investigation by East Indian Railway.
2. Ditto	Bijnour-Chandpur-Siau	21	Ditto.
3. Ditto	Utraitha-Sultanpur-Zafarabad.	136	Ditto.
4. Assam	Shaistaganj-Habiganj	8	Under investigation by B. A. Railway.
5. Ditto	Moranhat-Khowang	6	Ditto.
6. Bengal	Amnura-Chapai-Nawabganj	10	Ditto.
7. Madras	Bobbili-Salur	10	Under investigation by B. N. Railway.
8. United Provinces	Cawnpore-Khairada.	81	Final location survey sanctioned. General Manager authorised to commence preliminary works.
9. Bombay	Vasad-Kathana	27	Under investigation by B., B. & C. I. Railway.
10. Punjab	Nagrota-Jogindernagar	35	Survey has been held up pending settlement of the question of subsidy to be paid by the Punjab Government.
	Total	412	

PETTY ACCOUNTS LYING IN POST OFFICES AS UNCLAIMED

†211. *Shri Sri Prakasa: Will the Secretary of the Communications Department be pleased to state:

(a) the amounts of money lying in the Post Office at the end of the financial year 1945-46 as (i) unclaimed last petty accounts in the Post Office Savings

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

Bank, (ii) undelivered money-orders, and (iii) realised from addressees but undelivered to the senders on account of V.P. articles;

(b) if separate accounts are kept of these; and

(c) what steps, if any, are taken to trace the persons concerned and deliver their money to them?

Sir Herold Shoobert: (a) (i) The amount of unclaimed S. B. deposits in accounts with a credit of less than Rs. 2 at the close of the year 1945-46 was Rs. 10,11,534-13-5.

(ii) and (iii). The information is not readily available. In connection with this, the attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the replies given on the 28th March, 1946, to a similar question asked by him in the last session.

(b) Yes.

(c) As regards unpaid money orders and undelivered V. P. articles, I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given in the last session on the 28th March, 1946, to his question No. 1347.

So far as Post Office Savings Bank accounts are concerned, no special steps are taken to trace the depositors.

INSTRUCTIONS TO PASSENGERS HOW TO BEHAVE ON RAILWAY JOURNEYS

†212. ***Shri Sri Prakasa:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Railway premises and Railway compartments are made unnecessarily dirty by passengers;

(b) Whether Government are aware that passengers keep their luggage and sit about in a manner that causes unnecessary inconvenience to others; and

(c) whether Government propose to consider the desirability of printing on walls of Railway stations and Railway compartments instructions to passengers as to how to behave, arrange their luggage, and accommodate others, etc.?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) It is unfortunately correct that some members of the travelling public do not observe the degree of cleanliness and tidiness which they are expected to do.

(b) It is true that some passengers, unmindful of the convenience and rights of their fellow-travellers, do unnecessarily obstruct compartments with their luggage and occupy more space than they are entitled to.

(c) The Government have already considered this matter and have instructed railways to take action in the directions suggested. Some have already done so and others will do so shortly. I would like to suggest to my Honourable friend the desirability of men of his influence and civic sense doing something independently of the railways to educate the public in matters of this kind.

RULES re COMPULSORY INSURANCE OF MOTOR VEHICLES

†213. ***Shri Sri Prakasa:** Will the Honourable Member for Transport be pleased to state:

(a) if the rule regarding compulsory insurance of motor vehicles has come into force;

(b) if he is assured that all motor vehicles have been so insured;

(c) if it is a fact that different insurance companies charge different rates for insurance of motor vehicles; and

(d) if he would please consider the desirability of requiring insurance companies to have uniform rates in the matter of such compulsory insurance?

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

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) Chapter VIII of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939, enforcing the compulsory insurance of motor vehicles against third party risks came into force on the 1st of July 1946.

(b) So far as Government are aware, the insurance of vehicles registered in British India is now fully enforced. Pending introduction, however, of a scheme of reciprocity with those States who wish to enact parallel legislation, it has been necessary to ask Provincial Governments not to enforce the insurance of vehicles registered in the territory of those States when brought into British India.

(c) Yes, with the exception of insurance companies which are members of Tariff Associations and are bound by the rates fixed by these Associations.

(d) Government will consider the suggestion in the light of the experience gained of the working of the Compulsory Insurance Scheme. It should be remembered, however, in this connection that it is open to the owner of a motor vehicle to insure it with any company he may select.

GRANT OF NEWSPRINT QUOTA TO INDIAN AND ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS

†214. ***Shri Sri Prakasa:** Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) the present position of newsprint in India;

(b) if there is any possibility of further increase in the quota given to the various papers; and

(c) the principles, if any, that are followed in the grant of quota to the different categories of newspapers, namely, English and Indian language papers representing different political opinions?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) The newsprint position has been more difficult during the last six months than it was at any time since July, 1944. However, there is good reason to anticipate that the position will improve towards the end of the year. Stocks at the end of September were about 11,000 tons as against 14,000 tons in January and an average of 12,000 to 13,000 tons during 1945. When the Newsprint Delegation left India, it looked as though India would not receive more than 17,000 tons during the year as against 22,000 tons in 1945 and an average of 24,000 tons for the years 1940 to 1945. As a result of the Delegation's visits, however, India has been promised a total of 32,500 tons for this year of which roughly 17,000 tons have so far been received. It is expected that between 8,000 and 10,000 tons will be received before the end of December and that the balance of the 32,500 tons will be carried forward into the next year. The Government of India have no information at present as to how much may be expected during 1947. But there is reason to hope that the figure will not be less than 32,500 tons.

(b) Newspapers were given an increase of 25 per cent. over the basic quota in September, 1945. This increase had to be withdrawn on the 1st of May 1946. Half the reduction was restored on the 1st of August and half on the 1st of October. The consumption at present is at the rate of 2,500 tons per mensem or 30,000 tons for 12 months. There is, therefore, no possibility of any increase in the basic quotas for perhaps another six months.

(c) Quotas of papers which were published in March 1948 are based on the average consumption during the second half of 1942 modified with reference to the consumption in the year 1940. New newspapers have been allowed to give scope for expression to political points of view not adequately represented in the existing Press or where they will be brought out in areas where there are no other daily newspapers at present. Quotas for such papers are generally settled taking into account the supply position and the minimum circulation required for each case.

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

CONSTRUCTION OF A BRIDGE OVER THE GANGES IN PATNA DISTRICT

215. *Mr. Madandhari Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state the decision of Government to construct a bridge over the Ganges in the district of Patna?

(b) Where will be its location?

(c) What would be the approximate cost of its construction?

(d) When will the work of construction start?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) No decision has been taken.

(b) Nothing has been finally settled. Purely from an engineering point of view, the Mokameh Site is preferred. At the request of the Bihar Government, estimates of construction and maintenance costs of a bridge also at Patna are being prepared.

(c) The cost of construction of the bridge would be (i) Mokameh Site—about Rs. 4 crores, (ii) Patna Site—about Rs. 5 crores. Recurring costs at Patna are however likely to be much higher than those at Mokameh. These figures cannot, however, be accepted as firm estimates.

(d) It is not possible to reply to this part of the question at present.

Babu Ram Narayan Singh: When will this question be finally decided?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: The question is still under consideration and the plans are being examined and as soon as the alternative plans have been prepared, Government will take a decision one way or the other.

Babu Ram Narayan Singh: What is the approximate time the Government is likely to take in considering this question?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: These are engineering works. It is very difficult for me to say how long it will take. It all depends on the time the engineers will take to survey the situation afresh and prepare their new plans.

Mr. Madandhari Singh: In view of the fact that Patna is the capital town of Bihar it is the demand of the people of the province that the bridge over the Ganges should be constructed at Patna. Will the Honourable Member be pleased to approve the proposal of the construction of the bridge over the Ganges at Patna?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: In my reply to part (b) of the question I have already stated that the Bihar Government has requested us to reconsider the question and we are trying to do it.

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PROJECTS FOR OPENING NEW LINES IN BIHAR

216. *Mr. Madandhari Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state whether any new project for opening new lines in Bihar will be taken up during this financial year?

(b) If so, what are the details of the new project?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) The development plans of the E. I. and O. T. Railways include schemes for opening lines on five routes. Estimates for the survey of four of the routes have been received and sanctioned and survey reports in respect of two of these are expected to be received shortly, but it is not expected that they can be scrutinised and work commenced before the end of the current financial year.

(b) Details of the projects contemplated are given in a statement which has been laid on the table.

Statement of projects for opening new railway lines in Bihar

Name of route	Mileage	Name of the Railway	Stage reached
(i) Berkageon-Hazaribagh-Hazaribagh Road-Giridih.	225	E. I. . . .	Survey estimate sanctioned. Report not expected before August 1947.
(ii) Gaya - Sherghati - Chatra-Ranchi.	110	E. I. . . .	Ditto.
(iii) Siamarhi-Sonbarsa .	20	O. T. . . .	Survey report expected to be received very shortly.
(iv) Murli Ganj-Madhepura .	18	O. T. . . .	Ditto.
(v) Chakia-Alwalia-Sidhwalia .	27	O. T. . . .	Survey estimate awaited from the O. T. Railway.

Babu Ram Narayan Singh: What are the new projects? May I know their names?

(The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali then read out the statement laid on the table).

Babu Ram Narayan Singh: Have the alignments of the proposed railways been settled?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: I am afraid I must have notice of that question.

UTILIZATION OF DETERIORATED FOOD LYING WITH PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS

217. *Mr. Vadilal Lalubhai: (a) Will the Secretary of the Food Department be pleased to state if it is a fact that there are considerable stocks of food unfit for human consumption lying with various Provincial Governments which are from the allocations of foodstuffs made by the Central Government?

(b) If so, what is the extent thereof?

(c) What is the method of their disposal? Have Government thought of any scheme whereby the same can be put to the best possible use?

(d) Is it the policy of Government to give this deteriorated foodstuff for the production of starch to various starch factories at reasonable rates? If so, how much have Government distributed in this manner, and how much quantity still remains?

Mr. B. R. Sen: (a) and (b). From time to time, from the stocks of foodgrains held by Provincial/State Governments, certain quantities do become unfit for human consumption due to deterioration. Statistics of deteriorated foodgrains at present with Provincial/State Governments are not available.

(c) and (d). The Government of India have asked Provincial/State Governments to offer stocks of deteriorated foodgrains and products unfit for human consumption and cattle feed to the Textile Commissioner and to the Starch Factories. They have also been asked to fix a ceiling price above which stocks will not be sold, and it has been suggested that if a Starch Factory offers the ceiling price, the stocks should be sold to the Starch Factory in preference to other competitors. Information so far available, shows that a total quantity of about 5,730 tons of deteriorated foodgrains has been offered by the Provincial/State Governments to the Textile Commissioner since April last for distribution to Starch Factories.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Are the Government aware that among the reasons there is one, namely, not fixing the price by the Provincial Governments in time for these various foodstuffs allocated and the grains were not released to the public for sale?

Mr. B. R. Sen: I have already replied that a ceiling price has been fixed and the foodgrains are being offered to the starch factories which offer the ceiling price.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: The deterioration of the foodgrains to the extent of 700,000 tons is due to a large extent to their not being released immediately after they were received in the provinces. For instance from the Central Provinces pulses are being sent to Madras but the inter-provincial arrangement regarding price is not fixed and it takes nearly four to six months. There is no liaison officer. Is it not due to this fact that much of this deterioration goes on? Will the Central and Provincial Governments set up a common department to fix up the prices immediately the grains arrive so that they may be released very soon?

Mr. B. R. Sen: I do not think that as a general statement what the Honourable Member says is correct. It may be that in particular cases the deterioration was due to causes such as mentioned.

Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai: What is the quantity of the deteriorated stuff which has been thrown away and what is the quantity that has been utilised?

Mr. B. R. Sen: I am not in a position to answer that question and I will explain why. It is not possible to say exactly what quantities have been wasted in this way nor what quantities have been saved by the protective measures that we have adopted.

Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai: Will the Honourable Member say what are the quantities saved, if he cannot say what quantity has been wasted?

Mr. B. R. Sen: I am not in a position to answer this question.

Sri V. C. Vellingiri Gounder: Considering the large amount of deterioration of grains going on in all parts of the country, may I know whether they can fix up a certain date within which the grains or the pulses should be used whenever they are transported from the area of production to the area of consumption?

Mr. B. R. Sen: It is not possible to fix dates.

Sri V. C. Vellingiri Gounder: Then how this deterioration is going to be prevented?

Mr. B. R. Sen: I have already answered that question.

Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai: Have the Government been able to distribute all the deteriorated foodgrains to the starch industry?

Mr. B. R. Sen: I do not think so.

Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi: What are the special difficulties in the way of the Honourable Member getting correct statistics? Is it because the Provincial Governments refuse to give any information or is it because that the Government of India do not want it?

Mr. B. R. Sen: The Honourable Mr. Lawson has moved an amendment to my Food Motion and in replying to that I shall make the position clear.

Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi: If my question. . . .

Mr. President: It is a question asking for information and the Honourable Member is going to give that information later.

Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi: What about the question I asked? I stand up to my privilege. If my question was foolish you could have ruled it out, but if I have asked a question I want an answer now. I do not want to wait till the debate begins.

Mr. President: He has already given the answer—he said it would take time; and it is not fair to other questioners that time should be taken up in giving a long explanation over one question alone.

Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi: I asked one point only, whether it was the laziness of the Government of India or the refusal of the Provincial Governments to give statistical information.

Mr. President: It appears from what the Honourable Member has said that the answer cannot be categorical, that he wants to explain somewhat in detail, and that will take some time.

PROFITS TO IMPORTERS ON IMPORTS OF DYESTUFFS

218. *Mr. Vadilal Lalubhai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies please lay on the table of the House the quantities of yearly imports of dyestuffs with its total value from the year 1937 to 1946, year by year?

(b) Is it a fact that Government allows under the Control Scheme 15 per cent. profit on dyestuffs to importers and 65 per cent. of margin to dealers?

(c) Are Government aware that this total profit of 80 per cent. is found to be too high to the detriment of the consumer, in the shape of high prices for cloth which have to be fixed according to the cost of manufacture, one of the basis being the prices of several kinds of colours, chemicals, stores, etc.?

(d) In view of the imports being on a fairly large scale and in view of there being control on the production of dyed and printed cloth, do Government propose to remove control on the import of dyestuffs and its price regulation?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) A statement is placed on the table showing the value of the yearly imports during the period desired. Complete statistics regarding the tonnage involved during this period are not available, but on an average Rs. one crore represents slightly over 1,000 tons of dyestuffs.

(b) No, Sir. 15 per cent. over landed cost is allowed to 'A' class importers, who have no selling licences. 'B' class importers, who are distributors of dyestuffs with a fairly large organisation, and who have selling licences, are allowed a margin of 50 per cent. over landed cost. Other dealers such as repackers and retailers procure their supplies from 'B' class dealers and are allowed to sell to small consumers at a margin of 15 per cent. over their purchase price. It has to be remembered that out of their margin dealers have to meet expenses on account of their distribution, organisation, technical personnel, laboratories, mixing, repacking, etc.

(c) The Honourable Member will see from what I have said that the final price, even for the smallest consumer, can in no case be more than 72½ per cent. over the landed cost. In actual practice, however, nearly all manufacturers of cloth get their requirements of dyes at well below these maximum prices. Owing to the small percentage of dyes involved in the manufacture of cloth, the price of cloth is not materially affected by the internal price of dyestuffs.

(d) Licences for imports of dyestuffs are issued freely, and the only control now maintained is on their price. The present level of imports is only about 50 per cent. of India's requirements, and therefore Government do not consider that price control can be removed yet.

Year	Statement	Value Rs.
1937-38		3,94,05,915
1938-39		3,14,16,166
1939-40		3,60,78,087
1940-41		5,30,14,239
1941-42		5,77,64,539
1942-43		4,63,89,768
1943-44		7,72,19,409
1944-45		7,08,95,425
1945-46		8,40,00,749 (for 10 months from 1st April 1945 to 31st January 1946).

Mr. Vadilal Lalubhai: Is it a fact that even the biggest users have to buy in the retail market at the highest price?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I think it is conceivable that that happens in view of the great scarcity of this particular article.

Mr. Vadilal Lalubhai: If it is a fact that only 50 per cent. of the requirements are being imported, would it not be better to reduce dyeing by 50 per cent. and remove the control on both import and prices?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: That is a matter which should be taken up in consultation with the industry because it involves questions not merely of marketing but of technique.

Mr. Vadilal Lalubhai: Is it not a fact that recently the dyeing percentage has been reduced by the industry?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: That is correct.

Mr. Vadilal Lalubhai: Could it not be further reduced?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: In regard to various stores of this kind, I think from time to time we have reduced the percentage of materials to be used per unit of production.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May I know if during the war any dyestuff manufacturing industry has been started in this country?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: It has not been started, but I understand proposals are being considered.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May I know what steps the Government of India are taking to assist this industry, in view of the shortage even now and nearly 172 per cent. has to be paid for the dyestuffs?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I expect within a reasonable time the Indian dyestuff industry would be started; but the Honourable Member will realise that before we are in a position to produce in this country anything like the whole range of dyestuffs required here, we should have to set up a fairly elaborate organisation, which is going to take some time.

USE OF DETERIORATED FOODSTUFFS AS SIZING FLOUR

219. ***Mr. Vadilal Lalubhai:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state if Government are aware that big quantities of deteriorated foodstuff are lying all over the country which can be turned into sizing flour?

(b) Are Government aware that many Indian starch factories are manufacturing sizing flour for textile mills out of the deteriorated foodstuffs unfit for human consumption?

(c) If so, do Government propose to see that stocks of such sizing flour are first distributed to textile mills in preference to imported foreign starch under their control scheme in view of the necessity to protect the Indian starch industry?

(d) If so, are Government aware that there are considerable stocks lying with various starch factories which remain undistributed owing to the free imports of foreign starch?

(e) Have Government come across any unwillingness on the part of the Textile Industry to accept sizing flour produced from this deteriorated foodstuff?

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

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Government do not think that the quantities of starch imported into the country are such that there should be any difficulty for a manufacturer of sizing flour in this country to dispose of any sizing material which is suitable for the use of textile mills. There appears to be some objection among textile mills for technical reasons to the general use of sizing material manufactured out of deteriorated foodstuffs. Government will however investigate the possibility of encouraging the use of such sizing material.

(d) Government are aware that there are stocks of sizing flour lying unsold with various starch factories but are not sure that this is a consequence of the free imports of starch and sizing material. The quantities of foreign starch actually arriving in the country are believed to be well below the requirements of the Indian mills.

(e) Not all sizing flour produced from deteriorated foodstuffs provides sizing material of good quality. It is understandable that mills should be unwilling to purchase material of doubtful quality, but whether the unwillingness extends to good quality material produced out of deteriorated foodstuffs is a matter about which Government have no definite information. But as promised against item (c) above, Government propose to examine this question further.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May I know if the foreign starch is manufactured out of foodgrains or whether it is made of chemicals?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: As far as I know, it is largely made of foodgrains:

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: How then do other countries which are suffering for want of foodgrains, make this starch out of foodgrains?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I would ask the Honourable Member to address that question to the countries concerned.

Mr. Vadilal Lalubhai: Is it not a fact that large quantities of sago flour—thousands of tons—have been imported and dumped into this country and that a great majority of the mills are full of this stuff, so that they do not require the Indian stuff any more for some time to come?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: They are imported, but I believe they are imported in quantities which still are well below the quantities required by Indian mills.

Mr. Vadilal Lalubhai: Is it not a fact that there are huge quantities of this sago flour which have been imported from foreign countries and which are lying in the mills and so they do not require any more of this stuff for the time being?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: The information of Government is that taking all the materials which are now in stock in the country, the position is still one of scarcity.

Mr. Vadilal Lalubhai: Will Government take action if it is proved to them that there is a burdensome stock of sago flour and that that is the reason why the Indian stuff is not taken by the mills with subsequent burdensome stocks with starch factories?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I should certainly like to get more information if the Honourable Member can give it to me and will take action.

CONTROLS UNDER THE INDUSTRIES AND SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT

220. ***Mr. Vadilal Lalubhai:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state how many and which controls under the Industries and Supplies Department have ceased to be in force after the end of the War?

(b) How many and which controls still remain in force?

(c) Do Government propose to reduce the existing controls to a minimum in the immediate future?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) and (b). A statement showing the Controls which ceased to be in force with effect from or prior to the 1st October 1946 and those which continue to be in force is placed on the table.

(c) The existing controls are the minimum which Government consider to be necessary in the public interest. An Inter-departmental Committee has been set up to scrutinise the Controls constantly with a view to revising or removing them in the light of changing circumstances.

Statement

Controls which have been withdrawn prior to 30th September 1946 or which lapsed on the date (a)	Controls which continue to be in force after 30th September, 1946 (b)
<p>Machine Tool Control Order, 1941.</p> <p>The Factories Control Production Order, 1942.</p> <p>The Hoarding and Profiteering Prevention Ordinance, 1943.</p> <p>Ferro-Alloys Control Order, 1943.</p> <p>The Cinematograph Film (Footage) Control, 1945.</p> <p>The Control of Imported Engineer Stores Order, 1943.</p> <p>Non-Ferrous Metals Control Order, 1945.</p> <p>Brass and Copper (Control) Order, 1945.</p> <p>Aluminium Utensils (Control) Order, 1945.</p> <p>The Goods (Control over Movement) Order, 1945.</p> <p>The Drugs Control Order, 1945.</p> <p>Bleaching Powder and Chloride Control Order, 1945.</p> <p>Rubber Control and Production Order, 1946</p> <p>Control over distribution of cement.</p> <p>Control over distribution of Wattle Bark and Wattle Extract.</p> <p>Control over transport of timber.</p> <p>Control over prices of cyclot tyres and tubes.</p> <p>Control over prices of Motor Car and Motor Cyclot Tyres and Tubes and Giant Tyres and Tubes.</p> <p>Undertakings (Charges & Accounts) Order.</p> <p>Jute Industry Essential Stores Control Order.</p> <p>Starch Control Order.</p> <p>Textile Industry (Misc. Articles) Control Order.</p> <p>Cotton Textiles (Dyes and Chemicals) Control Order.</p> <p>Hydro-Sulphite of Soda Control Order</p> <p>Wireless Sets Control Order.</p> <p>Foreign Cotton Control Order 1945.</p> <p>Indian Cotton Control Order 1945.</p> <p>Cotton Movement Control Order 1945.</p> <p>Cotton (Forward Contracts and Option Prohibition), Order 1945,</p>	<p>Paper Control (Production) Order, 1946.</p> <p>Paper Control (Economy) Order, 1945.</p> <p>Paper Price Control Order, 1945.</p> <p>Paper (Price of Imported Paper) Control Order, 1944.</p> <p>Paper Control (Prices of board) Order, 1944.</p> <p>Paper Control (Distribution) Order, 1944.</p> <p>Newspaper Control Order, 1945.</p> <p>Newsprint Control Order, 1941.</p> <p>An Order issued under the Defence of India Rules empowering Government to declare the percentage of Indian paper Mill production for non-Government Civil consumption.</p> <p>Iron and Steel (Scrap control) Order including Price Control, 1943.</p> <p>Iron and Steel (Control of Production and Distribution) Order (including Price Control), 1941.</p> <p>Colliery Control Order (including Price Control), 1945.</p> <p>The Coal Production Fund Ordinance, 1944.</p> <p>*Factories (Control of Dismantling) Order, 1945.</p> <p>Cotton Cloth and Yarn (Control) Order, 1945.</p> <p>Cotton Cloth (Control of Printing) Order, 1945.</p> <p>Cotton Textiles (Control of Movement) Order, 1946.</p> <p>Cotton Cloth & Yarn (Transmission by post) Prohibition Order 1946.</p> <p>Cotton Textiles Fund Ordinance, 1944.</p> <p>Cotton Cloth and Yarn (Forward Contracts Prohibition) Order, 1945.</p> <p>Indian Woolen Goods (Control) Order, 1945.</p> <p>Textiles, Industry (Control of Production) Order, 1945.</p> <p>Bengal Textiles Association Ordinance, 1945.</p> <p>†Consumer Goods (Control of Distribution) Order, 1944.</p> <p>The Cotton Textiles (Raw Materials & Stores, Order, 1946.</p> <p>The Cotton Textiles (Sizing & Filling) Control Order, 1945.</p>

These have been re-imposed by some Provinces at the instance of the Central Government.

* For factories engaged in the manufacture of Cotton Textile goods or in the ginning or pressing of cotton.

† This order is in force only in regard to imported Woollen Goods.

Shri D. P. Karmarkar: Is the Honourable Member aware that under the provisions of the Paper Control Order now in force, no publisher who has begun publications after 1942 can get any permission from Government to publish any books?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I will inquire.

Shri D. P. Karmarkar: In view of the fact that what is being guaranteed to the publishers is simply registration as publishers and not any quota of paper, as such, is the Honourable Member prepared to reconsider that order and to keep the field open to all publishers irrespective of whether they published books prior to 1942 or not?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I will look into the matter.

Shri D. P. Karmarkar: The present newspaper control is effective in creating a monopoly for those newspapers which are already in existence and therefore will the Honourable Member reconsider the position with regard to all newspapers generally, which the Government considers are capable of doing their business efficiently?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: There was a question on the order paper regarding newsprint and I meant to say in reply to that that the position of newsprint as the result of the delegation which visited foreign countries recently is going to be considerably better in the near future. At present I think the average quantity which is available in the country, I am speaking off the record, is under 20,000 tons but I expect as the result of the successful efforts made by this delegation we should be in a position to receive at least 30,000 tons during next year and the position to that extent would be easier.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will the Honourable Member examine the order of priorities which is fixed under some of these controls based on the position of the particular parties during the war or based on war service or so called A.R.P. and other services and if the controls must continue will Government re-examine the position of priorities or the basis on which such priorities are based? I am not referring merely to paper. I am referring to all controls.

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: That opens up a very large issue. In view of the interest which is felt by Honourable Members in the general subject of controls, in connection with a Bill which I am going to introduce later, during the consideration stage regarding the continuance of controls over certain essential commodities, I expect it will be possible for Honourable Members to have an opportunity of expressing their views on the general problem.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will the Honourable Member call a meeting of the Advisory Committee of his Department and place the issues before them and seek their advice on this subject?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I will.

Mr. Leslie Gwilt: Will the Honourable Member tell the House the position of steel and steel control and what effect the latter has had on the supply of steel?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: The position with regard to steel control is that last April we decided to remove the control as regards the purchase of steel and the result was not an improvement in the situation but a definite deterioration and in consequence of that it was considered necessary by Government to re-institute the system of licences for the purchase of steel. The situation with regard to production in this country today is in my opinion grave, partly on account of the coal shortage and partly on account of labour troubles and the whole question therefore is under the active consideration of Government. Meanwhile we are issuing certain rules regarding the lines on which further control is to be maintained.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: In view of the discussion on the general subject of controls and de-controlling, will the Honourable Member circulate to the Members the statement which he has laid on the table today, as well as other documents concerning this subject?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Yes, Sir.

REVISION OF CONVENTION *re* SEPARATION OF RAILWAY FINANCE FROM GENERAL FINANCE

†221. *Mr. K. O. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state what action is proposed to be taken for the purpose of undertaking an examination of the question of revision of the Convention on which the separation of Railway Finance from General Finances has been based?

(b) What progress has been made in the collection of all essential data, particularly with reference to the lives of the assets, including obsolescence, and the consequent normal rate of contribution to the Depreciation Fund etc., to enable a comprehensive examination of the problem?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) and (b). The Railway Convention Committee appointed by the Legislative Assembly in March 1943, considered that the revision of the Convention depends upon the quantum of surplus falling due for division, and involves:

(i) a re-examination of the annual contribution to the Depreciation Fund, necessitating a comprehensive enquiry into the lives of assets including their obsolescence, the effect of the level of prices on the Fund, etc., and

(ii) an examination of other closely connected questions, such as provision for amortisation of capital, Betterment Fund, the question of a fixed contribution to General Revenues, the correct method of calculating interest on capital-at-charge and the allocation of replacement cost of an asset.

As announced in a Press Note, dated 26th April, 1946, the Railway Board had embarked on a detailed investigation of the above problems. A Betterment Fund was instituted with effect from 1st April, 1946, and the consequential changes in allocation rules have been made. The comprehensive enquiry into the lives of assets has been practically completed and the working out of the normal rate of contribution to the Fund, on the revised basis, has been taken in hand. The effect of the level of prices on the Depreciation Fund requires no special investigation, but it will have to be considered whether the existing rules of charging replacement costs to the Fund can be regarded as sound when the appropriation is made on the basis of original cost. Government hope to be able to formulate their decisions in time to be able to ask the House in the Budget Session, 1947 to appoint a Committee to examine the whole question of the permanent revision of the Convention.

PROPOSED ELECTRIFICATIONS OF EAST INDIAN, BENGAL NAGPUR AND BENGAL ASSAM RAILWAYS

†222. *Mr. K. O. Neogy: Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state what progress has been made in the consideration of the question of electrification of certain sections of the East Indian, Bengal Nagpur, and Bengal Assam Railways?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: The Railway Department have under consideration the electrification of the following sections of the three railways mentioned in the question:

Railway	Suburban	Main line
(i) B. A.	Sealdah-Ranaghat-Krishnagar City.	.....
„ „	Sealdah-Budge Budge and allied sections.	.....
(ii) B. N.	.....	Howrah-Tatanagar.
(iii) E. I.	.....	Burdwan-Gaya-Moghalsera.
„	Howrah-Bandel-Burdwan . .	.....
„	Howrah-Burdwan chord . .	.....

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

Of the two proposals for main line electrification the E. I. Railway's preliminary report on the Burdwan-Moghalserai scheme is being referred immediately to the Consulting Electrical Engineers to Government for their expert opinion. In the other case, namely, the Howrah-Tatanagar scheme, the B. N. Railway has been asked to submit a preliminary report.

In the case of suburban electrification schemes railways have already carried out preliminary investigations, but before proceeding further with them it is proposed to consult the Government of Bengal regarding the setting up of a Terminal Facilities Committee to go into the whole matter of railway facilities in and around Calcutta. The Committee's terms of reference would include the question of what additional suburban railways would be necessary, what portion of the suburban services of the three railways should be electrified and what facilities are required for the reception and quick dispersal of suburban passengers.

REVISION OF RATING POLICY OF RAILWAYS

†223. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state whether the question of a revision of the rating policy of the Railways, has been initiated? If so, what progress has been made in this matter?

(b) Have Government come to any tentative conclusions regarding the broad lines on which a revision of the rating policy of the Railways should follow, apart from the question of revising the rates structure?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) Yes. Investigation into the possibility of simplifying the rates structure was commenced in 1944 and is proceeding. The subject is of considerable complexity and involves the examination of many different and difficult problems. The introduction of telescopic "class" rates on a continuous mileage basis without unduly affecting revenue is now considered to be a practical proposition and the investigation is proceeding towards this end. A factual test is to be made with one class of traffic early next year. A Committee of Rates Experts has been appointed to carry out the work of revision of the rates structure and make recommendations to the Railway Board. Before finalising the proposed new scales of rates, commercial interests will be consulted.

(b) No conclusions, other than those relating to the revision of the rating structure, have as yet been reached by Government. There are various aspects of this matter which are under examination by the investigating officer, assisted by the Committee of Rates Experts.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ROADS ROLLER COMMISSION

†224. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to refer to starred question Nos. 1207 and 1208, dated the 25th March, 1946, regarding Road Rollers indented from United Kingdom, and state whether the recommendations of the Road Roller Commission have been communicated to Indian Industrialists and manufacturers? Will the Honourable Member please lay a copy of the Report in the Library of this House?

(b) What has been the result of the consultation with Indian industrialists and manufacturers stated to have been made in this matter [*vide* clause (c) of the answer to starred question No. 1208]?

(c) Will the Honourable Member be pleased to place on the table of the House a statement showing the number of Road Rollers already ordered from different countries abroad, indicating the cost thereof? In what period will these Rollers be actually available in India?

(d) Will the Honourable Member please place on the table of the House a statement showing the number of Road Rollers already acquired from military surplus stores in India and the cost involved, as also the number of Rollers, or their component parts, ordered from Indian industrialists and manufacturers, and the total cost involved?

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

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) The object of the Road Roller Mission was to advise Government as to the facilities available in the Ordnance Factories for the manufacture of Road Rollers. On the basis of these recommendations the Government of India negotiated with Indian firms possessing capacity for the production of such component parts as could be made in India. As regards the publication of the report, I would refer the Honourable Member to the answer given to part (c) of his question No. 1208, on the 25th March 1946. A copy of the Press Note published is placed on the table of the House.

(b) Orders have been placed with the Tata Engineering and Locomotive Manufacturing Co., for manufacturing 1000 Steam-Rollers and with Jessop and Co., for 500 Diesel Rollers in co-operation with manufacturers in the United Kingdom and the Indian Ordnance Factories.

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

(d) No Road Rollers have been declared surplus by the Military Authorities. According to information at present available 56 Road Rollers have been taken over from American surpluses. A trial order for 24 Road Rollers to be manufactured entirely in India at a cost of Rs. 5,28,000 has been placed with Messrs. Cooper Engineering Co., Ltd. The cost of component parts for the 1500 Road Rollers mentioned in reply to parts (a) and (b) is not yet known as the final details of the components which will have to be imported have not been fully worked out.

PRESS NOTE

ROAD ROLLERS FOR INDIA

ORDNANCE FACTORIES AND INDIAN FIRMS TO PRODUCE

TECHNICAL INFORMATION FROM U. K.

One thousand Steam and five hundred Diesel Road Rollers of the British type will be manufactured by Indian Ordnance factories and certain Indian firms in co-operation with manufacturers in the U. K., as a result of the recommendations of the Road Rollers Mission which visited India early this year and the negotiations carried on by the Government of India with the representatives of British concerns.

It is hoped that this will go a long way to meet the large demand for Road Rollers in connection with the Road Development Schemes of the Central and Provincial Governments and Indian States and pave the way for the eventual manufacture of complete units of road-making machinery in the country.

The entire scheme will cost about Rs. 4,40,00,000 nearly 40 per cent. of which will be incurred in the Indian Ordnance factories and the rest in Indian and associated British concerns. Deliveries are expected to start early next year for completion within two years.

The terms agreed upon provide *inter alia* that jigs, patterns, drawings, designs, and other technical information will be made available in the country and that such technical personnel and co-ordinating cells as may be required by the Ordnance Factories and other firms concerned will be provided by the contracting British firms.

The arrangements are that complete boiler and gear units in respect of steam rollers and engines and gear units in respect of Diesel rollers will be imported from the U. K. and the rest manufactured in the Ordnance factories and two Indian firms. Erection, assembly, commissioning and servicing will be done entirely in India.

A trial order for twelve Diesel road rollers is proposed to be placed on an Indian firm. Efforts are also being continued to locate capacity which will enable the manufacture of complete road rollers in India.

The visit of the Road Rollers Mission, consisting of the representatives of the British Road Roller Industry selected by the India Office on the advice of the Board of Trade and the Federation of Contractors' Plant, was arranged by the Government of India in consultation with the Secretary of State. The Mission visited the various Indian Ordnance factories and reported to the Government on the possibility of utilisation of the plant, tools, personnel and the general facilities available. The Mission also discussed with the Government of India the terms on which the manufacturers in the U.K. would be prepared to co-operate with the scheme. Subsequently the present agreement was arrived at between the Government of India and the manufacturers in the U. K.

DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIES & SUPPLIES;

New Delhi, August 1, 1946.

Statement showing contracts placed for the Supply of Road Rollers from different countries a broad

S. No.	Suppliers	Store	Quantity	Price per each	Total cost	Delivery forecast as per the contract
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	M/s. Malabar Moore Ltd. Australia.	Malcolm Moore 8/9 Ton (Ballast Tray fitted to carry Cast Iron weights) Three-wheel fitted with Fordson engine.	No. 225	Rs. 21,115 (F.O.R. destination in India)	47,50,875	10 Nos. by 18-6-46. 15 " " 30-6-46. 20 " " 31-7-46. 25 " " 31-8-46. and thereafter 25 Nos. or more in each succeeding month till the contract is completed.
	Do.	Malcolm Moore 8-3/4/9-3/4 Ton (Ballast Tray fitted to carry Cast Iron weights four wheel fitted with Fordson engine.	25	Rs. 26,175	6,54,375	
2	M/s. William Jacks Co., Ltd. Calcutta,	Austin-Western 'Autoorat' 10 ton Roll-A-Plane Diesel road roller.	8	Rs. 29,000 (F.O.R. port of entry in India)	2,32,000	28 Nos. 10 Ton Road Rollers by Nov./Dec. 46. 38 Nos. 10 Ton Road
	Do.	Austin-Western 10 ton 'Autooras' Three-wheel Diesel road roller.	58	Rs. 23,300 (F.O.R. port of entry in India)	13,51,400	Rollers by March 47 16 Nos. Tandem 5/8 Road Rollers by March 47.
	Do.	Austin-Western Tandem 5/8 ton Diesel Road rollers.	43	Rs. 19,350	8,32,050	27 Nos. Tandem 5/8 Road roller by June 1947

3	M/s. Simpson & Co. Madras.	Galton Chief 10 ton Diesel engine.	20	Rs. 31,125 (F.O.R. Madras)	4,22,500	Deliveries in India to commence in Sept. 1946 at the rate of at least 4 Road rollers per month till completion. Attempts should, however, be made to expedite production and shipment to greatest extent possible
4	Do.	Galton Tandem 5/8 ton Diesel engine.	30	Rs. 16,320	4,38,900	
4	M/s. Marshall Sons, & Co., Ltd., England. (In association with Ordnance Factories & Indian Industrialists).	Marshall Steam road rollers 3 tons.	1000	Estimated approx. Rs. 27,500 each	2,75,00,000	Every efforts are to be made to start delivery commencing in July 1947 and delivery is completed by 31st Dec. 1948.
5	M/s. Aveling Barford Grencham. (In association with Ordnance Factories & Indian Industrialists).	Diesel Oil Engine road rollers	500	Estimated approx. price Rs. 25,000 each	1,25,00,000	Ditto.
6	M/s. Jack Olding & Co. Ltd. Bat-field.	Buffalo Spring field 6 tons Diesel road rollers.	60	Rs. 8,500 approx. F. O. B. London	5,10,000	Ex. stocks in U. K.
7	M/s. Marshall's Sons & Co. England. (Order placed thro' B. G. I.I.D. Blackpool).	Diesel road rollers	100	Rs. 20,900	20,00,000	At the rate of 10 nos. per month.
8	M/s. Aveling Barford England (Order placed through DG, I.I.D. Blackpool).	Steam road rollers	100	Rs. 20,800 approx. (F.O.B. England)	20,80,000	Diesel road rollers 5 nos. March 1947 followed by 10 Nos per month beginning May 1947. Steam road rollers 6 Nos. per week beginning Jan. 1947.
	Do.	Diesel road rollers	50	Rs. 29,130 approx.	16,500	

DETERIORATION OF FOOD IN BENGAL

225. *Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: Will the Secretary, Food Department be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the quick deterioration of the food situation in some of the districts of Bengal;

(b) the reasons for such deterioration; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken for bringing about relief in the situation?

Mr. B. R. Sen: The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply to part (b) of unstarred question No. 10, by Mr. K. C. Neogy in the Legislative Assembly on the 28th October, 1946.

Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: Will the Honourable Member be pleased to state the extent to which during the last week the distribution of food suffered on account of transport problems in East Bengal?

Mr. B. R. Sen: I cannot give you the exact information but the Government of Bengal are trying their best to rush supplies to East Bengal not only by the normal means of transport but also by air transport.

Sreejut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri: In order to prevent deterioration of food in East Bengal, will the Honourable Member state whether he will send some quantities of food to Assam for feeding the Noakhali refugees?

Mr. B. R. Sen: Assam is a surplus province and there has been no demand from the Assam Government for supplies from the Centre in order to feed the few refugees who have gone there.

MANUFACTURE OF POWER ALCOHOL IN BENGAL

226. *Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) in how many places in Bengal are there arrangements for manufacture of power alcohol;

(b) how such power alcohol is put on the market and the uses to which it is put to;

(c) whether Government have in immediate contemplation expansion of facilities for manufacturing more power alcohol in Bengal; and

(d) what steps are being taken for reducing the price?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) As far as Government are aware there is no distillery in Bengal producing power alcohol.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Panel on Sugar, Alcohol and Food Yeast set up by the late Planning and Development Department has suggested the establishment of a distillery at Darsana for the production of power alcohol. The report is now under the consideration of Government.

(d) At present control over prices of power alcohol is a provincial responsibility.

Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: Is the Honourable Member aware that some sugar factories of Bengal which are owned and managed by Indians made applications for permission to produce power alcohol but they have been refused?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I have no information but I should like to have the position examined.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Is power alcohol being produced at any other places?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I believe so. I cannot give particulars off hand.

R.M.S. REST HOUSE IN CHANDNI CHOWK, DELHI

227. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: (a) Will the Secretary of the Communications Department please state whether it is a fact that the R.M.S. officials in the R.M.S. Rest House in Chandni Chowk, Delhi, are quite comfortable there?

(b) If the reply to (a) above is in the negative do Government propose to take steps to improve the lot of the officials in connection therewith?

Sir Harold Shoobert: (a) It is a fact that owing to neglect of maintenance by the owner of the building the officials concerned are not as comfortable as Government would wish them to be.

(b) The matter is already engaging the attention of Government.

RETIREMENT OF OFFICIALS WITH 25 YEARS' SERVICE ON FULL PENSION

228. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Will the Secretary of the Communications Department please state whether in view of unemployment Government propose to consider the question of retirement of all those officials who have put in 25 years of service with full pension benefits?

Sir Harold Shoobert: The questions (Nos. 228 and 229) should have been addressed to the Honourable the Home Member. They have accordingly been transferred to the list of questions for the 13th November 1946, when it will be answered by the Honourable the Home Member.

Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: In case there is any mistake when questions are being addressed, will the Department concerned return them to the Assembly Department and ask them to make the necessary correction and send it to the proper department? After all it has been printed on the Order Paper and may I know why the Honourable Member cannot reply to it?

Mr. Ahmed F. H. Jaffer: Last session you gave a ruling that if a question is wrongly addressed it should be sent to the department concerned, instead of saying that the question should have been addressed to such and such a department.

Mr. President: It is already being done. When the lists are printed, there is no other alternative but to inform the House that the question has been transferred to such and such a department.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: The answer will not be given this session.

Mr. President: The Answer will be given on the 13th November by the Honourable the Home Member.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May I know from the Honourable Member how he has tried to carry out this principle that persons who are superannuated are not entertained or retired? I am asking about the Honourable Member's own department. He can reply to the question so far as his department is concerned.

Sir Harold Shoobert: I am quite prepared to answer that question. The reason why this question was transferred to the Honourable the Home Member is that the matter is one of general policy, which must be laid down by the Government of India for all Departments. We cannot have unilateral action on the part of one Department. My Honourable friend has now asked what steps have been taken to stop re-employment of men who have been superannuated. The answer is that normally men in the gazetted ranks above the age of 55 are not being kept in employment. Men in the non-gazetted ranks, who were employed before 1938, are, according to the rule, able to be retained in employment, if they remain mentally and physically efficient, up to the age of 60. That is the position in our Department which is being followed.

Mr. President: No more supplementary questions as the question time is now over.

CANCELLATION OF EXTENSION GRANTED TO OFFICIALS

†229. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Will the Secretary of the Communications Department please state whether extension granted to the officials already in service will be withdrawn to provide employment for the younger generation?

(b) WRITTEN ANSWERS

CORRUPTION IN THE ENGINEERING BRANCH OF THE POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT

230. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Will the Secretary of the Communications Department please state whether Government are aware that there is great corruption in the Engineering Branch of the Posts and Telegraphs Department and if so whether any special staff is maintained to keep down the corruption?

Sir Harold Shoobert: Government have no reason at all to believe that there is great corruption in the Branch of the Posts and Telegraphs Department mentioned by the Honourable Member although a few cases of alleged corruption and malpractice have been brought to their notice which are being investigated. Such few cases do not call for the setting up of a special staff.

PROMOTION OF INSPECTORS OF POST OFFICES

231. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Will the Secretary of the Communications Department please state:

(a) if it is a fact that the Inspectors of Post Offices who were nominated for appointment as Superintendents of Post Offices and who proceeded on Field Service are being made permanent in the alternative vacancies in the Superintendents cadre;

(b) if it is a fact that this concession was not given to them when they proceeded on Field Service and has been given only in 1945;

(c) if it is a fact that the inferior servants of the Posts and Telegraphs Department who had worked as Clerks for six months in the civil and clerks who had qualified in the Inspectors Examination were deputed to the Field Service on the condition that after completion of 12 months satisfactory service they will become eligible for permanent appointment;

(d) if it is a fact that no vacancies have been reserved for them in the cadres for which they become eligible; and

(e) if the replies to parts (a) to (d) above are in the affirmative will Government state whether the officials mentioned in part (c) above will be appointed in the alternative vacancies in the cadres for which they have become eligible?

Sir Harold Shoobert: (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Yes.

(d) No reservation of particular vacancies in the Inspectors' cadre has been made, but the names of eligible candidates are to be brought on to the list of officials approved for appointment upon completion of 12 months' satisfactory service in the field. The inferior servants who become eligible for promotion to the clerical cadre in consideration of service rendered while in the field with Army Postal units are to be appointed against the departmental quota of 20 per cent. posts reserved for promotion of postmen and inferior staff to the clerical grades.

(e) No. The officials referred to are, however, likely to be absorbed permanently in the higher grades in due course.

EXPRESS DELIVERY OF INLAND AIR MAIL LETTERS

232. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Will the Secretary of the Communications Department please state whether it is a fact that inland air mail letters are surcharged at the rate of one anna and are delivered by special messengers or by effecting special delivery? If so, what is the propriety of express delivery for which two annas are charged?

†For answer to this question, see answer to question No. 228.

Sir Harold Shoobert: There is a surcharge on inland air mail letters of one anna per tola or part thereof payable in addition to ordinary postage. Special arrangements for the delivery of inland air mail letters exist at a few places only. It has been necessary to make these arrangements because the air mails at these places arrive after the ordinary deliveries of the day have gone out from post offices. In regard to the last part of the question, I would explain that letters upon which an Express Delivery charge is paid are, on receipt at the office of destination, treated in the same way as telegrams.

UTILIZATION OF INFERIOR STAFF FOR COOLIE JOBS BY POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS OFFICERS

233. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Will the Secretary of the Communications Department please state whether Government are aware that the services of the inferior staff, etc., are utilised for coolies job when the Posts and Telegraphs Officers are out on tour? If so, whether these inferior servants are paid for the work done by them on such occasions?

Sir Harold Shoobert: The question as framed by the Honourable Member does not indicate precisely what information is required. I may state that Government have received no complaints or representations upon this subject, but I am prepared to make enquiries if the Honourable Member can quote any particular cases in which the services of the inferior Posts and Telegraphs staff have been improperly utilised.

INCREASED PAY TO CIRCLE OFFICE OFFICIALS IN POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT

234. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Will the Secretary of the Communications Department please state:

(a) if it is a fact that the new scale of the 1st Division Clerks of the Circle Offices of the Post and Telegraph Department has been fixed higher than the old scale;

(b) if it is a fact that their pay has been raised by 5 per cent. by the Adjudicator's Award; and

(c) if the replies to parts (a) and (b) above are in the affirmative, whether the Circle Office Officials in the old scale of pay will also be given the benefit of increase of pay by 5 per cent.?

Sir Harold Shoobert: (a) No, except only for the Circle offices at Nagpur and Patna.

(b) Yes.

(c) Yes, in the case of officials of the class referred to serving in the Circle offices at Karachi, Lucknow, Lahore, Nagpur and Patna, where the old scales of pay are either slightly lower than the revised scales introduced with effect from 1931, or identical with those scales. In other places where the old scales are higher than the revised scales, no increase is to be given to officials drawing pay in the old scales.

WHITE PAPER SCHEME *re* RAIL-ROAD COORDINATION

235. *Mr. P. B. Gole: Will the Honourable Member for Transport be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the policy as explained in the white paper regarding rail-road co-ordination scheme is still being pursued by the Government of India;

(b) whether it is a fact that the recommendations of the majority of *ad-hoc* Committee appointed by this Assembly regarding the part to be taken by the railways in the rail-road co-ordination, are being followed by Government; and

(c) whether Government intend to open new lines of Railways; if so, whether the new lines are meant for strategic purposes or for meeting commercial and passenger needs?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) and (b). The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply given on 28th October 1946 to question No. 3, asked by Sardar Mangal Singh. This contains a statement of the Interim Government's policy.

(c) Government have under survey investigation various new lines, totalling about 5,000 miles, both for strategic purposes and for meeting commercial needs. A statement giving the list of such projects is laid on the table. The construction of these lines will be considered when the survey reports are received and examined.

The above programme includes about 1,066 miles of lines recommended by the Defence Department for strategic purposes, out of which about 420 miles of lines have also been recommended by Provincial Governments as civil projects.

List of approved Railway projects—New constructions and conversions

NOTE :—Strategic projects are marked with an asterisk.

Projects which are both Commercial and Strategic are marked with double asterisk.

	Approx : Mileages	The proposed gauge
EAST INDIAN RAILWAYS		
(a) Dismantled Lines to be Restored—		
1. Unao-Madhoganj-Balemau	78	B. G.
2. Bijnor-Chandpur Siau	21	B. G.
3. Utraitia-Sultanpur-Zafarabad	136	B. G.
(b) New Lines—		
1. Kicha-Chandausi	65	B. G.
2. Birmitrapur-Barwadih	120	B. G.
3. Chirmiri-Barwadih (Garhwa road or Untari Road)	140	B. G.
4. Barkageon-Hazaribagh-Giridih-Dumka-Rampur Haut	225	B. G.
5. Gaya-Sherghati-Chatra-Ranchi	110	B. G.
BENGAL ASSAM RAILWAY		
(a) Restoration of Dismantled lines—		
1. Shaistaganj-Habiganj	8	M. G.
2. Moranhat-Khowang	6	M. G.
3. Amnura-Chapai Nawabganj	10	B. G.
(b) New Lines—		
1. Bahadurabad-Goalpara-Pandu with a Bridge at Goalpara, Jogigopa and a link from the bridge to Bongaigaon, also Gouripur Mymensingh Mahendraganj.	283**	M. G.
2. Sylhet Bazar-Chatak	21	M. G.
3. Khowang-Dibrugarh	12	M. G.
4. Faridpur-Madaripur-Barisal	80	B. G.

	Approx : Mileages	The proposed gauge
(b) New Lines—contd.		
5. Sainthia Barhampore-Bhairamara	16	B. G.
6. Rohanpur-Nithpur-Dinajpur	76	B. G.
7. Jharia-Jhanjail-Baghmara-Siju-Jankaray	37	M. G.
(c) Conversion—		
1. Tezpur-Balipara to be converted from N.G. to M.G.	20	M. G.
BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY		
(a) Dismantled Lines to be Restored—		
1. Bobbili-Salur	10	B. G.
(b) New Lines—		
1. Ramagundam-Bastar-Jagdapur Jeypur Rayagada	290	B. G.
The portion between Ramagundam and Bailadila shall be surveyed by H. E. H. the Nizam Railway		
2. Rajnandgaon (or Drug)-Bastar via Kankar and Taragaon.	120	B. G.
3. Sambalpur-Kondagaon via Lochipur and Kantabanji	247	B. G.
4. Talchar (along the valley of Brahmi river)-Keel Bank	100	B. G.
5. Talbandh (or Bangriposi)-Badampahar (or Sulpat or Rairangpur) including conversion of Rupsa-Talbandh to B.G.	85	(including 70 miles of conversion). B. G.
6. Khurda Road-Sonepur-Lochipur	128	B. G.
7. Vishnupur-Santragachi	68	B. G.
8. Contai Road-Contai-Tamluk-Kolaghat-Ghatal-Ohandrakona.	150	B. G.
9. Extension of Lohardaga to meet Barwadih-Birmitrapur	23	B. G.
10. Naupada-Gunpur extension and conversion to B.G.	27	B. G.
11. Gopalpur-Behrampur-Russelkonda	57	B. G.
12. Nomandi to Joda	16	B. G.
(c) Conversion—		
1. Purulia to Lohardaga	116**	B. G.
SOUTH INDIAN RAILWAY		
(a) New Lines—		
1. Dindigul-Gudallur with restoration of Theni-Madura	70	M. G.
2. Kollengodo-Cochin Port	41	M. G.
3. Tanjore-Pattukottai	29	M. G.
4. Arantangi-Karaikkudi	20	M. G.

	Approx : Mileages	The proposed gauge
M. & S. M. RAILWAY		
(a) New Lines—		
1. Alnavar-Haliyal-Yellapur-Karwar	70	M. G.
2. Ellore-Saveri Valley	70	B. G.
G. I. P. RAILWAY		
(a) Dismantled Lines to be Restored—		
1. Cawnpore-Khairada	81	B. G.
(b) New Lines—		
1. Diva-Dasgaon	93	B. G.
2. Manmad-Nardhana	79	B. G.
3. Belapur Road-Sheogaon	45	B. G.
4. Baramati-Pandharpur	35	B. G.
5. Ahmedpur-Sheogaon	45	B. G.
6. Kurla-Karjat	65	B. G.
7. Amraoti-Narkher	79	B. G.
B. B. & C. I. RAILWAY		
(a) Dismantled Lines to be Restored—		
1. Vasad-Kathana	27	B. G.
(b) New Lines—		
1. Bulsar-Dharampur	17	B. G.
2. Khandwa-Hingoli	169*	M. G.
3. Ajmer-Kotah	100	M. G.
OUDH TIRHUT RAILWAY		
(a) New Lines—		
1. Kashipur-Kalagarh	30	M. G.
2. Chakia-Alwalia-Sikhwalia	27	M. G.
3. Sitamarhi-Sonbarsa	20	M. G.
4. Murliganj-Madhepura	13	M. G.
JODHPUR RAILWAY		
(a) New Lines—		
1. Pithore-Kahi-Tando Mithakhan-Sanghar-Jhol	62	M. G.

	Approx : Mileages	The proposed gauge
NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY		
(a) Dismantled Lines to be Restored—		
1. Nagrota-Jogindernagar	35	N. G.
2. Rohtak-Panipat via Gohana	20	B. G.
(b) New Lines—		
1. Havelian-Garhi Habibullah	43	B. G.
2. Charsadda-Mardan	17	B. G.
3. Pezu-Dera Isma'1 Khan	40	B. G.
4. Tando Mohd. Khan-Moghalbin (Jati Taluka)	72	B. G.
5. Badin-Gujrat (Bombay Sind)	268*	B. G.
6. Karachi-Kalat-Quetta	410*	B. G.
7. Peshawar-Kohat	40*	B. G.
8. Kohat-Bannu	80*	B. G.
9. Rupar-Talaura	37	B. G.
10. Khushab-Nurpur-Darya Khan	70	B. G.
11. Kashmore-Dera Ghazi Khan	10	N. G.
12. Jhang-Malot	100	B. G.
13. Khewra-Chakwal	40	B. G.
(c) Conversion—		
1. Mari Indus-Bannu and Manvai-Laki Marwat from N. G. to B. G.	158**	B. G.
2. Jacobabad-Kashmere from N.G. to B.G.	77	B. G.
3. Kohat-Thal	64*	B. G.

INTRODUCTION OF SKELTON'S GUIDEWAYS SYSTEM OF TRANSPORT BETWEEN VILLAGES BY RAILWAYS

236. ***Mr. P. B. Gole:** Will the Honourable Member for Transport be pleased to state whether Government are aware that the skelton's guideways system demonstrated to the Officers of the Railway Board, at Dapuri near Poona in 1937-39, and recently in the Jamnagar State is a cheaper and more convenient form of transport and has a greater hauling power? If so, do Government propose to introduce it as means of communication between villages?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: No officer of the Railway Board was present at the demonstrations of the Skelton guideways system at Dapuri near Poona in 1937-39 or in the Jamnagar State later on. In 1939 the Board arranged for a Railway Officer to examine a project of the guideways system for the Kashmir State. On the findings of the Railway Officer His Highness' Government decided to drop the idea of experimenting with the scheme.

As matters stand at present, there is no proposal for the Railway Department to embark on an experiment which requires to be tried out.

REDUCED INTERIM RELIEF PAID TO VIZAGAPATAM PORT WORKMEN

237. *Sri N. Narayanamurthi: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state if Government are aware that while all the employees of the Central Government are given interim relief at Rs. 8/4/- per mensem, the Vizagapatam Port workmen alone are being paid at only Rs. 4/8/- and that too only from April last and with no retrospective effect as in the case of the others who were paid from July 1945?

(b) If so, do Government propose to remove this discrimination?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) Central Government servants in Civil Departments other than the Railway and Posts and Telegraphs Departments, who were in service on the 1st July, 1946, have been granted interim relief with retrospective effect from 1st July 1945 as follows:—

(i) Addition to pay at Rs. 3 per mensem, for those on a pay up to and including Rs. 40 per mensem, and at Rs. 4-8-0 per mensem for those on a pay above Rs. 40 per mensem and up to Rs. 250 per mensem; and

(ii) Compensatory allowance for those on a pay up to Rs. 300 per mensem at a flat rate of Rs. 3-12-0 per mensem in areas where the supply of foodstuffs at concessional rates to Central Government servants has not been arranged by the Government of India.

The staff of the Vizagapatam Port prior to 1st April, 1946, from which date the Port came under the administrative control of the Bengal Nagpur Railway, were eligible for relief in accordance with the above orders for the period from 1st July, 1945 to 31st March, 1946, and instructions to pay them the relief in accordance with these orders were issued on 19th October, 1946. From 1st April, 1946, the staff of the Vizagapatam Port are treated as railway servants and are entitled to relief on the scale sanctioned for other railway servants, *i.e.*, at a flat rate of Rs. 4-8-0 per mensem, grainshop concessions being admissible in addition.

(b) In view of the position as explained in the reply to part (a) above the question does not arise.

VICTORY BONUS TO VIZAGAPATAM HARBOUR AND PORT WORKMEN

238. *Sri N. Narayanamurthi: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the "Victory Bonus" given to all Military services was not extended to the Vizagapatam Harbour and Port workmen, who were directly under the War Department till April, 1946, and who underwent the worst privations and risks of war including Japanese aerial bombing; and

(b) whether Government propose to extend the said Bonus to them also, as recommended by the Madras Port Trust and in the same manner as it was applied in the case of the Madras Port workers?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) Victory Bonus has not been allowed to employees of the Vizagapatam Port. It must, however, be explained that the award in the case of military services was not a Victory Bonus but a War Gratuity. The latter has not been granted to the Defence of India personnel, including such personnel on Railways, Posts and Telegraphs and Ports, except in the case of those who drew military rates of pay when serving in field service area.

(b) As stated in the reply to Diwan Chaman Lall's Starred Question in this House on the 14th March, 1946, Victory Bonus has not been allowed to Government employees. Staff of the Madras Port Trust are employees of a non-Government body. Government do not propose to treat Vizagapatam Harbour and Port workmen differently from other Government employees.

PROPOSAL BY BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY TO DIVERT THROUGH PASSENGER TRAINS BETWEEN MADRAS AND CALCUTTA FROM SIMHACHALAM TO ANAKAPALLI DIRECT

239. *Sri N. Narayanamurthi: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state:

(a) whether there is any proposal by the authorities of the Bengal Nagpur Railway to divert all the Mail and Passenger and other through trains between Madras and Calcutta from Simhachalam to Anakapalli direct without touching Waltair and thus reduce the present Simhachalam-Waltair section of the main-line into a branch-line;

(b) if the reply to part (a) above is in the affirmative, when, by whom and for what reasons, this proposal was made;

(c) whether, Government are aware, that such a step is bound to be not only harmful to the best interests of the Vizagapatam City and Port, but also diametrically opposite to the recent recommendations of the Technical Committee for the development of Ports regarding the future expansion and development of the possibilities of Vizagapatam Harbour and ship-building yards; and

(d) whether Government propose to stop any such move on the part of the Bengal Nagpur Railway authorities and consider an alternative plan of developing the present Waltair Railway Station into a first class junction Station and connecting it with new lines?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) and (b). The Bengal Nagpur Railway administration are considering a proposal to run the Madras-Calcutta Mails *via* Simhachalam North Station instead of Waltair as at present, and the proposal is under examination in consultation with the M. & S. M. Railway authorities. There is no intention at present to extend the proposal to include other passenger trains. Should it be decided to effect this change, the Bengal Nagpur Railway will provide convenient shuttle services between Simhachalam North and Vizagapatam Town, connecting with Up and Down mail trains. These shuttle trains will be provided with "Through" coaches to and from Vizagapatam Town with accommodation for luggage and mails. The "Through" coaches will afford considerable convenience to passengers from Vizagapatam Town and Waltair since they will be able to secure accommodation from the start of their journey whereas at present they have to face the uncertainty of finding accommodation in a through train passing Waltair station.

It is estimated that the proposed diversion will reduce the time taken at present for the journey between Calcutta and Madras by approximately 45 minutes by eliminating that portion of the present journey from Gopalapatnam to Waltair which is considered necessary only for passengers travelling to and from Vizagapatam Town and Waltair.

(c) Government endorse the opinion of the Railway administration that the proposal, if adopted, will neither be harmful to the interests of Vizagapatam City, nor affect the development and expansion of the port.

(d) Since the proposal is designed to accelerate the journey for through passengers between Calcutta and Madras, for whom the mail trains are primarily intended, while at the same time providing an improved service for passengers to and from Vizagapatam Town and Waltair, Government consider that it would not be in the public interest to stop further consideration of the proposal.

As regards Waltair station, the Bengal Nagpur Railway have under consideration the improvement of facilities for the travelling public at that station.

DETAILS *re* STRIKES ON RAILWAYS

240. *Sri N. Narayanamurthi: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please lay on the table of the House a statement giving the undermentioned details (preferably in a tabular form) about strikes which have broken out since 1928 on various railway administrations:

(i) name of railway on which the strike broke out;

- (ii) duration of the strike;
- (iii) causes of the strike;
- (iv) measures to settle with the strikes; and
- (v) the result of each?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: I lay on the table of the House a statement* giving the available information so far as it relates to Indian Government Railways.

PURCHASE OF FOOD BY INDIA FROM ABROAD

241. *Mr. Mann Subedar: (a) Will the Secretary of the Food Department please state how much food has been purchased by India from abroad (i) by Government and Governmental agencies, and (ii) by private individuals?

(b) What prices have been paid for these purchases?

(c) Is it true that these prices were very high?

(d) What is the total quantity of money involved?

(e) In what manner was payment settled and in how many cases was there a barter arrangement?

(f) What are the detailed terms of these barter arrangements and do Government propose to lay a copy of these terms on the table of the House?

Mr. B. B. Sen: (a) and (b). Statements giving the necessary details are laid on the table of the House.

(c) Yes.

(d) Approximately 57.7 crores.

(e) Except in the case of Indonesian paddy the payment for supplies in all cases was made in cash.

(f) A copy of the Agreement with the Indonesian Republic is placed on the table.

Purchase of foodgrains made by the Government of India on Government account during the current financial year

Country from which imported	Purchasing Agency	Kind of food-grain	Quantity in tons	Landed price per maund
Argentine	Dreyfus & Co. and Indian Govt. Trade Commissioner, Buenos Aires.	Maize	304,000	Rs. a. p. 13 3 4
Do.	Do.	Millets	16,000	11 1 0
Do.	Dreyfus & Co. London.	Rye	2,000	17 5 0
Do.	Do.	Kaffir Corn	750	12 13 0
Australia	Rallis Bros. Ltd., Karachi.	Millets	900	13 7 0
Do.	H. M. G.	Barley	1,050	13 8 0
Do.	Maars Corp., Madras	Millets	300	11. 4 0

*Not printed in these Debates. A copy has been laid in the Library of the House.

Country from which imported	Purchasing Agency	Kind of food-grains	Quantity in tons	Landed price per maund
				Rs. a. p.
Australia	Ministry of Food	Wheat	304,195	9 12
Do.	Do.	Wheat flour	128,157	13 5
Egypt	Indian Govt. Trade Commr., Egypt.	Millets	40,700	14 9 0
Do.	Do.	Barley	7,007	14 9 0
Iraq	Andrew Weir Co., Basra.	Millets	2,000	14 9 0
Do.	Saapen Co., Bombay.	Do.	170	17 9 0
Abyssinia	Besse & Co., Aden	Jowar	1,421	13 0 0
Canada	Indian Supply Mission.	Oats	30,358	11 1 0
U. S. A.	Do.	Milo	45,500	13 10 0
Do.	Do.	Wheat	410,695	12 0 1
Do.	Do.	Wheat flour	9,758	13 5 9
Do.	Do.	Corn	90,617	13 2 0
Turkey	Ministry of Food	Barley	4,900	9 10 9 to 13 9 0
Burma	Government of Burma.	Maize	5,030	9 15 6
Do.	Ministry of Food	Rice	149,444	16 0 0
Siam	Do.	Do.	8,700	9 12 0
Saigon and Indonesia	Do.	Do.	19,890	12 12 0
Brazil	Do.	Do.	51,682	13 15 0
		Total cost in	crores Rs.	30 0 0 57 72

Purchase of foodgrains through private individuals

Country from which imported	Agency	Grain	Quantity	Landed cost	Total cost
			Tons		Rs.
Abyssinia	Surashtra Seva Samiti.	Wheat	440	About Rs. 12-12-0 per maund.	1,52,000

Batavia, 27th July 1946

From

The Representative,
Government of India.

To

The Prime Minister,
Indonesian Republic.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to refer to recent conversations held between us and to state that the Government of India are grateful to the Indonesian Republic for the generous offer to supply paddy to India. They deeply appreciate your desire to relieve the critical food situation in India.

2. I am to assure you that the Government of India desire to assist Indonesia to relieve the shortage of consumer goods and will supply such goods as are required by you to the maximum extent possible.

3. The Government of India accept the offer to supply paddy on the terms and conditions mentioned below :—

(a) Seven hundred thousand tons of paddy will be supplied.

(b) The price of paddy will be rupees ten, annas thirteen and four pies per one hundred kilogrammes.

(c) Paddy will be delivered at ports in bags which will be supplied free, for this purpose, by the Government of India.

(d) The paddy to be supplied will be of fair average quality, clean and full grain, and without stem. Dust mixture will be kept at a minimum and, in any case, will not exceed five per cent. In case the quality of paddy offered is below the specification mentioned above, the shipping officer of the Government of India will have the option either to reject the supply or to purchase it at such lower price as may be mutually agreed between the representatives of the Government of India and the Indonesian Republic.

(e) The value of paddy supplied by the Indonesian Republic will be set off against the amount due to the Government of India on account of consumer goods supplied to the Indonesian Republic, and the balance, if any, will be paid in India to the authorised agents or bankers of the Indonesian Republic. If on the other hand, a net payment is due to the Government of India the Indonesian Republic will pay to the Government of India such amount in rupees in India.

(f) The Government of India will arrange shipping and will do all in their power to supplement local resources of lighters and tugs. You have kindly agreed to provide trained labour and such lighters and tugs as are available for loading operations. Labour and lighter charges will be paid by the Government of India at the current scale of payment for such services. The Indonesian Republic will pay the charges, in the first instance, and recover them from the Government of India in rupees at a rate of exchange to be mutually agreed between the Indonesian Republic and the Government of India.

(g) With a view to minimum delay in shipping, the Indonesian Republic have agreed to keep stocks of twenty thousand tons of paddy ready at each port. To assist the Indonesian Republic in movement of paddy the Government of India will endeavour to provide additional motor transport so far as they are able to do so.

(h) The Government of India will supply to the Indonesian Republic, on payment in India at prices agreed upon, such quantities of textile piecegoods, yarn, agricultural implements, motor tyres and tubes, cooking utensils and other consumer goods as are required by you and can be supplied by India. For handling and freight charges incurred by the Government of India will also be paid by the Indonesian Republic.

I take this occasion to renew to Your Excellency the expression of my high consideration.

K. L. PANJABI,

Representative of the Government of India.

Jakarta, 27th July, 1946.

From

The Prime Minister,
Indonesian Republic.

To

The Representative,
Government of India.

Dear Mr. Panjabi,

I have great pleasure in acknowledging receipt of your letter of the same date. It has been my earnest desire to relieve the critical food situation in India by supply of paddy from Indonesia.

2. I am very glad to note that the Government of India desire to assist the Indonesian Republic to relieve the shortage of consumer goods and that they will supply such goods as are required by us to the maximum extent possible.

3. I confirm that the Indonesian Republic will supply paddy to the Government of India on the terms and conditions mentioned below :—

(a) Seven hundred thousand tons of paddy will be supplied.

(b) The price of paddy will be rupees ten, annas thirteen and four pies per one hundred kilogrammes.

(c) Paddy will be delivered at ports in bags which will be supplied free for this purpose by the Government of India.

(d) The paddy to be supplied will be of fair average quality, clean and full grain, and without stem. Dust mixture will be kept at a minimum and, in any case, will not exceed 5 per cent. In case the quality of paddy offered is below the specification mentioned above, the shipping officer of the Government of India will have the option either to reject the supply or to purchase it at such lower price as may be mutually agreed between the representatives of the Government of India and the Indonesian Republic.

(e) The value of paddy supplied by the Indonesian Republic will be set off against the amount due to the Government of India on account of consumer goods supplied to the Indonesian Republic, and the balance, if any, will be paid in India to the authorised agents or bankers of the Indonesian Republic. If on the other hand, a net payment is due to the Government of India, the Indonesian Republic will pay to the Government of India such amount in rupees in India.

(f) The Government of India will arrange shipping and will do all in their power to supplement local resources of lighters and tugs. The Indonesian Republic will provide trained labour and such lighters and tugs as are available for loading operations. Labour and lighter charges will be paid by the Government of India at the current scale of payment for such services. The Indonesian Republic will pay these charges in the first instance and recover them from the Government of India in rupees at a rate of exchange to be mutually agreed between the Indonesian Republic and the Government of India.

(g) With a view to minimise delay in shipping the Indonesian Republic have agreed to keep stocks of twenty thousand tons of paddy at each port. To assist the Indonesian Republic in this the Government of India will endeavour to provide additional motor transport as far as they are able to do so.

(h) The Government of India will supply to the Indonesian Republic, on payment in India at prices mutually agreed upon, such quantity of textile piecegoods, yarn, agricultural implements, motor tyres and tubes, cooking utensils and other consumer goods as are required by us and can be supplied by India. The handling and freight charges incurred by the Government of India will also be paid by the Indonesian Republic.

With renewed expression of our sentiments of sympathy and friendship for India, I remain,

Yours sincerely,
SJAHRIR.

NUMBER OF FOOD SHIPS WHICH ARRIVED IN INDIA SINCE JANUARY 1946

242. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Secretary of the Food Department please state how many food ships have arrived in India from January, 1946 and at which ports they were landed?

(b) Why was it found necessary to take food ships to the port of Karachi, which is itself an exporting port?

(c) What arrangements have Government made for storage, landing and bagging at different ports for the requirements of the deficit areas in food?

(d) Have Government any information of the articles, which the ships, that brought food to India, carried and what was the freight rate charged on (i) bringing food to India, and (ii) taking other cargo from India?

Mr. B. B. Sen: (a) From the first January to 24th October 233 ships carrying foodgrains have arrived in India. I place a statement on the table of the House showing the number of ships which arrived at each port during each month of this period.

(b) Though Karachi is an exporting port, some imports had to be brought there at certain times of the year to meet shortages in areas normally served by Sind and the Punjab. It will be seen from the statement which I have just placed on the table that during the period January to April 16 ships were received at Karachi, during May and June six, none in July and August and four full

ships and three part cargoes in September and October. Early in the year the North of India had exhausted wheat surpluses and it was necessary to bring grain to Karachi to meet deficits in Delhi, N.W.F.P. and simialr other deficit areas. During July and August when the surpluses of Sind and the Punjab were available, no ships were brought in. Now that these surpluses are exhausted, grain must be brought to Karachi in order not merely to feed these areas but also to repay the loans of wheat which we have taken from Sind, Bahawalpur and the Punjab.

(c) The Government of India have appointed Clearing Agents at various ports whose business it is to clear and bag the grain and to deliver it in accordance with Government's instructions.

(d) Information regarding the cargo carried away by the ships in question from India and the freight charged on that cargo is not readily available. A statement showing the freight charged for food from various countries is placed on the table of the House.

I. Statement showing the number of ships carrying imported foodgrains received at Indian ports from 1st January 1946 to 24th October 1946

Month	Karachi		Okha		Bhavnagar		Bombay		Marmugoe		Cochin		Tuticorin		Cuddalore		Madras		Vizagapatnam		Calcutta		Mandapam		Total
	P.	F.	P.	F.	P.	F.	P.	F.	P.	F.	P.	F.	P.	F.	P.	F.	P.	F.	P.	F.	P.	F.	P.	F.	
January	2	...	...	...	...	...	9	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	3	...	...	1	3	...	...	20
February	6	...	...	...	...	...	2	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	3	4	...	...	22
March	3	...	...	...	...	...	2	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	...	...	12
April	5	...	...	...	...	...	1	7	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	16
May	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	9	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9	...	...	...	1	3	...	27
June	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	1	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	1	3	...	1	...	2	...	17
July	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	7	2	...	1	8	3	...	1	3	4	...	...	...	4	7	...	...	41
August	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	5	1	3	2	...	1	1	1	6	1	3	6	1	...	2	6	...	34
September	1	...	...	...	...	...	3	5	...	1	2	6	2	1	...	...	1	6	1	...	2	7	...	1	40
October (up to 24th October 1946)	3	3	...	...	...	...	4	5	...	1	...	4	...	2	...	...	1	7	...	...	...	1	...	...	31
Total	3	26	1	1	...	1	14	59	3	7	5	24	3	7	...	2	11	38	2	1	15	36	...	1	260

P. — Part Cargo.

F. — Full Cargo.

II. Statement showing freight for foodgrains imported into India

Australian Wheat and Wheat Flour

Name of foodgrain	Freight rate
Australian wheat—	
1. From West Australia—	
(a) Bulk wheat	63 sh. per ton.
(b) Bagged wheat	77 sh. per ton.
Australian Flour—	
2, From State other than West Australia—	
(a) Bulk wheat	76 sh. per ton.
(b) Bagged wheat	88 sh. per ton.
(c) Wheat flour	95 sh. 6d. per ton.
3. If discharged at—	
(a) Two ports—Range some coast extra charges.	2 sh. 6d. per ton.
(b) Extra range or Madras extra charges .	8 sh. 6d. per ton.
(c) Two ports—Madras Bombay extra charges.	6 sh. per ton.

American and Canadian Wheat

Early supplies	s. 103/6d. to s. 111 per ton.
A. For loadings completed up to and including 20th June 1946.	
(i) To East Coast India Ports— From U. S. Atlantic Ports U. S. A.	U. S. A. \$ 29.00 per ton.
From U. S. A. Gulf Ports —	U. S. A. \$ 29.75 per ton.
(ii) To West Coast India Ports from U. S. Atlantic Ports	U. S. A. \$ 25.75 per ton.
From U. S. A. Gulf Ports	U. S. A. \$ 26.75 per ton.
B. For loading completed on or after 21st June 1946.	
(i) To East Coast Indian Ports from U. S. A. Atlantic Ports.	U. S. A. \$ 30.00 per ton.
From U. S. A. Gulf Ports	U. S. A. \$ 30.75 per ton.
(ii) To West Coast India Ports from U. S. A. Atlantic Ports.	U. S. A. \$ 26.65 per ton.
From U. S. A. Gulf Ports	U. S. A. \$ 27.65 per ton.

These rates apply to cargoes landed at one port and discharged at one port. For more than one port of discharge, 50 Cents of U. S. A. currency per ton will be levied for each additional port to the highest applicable rate.

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Name of foodgrain	Freight rate
Argentine	Sh. 107-6d. per ton.
Burma	Rs. 46 per ton.
<i>Millets</i>	
Argentine	Sh. 107-6 d. per ton.
Egyptian	From sh. 60 to 65 per ton.
Iraqi	Rs. 55 per ton.
<i>Barley</i>	
Egyptian	From sh. 60 to 65 per ton.
<i>Rye, Kaffies Corn, Jawar, Oats and Milo</i>	
Argentine Rye	107 sh. 6d. per ton.
Canadian Oats	155 sh. per ton Rs. 3-12-10 per md. (East coast).
-	144 sh. 6d. per ton Rs. 3-8-9 per md. (West coast).

CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION *re* MEMBERSHIP OF INDIA OF INTERNATIONAL BODIES
e.g. COMBINED FOOD BOARD

243. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Secretary of the Food Department please state the manner in which India has been saddled with the membership of international bodies, such as the Combined Food Board, and the Combined Raw Materials Board, and what is the constitutional position in respect of these at the present moment?

(b) In how many such Boards is India involved?

(c) What is the influence of these Boards with regard to the (i) fixing of prices, and (ii) quantity exported to different destinations?

(d) Have Government received any protest against the fixing of prices in India of some of the materials through this machinery, and, if so, in which cases, and which are the articles that are affected in this manner, apart from tea, rubber, jute, shellac, mica and hides?

(e) Is it a fact that the interests of the Indian producer of raw materials were adversely affected through the operation of these Boards?

(f) When and in what manner do Government propose that India should be free to deal with these topics in India, instead of in London, as has been the case hitherto?

Mr. B. R. Sen: (a), (b), (c) and (f). So far as India's relationship with International Food Organisations is concerned, the attention of the Honourable Member is drawn to the opening portion of the "Memorandum on the Food position in India" laid on the table of the House at the beginning of this Session. The Combined Raw Materials Board and the Combined Production and Resources Board were dissolved long ago. India, however, still continues to be a Member of the Combined Textiles Committee at Washington. I lay on the table a copy of a document giving terms of reference and procedure of the Combined Textiles Committee. The Committee has no control over the fixation of prices of goods for export.

(d) This does not arise.

(e) No, Sir.

C. Textile C. Document 4.

Confidential.

March 29, 1946.

COMBINED TEXTILE COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference and Procedure

The United Nations continues to face substantial deficits in cotton textile products. This condition requires co-ordination of all cotton textile resources in order to assure the most equitable possible distribution.

The Combined Textile Committee at its first meeting on March 29, 1946 adopted the following terms of reference and outline of procedure as a means to ensuring an equitable distribution of limited supplies. In adopting these terms of reference, the Committee recognizes the right of each country to direct its own exports through its appropriate national agencies, and believes that Combined Textile Committee recommendations should cover only such adjustments as appear necessary to ensure effective co-ordination. It is understood that the fiscal and trade arrangements necessary to carry out national export programmes are solely the responsibility of the national fiscal authorities concerned.

1. *Terms of Reference.*—“To recommend to member governments the minimum quantities of broad woven cotton goods and cotton yarn to be made available by them, for export to the several importing countries including liberated territories, having regard to minimum requirements for maintaining essential civilian standards and preventing disease and unrest, to the ability of particular importing countries or agencies to procure such goods from the different main exporting markets and their opportunities of procurement from unallocated sources, and to the responsibility of all the main exporting countries to share in relieving the world shortage of cotton textiles; to advise on the distribution of any stocks or export capacity of conquered countries in textiles and textile products as may be required for these purposes.”

2. *Procedure.*—(a) *Production and its Allocation.*—About one month prior to the beginning of each quarter or allocation period (which may be three months, six months, or a year, depending upon which best suits the planning of national agencies concerned) the national supply agencies of each country should file, through its member on the Committee, a statement as to the anticipated production of cotton broad woven goods during the coming quarter or allocation period, and the division of this production as between the major claimants.

(b) *Requirements and Export Allocations.*—The export agencies of the supplying countries should file with the Committee, through their respective members, about one month prior to the beginning of the quarter or allocation period, a statement on cotton broad woven goods, setting forth:

(1) The total screened yardage import requirements of each country to whom exports are proposed for the coming quarter, together with a supporting statement, where necessary.

(2) The amount which it is intended to allocate to each country for the coming quarter, or, allocation period.

(c) *Staff Recommendations.*—The Staff of the Combined Textile Committee, after an analysis of the information contained in '1' and '2' above, and taking into account probable supplies from non-member countries, will develop a combined programme recommending such adjustments in the distribution of each country's export programme as appear appropriate to secure as equitable a distribution as is possible of available supplies; particularly to areas which are seriously undersupplied.

(d) *Committee Recommendation.*—The Committee members will review the Staff Recommendation and agree upon a final recommendation to be transmitted by each member to the agency in his country responsible for the allocation of cotton broad woven goods for export. This Recommendation should be issued prior to the beginning of a quarter or the allocation period.

(e) *Revision in Allocations.*—Each member will transmit to the Committee any amendments which are made in the Combined Export Programme, as issued by the Committee. It is understood that in the event an importing country is unable to take up all or part of any approved allocation, the national allocating agency shall inform the Combined Textile Committee as to the reallocation of this amount.

DISPOSAL OF TEXTILES BY DISPOSALS BOARD

244. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies please state the total quantity of textiles disposed of by the Disposals Board and how much total quantity still remains?

(b) What is the total quantity of ready-made clothes imported into India since the stoppage of hostilities?

(c) Have Government any information about the trade in second-hand clothing and, if so, have Government considered whether this trade should continue unrestricted and unchecked?

(d) Has any fumigation by chemical cleaning of second-hand clothing imported from abroad been done?

(e) Are Government aware that poor people are buying such clothing?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) A statement is laid on the table showing the total quantities of cotton textiles disposed of and remaining for disposal.

(b) Statistics in respect of imports of second-hand clothing are maintained in terms of value. The total value of such imports for the twelve months' period July 1945 to June 1946 amounted to Rs. 19,41,460.

(c) Government do not see any present necessity to interfere with the second-hand clothing trade.

(d) Enquiries are being made.

(e) Yes, Sir.

Statement showing total quantities of Cotton Textiles disposed of and remaining for disposal on 30th September 1946.

(1) *Piecegoods.*

Total quantity declared surplus.—120 million yards.

Balance yet to be disposed of.—80 million yards, which includes approximately 33 million yards in respect of which full particulars are awaited. Bulk of remaining 47 million yards consists of hospital items and canvas.

(2) *Yarn.*

Total quantity declared surplus.—1.5 million pounds.

Balance yet to be disposed of.—0.55 million pounds, which includes 0.24 million pounds in respect of which full particulars are awaited. Remaining 0.31 million pounds consists of specialised counts not suitable for weaving.

(3) *Sewing Thread.*

Total quantity declared surplus.—7.47 million Reels, Cops and Balls.

Balance yet to be disposed of.—4.98 million Reels, Cops and Balls which includes 3.8 millions in respect of which full particulars are awaited. Remaining quantity of 1.18 millions is under offer to Provinces.

(4) *Garments.*

Total quantity declared surplus.—6.48 million numbers.

Balance yet to be disposed of.—1.54 million numbers which includes 0.3 million numbers in respect of which full particulars are awaited.

(5) *Tapes, News, Cordages and Webbing*

Total quantity declared surplus.—74.40 million yards.

Balance yet to be disposed of.—29.5 million yards which includes 5.4 million yards in respect of which full particulars are awaited.

(6) *Miscellaneous.*

(A) *Kapok, Bunting, Lines Cotton, etc.*

Total quantity declared surplus.—1.99 million pounds.

Balance yet to be disposal of.—0.66 million pounds.

(B) *Tea Cloth, Gloves, Canvas Tanks and Buckets, Covers Waterproof, etc.*

Total quantity declared surplus.—1.06 million numbers.

Balance yet to be disposed of.—0.82 million numbers.

STEPS TO ENCOURAGE BUILDING OF HOUSES IN INDIA

245. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies please state the steps that Government have taken to encourage the building of houses in India?

(b) Have the Provincial Governments made any requests in the matter of control of steel, cement, timber and change of priority and for assistance in the matter of railway priority for building material?

(c) If so, what Provincial Governments and with what results and what was the response from the Central Government?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) The Government of India have urged upon Provincial Governments the desirability of taking all possible measures to stimulate the building of houses and have requested them to set up Building Materials Panels with this object.

(b) and (c). The Bombay Government suggested that the best method of encouraging building of houses might be to remove control over steel and cement. The Government of India removed their control over steel, but they have been compelled recently to reimpose the steel control owing to fall in production and the inadequate supplies now available. The Cement Control lapsed on the 1st October 1946, but has been reimposed by many of the provinces. Here also a central control may become necessary. In both cases however the Control will amount to the allocation of provincial quotas and the provincial governments will be left free to make quantities available for the construction of houses and buildings.

* MONEY REALISED BY DISPOSALS

246. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies please state the total amount of money realised by disposals month by month since the disposals work began?

(b) How and for what purpose are the moneys falling in the hands of Government used?

(c) How much is the estimated further realisation from the disposals?

(d) How much of the American material has been disposed of and how much remains to be disposed of?

(e) How much Government expect to pay to the Government of the United States of America in respect of the excess payable to them on this account in respect of American material?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) I regret that monthly figures are not readily available over the whole field. These are being collected and will be laid on the table in due course. From November 1943 to September 1946 total realisations were Rs. 55.15 crores.

(b) Proceeds from the disposal of surpluses are not earmarked for any specific purpose. Those from the disposal of India-owned surpluses are credited to the General Revenues of the Government of India and those from the disposal of U. K.-owned surpluses are credited to H. M. G.

(c) It is not possible to furnish an estimate in view of the uncertain factor involved.

(d) Approximately 40,000 motor vehicles and trailers and 60,000 tons of other stores were disposed of up to 30th September 1946. About 2,000 motor vehicles and 476,000 tons of other stores remain.

(e) The bulk of the American material remains to be disposed of. Here again, it is not possible to estimate the final total realisation and consequently the total amount payable therefrom to the United States of America.

RETENTION OF SOME OF THE RULES OF DEFENCE OF INDIA ACT UNDER SPECIAL ORDINANCES

247. *Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad: Will the Honourable the Law Member be pleased to state:

(a) if it is a fact that some of the rules framed under the Defence of India Act are still retained in original or repeated under special Ordinances;

(b) if so, what those rules are which are still in force; and

(c) the justification of the Government of India for not withdrawing these rules?

The Honourable Mr. Jogendra Nath Mandal: (a) and (b). The Emergency Provisions (Continuance) Ordinance, 1946, promulgated on the 25th September, continues in force with or without modification the provisions of the Defence of India Rules mentioned in the Schedule to the Ordinance to which the Honourable Member may refer. The Essential Supplies (Temporary Powers) Ordinance, 1946, promulgated on the same day, which was made in pursuance of the India (Central Government and Legislature) Act, 1946, provides for the maintenance of controls over the commodities mentioned in clause (a) of section 2 of the Ordinance and substantially reproduces the provisions of the Defence of India Rules under which such controls were previously exercised. The Requisitioned Land (Continuance of Powers) Ordinance, 1946, promulgated on the same day, which was also made in pursuance of the India (Central Government and Legislature) Act, 1946, provides for the continuance of all requisitions in force immediately before the expiry of the Defence of India Act and of the power to acquire requisitioned land in certain specified circumstances.

(c) The compelling grounds for the promulgation of these Ordinances were explained in a Press Note, dated the 14th September, 1946, of which a copy is laid on the table.

PRESS NOTE

Several emergency measures made during the war period are due to expire on the 1st October next, either because they have only been made for the duration of the war and six months thereafter or because they encroach upon the legislative or executive authority of Provinces and, therefore, will to the extent of that encroachment cease to have effect 6 months after the revocation of the Proclamation of Emergency under section 102 of the Constitution Act. The most important of such measures are the Defence of India Act and the Rules and the large number of "Control Orders" made under those Rules.

In particular, the economic controls applied on an all-India basis to the production, supply and distribution of essential commodities in short supply, like foodstuffs, textiles, coal, paper, etc., will lapse on the 1st October if no legislative action is taken before that date. Secondly, the expiry of the Defence of India Rules will result in the termination of all requisitions of immoveable property and the cessation of the Central Government's powers to acquire property upon which it has created valuable assets during the period of requisition or which it is necessary to acquire for the maintenance of essential supplies and service. Although these two matters fall within the provincial field, the Indian Legislature has been empowered by an Act of Parliament passed in March, last to make laws in respect of them.

Legislation within the normal powers of the India Legislature is also necessary to continue some of the emergency powers exercised during the war period in respect of the following matters:—

Trading with the enemy and custody of enemy property, control of foreign exchange and securities, control of capital issues, import and export of goods into or from India, Railway priorities, control of shipping and special provisions for safety at sea, avoidance of strikes and lock-outs and amicable settlement of trade disputes, regulating the supply of electrical energy by electric supply undertakings and house-rent control in Chief Commissioners' Provinces.

If an Interim Government had assumed office earlier it might have been possible to convene a session of the India Legislature and submit all the above legislative proposals in the form of Bills with a view to them being passed before the end of this month. Since this is not practicable, but at the same time it is essential to make some legislative provision for the continuance without a break of the emergency measures referred to above, the Government of India have decided to make such provision in the form of three Ordinances, which will be promulgated by H. E. the Governor General on or about the 25th September. The first, to be called the Essential Supplies (Temporary Powers) Ordinance,

will derive from section 2 of the India (Central Government and Legislature) Act, 1946, and provide for the continued operation of Central Control over trade and commerce in and the production, supply and distribution of the commodities mentioned in sub-section (1) (a) of that section. These commodities are foodstuffs, including edible oilseeds and oils, cotton and woollen textiles, paper, including newsprint, petroleum and petroleum products, spare parts of mechanically propelled vehicles, coal, iron and steel and mica. The second Ordinance, to be called the Requisitioned Land (Continuance of Powers) Ordinance, will derive from section 3 of the above-mentioned statute and provide for the continuance of all requisitions of "land" in force immediately before the expiry of the Defence of India Act and of the power to acquire any such land in certain specified circumstances and subject to payment of compensation in accordance with the provisions of section 19 of that Act. The third Ordinance, to be called the Emergency Provisions (Continuance) Ordinance, will provide for the continued operation of a few of the Defence of India Rules for the purposes indicated in the preceding paragraph.

LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT,
NEW DELHI;

The 14th September, 1946.

STEPS *re* ERADICATION OF CORRUPTION IN RAILWAYS AND APPOINTMENT OF HIGH POWER COMMITTEE

248. *Lala Deshbandhu Gupta: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state what steps, if any, Government have taken to strengthen the organization for eradicating corruption in the Railways?

(b) Have any steps been taken to direct Railway employees to show greater consideration and politeness to passengers generally, and to third class passengers particularly?

(c) Have any steps been taken to implement the recommendations of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways regarding the appointment of the High Power Committee? If so, when will the Committee begin to function, and what will be its terms of reference?

(d) What steps have been taken by Government to accelerate production of locomotives and manufacture of all the rolling stock and articles and fittings required for the Railways?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) The Honourable Member is referred to the answer I have just given to part (a) of Sardar Mangal Singh's Starred Question No. 205.

(b) All staff on railways including those having dealings with passengers are required by standing instructions to be helpful, courteous and civil, special emphasis having been laid on the necessity for extending courtesy and assistance to third class passengers. These instructions are repeated constantly through the medium of circulars, posters, and working time-tables and at meetings between officers and inspecting officials and staff. Incivility to the public has been specifically included in the list of offences meriting removal from service under the Discipline Rules. In addition, Complaint Books are maintained at stations in which complaints of incivility on the part of the staff can be recorded by the public. Notices at suitable places are exhibited, drawing the attention of the public to the fact that Complaint Books are maintained.

(c) It has been decided to set up a High Power Committee in accordance with the recommendation of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways. The exact composition of the Committee is still under consideration, but it will be presided over by a non-official Chairman. The terms of reference contemplated cover the points suggested by the Standing Finance Committee. The Committee can start its work only after Government have issued orders on the recommendations of the Adjudicator who is now engaged in investigating the matters referred to him. In order to expedite the work of the Committee when it starts, two officers, who will eventually form part of the Committee, have been placed on special duty for the collection of data and other preparatory work.

(d) *Locomotives.*—Government are proceeding with all possible speed to build a new workshop at Kanchrapara for local manufacture. Certain machinery has been ordered and some expenditure on works has also been authorized.

Government have also entered into a contract for the production of locomotives and spare boilers with the Tata Locomotive and Electric Company at Tatanagar. For this purpose, the Singbhum workshops of the E. I. Railway were sold to this Company on the 1st June 1945 and the firm are at present proceeding with the manufacture of boilers as the first step towards the early production of all the locomotives required in India.

Coaches.—There is a backlog existing which has to be made up, but there is no reason to suppose that the indigenous industry now existing *plus* the capacity of Railway Workshops cannot in a very short time make up for the deficiency which now exists. Thereafter, Railways themselves will have sufficient capacity to keep pace with demands from year to year as they did in pre-war days.

Capacity has been found with Messrs. Hindustan Aircraft Ltd. and the firms constituting the wagon panel, *viz.*, Braithwaites, Burns and Jessops, have the contract for 350 Broad Gauge lower class carriages. It is the intention to place orders for 100 Metre Gauge class bogie coaches on the wagon panel firms and on Hindustan Aircraft Ltd. when capacity becomes available.

Wagons.—Capacity of the wagon building panel in India is considered sufficient to cover the normal requirements of Railways *plus* considerable increases above normal requirements should these be found necessary.

Other materials and fittings.—As a result of the complete cessation of imports and the difficulty of purchasing from indigenous sources it was found necessary during the war to co-ordinate capacity of railway workshops. Rationalization Committees were formed that performed and continued to perform useful work to promote the self-sufficiency of railway workshops.

A classified provisional list of stores items required by Railways has been prepared by the Industries and Supplies Department which list covers well over 1,000 classes of items, including common user items. Of these, about 210 are imported. The Development wing of the Industries and Supplies Department has been formed for the purpose of bringing to the attention of potential manufacturers those imported articles which lend themselves to indigenous manufacture and the starting of new industries.

IMPROVEMENT OF CONDITIONS OF TRAVEL FOR THIRD CLASS PASSENGERS ON RAILWAYS

249. *Lala Deshbandhu Gupta: Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state the steps that have been taken by Government to relieve congestion in Railways and particularly to improve the conditions of travel for third class passengers?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: With regard to first part of the question, I would refer to the reply given by me on 81st October, 1946, to Starred Question No. 119, asked by Pandit Sri Krishna Dutt Paliwal.

As regards improvement in the conditions of travel, the standardisation of certain station amenities for third class passengers such as waiting halls, bathing facilities, improved latrine accommodation, better booking facilities, covering, lengthening and raising of platforms, foot overbridges etc. is intended. Long-range plans have been formulated to effect an improvement in the water supply in all coaches. For immediate purposes, arrangements have been made for the more frequent filling of water tanks.

The question of the provision of sleeping accommodation for a considerable percentage of third class passengers and of a larger number and better designed lavatories in coaches is under consideration in the Railway Board's post-war coach design. A new method of meeting the additional electric load which would be involved if fans are provided in third class coaches is also under close examination of the Railway Board, but no decision has yet been reached.

PROPOSED INTRODUCTION OF MESSAGE RATE SYSTEM FOR TELEPHONE CHARGES IN KARACHI, AHMEDABAD AND BOMBAY

250. *Seth Sukhdev: (a) Will the Secretary of the Communications Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that there is a proposal to introduce a Message Rate System of charges for telephones in Karachi, Ahmedabad and Bombay?

(b) If so, is it proposed to charge six pice per call besides a fixed monthly rental of Rs. 12/-?

(c) Are Government aware that the proposal as envisaged by Government will affect very harshly on the business community who in this age of speed and long-distances, conduct their business on telephone and as such, will have to pay many times more than what they are paying at present?

(d) Are Government aware that the proposed measure has been adversely criticised by the business community who have expressed themselves strongly against it?

Sir Harold Shoobert: (a) Yes.

(b) The fixed monthly rental will be Rs. 8 and the message rate one anna per call. These rates are exclusive of surcharges.

(c) No, the payment will be commensurate with the extent to which the service is used.

(d) Some commercial interests have expressed themselves against the change.

COMPLAINTS *re* INEFFICIENCY OF TELEPHONE SYSTEM IN KARACHI

251. *Seth Sukhdev: (a) Will the Secretary of the Communications Department be pleased to state whether Government are aware that there are constant complaints from telephone subscribers regarding inefficient telephone system in Karachi?

(b) Are Government aware that when telephones go out of order, it takes the management a number of days to put them in order, in spite of several requests and reminders to the Department?

(c) What steps do Government propose to take to put a stop to this state of affairs?

(d) Will Government consider the proposal to grant rebate to such of the subscribers whose telephones remain out of order for more than twenty-four hours?

Sir Harold Shoobert: (a) Government are not aware of any abnormal number of complaints regarding the Karachi telephone system.

(b) No; all interruptions and complaints are attended to as promptly as possible.

(c) Steps have already been taken to improve the efficiency of the telephone systems which unavoidably deteriorated owing to conditions created by war.

(d) No.

BACKWARD CONDITIONS IN ISTIMRARI AREAS OF AJMER-MERWARA

252. *Pandit Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava: (a) Will the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture please state if Government are aware of the backward conditions prevailing in the Istimrari areas of Ajmer-Merwara?

(b) Before a regular enactment on the subject is brought into force, do Government propose to introduce any interim relief to the agriculturist in Ajmer-Merwara from forced labour, unjustified lags, and unwarranted ejections at the sweet will of the Istimrardars? If so, what is the shape of the interim relief?

Sir Pherose Kharegat: (a) Government are aware of the fact that the tenants in Istimrari areas do not enjoy legal security of tenure. It is however reported that both as a matter of policy and custom it is not usual for an Istimrardar to disturb tenants of long standing. Moreover discretion is always exercised in the matter of ejection by the Revenue Officers in favour of the tenant.

(b) Government have appointed an officer to prepare draft tenancy legislation. As he will not take very long over this work, no interim measures are considered necessary.

DAMAGE TO CROPS BY DOMESTICATED WILD BOARS KEPT BY ISTIMRARDARS
OF AJMER-MERWARA

253. *Pandit Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava: (a) Will the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture please state if Government are aware of the practice prevailing among the Istimrardars of Ajmer-Merwara, who domesticate wild boars for sport and luxury-food, and feed them on the cultivator's standing crops, and that a fine of Rs. 51 and other punishment are imposed upon any cultivator who hurts or strikes these pet boars?

(b) Do Government propose to take steps for the discontinuance of these practices? If so, what?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) So far as can be ascertained three Istimrardars of Ajmer-Merwara possess preserves of wild boars. These boars sometimes break out of their enclosures and cause damage in neighbouring fields. While the Istimrardar prohibits the hurting or striking of the animals within the preserve, no such prohibition is binding on any villager in respect of an animal which causes damage to his field nor is he liable to be punished by the Istimrardar for doing so.

(b) Government will look into the matter further and decide what steps should be taken.

ABOLITION OF ZAMINDARI, JAGIRDARI AND ISTIMRARI SYSTEMS IN AJMER-
MERWARA AND OTHER CENTRALLY ADMINISTERED AREAS

254. *Pandit Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava: Will the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture please state if Government propose to abolish Zamindari, Jagirdari and Istimrari systems in the Province of Ajmer-Merwara and other Centrally Administered Areas? If so, do Government propose to set up a non-official Committee to collect all requisite data and information and to submit a report as to how, when and on what terms such abolition can be given effect to?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: An officer has been appointed recently for Ajmer-Merwara to draft suitable tenancy legislation and collect the requisite data and information. The question of appointing a Committee for Ajmer will be considered after his report is received. Conditions in other Centrally Administered areas differ considerably, and the case of each will be examined separately by Government in consultation with the administrations concerned.

EXTREME SHORTAGE OF SUGAR QUOTA FOR RURAL POPULATION OF AJMER-
MERWARA

255. *Pandit Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava: (a) Is the Secretary of the Food Department aware of the extreme shortage of sugar in the rural population of Ajmer-Merwara, and is it a fact that the quota allotted to rural areas hardly comes to one chhatak per family per month, as contrasted with twelve chhataks per head in the urban areas?

(b) Are Government aware that the major share of this quantity of sugar allotted to the rural area is being taken by Government officials in the Police Departments located there by the Istimrardars, Jagirdars and their staff and that the common villagers get nothing?

(c) Do Government propose to increase the quota of sugar allotted in order that the rural population also may have its due share?

Mr. B. R. Sen: (a) There is an acute shortage of sugar in Ajmer-Merwara as in the rest of the country. The sugar ration in the urban areas is three chhataks per week. As sugar rationing has not been introduced in rural areas the monthly quantity sold to each family in the rural areas cannot be stated.

(b) In distributing the quantity allotted to the rural areas, the normal consumers are given preference.

(c) In the pre-war days factory sugar was consumed almost wholly by the urban population. During the war years the production of sugar has fallen by 20 per cent. So long as production does not improve there does not appear to be any prospect of allocating increased quantities of factory sugar to Ajmer-Merwara for rural areas.

• SUPPLY OF GUR FOR RURAL AREAS OF AJMER-MERWARA DURING LAST
SIX MONTHS

256. *Pandit Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava: (a) Will the Secretary of the Food Department please state what quantity of Gur has been released for supply in rural area of Ajmer-Merwara during the last six months?

(b) Is it a fact that there is acute shortage of Gur in the rural population of Ajmer-Merwara?

(c) What check, if any, is placed on the importers of Gur in rural areas to see that the same is released only to the consumers? What precautions, if any, Government contemplate to take in future to see that Gur is supplied to the *bona fide* consumers only and that it does not go into Black Market?

Mr. B. B. Sen: (a) The quantity of Gur allotted to the rural area of Ajmer sub-division during the last six months was about 7,000 maunds. Similar information for other rural areas of Ajmer-Merwara is not readily available.

(b) Supplies of Gur in rural areas are reported to be inadequate.

(c) To ensure proper distribution of Gur importers have been asked to sell only to approved retail dealers on permits issued by the Sub-Divisional Officers. Detailed distribution is at present supervised by the revenue staff but elected primarily panchayats at Rural Distributing Centres are being formed for proper distribution to *bona fide* consumers.

PROVISION OF ELECTRIC FANS IN THIRD CLASS COACHES ON GOVERNMENT
RAILWAYS

257. *Mr. P. K. Salve: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state whether Government propose to provide electric fans for the third class coaches on all Government Railways?

(b) Do Government propose also to provide cushions in the third class coaches for the comfort of the passengers?

(c) Is it a fact that Government have purchased a large number of electric fans from the military? If so, will they inform the Assembly for what purpose these fans will be used?

(d) Do Government propose to make arrangements for drinking water supply in the third class coaches by water-taps?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) Government are considering the practicability of installing fans in III class carriages but a final decision has not yet been taken.

(b) Provision of cushions in III class coaches is not contemplated.

(c) Railways have purchased 99 desk fans and 1,000 ceiling fans from the Director-General of Disposals. These fans are for use in railway offices and station buildings.

(d) It is the intention to provide a small alcove in compartments with a water tap but this will be for washing purposes only.

CANCELLATION OF NAGPUR-BOMBAY EXPRESS TRAINS

258. *Mr. P. K. Salve: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state whether Government are aware of the inconvenience caused to the public by cancelling the Nagpur—Bombay Express trains which used to run between these Stations? If so, do Government propose to resume this train service?

(b) Are Government proposing to run Mail trains direct between Madras and Delhi *via* Nagpur? If so, from what date? Are Government aware that only one train *vis.* the Grand Trunk Express, runs at present between these stations? Are they aware that this single train is not enough to cope with the heavy passenger traffic between these stations?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply given to parts (d) and (g) of Mr. Gole's Starred Question No. 115, on the 31st October, 1946.

(b) Government are aware that the only direct train between Delhi and Madras *via* Nagpur is the Grand Trunk Express and that, under present conditions, this train is frequently overcrowded on certain sections of the journey. Some time ago, a proposal was initiated by the Railway Board for a bi-weekly mail train between Delhi and Madras, but due to a shortage of rolling stock further consideration of the proposal had to be deferred. The matter will again be reviewed towards the end of the year but, meantime, it is not possible to indicate a definite date by which the additional service is likely to be inaugurated.

INCONVENIENCES EXISTING IN THIRD CLASS WAITING ROOMS ON DIFFERENT RAILWAYS

259. ***Mr. P. K. Salve:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state whether Government are aware of the several inconveniences existing in the Third Class Waiting Rooms on different Railways, such as dirt, lack of good bathing and latrine arrangements and absence of clean food services? If so, do Government propose to take steps to remedy them at an early date?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: Yes. The question of cleanliness and sanitation of station premises has been receiving the special attention of the Railway Board for some time. With a view to promoting a healthy spirit of rivalry among the station staff in this important matter, a Competition scheme has been started which provides for awards of trophies and monetary prizes to the staff of stations which are judged to be the cleanest and tidiest throughout the year.

Government have every intention of extending and improving arrangements for latrines, bathing and accommodation generally at stations as early as possible and in this connection, have laid down certain minimum standards based on the number of passengers normally catered for to ensure that adequate amenities are made available to the travelling public.

Every effort is being made to improve the quality of food served to passengers by arranging periodical medical inspections. Members of Railway Local Advisory Committees have also been invited to make occasional tours on the railways and offer suggestions for improvement.

RUNNING OF MILITARY SPECIAL TRAINS

260. ***Mr. P. K. Salve:** (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state the number of military special trains which are still allowed to run at present? Are Government aware that several coaches on these trains are found empty of passengers?

(b) How many passenger coaches first, second and third class, are still with the military for their exclusive use? When are they likely to be returned for the use of the civil traffic?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) The latest figures available are for the month of September 1946. These figures show that the total number of Military Personnel Special trains run during that month was 517.

These special trains are divided into two categories as follows:—

(i) Military Mail trains which run at regular intervals between specific stations carrying Service personnel travelling on leave or duty as individuals or small parties;

(ii) Military Special trains which are run as required for large parties of Service personnel.

The number of Military Mail and Military Special trains, respectively, run during September 1946, were: Military Mail trains—421, Military Special trains—96 (Total—517).

Government are not aware that several coaches on these trains run empty, but it has been brought to their notice that Military Mails and Specials do at

times have some vacant seats. The Railway Board are constantly pressing the Defence Department to release stock handed over to them at a quicker rate than is occurring at present. The Railway Board have also asked that Military Mails should be made available to civilian traffic, but at the time when this question was put to them the Defence Department were unable to agree to such a course.

(b) On the 1st November, 1946, the number of different classes of coaching vehicles still with the Military for their exclusive use were:

1st and 2nd class bogie composite carriages	115
3rd class bogie carriages	548
3rd class and luggage bogie composite carriages	82
3rd class 4-wheeled carriages	46
Total	791

Since the cessation of hostilities, the Defence Department have been releasing rolling stock from time to time as it becomes surplus to military requirements and these releases continue. The Railway Board also is keeping in close touch with the Movements Directorate with a view to obtaining release of coaching stock to the greatest extent possible. It cannot be said at present, however, when all the stock at present in use by the Defence Department will be returned for Civil use, although it is hoped that the greater part of it will be returned by 31st March 1947.

ENLARGEMENT OF APPELLATE JURISDICTION OF FEDERAL COURT

261. *Seth Govind Das: Will the Honourable the Law Member please state:

(a) whether Government propose to enlarge the appellate jurisdiction of the Federal Court and confer thereon supplemental powers to enable the said Court to hear all the appeals which are at present heard by the Privy Council; and

(b) whether Government propose to abolish the system of appeals to the Privy Council as it involves heavy expenditure and takes a very long time?

The Honourable Mr. Jogendra Nath Mandal: (a) and (b). The Honourable Member will recollect that the proposals published with the Legislative Department Resolution No. F. 209/41 C. & G. (Judicial), dated the 15th January, 1945, included a proposal that sub-sections (1) and (3) of section 206 of the Constitution Act should be brought into force to the exclusion of sub-section (2) thereof with the effect of empowering the Indian Legislature to vest the Federal Court with a civil appellate jurisdiction concurrent with that of the Privy Council and of leaving the choice of the forum of appeal to the option of the party to whom a right of appeal had accrued. The large volume of opinion elicited by the publication of the proposals clearly established that there was no general support either for this proposal in its original form or for the more far reaching proposal embodied in part (b) of the question. In these circumstances the Resolution of which the late Law Member gave notice in the course of the Budget Session recommended that the question should not be pursued. The present Government do not propose to reopen the matter which is linked with the question of the creation of a Supreme Court for India on which the attitude of Government was explained in the reply to Mr. Sanyal's Starred Question No. 188 of the 31st October, 1946.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION IN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY BASED ON DRAFT HINDU CODE

262. *Seth Govind Das: Will the Honourable the Law Member please state whether Government propose to take early steps to introduce legislation based on Hindu Code, in the Legislative Assembly?

The Honourable Mr. Jogendra Nath Mandal: The Honourable Member is presumably referring to the draft Hindu Code prepared by the Hindu Law Committee. On this assumption, Government must obviously await the receipt

of the Committee's report before considering their course of action. They understand that the report is likely to reach them before the end of the current month.

FORMATION OF ALL-INDIA BAR COUNCIL UNDER FEDERAL COURT

263. *Seth Govind Das: Will the Honourable the Law Member please state whether Government propose to take steps for the formation of an All-India Bar Council under the Federal Court with powers to regulate and supervise the legal profession throughout the country?

The Honourable Mr. Jogendra Nath Mandal: I have nothing to add to the reply to Unstarred Question No. 4, of the 28th October, 1946, to which the Honourable Member is referred.

STATEMENT *RE* INDUSTRIES TO BE PLANNED AND DEVELOPED

264. *Seth Govind Das: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies please lay on the table of the House a statement giving the lists of industries which are to be planned and developed (i) by the State, (ii) under the State control and supervision, and (iii) through private enterprise?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to paragraph 7 of the Statement of Government's Industrial Policy issued in April 1945 which sets forth broadly the limits of State participation in industrial enterprise.

Government have not yet come to any conclusion as to the respective spheres of State and private enterprise in regard to industries.

LOCATION OF BASIC AND MEDIUM INDUSTRIES IN PROVINCES

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

(a) whether Government propose to consider the location of basic and medium industries in different Provinces; and

(b) if so, which of such industries are to be located in the Northern Districts of the Central Provinces *i.e.* the Nerbudda and Chhattisgarh territories?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) In respect of all industries for which targets of total production have been framed, regional quotas of production have been (and will be) allotted, wherever possible, after taking into account the availability of raw materials, nearness to markets, etc.

(b) One Textile Mill has so far been allotted to the Nerbudda area.

ACTION OF RESOLUTION *re* RESERVATION OF MILL YARN FOR USE OF HAND-LOOMS

266. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state what action has so far been taken by Government to implement the resolution passed by the Assembly in the last budget session recommending that 33 1/3 of the mill yarn produced in this country should be reserved for use of handlooms? On what occasions have Government considered the implementation of the resolution, and with what results?

(b) What is the present position with regard to supply of mill yarn to handloom weavers?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) Regarding the first part of the question, the Honourable Member's attention is invited to my predecessor's answer to Unstarred Question No. 12, asked by Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal on 28th October, 1946. Regarding the second part of this part of the question, Government considered the desire expressed in this resolution at the time they were formulating their decision on the Report of the Post-war Planning Committee (Textiles). As a result Government decided that all Provinces should leave at least 25 per cent. of their new spindlage uncovered by looms in order that the yarn in question might be available for handloom weavers.

(b) At present handloom weavers are getting roughly one-fourth of the total yarn produced in India, or about 90,000 bales a month.

INCREASED SUPPLY OF LOCAL YARN TO WEAVERS IN MADRAS PROVINCE

287. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state whether Government are aware of the fact that the Madras Government has admitted that the yarn now supplied to handloom weavers is enough to provide employment for a week in the month and also that widespread unemployment prevails among the 25 lakhs of handloom weavers in the Madras Province?

(b) When was the All-India Yarn Distribution Scheme last reviewed, and when is it due for further review?

(c) Do Government propose to review it at the earliest opportunity in order to stop the export of yarn from Madras and increase the supply of local yarn to local weavers?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) The Government of India are not aware of any statement made by the Madras Government to the effect that yarn supplied to handloom weavers is enough to provide employment for only one week in the month. On the contrary, a memorandum drawn up by the Honourable Member himself in March 1946 stated that weavers were finding employment for about 10-15 days a month. I imagine that the estimate made by the Honourable Member is probably about correct, *i.e.*, that handloom weavers in Madras are employed on an average about half the month.

(b) The principle of the Scheme is to allot to each consuming area a roughly equal percentage of what Government estimate to be its requirements. The principle of the scheme is not subject to review, but the estimates of the requirements of consuming areas are continually under review.

(c) Government do not propose to stop export of yarn from Madras as suggested by the Honourable Member. Madras produces more yarn than her quota entitles her to, and any stoppage of exports would be at the expense of weavers of other provinces. Under any all-India distribution scheme she must export the excess over her fair share of production. I take it the Honourable Member would not suggest similar stoppage of exports in respect of, say, food-grains.

RECONSTRUCTION OF ALL-INDIA HANDLOOM BOARD

288. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state when the reconstitution of the All-India Handloom Board is due?

(b) Have Government come to any decision regarding the requests of the All-India Handloom Weavers' Congress, the Madras Provincial Handloom Weavers' Congress and Provincial Weavers' Congresses of Central Province and Bombay for representation on that Board?

(c) Do Government propose to accord recognition to the Weavers' Congresses referred to above and invite them to send their representatives to the All-India Handloom Board?

(d) Is it a fact that the Madras Provincial Handloom Weavers' Congress has suggested to Government that the President of the All-India Handloom Board should be a Non-official representing the Handloom Weavers and that the quota of representation allotted to handloom weavers should be increased? Do Government propose to give effect to those suggestions when the Board is next reconstituted?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) The formal letters of appointment of members of the All-India Handloom Board were issued, with the exception of one official member, in June 1945. These members were appointed to hold office for one year in the first instance. In May 1946 the Government of India wrote to Provinces suggesting that the Board should be reconstituted on an organisational basis, that is to say that members should be nominated by various handloom organisations rather than by Provincial Governments. Most of the Provincial Governments have not yet replied to the Government of India's

letter. In the meantime the Handloom Board is carrying on with its present personnel.

(b) Not yet, in view of the fact that the Central Government are still awaiting replies from Provincial Governments.

(c) This matter will be decided when we have received replies from Provincial Governments.

(d) As regards the first part of the question, the answer is in the affirmative. As regards the second part of the question, a decision on this point cannot be taken until we hear from Provincial Governments.

REPRESENTATIONS BY THE WEAVERS' CONGRESSES

269. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state whether Government have given any consideration to the representations of the deputationists of the Weavers' Congresses that have met the Members during the last year?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Yes, Sir. The deputationists were led by the Honourable Member himself, and the points which they made were as follows:

(a) The numbers of handlooms throughout India shown in the Fact-Finding Committee's Report, published in 1942, are out of date.

(b) Handloom weavers should be given more yarn.

(c) The controlled prices of yarn and dyes should be reduced.

(d) Yarn should be distributed in Provinces through co-operative organisations.

(e) The Resolution passed by this House in February 1946, to the effect that mills should be compelled to release at least one-third of their yarn to handloom weavers, should be implemented by Government.

(f) Interchange of handloom goods between Provinces should be permitted.

(g) More dyes and chemicals should be made available to handloom weavers.

(h) The All-India Handloom Board should be made more representative.

The views of and action taken by Government on these suggestions are as follows:

(a) and (b). It is quite correct that the number of handlooms in action throughout India has increased since the Fact-Finding Committee made their enquiry. This is mainly due to the fact that since then a cloth shortage has developed and the Government of India do not control the prices of handloom cloth; in consequence, large number of handlooms which were not used in peacetime are now in operation. A large number of looms which used to weave silk and rayon yarn, have also shifted over to cotton weaving for lack of these yarns. The Government of India have obtained up-to-date figures of the number of handlooms now in operation on cotton yarn, and make allowances accordingly in their yarn distribution scheme. The Government of India make as much yarn available for handloom weavers as is possible. In fact, the supplies of yarn now made to handloom weavers all over India come to something like 80,000 bales a month, as against less than 70,000 bales a month consumed by them in the years immediately prior to the outbreak of war.

(c) The controlled prices of the finer counts of yarn have been further reduced this year; but Government found it necessary, mainly owing to the increased price of Indian cotton, to increase slightly the controlled prices of the coarser counts of yarn. The controlled prices of dyes have been reduced this year.

(d) The manner in which yarn is distributed within a Province is a matter for the Provincial Government concerned. According to the Government of India's information, yarn is distributed through co-operative organisations in Madras, Bihar, Bombay, Bengal and the U. P.

(e) This point has already formed the subject of a separate reply.

(f) Interchange of handloom goods between Provinces is now permitted.

(g) Imports of dyes and chemicals are still only about 50 per cent. of India's requirements. The Raw Materials Committee of the All-India Handloom Board advise the Textile Commissioner on supplies to the handloom industry, and all that is possible is done for the Industry.

(h) This point is the subject of a separate question put by the Honourable Member.

SELECTION OF DELEGATES TO WASHINGTON WORLD FOOD BOARD COMMISSION

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

(a) on what basis the Delegation to the Washington World Food Board Commission was selected;

(b) why an official was chosen as an alternative to the delegate;

(c) why a representative of the Reserve Bank of India was not included although a representative of the World Bank and Monetary Fund was being invited to Washington;

(d) why no representation was given to the Federation of Rural peoples organisations; and

(e) whether any scheme was prepared or is being prepared by the Government of India to be submitted to this Commission?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) The delegation to the preparatory Commission for examining the question of the establishment of a World Food Board was selected on the basis of the qualifications required. The delegation had to consist of responsible and experienced representatives assisted by eminent and expert technical advisers.

(b) Because he was considered to be the most suitable person for the purpose in view of his experience in matter relating to India's food problems.

(c) The Reserve Bank authorities were unable to spare a suitable officer. The question is however being further examined in consultation with the Finance Department.

(d) A representative of agriculturists was included in the delegation who has made a special study of the questions that are likely to come up before the Commission.

(e) The Preparatory Commission will itself prepare the scheme. The Indian Delegation has however been suitably briefed as regards the attitude to be adopted by them. A copy of the brief is laid on the table.

Memorandum on the attitude to be taken by the Indian Delegation at the Preparatory Commission.

The Indian Government accept the general objectives of the Director General's proposals for the World Food Board as summarised in the report of Committee I of Commission (C) of the Copenhagen Conference, viz.,

(a) developing and organising production, distribution and utilisation of the basic foods to provide diets on a health standard for the peoples of all countries, and

(b) stabilising agricultural prices at levels fair to producers and consumers alike.

The Indian Government would also like to lay stress on another objective mentioned in the Director General's proposals, viz., the establishment of food reserves adequate for any emergency that might arise due to failure of crops in any part of the world. With the experience India has had of the difficulties in acquiring supplies during her recent periods of shortages, the Indian Government is particularly anxious that there should be established a World Reserve which can be freely drawn upon by countries in need and which will be so located that difficulties of procurement and transport would be the minimum.

2. The Government of India also agree that the achievement of these objectives requires the establishment of appropriate international machinery with the necessary powers and funds. The officers of such a body may be located in different regions according to the commodity concerned. Since the meeting of the FAO Conference at Copenhagen, Government have had time to examine this question. It is accepted that without an international machinery these objectives cannot be achieved. The Government do not propose at this

time to commit themselves to the acceptance of any particular type of organisation nor will they do until they have before them a complete picture which, presumably, will be available at the end of deliberations of the Preparatory Commission. In the meanwhile, the Indian Delegation will take full part in the discussions of the Preparatory Commission and will make every effort to secure the evolution of a machinery which will effectively achieve the objectives mentioned in the Director General's proposal.

3. The Indian Delegation should emphasise the enormity of the problem that confronts India, if she is to raise the consumption levels of her people to a nutritionally-desired standard, within a measurable distance of time. Some indication of the increases in production required in various types of foods has been given in the Government's statement of policy on Food and Agriculture. Normally, India pays for her imports of industrial machinery and finished products by her exports of raw materials. The post-war development plans of India include large scale industrialisation which will require correspondingly increased imports of machinery and accessories. If at the same time India has to increase her imports of foodgrains by many million tons every year to maintain her consumption levels, she will obviously be unable to pay her way. It is clear that India will have to depend largely on her own efforts, and increase her own domestic supplies if she is to be in a position to raise the consumption levels of her people. In this task, India could legitimately ask for the support of the World Food Board in obtaining machinery and fertilisers and such technical services as are required for the expansion of agricultural production, as well as equipment for the manufacture of such machinery and fertilisers and technical advice for running the same. In view of the enormity of the supply problem in India and impossibility of its being met, to any substantial extent, by imports, India would be entitled to ask for priority of allocation on the world supplies of farm machinery and fertilisers, and equipment for manufacturing the same. She should also incidentally make it perfectly clear that it will not be possible for India to accept any limitations on a policy of expansion of agricultural production in India and if the point arises it may be made clear that this includes the right to encourage production by giving production subsidies. It may be that costs of production of certain agricultural commodities may be higher in India than they are in some other countries. But this difference in costs is likely to diminish with the application of science and modern methods to Indian agriculture. In any case, looking to the difficulty of India's financing large imports, the difficulty of finding alternative employment for the large number of her population employed in agriculture, and the difficulty of getting full employment and of increasing purchasing power within the country without adequate agricultural development, Government is convinced of the need for evolving a determined policy of expanding agricultural production within the country; and they trust that, in doing this, they will receive the full co-operation of the World Food Board.

4. A policy of maximising production will obviously depend for its effectiveness both on the adequacy and the stability of the prices payable to the producers. As regards stabilisation, Government of India have been thinking, for some time past, of inaugurating a policy of price stabilisation in their own country, and they welcome this attempt at world stabilisation of agricultural prices.

They trust that the world buffer stocks would be available as a complement to the country's own buffer stocks and help to make more effective price control operations within India.

Presumably the prices which the World Food Board will be stabilising will be those referred to by the Economic Committee as 'Class I international prices. It must, however, be made clear that owing to differences in economic conditions, it would not be possible to have parity of internal prices with the international prices. In the long run, no doubt, internal prices in any one country will have to be linked fairly closely to international prices particularly if there is going to be stabilisation. But there will have to be a transitional period during which every attempt will be made to increase the efficiency of Indian agriculture, and lower the cost of production per unit. During this transitional period, the length of which can not be defined at this moment, it will be necessary for the Government of India to have freedom to have internal price brackets that may be significantly at variance with the international price brackets that may be determined by the World Food Board. There is no reason why these exporting countries should be put in a position to make excessive profits simply because the Indian peasants must, for the sake of his standard of living, be allowed, for the time being higher prices.

International prices for the chief exporting countries should therefore be calculated on basis of allowing them reasonable profits on their costs and not on the basis of the internal Indian Prices.

Government however, will be willing to co-operate with the price operations of the World Food Board in so far as its own international transactions are concerned, and abide by the World Price brackets. In other words, they will be willing to see that their export and import prices are within the brackets set out by the World Food Board. It will also be necessary to evolve some technique for dealing with a situation in which internal prices and international prices differ. In this connection the feasibility of canalising trade in food between countries through Government channels or Commodity corporations as also the practicability of instituting the necessary control over distribution and profits in the food trade may be explored. In any case, Government of India must reserve to

itself the right to see that the operations of this world food reserve do not materially affect the internal price structure to the detriment of the Indian peasant.

5. The Government of India welcome the proposal that some supplies of food should be made available to needy countries at Class II prices. In fact, it would not be possible for India to finance that volume of imports which the nutritional considerations involved even on a very modest scale, would still require. India has to look to the World Food Board for making available supplies of certain important foodgrains and foodstuffs at concessional (class II) prices, so that this could be used in conjunction with national supplies for wider schemes of food distribution within the country, specifically from the point of view of meeting the requirements of the vulnerable sections of the community. Government would willingly lay down appropriate safeguards on the utilisation of such imports, in order that it may not affect adversely the interests of either foreign or domestic producers, and, at the same time, will be used in such a manner as to meet the requirements of those most in need in the country from the point of view of their vulnerable status or their low purchasing power. This kind of requirement of import at concessional prices would not be a permanent requirement but would only be needed as a transitional measure to help the country to raise its standards of consumption during the transitional period, when every effort will be made in India, on the one hand, to increase its own domestic output of agricultural produce, and on the other, to further the economic development of the country, and thereby increase its capacity to finance all its import requirements at international (class I) prices.

6. As regards the question of an Emergency Reserve, it has been estimated that a reserve of not less than 2 million tons of cereals will be required by India in order to control prices and face shortages. We would like the World Food Board to hold as much of this 2 million tons as possible, provided it is located in India, and allotments made to India are treated as a first charge on such reserves. Government have not yet decided what quantity they should hold themselves as an absolute reserve, but will take a decision on this question after they have obtained a comprehensive picture of the size of the World Food Board stocks, its location and composition, and the terms and conditions on which Member countries could draw upon these stocks to meet their requirements.

7. As regards the structure and constitution of the World Food Board, it need hardly be said that India should have an effective representation in all the Executive Bodies of this Organisation, and be in a position effectively to influence decisions regarding production, distribution, utilisation, price fixation, and operation of emergency and buffer stocks. As regards the financing, every attempt should be made to see that India is not made to pay an unduly large share of the finances capital and operating of the new Organisation. As the benefit of stabilisation of international prices will largely accrue to the exporting countries it is not fair that they should be asked to pay a larger share of the cost involved.

8. The above represents a general indication of the Government of India's views on the problems that will come up for discussion before the World Food Board. Government are anxious to see that the proposed World Food Board would serve India's interests in the following manner :

- (1) help to secure concrete facilities for expanding agricultural production in India;
- (2) help to provide India with grain during periods of shortage;
- (3) help to secure imports of certain foodgrains and foodstuffs at concessional prices for specified schemes of distribution to the vulnerable groups in India;
- (4) help to provide the kind of insurance they have themselves been contemplating in pursuance of their own policy of internal price stabilisation and maintenance of reserve stocks.

9. It is expected that the Delegation will try their best to see that in the constitution, structure and functions of the World Food Board, the fulfilment of these objectives is borne in mind.

PERCENTAGE RISE IN PRICE OF SUGAR AND SUGAR-CANE

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

- (a) if the price of sugar has been raised; and if so, when and by what percentage;
- (b) whether the price of sugar-cane has been correspondingly raised; and if so, by what percentage; and if not, why not;
- (c) whether Government are aware of the Madras Government's move to control prices of jaggery (gur), and whether it is in consonance with any All-India Policy laid down by the Government of India; and
- (d) whether it is the intention of Government to discourage the production of sugar-cane and gur; if not, why do Government impose controls over the prices of gur and thus bring down these prices?

Mr. B. R. Sen: (a), (b) and (d). The ex-factory price of sugar is fixed by the Government of India in relation to the price of sugar-cane supplied to factories, which is fixed by the Provincial Governments. The Government of India in consultation with the Provincial Governments has recently enhanced the ex-factory price of sugar by approximately 26 per cent. Their object is to enable Provincial Governments to fix a correspondingly enhanced price for sugar-cane in order to encourage its cultivation with due regard to India's needs for both sugar and other foodstuffs. The increase in the price of sugar-cane is likely to be about 33 per cent.

(c) Yes, Sir. The object of gur control is to secure that both sugar and gur are produced and distributed at prices equitable to producers and consumers.

PUBLICATION OF DECISIONS OF INCOME-TAX APPELLATE TRIBUNAL

272. *Seth Govind Das: (a) Is the Honourable the Law Member aware that on account of the provisions of section 54 (i) of the Income Tax Act, the decisions of Income Tax Appellate Tribunal cannot be published and are therefore not available to the assesseees for citation or reference?

(b) What steps does he propose to take to help the assesseees to know the Tax Law as interpreted by the Appellate Tribunal?

The Honourable Mr. Jogendra Nath Mandal: (a) Yes.

(b) A decision by the Tribunal which involves a question of law of any importance is almost invariably made the subject of a reference to a High Court under section 66 of the Act, and the Tribunal's statement of the case which indicates the rational of its own decision is habitually included in the report of the High Court's judgment in the series known as Income-tax Reports. In these circumstances Government do not consider that any useful purpose would be served by permitting the publication of decisions of the Tribunal as such, or that any other action is required.

BY-PRODUCTS OF COAL

273. *Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) the by-products of coal that have been undertaken in India (i) before the last Great War, (ii) during the last Great War, and (iii) after the last Great War;

(b) what other important and valuable by-products can and should be undertaken forthwith;

(c) what steps are being taken by the present Government so that the existing opportunities for the manufacture of by-products are not wasted and that the collieries are obliged and helped in undertaking industrially and commercially useful by-products immediately; and

(d) whether Government are consulting scientists and experts in such matter and whether they are taking the assistance of the Indian Science Congress?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) Before the war, the by-products obtained from coal consisted of coal-tar, coal gas and ammonia. Coal-tar was distilled in the main to obtain road tars, creosotes, disinfectants and pitch. During the war the following additional products were extracted from coal-tar: Naphthalene, Phenol, Cresolic acid, and small quantities of tar bases such as pyridine.

Two large recovery plants were set up by the Government at the Steel Works at Jamshedpur and Hirapur for the recovery of Benzene and Toluene from the coke oven gas.

No other by-products have been manufactured in appreciable quantities since the termination of the war.

(b) From the primary products of coal distillation such as benzene, toluene, phenol, naphthalene, etc., a large number of intermediates and synthetic products can be obtained. These chemicals are of great importance as drugs, anti-septics, dyes, solvents, photographic chemicals and perfumes, and for the

manufacture of explosives, synthetic resins, etc. The manufacture of intermediates and synthetic products from the primary coal-tar products, has not yet been developed in the country. The Panel on Fine Chemicals, Drugs and Pharmaceuticals set up by the late Planning and Development Department has dealt with these problems. The report of the Panel has recently been received.

(c) These suggestions will receive consideration when the recommendations of the Panel are examined.

(d) The Government is in close touch with scientists and experts. Through the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, it is establishing a Fuel Research Institute at Digwadih—Dhanbad for advice and research on the problems and similar matters connected with the uses of fuel. They have also set up several Advisory Committees on which members of the industry and prominent scientists are represented. The Indian Science Congress is not a research body but essentially an association of scientists. Many of the senior staff of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research are members and close contact is maintained between the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research and the Indian Science Congress.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

PRIORITY OF CONSTRUCTION OF NEW RAILWAY LINES

36. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to place on the table of the House a list of the new Railway lines, construction of which is expected to be undertaken within a year, in different parts of the country?

(b) What considerations have determined the order of priority of the different new Railway lines that are proposed to be constructed during the next five years? Will the Honourable Member please lay on the table of the House a list of projected lines according to the period in which they are proposed to be constructed respectively?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) A statement showing the list of projected lines under investigation and for which survey reports have been received, has been laid on the table. Out of the lines under investigation, survey reports of nine projects have recently been received and are under scrutiny. Sanction has since been given for (i) the construction by the North Western Railway in the Punjab of a new line between Rupar and Talaura (34 miles in length), and (ii) restoration in the United Provinces by the G. I. P. Railway, of Bhimsen-Khairada line dismantled during the war (81 miles in length).

It is not possible to state what further constructions will be taken in hand this year until a detailed examination of the engineering and traffic survey reports so far received has been completed.

(b) Provincial Governments have given a certain order of priority for carrying out survey investigations of projected lines and this order of priority is generally followed by railways in carrying out the surveys.

When the survey reports of projected lines are received and scrutinised, it will be possible to determine which of these lines are likely to prove commercially remunerative or otherwise. The construction of remunerative lines would be undertaken first, and as regards the unremunerative lines, negotiations will be opened with the Provincial Governments for financing these lines. This policy of financing is based on the following two fundamental principles.

(i) The Railway Department and the Provincial Governments should share both the capital expenditure and the earnings.

or (ii) On the basis of their estimate of net earnings, the Railway Department should work out the limit of capital expenditure which they would be prepared to incur without involving themselves in any loss after an initial period of five years from the opening of the line to traffic and the Provincial Government should make a contribution equal to the difference between such expenditure and the estimated expenditure on the construction of the line.

List of approved projects—New constructions, restorations and Conversions

NOTE.—*The projects for which survey estimates have been sanctioned are marked with an asterisk.

**The projects for which survey reports have been received are marked with two asterisks.

***The projects for which constructions have been sanctioned are marked with three asterisks.

	Approx. Mileages	The proposed gauge
EAST INDIAN RAILWAYS		
(a) Dismantled lines to be restored—		
1. Unao-Madhoganj-Balamau	78*	B. G.
2. Bijnor-Chandpur-Siau	21*	B. G.
3. Utratia-Sultanpur-Zafarabad	136*	B. G.
(b) New lines—		
1. Kicha-Chandsausi	65*	B. G.
2. Birmitrapur-Barwadih	120*	B. G.
3. Chirmiri-Barwadih (Garhwa road or Untari road)	140*	B. G.
4. Barkagaon-Hazaribagh-Giridih-Dumka-Rampur Haut.	225*	B. G.
5. Gaya-Sherghati-Chatra-Ranchi	110*	B. G.
BENGAL ASSAM RAILWAY		
(a) Restoration of dismantled lines—		
1. Shaistaganj-Habiganj	8**	M. G.
2. Moranhat-Khowang	6	M. G.
3. Amnura-Chapai Nawabganj	10	B. G.
(b) New lines—		
1. Bahadurabad-Goalpara-Pandu with a bridge at Goalpara, Jogigopa and a link from the bridge to Bongaigaon, also Gouripur Mymensingh Mahendraganj.	283**	M. G.
2. Sylhet Bazar-Chatak	21*	M. G.
3. Khowang-Dibrugarh	12*	M. G.
4. Faridpur-Madaripur-Barisal	80*	B. G.
5. Sainthia Barhampore-Bhairamara	76*	B. G.
6. Rohanpur-Nithpur-Dinajpur	76*	B. G.
7. Jharia-Jhanjail-Baghmara-Siju-Jankaray	37*	M. G.
(c) Conversion—		
1. Tezpur-Balipara to be converted from N.G. to M.G.	20	M. G.
BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY		
(a) Dismantled lines to be restored—		
1. Bobbili-Salur	10	B. G.

	Approx. Mileages	The proposed gauge
BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY—contd.		
(b) New Lines—		
1. Ramagundam-Bastar-Jagdalpur Jeypore Rayagada The portion between Ramagundam and Bailadila shall be surveyed by H. E. H. the Nizam Railway.	290*	B. G.
2. Rajnandgaon (or Drug)-Bastar via Kankar and Taragaon.	120*	B. G.
3. Sambalpur-Kondagaon via Lochipur and Kantabanji	247*	B. G.
4. Talchar (along the valley of Brahmani river)-Keel Bank.	100	B. G.
5. Talbandh (or Bangriposi)-Badampahar or (Sulpat or Rairangpur) including conversion of Rupsa- Talbandh to B. G.	85	(including 70 miles of con- version) B. G.
6. Khurda Road-Sonepur-Lochipur	128	B. G.
7. Vishnupur-Santragachi	68	B. G.
8. Contai Road-Contai-Tamluk-Kolaghat-Ghatal- Chandrakona.	150	B. G.
9. Extension of Lohardaga to meet Barwadih-Birmitra- pur	23	B. G.
10. Naupada-Gunpur extension and conversion to B. G.	27	B. G.
11. Gopalpur-Behrampur-Russelkonda	57	B. G.
12. Nomandi to Joda	16*	B. G.
(c) Conversion—		
1. Purulia to Lohardaga	116*	B. G.
SOUTH INDIAN RAILWAY		
(a) New Lines—		
1. Dindigul-Gudallur with restoration of Theni-Madura	70*	M. G.
2. Kollengodo-Cochin Port	41*	M. G.
3. Tanjore-Pattukottai	29*	M. G.
4. Arantangi-Karaikkudi	20*	M. G.
M. & S. M. RAILWAY		
(a) New Lines—		
1. Alnavar-Haliyal-Yellapur-Karwar	70	M. G.
2. Ellore-Saveri Valley	70	B. G.
G. I. P. RAILWAY		
(a) Dismantled lines to be restored—		
1. Cawnpore-Khairada	81***	B. G.

	Approx. Mileages	The proposed gauge
G. I. P. RAILWAY—contd.		
(b) New lines—		
1. Diva-Dasgaon	93*	B. G.
2. Manmad-Nardhana	79*	B. G.
3. Belapur Road-Sheogaon	45*	B. G.
4. Baramati-Pandharpur	35	B. G.
5. Ahmedpur-Sheogaon	45*	B. G.
6. Kurla-Karjat	35**	B. G.
7. Amraoti-Narkher	79**	B. G.
B., B. & C. I. RAILWAY		
(a) Dismantled Lines to be Restored—		
1. Vasad Kathana	27**	B. G.
(b) New Lines—		
1. Bulsar-Dharampur	17**	B. G.
2. Khandwa-Hingoli	169*	M. G.
3. Ajmer-Kotah	100*	M. G.
OUDEH TIRHUT RAILWAY		
(a) New Line—		
1. Kashiipur-Kalagarh	30**	M. G.
2. Chakia-Alwalia-Sikhwalia	27	M. G.
3. Sitamarhi-Sonbarsa	20*	M. G.
4. Murliganj-Madhepura	13*	M. G.
JODHPUR RAILWAY		
(a) New Line—		
1. Pithoro-Kahi-Tando Mithakhan-Sanghar Jhol	62**	M. G.
NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY		
(a) Dismantled Lines to be restored—		
1. Nagrota-Jogindernagar	35*	N. G.
2. Rohtak-Panipat via Gohana	20	B. G.
(b) New Lines—		
1. Havelian-Garhi Habibullah	43*	B. G.
2. Charsadda-Mardan	17*	B. G.
3. Pezu-Dera Ismail Khan	40*	B. G.

	Approx. Mileages	The proposed gauge
NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY— <i>contd.</i>		
(b) New Lines—		
4. Tando Mehd. Khan Moghalbin (Jati Taluka)	72*	B. G.
5. Badin-Gujrat (Bombay-Sind)	208*	B. G.
6. Karachi-Kalat-Quetta	410*	B. G.
7. Peshawar-Kohat	40*	B. G.
8. Kohat-Bannu	80*	B. G.
9. Rupal-Talaura	37***	B. G.
10. Khushab-Nurpur-Darya Khan	70	B. G.
11. Kashmir-Dera Ghazi Khan	90	N. G.
12. Jhang-Malout	100	B. G.
13. Khewra-Chakwal	40	B. G.
(c) Conversion—		
1. Mari Indus-Bannu and Manza-Laki Marwat from N. G. to B. G.	158*	B. G.
2. Jacobabad-Kashmore from N. G. to B. G.	77*	B. G.
3. Kohat-Thal	64*	B. G.

MONEY SPENT ON IRRIGATION PROJECTS IN BENGAL

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

(a) the amount of money that has been spent by the Government of India for irrigation projects in Bengal during the current financial year (including money already spent and to be spent);

(b) how many irrigation projects have already been undertaken or worked wholly or in part during the said financial year; and

(c) whether such irrigation projects are selected as parts of a bigger and long term planning or are merely taken up on individual merit?

Sir Pheroz Kharegat: (a) and (b). During the current financial year, the Central Government has sanctioned 14.32 lakhs in respect of 42 schemes of the Bengal Government for re-excavation and other improvements of water courses in Bengal. They are intended to increase irrigation facilities in certain cases to some extent but they are designed largely to improve drainage and thereby increase the yield of land. Information about the exact amount spent or proposed to be spent by the Provincial Government and the number of projects executed wholly or in part during the current financial year is not available and has been called for. In addition a grant of Rs. 18.02 lakhs has been sanctioned this year in respect of schemes undertaken in previous years.

(c) These are *ad hoc* schemes undertaken by the Provincial Government with a view to increase food production under the Grow More Food Campaign and were taken up before the post-war development plans of the Province were drawn up.

SCARCITY OF MUSTARD OIL IN BENGAL

38. Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: Will the Secretary of the Food Department be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of India have considered the acute scarcity of mustard oil in Bengal and the sudden rise in its price;

(b) the reasons for such scarcity and for such rise in price; and

(c) what steps are being taken for making mustard oil available for the ordinary man and at reasonable rates?

Mr. B. R. Sen: (a) Yes.

(b) Scarcity of mustard oil in Bengal is due to inadequate imports from U. P. and other areas in India.

The rise in prices is due to shortage of oil and lack of effective price control throughout India and particularly in the districts of Bengal. The fall in imports is due to increased consumption in producing areas due to greater purchasing power and shortage of ghee.

(c) The Government of India have after consulting the Provinces and States decided upon a policy of Co-ordinated control over prices and movement of edible oilseeds and oils in conformity with an All-India Basic Plan, and Provincial/States Governments have been advised to take immediate action to implement this policy. The export of mustard oil out of India has also been totally prohibited.

The Bengal Government have rationed mustard oil in Calcutta City.

SAINTHIA-BHERAMARA RAILWAY PROJECT IN BENGAL

39. Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state:

(a) how much progress has been made in the project known as the Sainthia-Bheramara Railway in Bengal;

(b) the route of the proposed railway mentioning only important places through which the proposed line will pass;

(c) the approximate time by which it is expected to run trains; and

(d) whether District Boards and District administrations connected with the places through which the proposed line will pass have been informed of the scheme?

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: (a) No progress has so far been made in the Project, Sainthia-Bheramara Railway, in Bengal, as the survey investigations have only been taken in hand recently. The investigations could not be taken in hand earlier, as this project was given a low priority by the Local Government and attention was therefore, concentrated on higher priority projects.

(b) It is not possible at present to state, the route the proposed railway will take, and the important places which it will pass through, or pass close by, till the surveys of this line, which are now in hand, are completed. The only important place that this route will connect is Berhampore.

(c) The construction of the line can only be considered after the survey reports are received and scrutinised. It is, therefore, not possible at this stage, to state when the line is likely to be constructed and when trains would run on the section.

(d) A notification was published in the *Gazette of India* on the 7th September, 1945, for the information of the public notifying that the Railway Board have sanctioned an engineering survey to be carried by the Agency of the B. A. Railway for a Broad Gauge line from Sainthia to Bheramara via Berhampore, a distance of about 96 miles. The Railway Administration concerned arranges a notification in the local Government Gazette in accordance with the terms of Section 4 of the Land Acquisition Act.

The Standing Rules for the traffic survey provide that the survey officer in charge should consult local authorities and prominent citizens both as regards trade and industries and the most suitable route for the projected railway.

GRANT OF EXTENSIONS TO POSTMASTERS AND POSTAL CLERKS

40. Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: (a) Will the Secretary of the Communications Department be pleased to state how many head Post Offices are there in the Kumaun Circle in United Provinces where Postmasters in selection grade are appointed?

(b) Is it a fact that recently the Post Office at Haldwani in the Naini Tal District was raised to the status equal to the status of those at Almora, Ranikhet, etc.?

(c) Is it also a fact that a gentleman who had retired from service was appointed as Postmaster of that Post Office? If so, was no other man in service available for promotion to that post?

(d) What are the rules for the grant of extension to Postmasters and other postal clerks who have completed 55 years of age?

Sir Harold Shoobert: (a) Three.

(b) Yes.

(c) The reply to the first part is in the negative. The latter part does not arise.

(d) The rule regarding the age of retirement of non-gazetted Postmasters and postal clerks is F. R. 56(b).

PHYSICAL FITNESS AND MENTAL FITNESS OF OFFICERS GRANTED EXTENSIONS OF SERVICE AS POSTMASTERS

41. Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: (a) Will the Secretary of the Communications Department please state whether Government are aware that even if an extension is granted on public interest, the official getting the extension must be physically and mentally fit to perform his duties?

(b) Is it a fact that the Postmaster posted at present at Ranikhet is disabled and is not physically fit to perform his duties?

(c) Is it a fact that he has been granted several extensions, and, if so, how many, and why?

Sir Harold Shoobert: (a) The Honourable Member is referred to Fundamental Rule 56(b)(1). A copy of the Fundamental Rule is in the Library of the House.

(b) No. The official in question is in very good health although he uses an artificial leg. This is not considered as a disability for performance of his duties as a Postmaster.

(c) It is a fact that this official has been retained in service for three years after the age of 55.

EMBEZZLEMENT IN THE POST OFFICE AT PAURI (GARHWAL)

42. Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Will the Secretary of the Communications Department please state whether it is a fact that sometime ago there was a case of embezzlement in the Post Office at Pauri (Garhwal), and if so, what was the amount involved and what action, if any, has so far been taken in the matter?

Sir Harold Shoobert: No; a loss of Rs. 100, however, occurred between Pauri and Pokhra Sub Office in May last. Police investigation is proceeding.

RELAXATION OF CONTROL ON BUILDING MATERIALS

43. Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies please refer to the Budget Speech made on the 28th February, 1946, by the then Finance Member in which proposals for assisting and stimulating private building activity were made, and special steps indicated as being taken

to increase allocations of coal for the burning of bricks and release of timber, cement and steel, and to relax controls over these materials and to extend production capacity, and lay on the table of the House a statement showing Province by Province, the progress made, or expected to be made in this matter during the year, as well as the nature of the action?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Four statements showing the position in respect of the distribution of cement, timber, coal and iron & steel are laid on the table of the House.

A statement about the existing and planned production of cement is also laid on the table.

I.—Statement showing percentage of Cement Supplies for Civil purposes against the total Cement production in India

Month	Total Cement Production	Cement Supplies for Civil Purposes	Percentage of Supplies for Civil Purposes to Total Production
1945			
January	1,81,521	82,137	45·2
February	1,81,021	72,530	40·1
March	2,10,625	1,26,854	60·2
April	1,89,245	95,346	50·3
May	1,81,887	93,509	51·4
June	1,80,121	98,745	54·8
July	1,76,644	1,15,079	65·1
August	1,83,268	1,06,809	58·2
September	1,77,312	1,23,777	69·8
October	1,62,219	1,30,988	80·7
November	1,64,235	1,37,165	83·5
December	1,75,148	1,51,347	86·4
1946			
January	1,47,496	1,41,457	95·9
February	1,49,192	1,49,793	100·0*
March	1,82,366	1,69,369	92·9
April	1,54,955	1,70,292	109·9*
May	1,69,473	1,47,083	86·8
June	1,50,187	1,29,805	83·4
July	1,62,227	1,53,857	94·8
August	1,67,936	1,66,401	97·9

*Note.—The figures in this column include releases made from stocks,

11.—Statement showing issues of Timber from Government stocks by Provinces

(Figures are in tons)

Province	Issues from January to August, 1946
Assam	15,990
Bengal	12,325
Bihar	15,620
Bombay and Dangs	45,450
Cochin	6,900
Coorg	210
Eastern States	16,030
Madras and Travancore	5,590
Mysore	610
N. W. F. P.	2,040
Orissa	12,320
Punjab	31,360
Total	<u>164,445</u>

III.—Statement showing allocations and despatches of coal for brick burning during year 1945-46

	1945				1946			
	Allocations		Total	Despatches	Allocations		Total	Despatches
	Civil	Railways			Civil	Railways		
	Tons	Tons	Tons	Tons	Tons	Tons	Tons	
March	5,150	11,500	16,650	21,469	1,00,000	5,000	1,05,000	72,652
April	5,150	11,500	16,650	14,214	75,000		75,000	71,296
May	18,947	...	18,947	20,252	88,459		88,459	60,376
June	5,000		5,000	5,062	92,699	...	92,699	21,612
July	7,000	...	7,000	14,622	1,08,459		1,08,459	88,284
August	7,000	7,000	14,000	7,055	1,03,459		1,03,459	48,354
September	20,000	10,000	30,000	17,322	1,18,459		1,18,459	21,998
October	35,000	12,000	47,000	34,916	70,520	...	70,520	56,621
November	35,000	1,000	36,000	...	50,520	25,000	75,520	Not yet available
	1,38,247	53,000	1,91,247	1,34,912	8,07,575	30,000	8,37,575	4,41,193

IV.—Iron and Steel

So far as steel is concerned, control was relaxed with effect from 1st April, 1946 so as to enable consumers to obtain their requirements in the open market. However, there was considerable deterioration in the supply position owing to labour unrest in the works of some of the producers and to insufficiency of coal. Moreover, the import position also deteriorated owing to similar difficulties in the U. S. A. and Australia. As a result, the control had to be re-imposed with effect from 1st September, 1946. It is not possible to say how much steel was purchased for building purposes during this period in the various Provinces. Government are now engaged in devising a procedure for the distribution of Iron and Steel the object of which will be to ensure that whatever quantities of steel are available are distributed in an equitable manner with due regard to the essential requirements of the various types of consumers.

V.—List of existing and planned cement works in Provinces and States

Province	Works	Present Capacity	Planned Capacity by 1952
N. W. F. P. . . . .	.....	...	...
Punjab	Wah	185,000	365,000
	Dalmia Dandot	70,000	220,000
	Punjab Minerals Co. . . . .	...	100,000
Baluchistan . . . . .	.....	...	...
Sind	Rohri	70,000	170,000
	Shantinagar (Karachi)	200,000	350,000
Bombay	Sevalia . . . . .	...	100,000
	2 or 3 more new Works under consideration.	...	300,000
Delhi . . . . .			...
U. P.	National Cement, Mines and Ind. Ltd.	...	100,000
C. P.	Kymore	250,000	350,000
	Hindustan Housing . . . . .	...	100,000
Bihar	Khalari	100,000	...
	Chaibasa . . . . .	...	200,000
	Dalmianagar	150,000	300,000
	Sone Valley	200,000	200,000
	Kalyanpur	40,000	40,000
	Sindhri . . . . .	...	200,000

Province	Works	Present Capacity	Planned Capacity by 1952
Bengal	Asam Mining Corpn.		100,000
	F. W. Heilgers & Co.		20,000
Assam	Assam-Bengal l.	75,000	150,000
	Siju		100,000
Madras	Kistna	80,000	180,000
	Coimbatore	180,000	280,000
	Dalmiapuram	70,000	220,000
	Andhra	30,000	60,000
	Tinnevelly	...	100,000
	Kurnool	...	50,000
INDIAN STATES			
Baroda	Dwarka	180,000	180,000
Bhopal	J. P. Srivastava & Sons		100,000
Bundi	Lakheri	220,000	320,000
Gangapur	Bird & Co.	...	100,000
Gwalior	Banmor	60,000	60,000
Hyderabad	Shahabad	200,000	240,000
Jind	Dalmia Dadri	70,000	220,000
Mysore	Bhadravati	20,000	50,000
Nawanagar	Jamnagar	...	100,000
Patiala	Bhupendra	100,000	200,000
Porbandar	Porbandar	40,000	100,000
Sirmoor	Sirmur Traders		100,000
Travancore	Travancore Cements	...	50,000

A few more schemes are under consideration.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT

PROTECTION OF LIFE AND PROPERTY OF RAILWAY PASSENGERS IN BIHAR

Mr. President: I have received notice of an adjournment motion from the Honourable Member Mr. Ishaq Seth. The motion is "to discuss the failure of the Railway Department to take adequate steps in time to protect the lives and property of passengers in Bihar as reported in the *Dawn* and other papers".

[Mr. President]

12 NOON Having found it to be vague, I asked for certain information and the Honourable Member has referred me to the issues of the *Dawn*, dated the 3rd and the 4th of November 1946. I am afraid there has been delay and there remains therefore no urgency of the matter. The House was in session on 4th November, after the publication of these news. Besides, the motion does not appear to be clear as regards the stations. Perhaps the report in the *Dawn* gives those stations. Then, it appears to me that item 3 of the provincial legislative list mentions "police, including the railway and village police," to be a provincial subject. I do not see how this matter can, therefore, be a proper subject for an adjournment motion, subject of course, to whatever the Honourable Member has to say on the point of urgency. I take it that by 'failure to give protection' he means so far as the attacks from mob outside are concerned and not on account of some inherent defect in the running of the trains or in the railway administration itself.

Haji Abdus Sattar Haji Ishaq Seth (West Coast and Nilgiris: Muhammadan): It may be both. With regard to the second point, if the legal position is such that the protection of passengers travelling in railway coaches is the duty of the provinces and of the provincial administration, then I am afraid my motion cannot be debated here. To that extent I agree. But I thought the position is that railways being the Central subject, so far as the life and property of those who are travelling inside the railway carriages are concerned, it is the duty of the Railway Department to protect them, and it is on that basis that the motion has been given notice of.

Khan Mohammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): May I, Sir, submit to you that if the attack comes on the line or on a particular train from the mob without the train being stopped, it is, of course, the duty of the Provincial Government to look after it. But if the train is stopped by pulling the chain, then it is the duty of Railway Department to look into the matter, because it is not the function of the Provincial Government to see whether a chain was pulled or not. Now, the allegations that are in the *Dawn* are that the chains have been pulled and the trains have been stopped and they were then attacked. The precaution to stop this sort of thing is to be taken by the Railway Department.

Mr. President: I do not think any useful purpose will be served by trying to meet the arguments advanced in a fine and very subtle manner by the Honourable the Deputy President. The report that has been given to me says that reports of communal clashes have been received from Patna, Hoshiarpur and other places in the Patna district and that on account of the disturbances in certain areas in Bihar, the Punjab Mail of the East Indian Railway came late etc. Obviously, the want of protection to the life and property of the passengers was not due to anything which the Railway authorities failed to do but because of certain extraneous circumstances, a matter obviously under the jurisdiction of the Railway police. I cannot understand the distinction between such disturbances by mobs coming from within or from without the railway carriages. Whatever it may be, I do not think the motion is in order. It is not urgent, as I pointed out, and it is not in order otherwise also; it is a provincial matter.

INDUSTRIAL FINANCE CORPORATION BILL

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan (Finance Member): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to establish the Industrial Finance Corporation of India.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to establish the Industrial Finance Corporation of India."

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE REGULATION BILL

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan (Finance Member): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to regulate certain payments, dealings in foreign exchange and securities and the import and export of currency and bullion.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to regulate certain payments, dealings in foreign exchange and securities and the import and export of currency and bullion."

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

MOTOR VEHICLES (SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali (Member for Railways and Transport): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939."

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Mr. M. Asaf Ali: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES (TEMPORARY POWERS) BILL

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai (Member for Industries and Supplies): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide the continuance during a limited period of powers to control the production, supply and distribution of, and trade and commerce in, certain commodities.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide the continuance during a limited period of powers to control the production, supply and distribution of, and trade and commerce in, certain commodities."

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

COFFEE MARKET EXPANSION (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai (Member for Industries and Supplies): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Coffee Market Expansion Act, 1942.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Coffee Market Expansion Act, 1942."

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

REGISTRATION OF TRANSFERRED COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Honourable Mr. I. I. Chundrigar (Commerce Member): Sir, I move for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Registration of Transferred Companies Ordinance, 1942.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to amend the Registration of Transferred Companies Ordinance, 1942."

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Mr. I. I. Chundrigar: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

WORKMEN'S STATE INSURANCE BILL

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai (Member for Industries and Supplies): Sir, with your permission, in the absence of the Honourable the Labour Member, I move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for certain benefits to workmen employed in or in connection with work of factories in case of sickness, maternity and accident and to make provision for certain other matters in relation thereto.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for certain benefits to workmen employed in or in connection with work of factories in case of sickness, maternity and accident and to make provision for certain other matters in relation thereto."

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

REQUISITIONED LAND (CONTINUANCE OF POWERS) BILL

Mr. G. S. Bhalja (Secretary, Defence Department): Sir, I move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the continuance of certain emergency powers in relation to requisitioned land.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the continuance of certain emergency powers in relation to requisitioned land."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. G. S. Bhalja: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

MOTION RE FOOD SITUATION—concl'd.

Mr. President: The House will now resume further consideration of the following motion moved by Mr. B. R. Sen, on 4th November 1946:

"That the food situation in India be taken into consideration."

and also the further consideration of the amendment moved by Mr. Lawson, on 4th November 1946.

In this connection, I have received a communication from the Honourable Dr. Rajendra Prasad which I will read to the House:

"Dear Mr. President,

The situation in Bihar requires my immediate presence there. I am therefore going away today (*that is yesterday morning*) and will not be present in the Assembly to listen to the speeches of other Members who may participate in the debate on the Food situation. I beg of you and of the House to excuse my absence in view of the emergent situation which necessitates this. The Secretary of the Food Department will be present and take part in the debate."

Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I highly appreciate the lucid statement of the Honourable the Food Member describing the present situation and the future programme of production. The speech which we heard two days ago on the food situation was very different from what we have been accustomed to hear in previous years. We hope that the food situation will improve. Sir, India before the war had been an exporting country as far as foodstuffs are concerned. I have got before me the figures of 1938-39 as published in 'Trade of India Review'. In that particular year, we produced 9.9 million tons wheat and exported only 279 thousand tons. During the same year we produced 23.6 million tons rice and exported 282 thousand tons, but we imported 1,282 thousand tons. Thus we had a shortage of 1 million ton of rice in that year which we imported from Ceylon. Our total export of cereal was $\frac{3}{4}$ million ton. We also exported large quantities of seeds, most of which could be used as food—groundnuts by men and other seeds by cattle. The total quantity which we exported to foreign countries in 1938-39 was about three-fourth million tons in food grains and pulses and about 15 crores worth of seeds and imported 1 million ton rice from Burma. This was after feeding the whole country. That was our position before the war. We had enough to eat and we could also afford to export certain quantities to foreign countries, particularly to U. K. Now,

after the war, as we understand from the Honourable the Food Member, our production has increased. So, on account of increase in production, I do not see any reason why there should be shortage of food in our country. As far as famine is concerned, there are only three places where there is famine. One in the files of the Food Department, that is the place where famine starts. The second is in the speeches of Honourable Members of this House, including myself. I made a speech about famine with the expectation that we might bring more food from foreign countries in order to lower the prices because the moment we hear that food is coming from outside, the prices always are lowered. But to my great astonishment, I find that the wheat which we purchased from Argentine was really at a very high cost and my expectations were altogether falsified. I think all the speeches that I delivered in order to get cheap food from outside did not prove to be correct. It is an important point to be looked into. We do want food from abroad, but we do not want the same at exorbitant price. I hope my Honourable friend Diwan Chaman Lall who represented this country will tell the House at what price he purchased Argentine wheat compared with the price prevailing in India. If it was at a high price, for what reasons. Was it not possible for him to get it at a lower price?

Diwan Chaman Lall (West Punjab: Non-Muhammadian): I did not purchase any food at all.

Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad: Did my Honourable friend have a pleasure trip at the expense of the taxpayer?

Diwan Chaman Lall: It was a strenuous trip. Food had already been purchased by the representative of the Government of India, but he found that he could not get it out of the country. Our ships were lying in the harbours paying £5,000 a day as demurrage. I got the food out.

Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad: Then he merely wished to help the Commerce Department instead of Food Department.

Diwan Chaman Lall: I helped my own people to get food.

Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad: It was a private effort.

Diwan Chaman Lall: It was a public effort.

Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad: At any rate, when he gets up to speak, I hope he would tell the House at what price the representatives of Government purchased foodstuffs in Argentine, and how did that price compare with the internal price prevalent in Argentine. Therefore, as far as we are concerned, I think there is no shortage in India. I think the only reason for shortage of food is deterioration. Today and at other times we have heard of the quantity of food that has gone bad because it was not properly handled. My Honourable friend the Food Secretary while replying to a question today could not even give the figures of food destroyed. I think it is simple arithmetic; he knows the exact production and also the exact consumption and the difference between the two is the quantity lost by deterioration. So the chief reason for the shortage of food is not want of it but inexperience in handling. Storing wheat is not easy, it requires expert knowledge and people in the trade have been accustomed for centuries to keep wheat in a proper condition. But our Government of India officials are not experts in the matter of storage of food; they consult zoologists and entomologists to study the parasites which destroy the food. By the time they approached the scientists the war was over, and I am sure that by the time they complete their investigations about the method of storage the Food Department itself will be liquidated, and the whole thing will go back to the trade. Therefore the reason for the shortage of food is really bad storage, and it requires careful looking into.

Then I come to the question of procurement, which was discussed at length by the Food Member. If we leave it to the sweet will of the producers to sell or not to sell their articles to the consumers the whole social fabric will break down. If the producers of foodstuffs maintain that it is their privilege to sell or not to sell their articles to the consumers, and the same privilege is claimed

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by the cotton producers and manufacturers of cloth, and if Government accept that proposition, society will be paralysed and there will be complete deadlock. Government must take a strong line on this question; if they do not do so it is better to nationalise all industries and adopt communist methods. But I do not think it will be necessary to go so far. It is understood that the first priority must rest with the producers; but whatever is left after his own consumption and seed requirements must be the property of the State and the people. The same applies to the manufacturers of cotton and piece-goods. Government may hesitate to apply this principle because they have to depend on the votes of these cultivators who returned them to power. But unless they adopt the principle I have just laid down there can be no stable or efficient Government in India. Whatever is left after meeting the requirements of the producers should come to the State and should be distributed to those who do not produce these foodgrains. Otherwise we will not know where we are. I am prepared to discuss the detailed scheme of procurement and responsibilities of the Central Government as well as the provincial Governments.

The next point discussed by the Food Member was with regard to the prices, whether they should be fixed by the producer or the consumer. I am afraid that is wrong way of handling the proposition. This may be all right in ordinary normal life but we are living in abnormal times and the important point that the Honourable Food Member ignored was that we calculate prices in terms of the paper rupee, which is only a managed currency. Intrinsically it has no value. The cultivators appreciate gold but not the paper rupee. Let the officials of Government make an experiment. Let some one go with a tola of gold and find how much wheat he gets for it, and let some one also try with this paper money and see how much he gets in exchange for that paper. That will determine the purchasing power of one tola of gold in terms of paper money. But to make this experiment of the purchasing power of managed currency which has no intrinsic value with wheat is a fundamental mistake. The price index of wheat at present is 373. My Honourable friend knows that prices of all foodstuffs move in sympathy with the price of wheat and rice. If the price index of wheat is Rs. 373 it means that instead of Rs. 100 you have to pay Rs. 373 for the same amount of wheat. We who are wage-earners get money not in terms of gold or wheat but in terms of manipulated and badly printed paper money; and it is really the purchasing power of that rupee which is taken into consideration. If we accept the payment method proposed by the Honourable Food Member what will be the result? The result will be that the value of rupee will come down to 4½ annas. Therefore if you want to pay wages, you must increase them in the ratio of 4½ to 16 or in other words, instead of paying Rs. 100 you should pay Rs. 373. The Government of India have appointed a Commission—the Central Pay Commission—to go into the question of wages of the Central Government employees. I think this Commission should consist of three persons because in the words of Lord Palmerston the most efficient committee is a committee of three persons provided two out of them absent themselves. This Commission therefore should consist of the Honourable the Food Member, the President of the Assembly, and myself, and because both the President and myself will be absent the Honourable the Food Member will have no alternative but to recommend that the pay of Government servants should be increased from Rs. 100 to Rs. 373. No further Commission will be necessary; it is a simple question of arithmetic.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar (Madras Ceded Districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Let us address ourselves to allowances.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Allowances will be raised from Rs. 45 to Rs. 168 per day. The thing is that we have to look at it from an entirely different point of view. The question is that the price of wheat ought not to be considered from the view point of what the consumers can afford to give or what the producers would like to have. It has to be determined by the Govern-

ment and they have to decide what shall be the value of their managed currency represented by paper rupee. I do not want to speak on it at length today. The Government ought to compare their prices in terms of gold. If they want to stabilize the purchasing power of the rupee, they should fix the price in terms of gold, and after that they should fix the price in terms of silver, and wheat, textiles and everything else will follow. So instead of fixing the prices from the point of view of consumers and producers, he ought to have the co-operation of the Government, because the Food Member alone cannot solve this problem. He must have the fullest co-operation of the Finance Member, the Commerce Member, the Supply Member, and in fact the entire Government. By joint effort and mutual consideration they should fix the purchasing power of the rupee and then the price of wheat and all other articles will automatically be fixed.

Coming to the question of production, there is one factor which the Honourable the Food Member omitted in all his calculations, and that is the increase in the population of this country, which is over 1 per cent. In fixing his target he should take the increase in population also into consideration. He said the other day that the production of foodstuffs has gone up by about 4 per cent. but the population during the same period has also gone up by about the same percentage. Therefore whatever long term policy may be framed, it should take into consideration that our production should increase at least in proportion to the increase in population. I have already said that we had enough production in all cereals except rice before the war. No doubt the situation has eased somewhat and we can get rice from Burma and other countries, but it seems desirable that we ought to make efforts to produce rice ourselves of the type which people of Bengal and people of the South would like to eat. I suggest to the Honourable Members on the Treasury Benches, and especially my Honourable friend who comes from Assam, whether it will not be possible for them to increase the production of rice in the territory now belonging to Assam. Labour is available in Assam, and elsewhere. They remove their prejudices of what they call line system. I feel that they can produce at least as much rice as we used to import from Burma before the war. Although we may be able to import rice at present from Burma, Siam, and other countries, I think it is desirable that in the matter of food we should be self-sufficient. Therefore, I beseech that every effort should be made by mutual compromise to see that the large tracts of land available in Assam are put under rice cultivation. That is really an important point which the Honourable Food Member ought to tackle.

There is one point which the Honourable Member did not touch in his speech, and I think rightly, and that is the question of use of machinery in cultivation or large scale farming. In my opinion in India we cannot use machinery to the same extent as is used in the West. The reason for this is that everybody here has got small holdings and if you use machinery on a large scale, a large number of people will be out of employment. For increase of production we have to fall back upon the facilities which were mentioned by the Honourable the Food Member himself, *viz.*, better seeds, fertilizers, water, and everything else which is required in order to produce more food. The position of cultivators at present is very good because they are getting Rs. 378 instead of Rs. 100 for their produce. But these conditions will not continue very long. They may continue for a few years more. The old conditions are bound to be restored and they will again be in debt as in the past. This is the time to consider this problem and we should follow the same method which Japan followed for improving the condition of their agricultural farmers. We know that cultivators for four months in the year are idle. These months ought to be utilised in cottage industries. Perhaps my friend will know that in Japan before the war the entire hosiery and a large portion of the textile was done by villagers by the system of cottage industry. Therefore, we ought to introduce cottage industry in the villages so that when the people are idle they may produce wealth and earn money. In order to make them rich by artificially raising the value of their products from 100 to 378 is not really the

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production of wealth. They are not really rich people. Artificially on paper they are rich but it is not satisfactory. This is manipulated wealth. The real wealth will be what they produce after doing some work. If by the same work the amount is increased it is not wealth. If by additional work you get additional wealth, that is real wealth. So you should introduce cottage industries in all the villages. Now they are in a position to do so because the cultivators have money and they can buy small machines by means of which this can be done. This question is attracting the attention of the Development and Resettlement. The Resettlement Directorate is working out a scheme of cottage industry for demobilized soldiers. The same principle should be extended later on for these villages. The scheme is that we take demobilized soldiers and train them for six months or a year in certain trades and afterwards manufacture the machines which they would require for their trades and give them either on rent or sell them. The payment may be made by instalments in lump-sum. If this is successful in the case of demobilized soldiers, I see no reason why it should not be extended in the case of villagers so that they may engage themselves in cottage industries during the period when they have no work and begin to earn some money. This will also improve our industries enormously. Though we have factories all round, (I admit that factories are indispensable), yet these factories will not be able to produce all our requirements. The villagers should continue to produce all the requirements of the villages by these cottage industries. Food Department should co-operate with Resettlement Directorate and train villagers in cottage industries; they should not depend on the artificial price which will not continue for a long time.

Mr. President: May I invite the Honourable Member's attention now to one aspect of this debate? Government have allotted two days for the debate. Today is the second day of the discussion, but I find from the list that has come to me that a large number of Honourable Members are eager to express their views. I propose to call upon the Food Secretary to reply by about four O'clock. The House will certainly like him to give information on the various points that have been raised by Honourable Members. I do not wish that any Honourable Member should leave out any of his points. I do not want to curtail the raising or mentioning of points, but there has to be some time limit to the speeches. The Honourable Member has spoken for half an hour. Time will therefore be short for other members: otherwise, the alternative will be that some of the members wishing to address the House will be crowded out.

Sjt. N. V. Gadgil (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammudan Rural): Formerly when some such questions were discussed in the House, a time limit was accepted, either 15 or 20 minutes. If that procedure is followed, it will be possible for the House to know the view points of the other members. At the same time, it will be possible to conclude the debate before the House rises for the day.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer (Bombay Southern Division: Muhammudan Rural): The time limit should be divided according to the Party Groups as in the past, so that the Party concerned may put up certain speakers within the time allowed.

Sri V. C. Vellingiri Gounder (Salem and Coimbatore cum North Arcot: Non-Muhammudan Rural): There are many of us in the back benches who cannot get any time. If a time limit is to be enforced, may I suggest that at least ten minutes be given to each member. I do not think a twenty minutes limit is necessary.

Mr. President: I have made the suggestion and I have given the alternatives. If I find that the Members are already restraining themselves and having a time limit of their own, it will be more welcome to me. Otherwise, the other alternative will be to leave out the other prospective speakers. At any rate I shall be calling upon the Food Secretary at about 4 P.M. to give his reply and the Parties may adjust time limits among themselves.

Sjt. N. V. Gadgil: Under Standing Order 62, you can limit the speeches to fifteen minutes each. This is a resolution and undoubtedly it is governed by the provision of Standing Order 62.

Mr. President: The Standing Order is not applicable in the strict sense. This is a motion by the Government. If the House wants me to exercise a time limit, I shall be glad to do so.

Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad: In view of your ruling I suppress my speech and say only a few words, I understand rationing and no rationing. But I do not understand partial rationing because that means that I live on starvation diet which others indulge in lavishness. If I go four miles I find that cattle are being fed on wheat. I cannot invite more than 20 persons to a party, but a villager can feed 2,000 persons in marriage parties. This does not show great credit to the administration.

Here in India hospitality is our great virtue. The people of the west are not familiar with that hospitality. I wrote a letter to the Rationing Authority in the United Provinces that I get in Aligarh a large number of guests and there is no decent hotel or place where they can stay and to give me some additional ration. The reply that I got was that I should tell my guests, when they came, that they should bring their rations with them. If they fail to bring them ask them to go Halwai or Nanbai shop. Such reception of our guests is against our sentiments. But the humour does not end here. At the end of his letter he said: "Copy to the District Magistrate for action." It is in keeping with western hospitality. Hospitality is our traditional virtue and Food Department is out to destroy it. I hope that Food Department will be liquidated long before we lose our virtue. I am sure my friend from the North-West Frontier Province will not appreciate the practice of Food Department.

Khan Abdul Ghani Khan (North-West Frontier Province: General): Certainly if it is for the good of India I will write something worse than that!

Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad: Then I have some suggestions. In the first place rationing should not be fixed for everybody in terms of sugar, rice and wheat, because the poorer people do not like to take sugar. They would rather be pleased to take a double or treble quantity of *gur* for the same price. They may not like wheat. But they would like a double quantity of the coarser grains for the same value. Therefore, in rationing these things, one thing should be essential that everybody should not get the same stuff. The prices of articles which poor men use should be very low and rationing should be fixed not by quantity of inferior stuff, but we should also fix the value in money and supply about double the quantity to poor people for the same amount.

The second point is, Food Department should not have arithmeticians only, but they should also have persons who are familiar with the habits of the people. You send Bajra to Travancore, where the people do not know what it is and how to eat it. The villager in Upper India eat Bajra, and Maize, but supplement it with *Mutha*, which we do not get in towns. Average resident of the town will begin to suffer from dysentery if he is compelled to eat maize or Bajra without *Mutha*. Give us the food which we have been used to eat for centuries. You cannot alter the habits of people by order under the pretence of famine. As regards rice, position is more difficult. Somebody in Food Department must study the quality of rice which people are accustomed to eat in a particular locality and that quality alone should be supplied to them. What is the use of giving rice which people do not eat. In Aligarh nobody purchases the rice which is supplied, which even the chickens refuse to eat. It is wasted. My request is that somebody should carefully study the quality of rice consumed in each locality and supply the same quality. If not give it up in favour of trade channel.

My next suggestion is that at present what is called the Rationing Officer is a person whose minimum income free of income tax is Rs. 2,000 per month. It is his due. An honest Rationing Officer will confine to this income. But honest persons are few. Corruption is all round and I hope that the present

[**Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad**]

Government will eradicate the shortcomings of their predecessors. For this purpose I suggest that there should be a committee to look after the system of rationing and the action of the Rationing Officers who should not be protected by the Defence of India Rules. At present he is above criticism. He is defended by Defence of India Rules. There should be a committee to watch Rationing System. In the case of Delhi I pointed out last year and also in previous year about the corruption of one individual and mentioned his name. He is still flourishing in Delhi and no action has been taken against him.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena (Lucknow Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Is there only one?

Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad: I think it is better to associate some kind of non-official committee with the rationing officers. There should be a mohalla committee also and shops should be opened in each mohalla where the food-stuffs should be supplied.

My next suggestion is that persons should be allowed to bring food from outside provided it is written off against their ration.

Mr. B. B. Sen (Secretary: Food Department): That is already allowed in the U. P.

Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad: I wish it may be so. I cannot bring my own food which is lying elsewhere without permit which is not easily obtained. People should be allowed to have their own food provided it is written off against their own ration. That will really help the rationing authority.

It is very difficult to get ration permit cards. In Ceylon it is exceedingly simple. The moment I landed there I got the permit. Here people have to wait for three or four days before they get their permit cards. These cards should be easily available, and high penalty should not be charged for losing them. They must be supplied not by one authority but by several authorities in the town, like the post office. Certain facilities should be given to the public in order to relieve them of the sufferings which they at present undergo. The cards for the guests should be issued at short notice and preferably at the station.

Diwan Chaman Lal: Sir, I have no intention of following the previous speaker when he went into a dissertation regarding prices, the value of the rupee and the value of gold. But it is quite obvious that the many subjects that he touched were in the larger context irrelevant to the present situation in India.

I would like to add my tribute to the many tributes that have already been paid to the Honourable the Food Member not only for his brilliant speech but for a speech the equal of which has not been heard for quite a long time on the floor of this House—a speech full of simplicity and a complete grasp of the situation and full of human sympathy for his countrymen. I have no doubt that under his charge the Food Department is in the ablest hands in the country and the grave situation facing the country is going to be taken charge of by competent hands.

Sir, the question is not merely a grasp of the situation. The question is how are we going to relieve the situation that faces us in the country. There are only three methods of doing so. One is to procure more food. The second is to purchase more food and the third is to build up a sufficient reserve so that the calamities that have faced us in the past do not face us in the future. Therefore, the situation that I would like to direct your attention to, Mr. President, is what is the present position regarding procurement of food? What is the position regarding production and what is the position regarding our reserves?

At the present moment there are two methods by which we are getting our food. One is, as explained by the Honourable the Food Member, the internal market and the second is the external market. As far as the external market is concerned our demand was for 4.4 million tons for the year. Unfortunately

we have not been able to get that demand fulfilled. You, Mr. President, will remember the debate that took place on the floor of this House in the month of March last when Sir Kamaswami Mudaliar came back from America. We expressed then our grave doubts as to the programme that he had accepted, grave doubts as to whether the quantity that he thought that he was going to get from abroad he was really going to get and the fears that we expressed on the floor of the House at that time were justified later on. And today we are faced with this proposition that although our demand was for 4.4 million tons we have only been able to get 1.7 million tons. As for the further the Emergency Food Council which met on the 4th November (a couple of days ago) will have considered the position as far as India is concerned and from the fact that total availability for the whole world reckoned by that Emergency Food Council is about 27 million tons and the total requirements of the world reckoned by that Emergency Food Council are about 35 to 36 million tons, the result has been that even our original demand having been reduced our later demand for 2½ million tons has again been reduced and our total demand will now be sanctioned by the Emergency Food Council only to the extent of 1.9 million tons. That is the position as far as the Emergency Food Council is concerned. As to our position—and here I may differ in a slight degree from the Department—our own position is that by the end of January, 1947, unless and until we can get another one million tons of food from abroad over and above all our procurements and all our availabilities, we shall be facing a very serious situation in the country. The question then arises, how are we going to get this extra million tons of food? This is a factor which we have to bear in mind. As the last speaker stated, our position is very serious. 150 millions of our countrymen are under the rationing system, partially or otherwise. I believe 1,00,000 men are employed in working this particular scheme throughout India, that is, the department has engaged about 1,00,000 administrators in this process—a small number compared with the magnitude of the problem. Crores have been sunk in this organisation. It is necessary for us, since this is the only organisation that has gone deep down to the people, that we must not disband this organisation when the time comes and when the necessity is not so great. But the fact is that the total calorific value which is being allowed to our people is about 1,200 calories per day; and that is the lowest calorific value being utilised in any part of the world today, including the occupied countries. Mr. La Guardia, who was the UNRRA administrator, said only a few weeks ago that the lowest calorific value which is necessary to keep body and soul together is about 2,400 to 2,600 calories a day; as against that, less than half is being allowed to our people. These are the facts, and it is necessary therefore to remember that this one million tons that we shall need now has got to come from somewhere. At the same time the overall position must not be lost sight of. Our production is between 50 and 55 million tons a year. Our needs are 60 million tons over a year. Our population is increasing at the rate of 5 millions a year; so that our demand for food and more food is going to be constant, not merely now but for a number of years to come. It is not possible by waving a magic wand to produce more food immediately from the soil that is producing this food now, unless and until you are going to enrich that soil and adopt such methods of agriculture and farming and mechanisation as will increase the productivity of our soil. Therefore the need is going to be very great. That need has got to be fulfilled. As far as the long term policy is concerned I will say a word about it later on. At the present moment I am concerned with the immediate short term policy of procuring an extra million tons of food between now and the month of January 1947.

There are three methods by which we can obtain this food. As far as the international Organisation is concerned, I do not think we are going to get more than 1,00,000 tons of food between now and July 1947 from Canada, although Canada had a surplus of 6 million tons of wheat which other countries have taken away. I do not think we are going to get more than 5,00,000 tons of corn and 1,50,000 tons of wheat between now and July 1947 from the United

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States; and I do not know how much we are going to get between now and January next. These are the figures available in Washington, as far as availabilities from these two countries are concerned. In fact, the total amount that was made available to us from the United States—it was not wheat—for the month of October was only 59,000 tons; and we do not know what allotments are going to be made to us for the months of November and December.

Therefore the position being problematic, it is necessary for us to make every attempt to obtain extra food, that extra million tons of food, from every corner of the world that we can approach. Where can we get it? When I was leaving New York I understood that a figure of 3,00,000 tons of wheat was published, that was going to be made available to Japan from the United States; and at the same time I learnt that this 3,00,000 tons of wheat was not going to Japan as they had discovered that there was already a sufficiency of food in that country. Now, it is necessary, and I have no doubt that the Food Department, ably led as it is, brilliantly staffed as it is, will take up this matter immediately, not only take it up themselves but in conjunction with His Majesty's Government take up this matter and place it before the United States Government, that this 3,00,000 tons of wheat which is available in the United States should be diverted immediately to this country in order to meet our needs. This is a very important factor. If we can get this 3,00,000 tons of wheat, we shall be able to save the situation for a few weeks to come.

Over and above this 3,00,000 tons of wheat, there is available today in America, according to the information I gathered in the United States and in South America, about 1,00,000 tons of rice, 62,000 tons of which are available in Brazil; but unfortunately according to the constitution of the Emergency Food Council and its Rice Committee, we are unable to touch it independently, because rice is not programmed but is allocated, which means that there is a particular territory designated and a particular quantity designated to that particular territory, from which we can pick up rice and from no other. I have already, anticipating the requirements of the Food Department, made a suggestion to the Emergency Food Council in regard to this particular matter; and I have no doubt the Food Department will take up this matter so that we may, if we are able to pick up this rice and pick up the 3,00,000 tons of wheat, alleviate the situation that is facing us in the very near future.

The third source of supply to us is Australia, and I must add my word of congratulations to those countries which have stood by us in the past; and I must support the Honourable Food Member in his tribute to those countries. There will be a quantity of 1.9 million tons of wheat surplus available for export from Australia from December onwards. My suggestion to the Food Department would be that they must, realising the seriousness of the position which is not going to last a year or two but may last five years or longer, and in view of the world requirements of food and in view of the increase in population that is taking place in India, attempt to enter into long term arrangements with those countries which can supply us with the necessary food. Great Britain, realising the tremendous export surplus that was available to them in Canada, entered into such long term agreements with that country, with the result that practically all the six million tons of surplus wheat is going out to be utilised by Great Britain for her purposes and for other international purposes to which use she may put that food. It is necessary for us too to do the same and I hope that this point will not be forgotten by the Food Department in their dealings with Australia in the matter of food.

At the same time I am happy to be able to announce that, as a result of the mission that went out to the Argentine—the success of which is probably due either to my colleagues or to the Honourable Member who is sitting there. Mr. Sen the Secretary of the Food Department, and all the officers of the Food Department, for the great co-operation that they showed in the working of this Mission to the Argentine—my part was very little indeed—the major part of the credit goes to the Food Department and to my colleagues who went

with me—we were able to succeed in getting 3,00,000 tons of maize which had already been purchased locally or through the High Commissioner in London, out of the country. It was a difficult mission, because of the situation in South America and because there were about 17 different international missions all wanting food for their own countries, including the British Food Mission—about 30 strong—who had been there for a couple of months already before we got there. But we were fortunate that almost immediately on my arrival we were able to get 14 ships loaded, not only 14 but we had to borrow 3 more ships, 17 ships loaded almost immediately on our arrival and sent out to India and I am glad to find that those ships have already arrived in Indian ports and the food is being distributed in the scarcity areas. Those ships had been paying as much as, I understand, £5,000 a day demurrage. It was an extraordinary situation, because there was one mission, for instance, which was given permits to load its ships. After they started loading ships the order came—unload. The ships were unloaded and the ships went back to that country empty, unable to pick up the food that they bought. Therefore it was a very serious and a very nervous situation but in the end, after all the difficulties, the situation was taken in hand. The difficulties were surmounted and now the rest of the food is practically on its way—150,000 tons—the rest having already arrived in India.

But I did not leave the matter at that. From New York I got into touch with the Argentine authorities and this is the cable I have got from them.

“Owing to heavy commitments next crops of wheat and doubtful almost poor prospects for new crop Maize very difficult get Lagomarsino take new commitments. He has now however, promised me to give up to 250,000 tons between wheat maize millets rye and oats against which second quota of Hessians would have to be allotted on similar terms of last agreement.”

This is a matter for negotiation again and the Food Department will undoubtedly take up this matter and if more food is available, the President of the Republic General John Perron told me that he would possibly be able to give us 500,000 tons, I think the situation would be saved between now and the end of January.

I submit, Mr. President, here too, as in the case of Australia, it would be necessary in my opinion to enter into a long term arrangement. We must look beyond this year and the next year and the year after and if we can secure our position, there is nothing to prevent us from unloading anywhere where there is scarcity in other parts of the world, after our requirements have been completely met and there is a surplus resulting from these long term arrangements but for our own safety the arrangements must not be short term any longer. They must be long term and if we can enter into long term arrangements we shall be in a more favourable position. We have a commodity which we can bargain with on a barter basis as we did in the case of Argentine, a commodity which is only available to us in India and to nobody else in any other part of the world. I mean hessian and raw jute and I do not see any reason why, when every other country which has surplus food is holding other countries which have not, almost to ransom, or utilising their surplus for political purposes, we should not for bargaining purposes utilise this particular commodity of which we hold a monopoly and I am certain that if we do so, as very ably the Food Department did in the matter of the Argentine, we shall be able to control the situation regarding our imports from abroad.

Now, it is not only a question of imports. I know the House would be with me when I pay my tribute to the Indian Famine Mission from America headed by Mr. Schultz, which came out to this country and put the question of the famine in India on the map of the world, I know that the House will join me in paying a tribute to the excellent work that those gentlemen did. I may inform the House that not only did they produce a most excellent report, copies of which are no doubt available to all of us but since their return to America they have not ceased to plead for India and India's needs in the highest quarters in order that the requirements of India may be met by those countries which have a surplus. At the same time the House should know and appreciate that people like Mr. J. J. Sing in New York, and Pearl Buck

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of the India League have been constantly agitating for the supply of India's needs in the matter of food and helping to procure us food. I must also pay them a tribute for the valuable work they have done. They are still active and they continue to be active.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member may continue his speech after Lunch. 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.

Diwan Chaman Lall: Sir, I was referring to the question of my own mission to the Argentine and I would like to take this opportunity of placing on record the tribute of my colleagues who went with me from this country to President General Peron for the sympathy that he showed towards the work of my mission and for the promptitude with which he intervened both originally and at a later stage in order to enable us to complete our trade treaty with the Argentine. The treaty itself is value for value basis treaty; that is to say, if the Argentine buy in our country a certain quantity of jute or hessian or any other commodity, we are entitled to buy for the equivalent value food in the Argentine. As the position stands at present, India has purchased, I believe, from the Argentine about 88 to 90 million pesos worth of foodstuff, which is equivalent to 300,000 tons of food which we have purchased and which is now arriving; but the value of the jute that we have sold to the Argentine Government, and we have sold it at a favourable rate—favourable from the point of view of the prices prevailing at that particular time—is about 200 million pesos worth. A peso is, roughly equivalent to 14 annas. Therefore, according to the particular treaty that I have been able to enter into with the Argentine Government on behalf of the Government of India, we have got a leeway to make up to the extent of 120 million pesos, and I think this amount should be utilised, as I suggested, by our entering into arrangements with the Argentine, for the purpose of purchasing food which may be needed not only now but at a later stage in the years to come. I have already stated that the Argentine Government had subsequently informed us that they are willing to allow us to purchase another 250,000 tons of food which will be available out of the new crop which comes in in the month of December. If attempts are made by proper means and through proper hands to purchase this food, I think our country is going to benefit vastly from this transaction.

Now, there are certain other matters which I would like to refer to in connection with the future. The last speaker referred to questions of storage. This is a very important question. I understand that 12½ per cent. of all the food grown in India is utilised either for seed or is lost as a result of storage. We do not quite know what particular quantity it may be, but it is possible it is from 8 to 5 per cent. Now, it is necessary to conserve every grain of food that we produce. We, a great agricultural country, are the most backward in the matter of storage facilities. In Canada and in America you have a system of elevators, which is a most modern system for the purpose of conservation and transit of food. One member of my delegation was asked to investigate the question of elevators in America. He will in due course present his report to the Food Department, but this is a matter that should not be delayed. It should be taken in hand immediately. As long ago as 1928 I remember making a suggestion to that effect after my return from Canada to the then Finance Member, but unfortunately it was not taken up. Now we have an example before us in the province of Saskatchewan in Canada, where a system of storage, has been developed on purely co-operative lines and it is working to the entire satisfaction of the province. I think somebody should be deputed to go there and study that particular problem and find out how they have successfully solved this question and arranged to preserve their food supply. That is one point to be considered very carefully for the future.

This second point to consider is the question of co-operative farming. It is a very large subject and I am not going to dilate on it except to make the suggestion that the Department concerned may look into this matter and see how we can put an end to these separate, tiny little holdings which are to be found in our country at present and get on to a basis of co-operative farming in this country.

The third question is the question of fertilizers. One big factory is being set up in Bihar under State management and control, but one factory is not sufficient. The top layer of the soil in many parts of the country has been destroyed and it is necessary to replace that by chemical fertilizers. The amount of manure available in the country even according to the present system is no longer sufficient and it is necessary to supplement that by means of factory produced manure. And I hope that steps will be taken, as now they are being taken, to start fertilizer factories on a large scale where the raw material is available so that fertilizers may be made available in ample measure and at cheap prices.

The last question is with regard to machinery. We must have tractors in this country. There are large tractors and small tractors. For small farms there are small tractors available and it was amazing to me when I went round in America to some farms and found that farms of 400 acres are being ploughed and harvested with the assistance of just two people. One man sitting on the machine ploughs the ground and the same machine is utilised for the purpose of harvesting the wheat and at the same time threshing the wheat; on the one side, you have the straw coming out and on the other the grain. It results in a tremendous saving of labour and gives quick returns. A machine like that is capable of ploughing several acres a day, whereas since we depend upon the rainfall and moisture in order to plough, it is necessary that during the planting time with quick ploughing, attempts should be made to utilise every bit of moisture that is available in the soil.

The next point is in regard to the question of prices, which was also raised by the last speaker. The Honourable the Food Member went at length into that question. It is obvious that in our country we have to adjust the prices, keeping in view the interests of the producer and keeping also in view the interests of the consumer. A certain method will have to be found in the end to see that the farmer gets the basic decent price for his produce irrespective of what the price in the market may be. Other countries have done so. France, Great Britain and even America have assured a higher than the market price for their agricultural produce by means of a subsidy. In England under the Wheat Commission that has been set up, a farmer gets the price of wheat which is 20 to 50 per cent. more than the average world price of wheat. He is recouped out of a Processing tax and a similar method is employed in France. The necessity arises of stabilising agricultural prices and if decent prices are assured to the agriculturist over and above the market price by some such method as that of the Wheat Commission in Great Britain, I have not the slightest doubt that we should find no difficulty in the farmer giving the surplus produce and utilising as little as possible for his own purposes.

Finally, let it be understood and let the world realise this and let America particularly realise this that the need in India is not over, that the need in India is great and that between now and the month of January we must have nearly a million tons of more food if the rationing system is not to break down or if we are not to be compelled to keep on reduced rations. Does the world realise—I do not think they do, not in Washington, at any rate, from my information—what the implication of this reduced ration is? The health of our people is being steadily undermined under this small basic ration. It is necessary to take immediate steps to warn the world that this state of affairs is very dangerous and any break down in the rationing scheme would be disastrous to this country. Millions would go under not merely in starvation, but literally die. It is therefore necessary not only to procure enough food to keep the scheme in existence but get enough food to raise the standard of

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rations because many millions of our people, poverty stricken as they are, are unable to get anything more than the basic ration of 12 oz. a day, that is allotted to them. They are not like other countries, even European occupied countries where they can get their bread, and at the same time they have other kinds of food which they can use as supplement along with their bread in order to get a fairly decent living. In Germany, the basic calorific ration amounts to 1,600 to 2,000 against our 1,200 calories in India. In Germany there are other kinds of tinned foodstuffs which are available to them, whereas to a great majority of our population nothing else is available. I would take this opportunity of appealing to countries like Canada, and U.S.A. to realise our great need and to come to the assistance of India at this particular hour of need, and not to be content with what has been done. It is a miracle to see what has been done in India by our department, in putting this scheme through with great ability and with great energy. There is no other country in the world today whose population subsists on rationing on this wide scale—150 million people are under rations. There is no other country in the world—I am astonished to think of this. I have gone to other countries like Argentine where there is an abundant surplus. In those countries nobody is ever worried about food. Nobody is worried about almost anything else as far as their economic existence is concerned. I go to U.S.A. I find the same state of affairs, barring a little shortage in sugar and things of that sort, or perhaps a temporary dislocation in the meat supply position because of the strike. There is really no shortage of food. The same thing applies to Canada. Although this does not apply to Great Britain, which must have the sympathy of this House for the sufferings they have gone through and are still going through, yet the conditions there are simple when compared to the condition in our country. Therefore every attempt should be made to bring this to the attention of the rest of the world by sending out missions composed of men capable of putting the case before the councils of the world in order that you may be able to retrieve the dangerous position that faces us in the immediate future. I must finally congratulate the Honourable the Food Member and the new Government which are completely alive to the seriousness of the situation in India and wish them God speed in the efforts they are making to ameliorate that condition.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffar: Sir, we all greatly admired the ability and clarity with which the Honourable the Food Member dealt with what has come to be a 'hardy annual'—I mean the discussion on the food situation. His speech was listened to with profound attention and with some relief that he was not going to ask the peoples of the deficit areas to tighten their belts one more notch. All the same, I think there must have been many Members in this House who will share my disappointment, that there was no indication of the new efforts made by surplus areas to help others in distress. We expected some outline of the steps which have been taken in this direction or are under contemplation in those areas which have not pulled their full weight in the past.

While the Honourable Member, Dr. Rajendra Prasad admitted that the food situation had not improved in the past few months, his speech as a whole may have led members of this House to believe that we had turned the corner and could congratulate ourselves on surviving the worst dangers. Such an attitude would be one of unwarranted complacency, and the Honourable Member himself would not, I am sure, like such an impression to get about. The fact remains that even today the province of Madras has uncovered deficit of five lakhs of tons between now and the end of 1946, and my own province of Bombay has still to find two lakhs of tons of cereals. If these quantities are not made available by the Central Government by the end of this month, the rationing system in Bombay and Madras which has drawn such tributes from the American Food Mission from ex-President Hoover and from all students of food administration in this country will collapse. Surely that shows that the crisis in its most intensive form is still upon us.

By abandoning the basic plan on which they had worked for the last two years, the Government of India have done nothing to help those provinces which have tried to do their duty towards the country as a whole. Under the basic plan the Government of India gave assistance to provinces annually on the basis of merits and deserts. Sometime back this basic plan was abandoned and the Government of India decided to distribute central supplies every month on the basis of stocks existing in the province at the beginning of the month. If a Province was improvident or did not procure enough, it would have a low level of stocks, and on that basis the Government of India would give it assistance. Another province which procured more of its own resources and maintains strict control over distribution and, therefore, had higher stocks, would get nothing. This abandonment of the basic plan has been a distinct encouragement to improvidence on the part of provincial governments and deserves the strictest censure. I trust that the Food Secretary when replying to this debate will give an assurance to this House that as from January 1947, the basic plan will again be restored and that this system of giving to those who deserve least and stinting those provinces who deserve the best thanks of this country such as the provinces of Bombay and Madras will be reversed.

I hope he will give a further assurance that meantime there will be no further cut in the already inadequate general ration of 12 oz.

I hope my words will not be misunderstood by the Honourable the Food Member but the question which people in Madras and Bombay and Mysore are asking is: we have mobilised all our resources to the utmost of our ability, we have rationed our urban and rural populations, we have gone to our farmers and taken from them the surplus grain, and yet we are denied by the Central Government supplies to meet our barest needs? Why are other areas who have been lax in their food administration still allowed to get away with large supplies? When maize is made a compulsory part of the ration in Bombay and Madras, why should not the same be done in Delhi which is as much a deficit province as the other two?

Then we come to other anomalies. We have been told that government monopoly purchase of foodgrains is the only method to meet an emergent situation of the kind which faces India today. And yet why has this system made little headway in quite a few provinces? The previous Food Member warned, cajoled and promised by turns, but unfortunately, it is the opinion in deficit areas that despite all this, there is no real enthusiasm for government procurement in surplus provinces; I may be wrong and shall be glad to be corrected.

All of us are concerned and must remain concerned during the whole period of the food crisis with the clamour for raising foodgrain prices. I do hope, Sir, there will be no wavering in this respect. This problem of the vicious spiral, increase of grain prices, followed by increases of other prices and so on, will have to be carefully tackled. If there is to be any further increase, I feel, the process will lead us faster and faster to a catastrophe.

That brings me to the nauseating business of profiteering in foodstuffs. We hear and read much about profiteering in food but we missed any indication in the Food Member's speech of the conviction of any large profiteer.

I wish to refer briefly to a matter which I think is of some importance, although it may seem to be of comparatively small importance. A couple of days ago I was astounded to read in the Delhi newspapers that the control over milk had been lifted in Delhi. Is the capital of India so overflowing with milk that this commodity can be decontrolled? It is really an astonishing situation that while other parts of the country are making special efforts to make milk available to children through special schemes—as in Bombay—Delhi should consider milk control superfluous. Surely there is one class whom we want to spare, and that is children, the hope of our future. Do Delhi children get sufficient and cheap milk now? Speaking of milk I would remind the Honourable the Food Secretary of my speech during the last food debate when I suggested that import duties on milk products should be removed, for

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instance, the heavy duty on butter imported from Australia. When we are short of butter in India I suggest that duty on such milk products like butter, etc., should be removed and I hope the Honourable the Finance Member while preparing the next year's budget will consider this question favourably.

The shortage of cattle food is one of the factors making for milk shortage. I have a letter from the Bombay Humanitarian League giving details of their approach to the Government of India for importing cattle food from Portuguese East African Colonies and British East African Colonies and how such opportunities have been neglected by the Government of India. This shows that we are not using our exports as a lever for obtaining cattle food.

As the Food Member is also in charge of agriculture I should like to state that all our present troubles are due to the woeful neglect of agriculture in the past. And the chickens are now coming home to roost. We have had commissions in the past, reports, blue-books, white papers and advertisements about "Grow More Food" in English newspapers, but the fundamental problem of insufficient production still remains. This is the time for Government to make up their mind as to what part agriculture must play in the life of this country.

In conclusion, I am sure every Member of this House realises that the organisation of food administration even in normal times is an immense undertaking, but once shortage becomes a world problem the problem becomes bigger still and one which knows no limit. We feel that Government now have a real grasp of the situation and are trying to do their best for the amelioration of the people's suffering. In spite of the criticism that I made on points of detail, I am sure Government can demand from all of us uninterrupted, loyal and consistent support, which will mean success in fighting back the danger of famine.

Khan Abdul Ghaní Khan: Sir, so much has been said and written and stated about food inside this House and outside it that it is hardly possible for one to put forward any new idea or contribute any fresh suggestion. Since the Bengal famine we have been talking of food and food has become more and more scarce. In the last two or three years we have produced magnificent plans and reports on food and we have seen more magnificent deputations of beggars to beg for food in the foreign countries. I returned from one such deputation day before yesterday, the delegation that went to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations at Copenhagen. In Commission A of that conference I did the begging for India, my colleagues did it in the other Commissions and Committees on which they were serving. I begged the Commission to give preference to India in the distribution of fertilisers and export an allotment of tractors because India was starving. Never shall I forget the shame that I suffered when I said that. There was I standing before the nations of the world admitting in so many words that though I came from a country which has unlimited man power, inexhaustible natural resources, one of the best climates and most fertile lands, with scores of long rivers and hundreds of square miles of flat ground, yet we are starving. I admitted in so many words that we were starving because we Indians were stupid and ignorant and inefficient and suffered from a lack of will and intelligence. And, Sir, these are precisely the reasons why we are starving. Our rivers, our soil, our mineral wealth is all as good as America's; our man power is greater; and yet America is rich and well fed and we are poor and starving. What is it that America has and India has not? It is the will to serve, the will to create, the will to produce. A thousand brilliant plans will not produce a single turnip; you cannot get fish by singing lullabies on the banks of rivers. If files and plans and statements and blue-books could produce food we would be the greatest exporters of food in the world. But unfortunately potatoes do not grow in files. We do not want speeches, we want action. I know the Honourable Babu Rajendra Prasad has the will and the desire to serve India; he has been given the most difficult portfolio, he has the most terrible responsibility and therefore the greatest honour. I

know he will try his best, but that is not enough; we all must try our best. As long as there is one unfed child in India we have no right to raise our head with pride or talk of our culture or civilization or religion. There is no room in a hungry man's stomach or head or heart for anything else but hunger. A starving man knows no other God except bread. Food is the first duty and highest responsibility of every Government; everything else is secondary. There is no point in teaching a child geography when you should be giving him potatoes. There is no sense in making laws for a hungry people; hunger neither understands nor needs laws. It needs food. I know that you all realise this, but what I want to point out specially is that we must not forget that it is the farmer of India and not the soil of India that will produce the food of India. You forgot him and he underfed you, you condemned him to a life of ignorance and poverty and disease, and nature made you pay for it a horrible price, famine. I am glad you have remembered him at last. He is the real problem. You will dam the rivers and plough the fields and have the fertilisers but you will still starve until you educate the tiller of the soil and make him intelligent. Arm him with knowledge and understanding and he will beat hunger for you; nothing else and no one else can. The blind farmer of India is the great obstruction to the greater production of food in India. For example, take the case of manure. Go to any Indian village and you will see stacks of cowdung cakes and the immediate consequence,—undernourished children and wretched crops. Do you think that if the mother of these half-starved children understood and knew that everytime she burnt a cake of cowdung she was burning away one solid meal from her child's food, she would do it? No Indian mother would; she would rather burn out her eyes. She does not know it but she must be made to understand it. I had exactly the same difficulty in my own village. I quarrelled with my people, I pleaded with them and I even threatened them; but they still continued to burn cowdung cakes. I persuaded the men but I could not persuade the women; the only way they could cook their food was with cowdung. So three years ago I planted a few quick-growing trees for them and allotted them to various families. When they got a little fuel they saved a little manure; and this year I had the best crop in my land because they had a lot of manure. Next year I hope to get a better crop because they will have more fuel next year.

This brings me to the suggestion that I want to put before the House. My Honourable friend Mr. Lawson said the other day that food and agriculture were complementary to one another and he was glad to see them under one Member. I want to go further. I claim that more food is possible only if all the departments of Government co-ordinate to produce it. The farmer must be taught by word,—that is the Information Department; then by deed,—that is the Agriculture Department. The P.W.D. must make dams and canals and wells and make farms to market roads. Communications must give him better transport; Industries must give him fertilisers and science must give him improved seeds. If you look deeply into the subject you will be shocked at the number of wheels that you will have to turn before you can hope for any progress. Therefore I propose that we make an organisation modelled on the lines of the international organisation of the F.A.O. (Food and Agricultural Organisation) of the United Nations. This organisation must be made responsible solely for the production and distribution of food in India. It should be given the supreme authority over the provincial Governments and their provincial projects and the central departments in the matter of food. It should be a society of missionaries who will consider the feeding of Indian children holy and noble enough to give up their life to it, and we on our side must give them the power the trust and the chance to make good use of their lives in the service of India and that is

3 P.M. the quickest way, and to my humble understanding the best way and the only way of getting more food for India.

That is all that I have to say about the production of food. Now a word about consumption of food and I am through. If you want to get the best

[Khan Abdul Ghani Khan]

out of your food and your investment in it, you must eat intelligently. This is another thing we have to teach the masses of India. You must not ask for a particular variety of food that you like; you must eat what is good for you. Perhaps an example will help me clarify what I mean: Take my friends from South India. They have a famine. I am surprised they have not had a dozen instead of one. The Madrasi is a very intelligent Accountant and lawyer but he is a very unintelligent feeder. He eats only rice and he will not eat fish and eggs and meat and even wheat.

An Honourable Member: We are now eating maize.

Khan Abdul Ghani Khan: I am very glad to hear it.

On a specialised diet like that, the chances of starvation are much greater than for more general feeders, like the Pathans or the Punjabis. You must eat what you can get until you can produce what you would like to eat. India may pay crores of rupees this year to subsidize rice for you, but we cannot do it every year. You must eat what India produces—corn, wheat and bajra, eggs and fish—yes, Sir, fish—you cannot starve a human child because you feel sentimental about fish. You cannot be an intelligent eater and orthodox at the same time. The animals that had specialised food were the first to fall in the struggle for life. They are all extinct. It is unreasonable to say that I must have rice and chillies or I am going to starve, so help me God. No, you must eat whatever will keep body and soul together. You will get a little more brawn—and possibly a little less brain, and the result will be a better Madrasi.

The English, who are an infernally sensible race—and too much so, as we have found to our cost—are very intelligent about food. They have mechanized their farms and they are short of meat and so what do they do? Why, they have eaten up all their horses. When you get Viena Steak in London you must understand that in plain English it means plain good old plough horse.

I wonder when India will learn that there is no virtue in eating a turnip and no crime in eating a horse. For neither the turnip nor the horse is what matters. The only thing that matters is the strong and healthy young body which is the only hope for a perfect mind, which is the only hope of a perfect nation. Feed India and educate her and you need not worry about the future of India. It will be greater than you have ever dared to dream.

I thank you, Sir.

Sri E. Venkatasubba Reddier (South Arcot *cum* Chingleput: Non-Muhamadan Rural): Sir, I pay my tribute to the Honourable the Food Member for having appealed to the members of this House and also the public for co-operation in his efforts. And I also pay my tribute to the Food Secretary for having managed the Honourable the Food Member to repeat his theory against the prices

Mr. President: Before the Honourable Member proceeds further, I would like to say a word. I stated in the morning Session that in view of the large number of members who wish to speak, there should be a strict time limit and the speeches should be as short as possible and should deal with points which have not already been brought out in the debate. That is the only way of having the maximum number of points and suggestions brought to the notice of the House and to the notice of the Government. Though I do not want to fix any rigid time limit, but I think ten minutes should be sufficient for expounding any further points which Members have to place before the House, Members should therefore see that they do not exceed five minutes if possible or ten minutes at the most.

Sri E. Venkatasubba Reddier: I would like to address myself only to the question of prices and not to other points. I was surprised to hear that the Honourable Member will not support any rise in the price of foodgrains. I think it is partly due to the work of the Department, but he argued a bad case good

lawyer that he is in order to convince this House and also the public against raising the prices. But I would like to expose some of the fallacies in his arguments.

He said that he must look after both the interest of the producer and the interest of the consumer. Nobody denies that. What is it that the consumer would like to have? Would he like to have his rice or wheat at the cost of the producer? Now, he has not taken into consideration the cost of production of rice or wheat. So far as we are concerned, coming from the South I shall give some figures for raising paddy crop on an acre of land. If it is a dry land it comes to 120 rupees and if it is a wet land it comes to about 80 to 85 rupees per acre. I will request the House to bear with me if I go into details because I find I am the only person here in this House who has been fighting for the rise in price.

The cost of preparing seed beds and manuring is Rs. 15 per acre in my district. Preparation of land comes to 21 before it is transplanted. The cost of transplanting and removal of seedlings comes to about Rs. 8 per acre. Manure is required at the rate of 4½ bags of oil cakes per acre, and the controlled rate is Rs. 9-4 per bag although we never get it at the controlled rate. It comes to Rs. 41-10. The land revenue on wet land comes to Rs. 6 to 8 per acre, and harvesting charges Rs. 15. All this taken together works out to Rs. 85 per acre. What is the normal yield in India? We have got agricultural statistics in India and also several reports before us. They give 12 maunds of paddy per acre as the average outturn. So at the present rate of Rs. 5-11, it comes to about 66 to 69 and even if you take the value of straw, which is about Rs. 15 per acre, it comes to exactly Rs. 84. He has nothing for his supervision charges and nothing for his establishment, and if it is a wet land he is just able to make up what he has spent on his land. But if it is a dry land he is a loser by 35 to 40 rupees. I do not mean that on an average every cultivator is losing, but that is the position. The Honourable the Food Member said that if he is a loser why should the cultivator go on cultivating his land. The Honourable the Food Member has not been practising for a long time. If he had been practising, he would have found that many a member of the bar is not able to make both ends meet and yet continues his practice, because they are not capable of taking up any other profession nor can they adjust themselves in any other walk of life. It is just the same with the cultivator. He has no other vocation and the other thing is from his labour on the land he hopes to get some crop. He hopes to get some grain which he would not otherwise get. So he is on the land and carrying on the profession of agriculture in order to help himself and if possible others.

The other question was raised: if as a matter of fact raising of food crops is not profitable, why should he not raise commercial crops or money crops? The answer is this. If you want to raise sugar cane or tobacco or ground-nuts, they are costly crops. Raising sugar cane in my part costs Rs. 400—500 an acre and ground-nuts cost Rs. 100—120 per acre. Many of these people find it difficult to raise those crops. The other reason is that the Provincial Government of Madras prohibited the growing of ground-nuts and money crops in March of last year. He argued if the level of price was raised the consumer could not pay and it would be a burden on the consumer who would not be able to meet his demand and get the other necessities of life. It is not true. He also quoted from some index figures that the price of rice has risen 320 per cent in the index. But from the reports of the Agricultural Statistics of India, 1938, I find that in Madras the rice price has been Rs. 3-14 per maund and the present control rice price fixed by Government is Rs. 8-9 per maund. It comes to 220 per cent and not 320 per cent over the pre-war level.

Mr. B. R. Sen: That is the all-India index.

Sri R. Venkatasubba Reddier: I am giving figures for my province. Then he quoted that sugar has not risen in price. That is because it has been controlled from the beginning. Compared with other articles, the price of sugar has been kept very low.

[Sri R. Venkatasubba Reddiar]

What about the needs of the agriculturist? Some of my friends have said those needs have gone up in price. In 1941 I was able to purchase a ton of oil cakes for Rs. 32. Now I am not able to purchase it for Rs. 180. Labour has gone up by four times. The work turned out by the labourer has diminished in proportion to the rise in wages. We cannot get cattle, implements and their price has risen by 10 to 15 times. So we say that the agriculturist should get a fair price and if the price is raised by one rupee per maund, it does not hit the consumer. One maund is 82 lbs. Under the present ration of eight ounces per head per day, only fifteen pounds are necessary for an individual for a month. A rupee increase in the price works out at one and one fifth of a pice per day, or three annas per month. I say if it is not possible, or the producer could not expect the consumer to pay three annas increase per head for this rice, the incidence is not very much. Even if it is thought that this could not be borne by the consumer, I would suggest, just as they are doing in the Railway Department, that the Government itself subsidize this food and meet the cost of conveyance, the middleman's charges, and pay the producer at the rate at which the consumer is getting.

There are, the second and third sorts of rice in Madras. They are very cheap. It works out at Rs. 7-14 and Rs. 7-6 per maund and if it is increased by Rs. 1-8, it does not hit the consumer.

So far as village rationing is concerned, we heard the Honourable Member say that people were unwilling to take some of these varieties of grains. It is true. What is happening in villages where grain is produced is that some people are given 2 lbs. of paddy per week. It is not sufficient for one day's meal. He is not able to take wheat. What is retained in the village is only paddy. The other grains are taken away. I would suggest that the Food Department try its best and raise the ration to one pound.

We support this motion and we will give all help to the Food Department as appealed to by the Food Member.

Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi (Calcutta and Suburbs: Muhammadan Urban): The Honourable the Finance Minister twitted me the other day saying that I lived in the past and did not think of the future. That is not quite true. I listened to the speech of the Honourable the Food Member with great attention. Had he been present here, Sir, I would have congratulated him upon the manner in which he simplified the whole case for us and put a picture before us which gave us clearer understanding of the situation. But I am sure, Sir, critical minds like mine, must have realized that he was just repeating a lesson placed before him by the Department. In the last session we heard the phrase, ninety days. Once we have gone over the ninety days we shall have entered the millenium so far as food was concerned. Now, the same Department has made the new Member say, it is only a question of sixty days, and not sixty-one. By then we shall all be happy and our poor brothers and sisters in India will get a tummy-full of full, if you will pardon the expression. My feeling throughout has been, that for reasons which I cannot fully appreciate or understand, this starvation stunt of India has been overplayed. We are accustomed, Sir, to shortage of food. Our brothers and sisters have not been able to eat even one square meal a day sometimes. We have been talking of this for years and years. But I was flabbergasted when the Honourable the Food Member said that he had spent Rs. 91 crores in buying foodgrains and in order to equalise the local prices and the prices at which he had brought them outside, he had to pay a subsidy of Rs. 15½ crores more and yet the situation is what it is. Sir, the history of the Food Department has not been a very happy one. Lord Linlithgow chose three Food Ministers in about as many months and then himself sat on that gadi and the results are what they are. Will it surprise you, to learn that this word 'statistics' leaves me cold. They are never correct. I know something about the jute statistics of Bengal. You can go and talk to any one you like and you will find that they have no faith in Government statistics. Commercial houses give you better statistics. I know the case, which I think the

Honourable Member who will wind up the debate on behalf of the Department will note down carefully. They decided, here in Delhi, that a surplus area was not a surplus area. They promised to send so many thousand tons—we always talk in tons nowadays—to them there. The officials there wrote back saying that they had got so much of surplus and so they did not want any more. Train loads of grain were however sent and then the same Government of India bought that same grain at a higher price, paid double transportation charges and carried it to the area where it was actually needed. This is only one instance of incompetence of the most magnificent department the Government of India had when India was starving. They fixed prices and they are supposed to control them but does it surprise you to know that the Government itself buys at a price higher than the price—it has fixed. Can ridiculousness go any further? My own feeling is this—you, Sir, have asked us not to go into details and therefore I shall cut short my remarks—that the I. C. S. (the Indian Celestial Service) does not understand the A. B. C. of the problem. I wish the Honourable the Food Member had been here. I would then have appealed to him to save us from the civilians, who can only go on fattening files but who do not know one grain from another. They sit in the offices, and smoke cigarettes. Their habus bring the files to them and they put their initials on them. They do nothing more than that. Sir, I hope the new Member, when he has got into the guts of the matter will hand over the problem of feeding India to the grain merchants. It is because the Government has come in that the merchants, in order to safeguard their own position, have done things which should not have been done according to strict principles of commerce or trade. Once these great civilians are removed, Sir our *baniyas*, our *memons*, our *khogas* and other grain merchants will be able to put India on a very sound basis in the matter of food. We shall get our rice, wheat, dal and oil at the normal prices that we used to pay. It is all because of this madness about internationalism which sends us with the beggar's bowl to other countries in the world.

Sir, the Honourable the Food Member suggested many ways of how he was going to increase production. Sir, the department has not drawn his attention sufficiently to the *liaison* between Government officials, zamindars and merchants. Sir black-market is not the right word. This *liaison* is more terrible. I will give you one instance. After the Bengal famine, the Government of India and the Bengal Government decided to have granaries. They bought rice from every corner in the world, filled the granaries and fixed the prices. Will you believe me that they could not sell one seer of grain, because all the grain which had been hoarded either in the zamindar's underground cellars or in the merchant's backyards came out into the market at a price lower than the price fixed by the Government. So, if this *liaison* could be broken by the Food Department, I am satisfied in my mind that there shall be no shortage. Our population is increasing and therefore we must have more food. Fertilisers should be introduced and, therefore, a monopoly should be given to a certain corporation and not open it up to the general public to establish fertilising plants in India. But there is one way of getting out of the trouble and that is to break the *liaison* between the Food Department officials and the food grain merchants and the zamindars. There is enough food in the country. I can understand the point made by the Honourable the Food Member that he has to look to the interests of the producers and he has to look to the interests of the consumers. If he can establish a balance, there would be nothing like it. But scholars and economists have found that the maximum number of media between the producer and the consumer is about 36 and the lowest about four to five. Now if they cannot break it through their monopolistic purchase policy, as they call it, then the producer does not get the 320 per cent increase the Honourable the Food Member mentioned and you and I have to pay, I do not know how many times more, for the food that we get and the poor man suffers consequently. My appeal to the Department will be: please let the producer get as much as he can but bring the price of the foodgrains down as low as you possibly can. Here is a chance for the Government trying to become a real *ma bap* in the old sense of the term and get at every turn it bungles, and brings losses upon losses to the tax-payer.

[Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi]

During the great famine in Bengal the Government of India laid down its mighty big policies. Will it, again, surprise you, Sir, to learn that there was a revolt in the provinces. Assam was going to give us in Bengal 25,000 tons of grain but it did not give us more than 2,500 tons. The strong Governor of Bihar refused to send one single grain of rice to Bengal. Now if the Food Department is going to work through the provincial agencies, I am satisfied that it will be a new fiasco greater than any. And therefore in order to break the *liaison* and the incompetence, as I have suggested, let Government get out of this field. Let Government take up the problem of production only and leave distribution to commercial agencies who in certain cases have the experience of generations in that type of business.

I am sorry the Food Member is not here. There are other aspects of the matter to which I could speak. But if the Secretary to the Department conveys my appeal to him, to hand over distribution to men who understand know, and take back the civilians, we shall not need to go either towards the west or to Bangkok or to any other part of the world for our daily food. In this manner alone will the balance between the producer and the consumer be established.

Raja Bahadur of Khallikote (Nominated Non-Official): Mr. President, Sir, I wish to congratulate my Honourable friend, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, for his able and lucid speech on the food situation, and I have no doubt that he deserves to receive a well-merited tribute from this Honourable House for the masterly manner in which he has dealt with the most difficult problem of the day, so soon after his taking over charge of affairs. It is amazing to find that in spite of his advancing age and indifferent health he has so soon mastered a problem which is the most vexed of all the problems of the day. Let us hope that the approaching harvest will fulfil all expectations and that nothing untoward like cyclones and other calamities, common to our coastal areas, will mar the prospects of what appears to be a very promising season, so far.

Arising out of the speech of the Honourable Member, I wish to point out one or two matters by way of suggestions. I heard my honourable friend the Food Member say that in permanently settled areas there were no means of collecting statistics or data. So far as the permanently settled estates of the Madras area and the ex-Madras area of the Orissa province are concerned, there are facilities for gathering such statistics. In these estate areas, as well as in the ryotwari areas, the system known as the village officer system for groups of villages exists, and under this system it is the duty of these village officers who are public servants, to furnish all information and statistics to the authorities and they are the only agency on whom every revenue authority depends to gather statistics regarding the crop outturn. These village officers are low-paid and generally an uneducated lot, identifying themselves with the local cliques of the village. The natural conservative temperament of the villager prevents him from disclosing or parting with his stocks, and the village officer will surely make himself an enemy of the villagers if he gives a liberal estimation of the crop outturn. I have personally known of cases where village officers do not go to the fields or make any inquiries but just sit at home and write away some kind of a report which forms the basis of these so-called statistics. If dependable statistics are needed, it is essential to have a separate statistical machinery instead of depending upon the uneducated and ill paid village officers who cannot be expected to turn out such work efficiently and accurately. The exact estimation of a standing crop on a field is a most difficult task and unless actual crop cutting experiments are carried out, this estimate can, at the most, be approximate and sometimes vague.

There is not enough propaganda in the rural areas to induce the producer to part with his surplus stock for the benefit of others. Such is the case not only in permanently settled areas but in all areas. Another thing that tempts the producer to suppress his stocks is the control of prices by government. He lives in hopes that prices will rise further and often not satisfied with the control, he

prefers selling his stocks in the black market to his friends in the neighbourhood and sometimes, gives his stock in exchange for other consumers goods. My experience has been that the procuring agents appointed by provincial governments are, generally, not the right type of people enjoying the confidence of the producers. Instead of appointing persons who try to make a regular business of it, why not entrust the work of procurement to co-operative societies as is being done in Madras? Why not also encourage the payment of bonus as is also being done in Madras, which is responsible for bringing out such a large percentage? This will have the additional benefit of discouraging the producer from going into the black market.

I am glad that my honourable friend, the Food Member, as Member in charge of Agriculture and Food, realises that the time has come not to agree to a further rise in prices, and I may assure him that the scheme of procurement will show far better results if the producer is given straightaway to understand clearly now that there is to be no further rise of prices.

By a proper planning of trade policies the Government of India can make attempts to solve the food problem. India is getting rice from Indonesia and Siam in exchange for textiles and a financial credit of 5 crores, respectively. Government must explore similar possibilities with the countries of the Middle East and other countries. As there is now a full-fledged national government in this country today, India's prestige at the moment is very high, as was proved by the conclusion of the Indo-Argentine Food Agreement. I wish to take this opportunity to pay my humble tribute to my honourable friend, Diwan Chaman Lal, and his delegation for their great efforts in securing us food. It is, therefore, just the time to send out a strong delegation with full powers to negotiate and buy plant for the manufacture of fertilisers, tractors and other agricultural machinery. This government must also impress upon His Majesty's Government that it is very important that they should provide ample shipping space for carrying food to our country and to bring to our shores all this machinery which is so urgently needed.

The cost of fertilisers must be within easy reach of the agriculturists. Without making any discrimination between ryotwari and other areas, the system of giving grants-in-aid for even larger irrigation works should be adopted on an uniform scale for the simple reason that the food crisis makes no difference between ryotwari areas or any other areas.

Finally, referring to my poor province of Orissa, we are grateful to this government for providing that the share of the central government should be two-third instead of half, out of the 50 per cent grant. Loans also should be encouraged. We are thankful to providence that the province has recovered from those dreadful days of 1943 and is also doing her bit in easing the food crisis elsewhere in the country, as was demonstrated by our parting with 5,000 tons of rice to Madras recently. The responsible ministry that is functioning there now will, I hope, always be on the alert to prevent the repetition of a similar disaster to the one which occurred in 1943. It is gratifying to note that beneficial schemes like the Mahanadi and the Duduma projects will soon be taken up, and in this connection, may I hope that the central government will show to this poor province of Orissa the same generous consideration as in the case of other matters.

I wish to conclude now by saying that my Honourable friend the Food Member has started well in tackling the food problem on right lines and I wish him God-speed and the best of luck in this most difficult task that he has undertaken.

Sree Satyapriya Banerjee (Chittagong and Rajshahi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Mr. President, Sir, I confess it is painful to have to speak on the Food situation in the country for reasons which can be better imagined than described but one has to when occasion demands and circumstances permit.

The speech which the Honourable Food Member delivered the other day was a magnificent performance. The speech, in which he gave a masterly survey and a careful and a straightforward analysis of the entire food situation of the

[Sree Satyapriya Banerjee]

country, neither belittling its gravity nor sounding a note of despair, will stand-out in bold and striking contrast to the speeches delivered by his predecessors on similar occasions in the past. I fully realise that he has inherited a legacy from his predecessors, a legacy of commissions and omissions of which the less said the better and I do not want to rake up the memories of the unpleasant past but I am glad to find that within a very short period he has been in office he has been able to create a record of policies, which his speech has amply demonstrated, and I hope also, very soon he will create a record of actions, a record which would defy time and inspire confidence and courage in his fellow countrymen by his beneficent influence.

The food situation today is grave, it is dangerously insecure. There has been no improvement in the food situation says Dr. Rajendra Prasad. If that is true of the whole of India, how much more is it true of the province of Bengal. The *Statesman*, in its editorial of yesterday says while nowhere there is cause for complacency in Bengal particular reason exists for continued grave concern. Bengal, I must say, circumstanced as she is today, her food problem has been cast into shade and it pales into insignificance before the general political situation of the province, particularly in Calcutta and East Bengal. Life is insecure. Liberty is at stake. Properties have been looted. Houses have been burnt. Sanctity and freedom of religion have been trampled under foot. Forcible conversions into Islam and forcible marriages of Hindu girls with Mahomedans in Noakhali and Tipperah districts on a mass scale have taken place and the wound that has been inflicted on Hindu world by these unhappy happenings will take a long time, if at all, to heal. That is the picture of Bengal now, as she is today and I shall try to review the food situation in this perspective and my remarks will be confined to the problems of that province. Rice is non-available in many parts of the province and where it is available, the prices are so high that they are beyond the reach of the poorer sections of the people of the province and it is as good as non-existent. There are also reports of death from starvation, reports which have not yet been contradicted. I have definite information that thousands of people marooned in the affected areas of Noakhali and Tipperah were, and, I am afraid, still are going without food. I would ask the Food Member, and in his absence the Food Secretary with all the earnestness and emphasis at my command to make arrangements for taking food to these affected areas immediately and save them from starvation and death. The matter does not brook any delay—that will mean sure starvation and death. I cannot, Sir, resist the temptation of quoting a few lines from the editorial of yesterday's *Statesman*: When the present communal strife began in August, many features of the food administration were unsatisfactory. Rice was selling in some deficit areas much higher than the official price; procurement was small; Government stocks were small; distribution was uneven. In Calcutta there was no movement of supplies for a few days last week. Comment was made on the requirements of the disturbed areas in Noakhali and Tipperah. Alarming reports are coming from Mymensingh and other parts of province.

Let me now deal with the food problem in the province and offer some constructive suggestions in this regard. It is evident that the food problem in Bengal, or for the matter of that, elsewhere, and anywhere in the world, has to be dealt with under the following heads—production, procurement and storage, distribution and rationing.

Before dealing with these factors, let me give you some figures regarding Bengal. Bengal was declared a deficit province in 1943-44 so far as rice was concerned by 800,000 tons and the rice allotted to it was only 1,707,000 tons. Bengal was declared again deficit in the year 1944-45 by 11,00,000 tons and believe me when I say that rice was still despatched from it to the extent of 118,000 tons and this year, from 1st May 1946 to 30th September Bengal has received only 112,000 tons of foodgrains out of a total of 1,019,000 tons received from overseas. Bengal is deficit this year according to the revised estimate by 2 million tons. I hope the Honourable Food Member will give special consideration to Bengal, regard being had to the deficit that stares us in the face. I will just read here

a quotation from the statement of Sir Robert Hutchings made on the 17th June 1946 regarding Bengal:

"Bengal would be self-sufficient this year and at any rate would not call on the centre for help at present while it is still trying to save the people of Southern India. For the present we fully intend to see the people in Southern India through the trouble. The extent to which we can help Bengal, depends very largely on the assistance we receive from outside India."

I ask the House to ponder over the situation as described in this statement in comparison with what the situation actually is today and ask the House to consider whether Bengal does not deserve special consideration.

Sir, let me first of all turn to the problem of procurement in that province. In Annexure A to the memorandum circulated to us we find only seven lines describing the system of procurement in the benighted province of Bengal. I owe it to myself and to members of this House to describe in brief outline the system of procurement—how purchases are made by the Government officers in those districts in which purchases are from the very nature difficult—I mean the districts of Khulna and Barisal and while chief purchasing agents operate in the surplus districts of Dinajpur, Burdwan, Birbhum, Bankura, Midnapore and 24-Parganas. Procurement in all these districts is done, to all intents and purposes by the rice mills which are heavily concentrated in those districts and the chief agents, only because they are so, get a commission of 2 annas per maund of rice or paddy plus 3 annas for handling and storage, costing the exchequer more than a crore and a half of rupees a year. I fully realise, Sir, that Bengal being a permanently settled area it is difficult, if not impossible, to introduce monopoly procurement here and now but it is quite possible to requisition the stock of holders of paddy land of more than 25 acres and more who are required to submit their stocks to Government. Why not assess the surplus of these people and take it over at Government's purchasing price? This can be done at once without any extra cost to the Government but with the saving to the exchequer of the commission paid to the chief agents. May I ask, Sir, why the recommendations of the Famine Enquiry Commission and of the Braund Committee have not been carried out by the Bengal Government? Provincial Autonomy is good but provincial licence certainly not. Provincial autonomy should not be allowed to degenerate into provincial licence and when that happens, it is clear duty of the higher authorities, if I may use the expression of Rousseau, to force that province to be free.

Let me come to storage now. It is admitted on all hands that loss due to storage has been considerable. We are told that there has been a storage directorate, there has been an inspection directorate and there has been a laboratory and there must have been huge expenditure on all these heads. May I ask the Food Secretary whether these Directorates have done what was expected of them and had they done so whether such huge wastage due to defective storage could or could not have been avoided. May I ask what will be the approximate amount saved from wastage on account of defective storage as a result of the setting up of these Directorates? During the last session I asked a question regarding storage in Bengal, in reply to which my Honourable friend the Food Secretary was pleased to observe—an inquiry has been made from the Bengal Government and the information will be laid on the table when received. And you will be astonished to learn the information has not yet been supplied. It was on the 3rd April 1946. I trust the Honourable the Food Member will personally look into it and put the Directorates in the working order or scrap them altogether.

Now, let me turn to distribution. Distribution and procurement are complementary; they go hand in hand. They go together. Foodgrains are procured not for defective storage but for effective distribution. The detailed reports from the different districts give an idea of the disastrous situation with regard to distribution. Immediate steps should be taken to remedy this state of affairs as follows:—

(1) The needs of every district for the next few months should be immediately assessed and movement of stocks planned accordingly.

(2) The bigger towns should be immediately put on full rationing.

[Sree Satyapriya Banerjee]

(3) The modified rationing scheme should be introduced extensively in rural areas, if complete rationing is not possible.

(4) Supplies must be given regularly, and not occasionally as at present under the modified rationing scheme.

(5) The distinction between A, B and C classes should be abolished, for such a distinction falls heavily on the B and C classes and ultimately leads to the creation of a black-market for persons denied help.

(6) Assessment of local needs is generally made by Civil Supply officers without consulting public opinion. The result very often is bad with consequential chaos. This should be stopped and arrangements should be made to enable responsible leaders of public opinion to have a say in the assessment, supply and distribution.

(7) The Union Food Committee must be put under strict control and supervision so that they may no longer remain bottlenecks of corruption. It is also essential that these committees must be efficient units or be replaced by some other competent machinery.

(8) Sub-divisional and District Food Committees must have no executive officer as their office-bearers.

(9) Prompt enquiries should be made into grievances, local or general, specially in cases of corruption and communalism and strong action taken, if grievances are found to be genuine.

(10) Finally, the assessment of *per capita* need must not be below the minimum nutritional standard.

Let me give the instance of Calcutta. For the next two months on the basis of $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. *per capita* Calcutta would require about one lakh of tons of stores, but the present stock in the hands of the Government is only about 4 lakhs of maunds, an utterly inadequate and a ridiculously small amount.

Now, Sir, let me come to the basic problem—the problem of problems regarding food—the problem of production. The policies of the Government in this regard have been many and varied but their performances have been few and far between. The performances have only led to extravagant cost without any commensurate results. I shall not deal with short-time production that has been done already and I shall not say much on the grow-more-food campaign. I may at once say that hitherto the grow-more-food campaign has been a colossal waste of money. The expenditure on this account amounted to Rs. 72.65 lakhs in 1944-45; Rs. 103 lakhs in 1945-46 and in 1946-47 a provision of expenditure of Rs. 102.35 lakhs has been made. Sir, the Members of this House will certainly be surprised to learn that the area under cultivation of winter rice in 1945-46 has shown a decrease of 6.4 per cent. as compared to the previous year. And, Sir, the yield of my poor province of Bengal compares unfavourably to the yield in Coorg and Madras. In Bengal it is about 900 lbs. per acre while in Coorg it is about 1,450 lbs. per acre and in Madras 1,050 lbs. per acre. And if we look a little beyond to a country which has no intensive cultivation, I mean Egypt, we find there the yield of rice per acre is 1,854 lbs. per acre. The system of rice cultivation being the same in Coorg and Madras as in other parts of India, it may be taken for granted that this decrease in yield is due to the fact that the soil has been denuded of its fertility and it has to be replenished. My time is up. I wish I had time to deal with co-operative farming, fertilisers and consolidation of holdings.

One word more and I have done. May the Food Department be infected by the dynamism and sincerity of Dr. Ranjendra Prasad and may we as a result, be spared, such debates in future.

Mr. President: I think the Food Secretary will be able to do justice to his case if I give him 45 minutes.

Mr. B. R. Sen: About half an hour will be enough.

Raj Bahadur Davendra Mohan Bhattacharyya (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, we have listened with interest to the very valuable speech that has been delivered by the Honourable Member in charge of Food and Agriculture surveying the entire food situation of the country. It is very good of the Honourable Member that he has kept nothing concealed from the House and he is so very sincere and earnest for the real welfare of the people concerned. I do believe, Sir, that with consistent drive we can raise India's food production up to the standard required for her present population. So far as Bengal is concerned, I may say from my personal knowledge that vast tracts of land are still lying uncultivated in western Bengal for want of irrigation projects, which, if attended to, will bring the whole area under cultivation and will go a long way in solving the food problem which is so acute in Bengal. Irrigation projects of those areas have long been prepared but we hear that they are not being executed for want of funds. I think the Honourable the Secretary of the Food Department knows some of these projects as he had to deal with one or two when he was the District Officer of Midnapore. May I under the circumstances request the Honourable Member in charge of Food and Agriculture to consider if it is possible for the Central Government to render any financial assistance to the Government of Bengal for carrying out these irrigation schemes and thereby relieving Bengal to some extent of her food difficulties.

We have been very pleased to hear that the Central Government have decided to help the poor agriculturists in small irrigation works, such as, tube wells, surface wells, etc., and the idea is that 50 per cent. of the cost would be borne by the party that would benefit by it and of the remaining 50 per cent. half would be contributed by the Provincial Government and the other half by the Central Government. May I know if this formula would apply to provinces which are running at a deficit? Take, for instance, the case of Bengal which is at a deficit of about ten crores for the current year. If the Provincial Government fails to pay its quota will the Central Government pay the entire half and thus help the poor agriculturists of Bengal in food production?

Then, Sir, the poor agriculturists of Bengal are confronted with another difficulty. Government agents for procurement of paddy do not reach the outlying villages and the result has been that the poor agriculturists of those areas are compelled to sell their paddy at rates lower than the controlled rates to middle men who have cropped up between Government agents and agriculturists. It is also reported, Sir, that if an agriculturist brings his paddy to the Government purchasing centre for sale, he is very often told that paddy is not required on that day or that the paddy is bad. The poor agriculturist has then no other alternative but to sell his paddy at a rate lower than the controlled rate as carrying the paddy back to home means unnecessary expenditure and harassment. May I suggest, Sir, that these agents should be asked to go to 4 P. M. the village of the agriculturist for purchase and carry the paddy from there at Government expense.

There is another difficulty that the Bengal agriculturist is suffering from because of these Government agents. They pay the same price for rice which is coarse as well as fine, although everybody knows that the price for the two varieties cannot be the same. When these grievances are brought to the notice of the Procurement officers, they do nothing to remedy those grievances. May I suggest that the Department concerned should be asked to issue fresh instructions so that people may not suffer from these grievances.

Then, Sir, the recent imposition of the agricultural income-tax in Bengal has probably stood in the way of the 'Grow More Food Campaign' in Bengal. The big farmers think twice before they extend their cultivation because the fruits of their labours would not be left to them for enjoyment. Therefore, I request the Honourable Member in charge of Food and Agriculture to consider if the provincial governments should be advised to suspend the operation of the Agricultural Income Tax Act till India becomes self-sufficient so far as her food supply is concerned.

[Rai Bahadur Davendra Mohan Bhattacharyya]

Before I resume my seat, I would only like to add that the Honourable Member's speech has appealed to us most because in his speech he has claimed no credit for himself or for his department as his predecessor-in-office used to indulge in. The term 'I' or 'my department' has found no place in his speech.

Mr. President: Before I call upon Mr. Rohini Kumar Choudhuri to speak, I wish to invite the attention of the House to remove one possible misimpression. The Honourable Food Secretary said that he would require about half an hour to reply and Honourable Members might be under the impression that they can speak till half past four. I understand that there are some points which have to be replied to by the Honourable Secretary for the Agriculture Department. This debate will come to a close at about quarter past four. I believe the Agriculture Secretary will take about quarter of an hour.

Sir Pheroze Kharegat (Secretary, Agriculture Department): I would require only ten minutes.

Mr. President: I said about quarter of an hour. The Agriculture Secretary will be called upon to speak and then the Food Secretary will reply.

Sreejut Rohini Kumar Choudhuri (Assam Valley: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I rise to intervene in this debate to speak a few words regarding the plight of my unfortunate province of Assam.

[At this stage, Mr. President vacated the Chair which was then occupied by the Deputy President (Khan Mohammad Yamin Khan)].

Let me make no secret of my intentions. I want to din into the ears of the Government of India and this House the case of Assam so that they may make amends for the neglect of my province. I wish that my Honourable friend Dr Rajendra Prasad had been present here today because we in Assam have unbounded confidence and faith in his sense of justice and sympathy for the poor people. Sir, however, we cannot grudge his absence from this House on a more noble mission of peace. Let us all hope that he will come back with the glory of success imprinted on his face. But, Sir, may I add in this connection that if the Honourable Members of the Interim Government had been able to make a timely visit to the disturbed areas of Eastern India, a lot of houses which were burnt could have been saved, a lot of food which was destroyed could have been utilised, not to speak of saving of human lives. Sir, I do not say this in a spirit of carping criticism, because I know that this interim government is not yet a full fledged national government and my Honourable friends who sit at the back of the Treasury Benches are still powerful enough to influence the decisions of Government.

Sir, I listened very carefully, like an attentive schoolboy to the speeches delivered by my Honourable colleagues but I failed to hear a single word of sympathy for the flood stricken province of Assam. The recent floods in Assam rendered thousands of people homeless and all their crops have been damaged. Nearly 1½ lakhs of people are fed on doles every day and still not a word was heard in this House in sympathy for the plight of Assam. It is true that the All India Congress Committee, through the good offices of my Honourable friend Sardar Patel granted a sum of Rs. 25,000. But that is a drop in the ocean. Yet we appreciate that. But what have my Honourable friends of the Muslim League done for the flood stricken people of Assam. Let me tell my friends of the Muslim League that the bulk of the sufferers in Assam are Muslims. But whatever the Congress or the Muslim League might do, it does not absolve the Government of their responsibility in this matter. I wish the Food Secretary would enlighten the House and say what this Government have done in order to save people from starvation. I hope he will not give the same stereotyped reply which he has given with regard to the question of evacuees from Noakhali that he has done nothing—that it was the concern of the provincial government. Is it not the responsibility of the Government of India to regulate the food policy of the entire country and find out whether any

province is suffering because of unprecedented floods or unexpected sojourn of unfortunate refugees? The flood came very late in the month of October and there was no time to sow crops again.

An Honourable Member: What about the sufferings of Bihar people. You must refer to them also.

Sreejut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri: So far as the sufferings of Bihar people are concerned, I feel proud to say that our leaders and the members of the Interim Government have already rushed there and the statements which they have issued show that they realise the gravity of the situation and that they are doing their best to save the people there. I wish the same prompt steps were taken when East Bengal was in the throes of disaster and suffering. Apart from that, the problem of Assam is very peculiar and it is this. In normal times, we can grow sufficient quantity of rice. Now we have not only to feed ourselves at this moment, but we have to feed a large number of people whose crops have been destroyed, a large number of people who have taken shelter there and whose hearths and homes have been destroyed and unless the Government of India come to the rescue of the Assam Government, it is impossible for Assam to feed this vast population. Sir, we were in a happy position just before the Government of India sought to meddle in the food problem of the province. At the time when there was no control, Rice was selling in Assam at Rs. 30 a maund, whereas in Bengal it was selling at Rs. 100 a maund. Now, what is the position? The producers have been left in the unhappy position of selling their paddy at controlled price of about Rs. 5 a maund, whereas the Government of Bengal is getting their rice from us and selling it at a profit of fifty per cent. What is the effect of that? The Assam farmers get no benefit out of this. The Assam peasants do not get enough money to purchase their agricultural implements and to improve their husbandry. They do not get enough for their own living because with their slender earning due to control of the prices of their agricultural produce. They do not get a proper price for their own produce but they have to pay a much higher price for purchasing other things. The only things that we want are sugar, *gur* and salt. You will hardly believe me when I tell you that at one time salt was selling in Assam in the black market at Rs. 12 a seer; and even now the position with regard to salt is very critical in that province. The reason for that is that the province of Assam has been wedded to the province of Bengal so far as the supply of salt is concerned, so that if for any reason Bengal does not get a supply of salt Assam has to go without it. The Government of Assam two years ago was quite helpless in the matter, watching the people purchase salt at prices varying from Rs. 8 to Rs. 12 a seer. Should not any Government be ashamed of that? I am saying all this so that you may profit by the experience of the past and the Government of India may not fall into the same error again. Sir, if my information is correct, the Food Secretary Mr. Sen was born and brought up in the province of Assam but he has already earned the distinction of being hard-hearted towards that province. In the last session he told us that the villagers of Assam were not given enough sugar or any sugar at all because they were expected to live on molasses. But what is the position about molasses? There were conflicting orders passed by the Government of India and sometimes molasses were allowed to be taken from some provinces and then an order came to stop the import. The villagers do not get sugar or sugar candy even at the time of illness; that is the position of my unfortunate province.

As regards *dal* which is not produced in sufficient quantity in the province, conflicting orders of the Government of India passed from time to time have been responsible for absolute shortage of *dal* now in that province; so much so that in giving free rations Government had to get some *dal* from different provinces by seizure, but ordinary people had to go without it; and even now they are going without *dal* in many places.

Sir, I do not wish to take any more time of the House because other Honourable friends want to speak on this. I will only say that I have not been able

[Sreejut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri]

to describe to even one-tenth of the injustice that has been inflicted on Assam on account of the deliberate neglect and indifference of the Government of India towards my unfortunate province which had to bear untold hardship in the last war and borne the whole brunt of it. But nothing is being done by the Government of India to help the Province at all.

Sir, I apologise to the House for bringing the lofty tone of the debate down to the level of mundane affairs of my unfortunate and neglected province.

Sri T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar (Madras: Indian Commerce): Sir, coming from the province of Madras which has set an example as stated in this House for other provinces to follow as well as having knowledge of many difficulties which require attention at the hands of Governments, both provincial and central, I am sorry that I have to come in at this late hour. Sir, we are thankful to my Honourable friend Diwan Chaman Lal for getting us at a time of stress and need maize in a large quantity. Maize was welcome at the time it came, but I am sorry he seems to be thinking that we should come to an arrangement with Argentina to go on sending maize to us in future also. I may tell him that though we were prepared at this juncture to take some quantity of maize and make use of it, it is not likely that maize will be taken in future if other grains like rice and *cholam* are available. I have got my own fears whether the large number of ships that are on their way from Argentina to Madras and other ports will have their contents sold and taken up by the people. Sir, we have already got some portions of our new crop and the second crop will come in very soon; and it is not likely that when the crops are gathered people will look at maize to which they are not accustomed. So I will warn the Government of India not to commit themselves to any arrangement under which they will get grains like maize or barley to which we are not used from other countries for the use of India. I may say that it is time we came to an agreement with Burma and Siam to supply to us our needs as they used to do before the war. The main question that will remain to be solved as a long-term question will be whether we are going to turn all our lands to the production of foodgrains or whether we are going to put them to the best use that is possible economically. That is a question which we have to face. We are growing what are called money crops wherever possible. It is only where the agriculturist cannot afford it or where the land would not profitably yield economic crops that foodgrains were cultivated and also where irrigation facilities would not allow any other crop to grow. The question is whether we are going to reverse the whole policy and force people to have recourse only to the production of foodgrains to the exclusion of those money crops which are more valuable. If international trade and international relationship means anything we have to grow what we can and what pays us to grow and make it a source of exchange with other countries from which we get other commodities. England cannot think of being self-sufficient in food, it has to depend on its neighbouring countries for its food supplies and for other resources. So the question will be whether we are going to make ourselves self-sufficient in the sense that we will not depend even on our neighbours like Burma and Siam and Java for our food supplies as we have been doing hitherto. That will be the second question which I will put to the Central Government to consider very deeply before they enter into any definite programme for the future.

Then I come to rationing. In our province we started rationing in the towns and we did very well there. But the moment formal or informal rationing was introduced in the villages the whole thing broke down; and I am saying that because I am closely connected with the administration of this formal or informal rationing in the districts. In my own district of Coimbatore what is called informal rationing has been introduced. But only two months ago I went into the accounts for a month and I found that whereas the requirement of the district was 11,000 tons per month the actual offtake for that month was 2,000 tons. That only shows that this so-called rationing is mere

eye-wash and does not mean anything. So far as the towns are concerned, as I said, rationing has done very well and I call it a success; but the moment they introduced it in the villages it broke down. What happened was this. I am glad to hear that Madras procured 94 per cent. of its demand—I do not believe the figure is correct in any way, but still they were able to collect a large quantity and how did they do it? They did it because they offered Rs. 2 per maund more, so that such of those as had some stock with them came forward and delivered it, and that is how a large quantity was collected. From whom? Not from all the people. It was collected from only those who were putting by all these stocks, who were evading your rules, who were keeping things which they ought to have surrendered voluntarily. It seems to me that the whole policy will have to be reviewed. There is the engine of repression in the shape of these procurement officers and others. The man who suffers is not the big landlord. He is always able to purchase exemption. It is the poor land-owner who always suffers. It is the man who has got one acre, and who has got two acres or three acres, who always suffers. I proposed in the Province of Madras that all these poor land-owners who are growing foodgrains up to 3 acres ought to be exempted from this system of procurement. They should be allowed to give whatever they have got and their surplus may be sold in the open market. In that way we can avoid the corruption and the repression to which the villager is put and also improve the administrative machinery of Government.

As I said, the well-to-do land-owner somehow escapes and the poor man suffers. This will have to be looked into in any scheme that the Government is going to formulate.

I do not want to take up more time except to say one word about the prices. No doubt the agriculturist is suffering on account of the high prices he has to pay for labour and for seeds, manure and things like that. It is especially so in dry areas where there are no irrigation facilities and he has to draw water from a depth of 40 to 50 feet and has to incur an expenditure of Rs. 40 to 50 per acre whereas his brother in their Deltaic areas is only paying Rs. 10. In such cases help has to be rendered and the suggestion I would like to make is this: The Government ought to make available to these men, especially in the dry areas, manure and cattle feed at very cheap prices. That ought to be their first concern. Secondly in the dry areas we are importing all these grains. What is done is they are paying to us in the dry areas the same price for grains that they are paying in the wet area. The result is that grain coming to dry areas from outside cost, a rupee or a rupee and a half more per maund than those procured locally. If the prices for local grain and imported grain are fixed at the same level it will help the dry areas very much. This will be only adding the transport charges and procurement charges at the place of production to the procurement price in the dry areas. This will not effect the consumers.

Sir Phoroze Kharegat: I shall deal very briefly with some of the important points that have been raised during the course of this debate which relate to the Department of Agriculture. The first and the most important question that has been asked is what has been the increased acreage and the increased production as a result of the efforts that have been made in the past few years. Our statistics are generally considered to be hopelessly unreliable, but the fact remains that our acreage statistics in the temporarily settled areas are probably about the best in the world. These figures indicate that comparing the average of 1936 to 1939 with the average for the years 1942 to 1945 (the Grow More Food came into operation in 1942), there has been an increase in the cultivated area of no less than nine million acres. Nine million acres of additional land have been brought under cultivation by our cultivators which were not cultivated before.

The second figure I wish to point out is that 5½ million acres have gone under food crops. After having been transferred from cotton and jute. These figures do not refer to all India. I am not talking of Indian States about which the figures are unreliable; I am only referring to British India. But I have also

[Sir Pheroze Kharegat]

worked out the figures for the temporarily settled areas *i.e.*, leaving out Assam, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and the figure of increased acreage is 6½ million acres. There can be no question about that figure. It is absolutely reliable and must be accepted as an enormous contribution that has been made by the agriculturists of India to solve the food problem of the country. The increased production that must have resulted therefrom is—and these are the figures that have been given to us—3.8 million tons out of which the temporarily settled areas account for 2.3 million tons, *i.e.*, in addition to what was produced in the years 1936-39, and working it out on the basis of the increased acreage, this is precisely the figure that we would get. There is one drawback to which I must frankly refer and that point was raised by one Honourable Member and that is because of the system of procurement and distribution there is a tendency, a very marked tendency, on the part of certain provincial governments to under-estimate their production. He referred to the case of the Punjab. The actual figures are that that province gave us an estimated production of 3.2 million tons of wheat. By crop cutting experiments it was found that the production was in the neighbourhood of 3.9 million tons, a clear difference of 700,000 tons in one province alone.

In estimating what has been achieved in this connection, one must also take into consideration the amount of money that has been spent. We were told the other day that in order to import food we spend 91 crores of rupees, and in order to distribute that food we spend an extra 15½ crores of rupees. Have we spent anything like that on the production of food in India? The amount that has been spent in the course of the three years does not exceed more than 5 to 6 crores. How does that compare with the 15½ crores spent in one year simply on subsidizing food imported from outside? And I ask the question as to why instead of going round here and there, begging for food, we should not concentrate all our efforts on trying to increase production in this country? It was suggested that we should enter into long-term contracts with other countries to supply us with food. By all means if it is necessary let that be done but why should we not enter into similar contracts with our own producers, guarantee them a reasonable price and say, whatever you produce we will take at such and such a price. Give them this guarantee: give them all the facilities that are needed and I undertake it that they will produce all that is required in order to feed India within the next five years, and there will be no need to go outside in order to beg or try to obtain things from elsewhere.

Several other points have been raised. They are of comparatively minor importance. I was asked what is our programme for distribution of seed. Our programme envisages the placing of 20 million acres under improved seed which will produce something like 300,000 tons of extra food within the next year.

References were made to co-operative farming. In a reply I gave to a question only this morning, I explained that the Government have already decided to take up experimental work in connection with co-operative farming in the Delhi Administration area.

So far as machinery is concerned, we have been trying our best to try and get machinery, that is tractors, from other countries, but our efforts have not been very successful. We have with great difficulty obtained a few tractors which were left behind by the Americans and we have set up a tractor repairing factory and we hope that as a result of that within five or six months we will have at least 300 tractors which can be used where they are required. I admit that there are many areas such as those growing rice where tractors cannot be brought into use. On the other hand there are many other areas where there is a lot of land which, if water were available, could be brought under cultivation. There are areas which are infested with deep-rooted weeds which can be eradicated by tractors and for which tractors are the only means of eradication. So there is considerable scope for the use of tractors in different parts of the country. We have also induced a private individual to start a factory for the manufacture of heavy ploughs required for use with these tractors.

As regards fertilizers, we are trying at the present time to import as much as we can, but in addition, we are not neglecting the importance of compost, compost-making by villagers and compost-making in towns, and we are giving subsidies for the preparation of these composts and for distributing the same to the villages.

So far as irrigation projects are concerned, I would like to mention one single instance of what one province has achieved. Within six months the Madras Government have constructed no less than 80,000 new wells, and if that one province could do that (they did it under the stress of famine) is there any reason why other provinces, provided they put their shoulders to the wheel in the same way cannot do? There are certain difficulties I fully realize. But I do think that a great deal more effort is required in this direction and I hope that provinces will come forward and try to induce the cultivators to take up these works whether of irrigation or of drainage or of soil conservation which are essential for increasing production.

In conclusion, Sir, I would like to refer to the remark made by my honourable friend, Mr. Abdul Ghani Khan. He characterized the Indian cultivator as ignorant, illiterate and more or less implied that he was a useless sort of creature. Well, Sir, I emphatically and entirely dissent from that suggestion. He is one of the most hardworking of people and so far as his own work is concerned, he has sufficient intelligence to understand what he is doing and what he can and should do. Give him the means, the facilities that are required, and he will produce for you everything that is wanted. Without any facilities, without practically any help, he has produced within three years no less than 8 million tons of extra food a year. With the facilities, I am perfectly certain that he would be able to produce all the food that is required for feeding the millions of India.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths (Assam: European): The Honourable Member has told us of the increased area under cultivation and the resulting increased yield. Can he tell us whether there has been any substantial increase in the yield from the previously cultivated areas?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: The figure of yield per acre? Unfortunately, we have no figures for that. The only thing we can rely upon in the shape of figures, are the crop-cutting experiments which have been carried out recently in respect of wheat and rice.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: What was the total amount of yield as a result of cultivation taken within the precincts of the New Delhi Municipality in pursuance of the Grow More Food Campaign undertaken by the officials and the Honourable Members and others?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: I have no information on that point. But I think I did reply to a question in connection with the cultivation undertaken on the vista. I think we got something like Rs. 3,000 by the sale of the maize crop and something like Rs. 500 from the sale of the vegetables that were cultivated there.

Deputy President: Food Secretary.

Mr. B. B. Sen: For one who has taken part in practically every food debate in this or the other House, this debate has provided a unique experience. Such sympathy and such understanding from all sides of the House it has not been my privilege to experience before. I have however missed some very familiar features in the food debates that we have seen before. For instance, the very gentle persuasiveness of my friend Prof. Runga, the demand of my friend, Dr. Zia Uddin for the abolishment of the Food Department for his difficulty under the present arrangements, to get rice for his *pulau* and the anxiety of my friend Mr. Lawson for the fish in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. The food administration in no country can be a success unless there is full understanding between the people and the Government. We are now fortunate in having a National Government with one of the biggest political leaders at our head, and with all the

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Members in the House now on our side to interpret his message, it will be surprising if we do not make rapid strides in achieving the objects we have set before us in food and agriculture.

Mr. Lawson by his amendment has brought before us a very important aspect of the food administration of this country. Mr. Lawson deserves the gratitude not only of this House but the people of this country for the insistence with which he has emphasised the importance of preservation of food and the measures to be adopted for preserving food. This question has agitated all sides of the House for some time. During this session we have had a series of questions and supplementary questions. During this debate we have had several speakers who have referred to the wastage and have made suggestions.

There are three points on which I have been asked to reply and they are: (1) What is the present wastage in our country. (2) To what extent we have been able to prevent losses and (3) What would be the ultimate saving if we apply all the measures that we have in view. Sir, from the way the questions have been put it seems to me that the members have rather vague ideas about the whole subject. The crop production of India is about 60 million tons. About 60 to 67 per cent of the crop is retained by the cultivators for their own consumption. About 33 to 40 per cent. of the crop they bring to the market in small parcels throughout the year. It is difficult therefore for anybody to say what is the wastage which is going on in the homes of the millions of cultivators of our country.

Some of the members have asked why it should be difficult to ascertain the losses in this country when it has been done in other countries. I was interested to see what was the position in other countries, particularly U.S.A. and U.K. As Honourable Members are aware, U.S.A. is one of the most advanced countries in the application of statistical science. It is also one of the most advanced countries in the application of insecticides and in the construction of modern and scientific structures for housing the grains. There is a book before me by Richard Cotton, one of the great authorities on the subject of grain preservation. The only information that he can give about the extent of losses in that country is in these terms:—

"It has been estimated that as a result of their feeding activities, their presence in grain and cereal products and the cost of methods employed to destroy them, this group of insects exacts a yearly toll of at least \$300,000,000 in the United States alone."

\$300,000,000 in terms of rupees would be about Rs. 100 crores. If the loss in India is about 3 million tons of cereals, in rupees it will work out at 90 crores. Thus even with all the application of science the United States has not been able to conserve foodgrains to the extent that the Honourable Members here might think. In the case of the United Kingdom it was only in 1936 that a Committee was appointed under Prof. Munroe of the Imperial College of Science and Technology to make a survey of the whole position. Honourable Members will be interested to hear what that survey brought out:

"The most important result of the survey is that it demonstrates the occurrence of infestation throughout all the industries producing, housing, transporting, trading in, manufacturing, or using cereals and cereal products. . . . To those who have had experience of infestation in other industries, who have endeavoured to assess the extent of infestation in them, and have now been privileged to carry out this survey with the co-operation of the grain industry, the outstanding feature of the survey is the fact that infestation is no longer concealed."

I have not found in any publication relating to grains in the United Kingdom any reference as to the extent of losses. Sir, it is difficult for any administration to find out the losses in the country. This figure of 3 million tons for India is only an arbitrary figure and we cannot give any more exact figure than this.

Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad: How will you calculate on losses?

Mr. B. R. Sen: The point I was making was that it is not possible in any country to say with any exactitude what the grain losses at any particular moment are.

Diwan Chaman Lall: Would it not be correct to say that the losses here would be greater than the losses in a country like the United States of America, which has gone in for modern systems of preservation?

Mr. B. R. Sen: The House would like to know what we are doing or what we propose to do with a view to prevent wastage in this country and to have a few figures in order to understand the question in its proper perspective. In the United Kingdom where there are warehouses and silos constructed on up-to-date lines, this is what the survey revealed:

"The following data, obtained from the examination of the various consignments in the port warehouses and graneries seen during the survey, indicate the extent and nature of the infestation under the three main methods of storage. Of 3,316 consignments seen, 46 per cent. were infested. . . . The infestation was distributed as follows; silos 31 per cent. bagged grain 59 per cent., and bulk grain 75 per cent. In the general warehouses at the ports, 65 per cent. of the consignments of feeding-stuffs were infested, and in the mill warehouses 60 per cent.

The survey was carried out by one of the best authorities on the subject, and there can be no doubt about the correctness of the results. If this is the picture in the United Kingdom and the United States of America, the House will not be surprised if I am not in a position to state here and now what is the wastage in the country.

Sri V. C. Vellingiri Gounder: The Honourable Member mentioned silos. Does it refer to cattle food or human food?

Mr. B. R. Sen: Cereals of all kinds.

As regards saving, the corollary is that it will not be possible to say with any exactitude what the real saving would be. Honourable Members will ask why it is not possible for government to ascertain the extent of losses in government storage. So far as the Central Food Department is concerned, there are three depots established at Karachi, Calcutta and Bombay functioning under their auspices. I have got a paper before me which gives a survey of losses in our storage over the last few months. According to this survey a total loss of 30 tons of indigenous and 34 tons of imported foodgrains has occurred at the Karachi depot since April 1945, during which period the total quantity handled there has been 4,24,394 tons. At the Calcutta depot where 1,32,300 tons were handled, only one ton was lost. At the Bombay depot up to now no case of losses has come to notice. I do not know to what extent these figures can be relied upon, but it is clear that on a restricted scale it is possible to reduce losses to a certain extent. The survey I have just referred to makes out that the losses in these three depots since April 1945 have amounted to only .0085 per cent. as against 5 per cent. for all-India, and the saving has amounted to about Rs. 95 lakhs. Some members have said that if India had saved the 3 million tons which she annually loses, India would not have been compelled to import. The whole argument, if I may say so is futile. India could not possibly have saved the loss of this quantity whatever attempts India might have made in this connection.

I should also mention that even the scientific study in this subject is incomplete. One of the greatest causes of wastage is the interplay of the factors of humidity and temperature. The survey Report of Professor Munroe states:

"A study of this problem of the interplay of these factors, humidity and temperature," as Prof. Munroe states. "Is that the infestation of grains is too little advanced to permit of an exact assessment of how it can be controlled in grain stores to reduce infestation."

The problem in India is even bigger than the problem in countries like the United States and United Kingdom. I understand from what I have read

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that in cold climates the infestation starts within the storehouses—it does not start in the fields; but in countries of moderate temperature like India, the infestation starts in the fields. So even before the cultivator has taken the grain into the storehouse, the infestation is already affecting the grain. That is one of the factors which make control of infestation in India more difficult than in countries in the west. Again in India, as I have said, the grain is very largely stored by the small cultivators—millions of small cultivators. There is therefore no sovereign remedy for this wastage in India. If the House will permit me, I will again refer to Prof. Munroe's report in this connection:

"A survey shows clearly the intensity or the amount of infestation varies with the conditions of trade and the conditions prevailing in grain stores and that the first remedy is already at hand in the rather prosaic form of improved hygiene or cleanliness."

This is the simplest and for conditions in India the most effective remedy. It is easy to say that producers should store under hygienic conditions, but this is a matter which is closely bound up with the living conditions. It cannot be done by merely issuing instructions or propaganda leaflets. It is a matter of education; it is a matter of raising the level of the economic conditions of the people. It is therefore clear that if the House expects that by the time we come to the next budget session, I shall be able to get up and say that I have reduced losses of grain in this country by 50 per cent they will make a mistake.

Rai Bahadur Devendra Mohan Bhattacharyya: May I submit one thing, that generally in rural areas farmers allow a rebate of 2½ seers per maund if one year has passed and that the amount is deducted from the storekeepers? Otherwise he is responsible for that.

Mr. B. R. Sen: That only shows that traders in this country take losses for granted; so long as they do not suffer any financial loss over the transaction, they are content. But the problem here is different. We have got to conserve food. We are not concerned with what profit the individual traders make. The House will no doubt ask me, what government is going to do in this matter? So far as the cultivators are concerned, we think that there should be sustained effort on the part of the provincial and state governments to educate the producers in this matter as far as possible. We have started training courses for officers of Provinces and States. Several courses have already been held. We propose to supplement these by regional courses so that a larger number of people can be trained with reference to local conditions. We have asked the universities to include study of grain preservation as one of the subjects. In these ways, if sustained effort is maintained we think, in a reasonable time, the losses could to some extent be reduced.

Diwan Chaman Lal: May I interrupt my Honourable friend? Has not Government considered the possibility, as was pointed out by me in my speech, of considering the plan adopted by Canada of preservation of grain on a co-operative basis by having co-operative elevators? The difficulty will not arise; the farmer will not have the grain; he will get a certificate and he will get an advance and the grain will go straightaway to these elevators, cleaned and preserved.

Mr. B. R. Sen: I shall come to that point a little later. So far as traders are concerned, we have done one thing. We have advised the provincial governments that they should introduce a system of licensed warehouses, that traders will be given permits to trade in grains only when they have got warehouses up to certain standards. We have also made available to traders, who have shown any interest, modern designs for new constructions, and in this way we think some progress will be made.

Mr. Chaman Lal has referred to the development of what is called the ever-normal granary. This has engaged our attention for sometime past. It is, however, a matter which will require sustained study and consi-

derable propaganda on our part. This would mean a fundamental change in the trading methods of this country. We know that this has been tried with success in South Africa, in the United States and in Canada. We should study this subject and see if we can introduce the system in this country.

So far as the Government storage is concerned, I have already said that one of the things that government has done in the past two years is to construct new storage. I have given the figures—12 lakhs of tons of storage has been built by provincial governments, 11½ lakhs tons of storage has been built by the state governments; the Government of India has also constructed about 1,95,000 tons storage at the main ports. The question of government storage is assuming added significance at the present moment. We have just received the report of the Krishnamachari Committee which was asked to go into the whole question of stabilisation of agricultural prices in the postwar period. One of the recommendations they have made is that a machinery should be set up for stabilising prices, and in order to do that, it should be prepared to buy when prices are falling beyond a minimum limit and to sell when prices are rising above the maximum limit. That would require provision of storage for nearly two million tons.

Apart from that, there is also the proposal for building up an emergency reserve for preventing famine in future. This year we have had a bitter experience and we do not want that experience to be repeated. We must build up sufficient reserves in this country. I may say that the Policy Committee which sat in 1943 and which produced the blue-print on which we are working for the last three years suggested that we should build up a reserve of half a million tons. When they made that suggestion they were, however, not thinking of prevention of famines—they were thinking of the maintenance of price structure and keeping under control speculation. But even that comparatively small reserve of 500,000 tons we have been unable to build up in spite of our most strenuous efforts during the last three years. At only one stage, it was at the end of 1944, we had in our hands, what we could call a reserve of 120,000 tons; at the end of that year we had a serious shortage developing in the United Provinces and we had to disperse all that 120,000 tons to meet the situation there.

We have not yet given full consideration to the report of the Krishnamachari Committee. It is possible that the famine reserve and the reserve for the maintenance of stable agricultural prices would not be separate but would be the same. Even then we shall have to take up the construction of storage for nearly two million tons of food grains. That would give us added responsibility for devising ways and means to prevent losses in those storage godowns. Government must therefore pay intensive attention to this subject in future. I can say that the Food Department since 1944 when they established the Directorate of Storage has been doing everything possible in the matter. We cannot give you the exact results. It is not a physical possibility. But we have already made a start and we feel that we have already achieved some results.

One member asked if Government procured three million tons only this year, what had happened to the rest of the marketable surplus. As the Honourable Member knows, Government procurement does not cover the entire marketable surplus. Government collect only a small proportion of it; the rest is handled by the trade.

Mr. Masani raised the question whether Government can give him an assurance that there will be no cut in the ration during the next two months in different parts of the country. He reinforced his remarks by the argument that the ration is already low and that the Food Ministers' Conference held at New Delhi passed a Resolution that in no circumstances should there be an all-India cut in ration.

Mr. Deputy President: How long will the Honourable Member take?

Mr. B. R. Sen: I shall take another twenty minutes.

An Honourable Member: One hour may be given to him tomorrow.

Mr. Deputy President: All the days are full. I do not mind sitting ten minutes more if the Honourable Member will finish by then. He has spoken for 20 minutes already. If the House is agreeable I will sit.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: This is an extremely important subject and I would suggest that the Honourable Member should be allowed to make a full statement to the House.

Mr. B. R. Sen: I shall try to finish as quickly as possible. I referred to the assurance asked for by Mr. Masani. It is not possible for me to give any such assurance. We have now entered the most critical stage of the year. We are now in the last two months of the crop year. We have still got a deficit of 515,000 tons, without which there will be a major breakdown in the food administration of the country. In some parts of the country, the ration is already very low; of the 12 ounces allowed, people are not getting more than 6 or 7 ounces. During the months of November and December we need very much more than 515,000 tons to maintain the full ration scale, but if we get this, we shall be able to save a major breakdown.

The Honourable the Food Member recently paid a visit to the Punjab and succeeded in persuading them agree to make available 60,000 tons of rice in November and December. We have also heard from our representative in Washington that in November and December the United States is likely to ship another 110,000 tons. That is all we have before us in order to cover the deficit. How we shall meet the balance we do not know. Mr. Masani has suggested various devices. We shall have no objection to offering a bonus at the end of the crop year just as Madras has done but there is this danger that the bonus may raise expectations in the minds of the cultivators that they would get the same higher price for the new crop. If the Provincial Governments make it clear to the cultivators that the grant of a bonus at the end of a crop year does not mean that the bonus will be added to the price next year, we shall have no objection. In fact, apart from Madras, Bengal has also adopted this device for procuring their *aus* crop. An announcement to that effect has been made a few days ago. As regards offering consumer goods, this expedient has been tried in two provinces, United Provinces and Bihar. I do not know with what success. There is a danger in that also. If the cultivators feel that they can get consumer goods in exchange for foodgrains, then they may hold back their foodgrains till they get their consumer goods and Honourable Members know that there is a great shortage of consumer goods in this country.

As regards the proposal for a differential ration according to income, this is an expedient which I believe was discussed some time ago in Bombay and probably the Honourable Member himself knows with what result. We do not think it is possible administratively to introduce differential ration according to incomes. It is the same as the means test for other purposes that has been tried in the United Kingdom and other countries, which has not been successful.

We have had two extraordinary statements from two prominent members of the House, Dr. Zia Uddin and my friend Mr. Siddiqi, that there is no famine in the country and the famine is only in the archives of the Secretariat. I know that my old friend Mr. Siddiqi who was with me in Oxford years ago is a man of ideas and I am not surprised that this is one of his ideas. But I cannot understand how my Honourable friend the noble Vice Chancellor can entertain such an idea. If only he had taken the trouble of going to the South and seen the conditions there, he would not have made that statement.

Dr. Zia Uddin gave us a discourse about the relation of currency to food prices. I am sorry I have not been able to follow his abstruse discourse. But we have studied this subject. It is our business to study this subject. There is a Price Advisory Committee on which we have representatives of Finance, Food, Agriculture and other Departments, and representatives of producers and traders, and on the recommendations of this committee we function.

Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad: Can I have a copy of the terms of reference of this Committee?

Mr. B. R. Sen: I shall deal with this question of prices in a little more detail in reply to another Honourable Member. Dr. Zia Uddin also said that in the United Provinces cultivators are not allowed to bring their own produce to the rationed areas. I interrupted him and said that it was not correct. I have now the authority for saying that it is not correct. People in the United Provinces are allowed to bring their own produce to the rationed areas for two months' requirements, against the cancellation of their coupons for that period.

Sir, I shall now pass on to the speech of Mr. Chaman Lall. He has returned from a very useful visit and I should like to add my own tribute for the way in which he performed his difficult task. I believe Mr. Chaman Lall had to get off his plane more than once in order to argue with and convince the Argentine Government. I certainly think that Mr. Chaman Lall deserves the gratitude of the House for the tenacity and persistence with which he completed the negotiations.

Mr. Chaman Lall has made some very important suggestions. One is that for the future we should try and enter into long-term contracts with countries like Australia and Argentine as the United Kingdom has done with Canada. We also have been thinking on these lines. Already a long-term contract with Australia is under tentative discussion, though we have not had any official discussion on the subject. We shall take up the suggestion of the Honourable Member as regards Argentina as soon as we get the report of his mission.

Mr. Ebrahim Jaffer raised one point which seemed to show that there was some misunderstanding. He said that the basic plan has been abandoned. That is not correct. The basic plan exists. What we have done is to supplement and reinforce the basic plan with a monthly food budget. What happens under the basic plan is that at the beginning of the crop year we get the surpluses and the deficits of the States and the Provinces and make allocations and then we leave it to the supplying and receiving provinces to get their allocations as best as they can. This year as the resources of the provinces and states became more and more slender, we found it necessary to keep a stricter watch over the stocks of the provinces. We introduced the system of monthly budgets. Under this system at the end of the month, we know what stocks are held by the different provinces, and we aim at keeping in each province a stock of six months requirements as far as we can. The system on which we are working does not mean the abandonment of the basic plan. The monthly budget was introduced under pressure of circumstances and as soon as this pressure is removed, we shall revert to the old system. I may say for the information of the Honourable Member that when we came to frame the Rabi plan in April this year, the only surplus declared was 40,000 tons of wheat by Sind and 30,000 tons of wheat by Bahawalpore while the requirements exceeded 900,000 tons. So, we could not possibly at that time frame an effective basic plan. Since then we have prepared a basic plan and have, as I have said, re-enforced it by monthly food budgets.

Sir, Mr. Reddiar raised the important question of prices. I find I have not the time to go into it in any detail but I have just now—a few minutes ago—got the summary of the recommendations of the Krishnamachari Committee. I would refer him to paragraphs 21, 22 and 29 of that summary. There it is stated that a fair price should be paid to the producer. The determination of a fair price entails calculation of the costs of the different items which enter into costs of production and actual living in different parts of the country. These must vary widely. Crops produced and several other factors can only be estimated by detailed inquiries, especially planned and conducted with this object. It is therefore necessary to take early steps to create a suitable machinery for the collection of data relating to these costs. They further say that in the transition period minimum prices should be fixed at the

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level of fair parity prices. I may say that though we have not got necessary reliable data for the determination of agricultural prices, we have got before us the authoritative statement of the Bengal Famine Inquiry Commission. I would ask Mr. Reddiar to refer to paragraph 7 of the second volume of that report in which the Commission say:

"We think it is clear that it should be the common object of all Governments concerned to secure as early as possible as supply conditions in the transition period permit, that the prices both of rice and wheat in different parts of the country should be brought down to a normal parity with the level of rice prices at present prevailing in Madras and Sind."

It is thus clear that the Commission, on full consideration, took the Madras level to be the level which all Governments in this country should work up to in the postwar period. So, it is not that we are following an arbitrary method. All materials on the subject of prices have been minutely examined by the Honourable the Food Member himself. I think it is hardly worthy of Mr. Reddiar to suggest that the Honourable Food Member has merely accepted what I have placed before him. The Honourable Food Member has got his own judgment and he has gone through all these papers and he has come to the conclusion which he announced on the floor of the House.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Is it open to the Honourable Member to say that it is not worthy of Mr. Reddiar to make such remarks? The Honourable Member has used an unparliamentary expression and he should withdraw it.

Mr. B. R. Sen: I did not mean anything more than this that the Honourable Member should have confidence in his own leader. I may be pardoned if I used language which has hurt his feelings.

Mr. Deputy President: Will the Honourable Member withdraw the word 'unworthy' which he used in connection with Mr. Reddiar?

Mr. B. R. Sen: I withdraw.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Has not the Government of Madras written to the Government of India to increase the price of rice by half a rupee per maund and the price of millets by 3 annas per maund?

Mr. B. R. Sen: They have written to us. Not only Madras but some other Governments also have written to us. But we have got to look at the question as a whole.

I shall now refer to the points raised by Mr. Banerjee about Bengal. The position in Bengal can be easily understood. The crop production this year as announced by the Government of Bengal is 9.7 million tons. This is slightly below what Bengal needs for her current consumption. But it was hoped that with the reduced scale of rations all round, the Bengal Government would be able somehow to scrape through. The pre-war average production in Bengal was about 9.6 million tons including imports. The average imports that Bengal got amounted to 125 to 135 thousand tons. The imports thus formed a very small percentage of the total supply that Bengal needed for her consumption. It therefore follows that the distribution position in Bengal cannot be stabilised till the procurement of the internal surplus is placed on a satisfactory basis. The Honourable Food Member said in his speech that about 25 million people in Bengal are either under statutory ration or are under controlled distribution. The actual figure is 6 million under statutory ration and about 19 million under controlled distribution. If you take direct responsibility for feeding 25 million people out of 60 million, then you must have under your control about 40 per cent of your total production. That is, Bengal should have had under their control about 3.8 million tons out of their own production if they were to feed 25 million of their population adequately. Actually the quantity procured has amounted only to about 630,000 tons, one sixth of what the Bengal Government needed. It is therefore quite clear why the position is so unstable in Bengal. We are of the view that there is no intrinsic shortage of supply in Bengal. Some of my Honourable friends might

disagree with me. I can only go upon the figures supplied by the Bengal Government. Mr. Banerjee referred to the high prices and to the fact that Government exercise so little control over the market. The Government can exercise control only if Government have got large stocks with which they can play the market. At present the supply position is such that neither the Government of Bengal nor the Government of India can find the stocks for the purpose.

Then, Sir, a large portion of the population in Bengal who are under controlled rationing are not getting the benefit of the scheme. Out of 19 million people under controlled distribution only six million are getting their supplies more or less regularly. When you have got such a vast number of people who are not assured of their food from day to day, who do not know where they will get the next meal, or whether they will get it at all, the natural psychological atmosphere is created from out of which panic arises. Whenever anything happens, such as a debate in the Central Assembly on the situation in Bengal or in India generally, there is panic, and when there is panic, the producers hold back their stock from the markets which in its turn intensifies local shortages. Thus goes the vicious circle. That is a position for which, I, for one, cannot find any remedy until the Bengal Government build up sufficient reserves in their hands which they can use to influence the market and so improve and remodel their procurement arrangements as to succeed in getting a much larger proportion of the surplus from the hands of the producers.

My Honourable friend from Assam Sreejut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri found me guilty of callousness and lack of sympathy. I can assure him that he is wrong. Now Sir, only a few days ago we had a visit from the Premier of his province. We had a long discussion on the points mentioned by the Honourable Member. Regarding salt, it is not correct to say that Assam is wedded to Bengal. Salt can now be purchased in the market independently by Assam. We told the Premier of Assam that he should make his own arrangements to buy salt in the Calcutta market. It is true that the salt price has gone up from Rs. 4 to Rs. 6 since the Government of India took off their control a few months ago but it is now entirely in the hands of traders and since some Honourable Members think that traders will control the market better, well they have the benefit of this instance of salt in Bengal and Assam to ponder upon.

With regard to the complaint about dearth of sugar, I may say that the production in the country is 20 per cent less than in prewar years. In prewar years we used to get imports from Java in large quantities whenever there was a shortage in the country. Imports from Java we cannot expect now. Moreover there has been a change in the habits of people. In rural areas, certain classes of people used to take *gur* exclusively. Now on account of a temporary rise in their income, they prefer sugar to *gur*. This change of habit has brought in a greater pressure on the available stock of sugar in the country.

Sreejut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri: Sir, I wish to ask. . . .

Mr. B. B. Sen: I have no time to give in. I think I have covered most of the points that have been raised in the debate. India has had a catastrophe of an unprecedented character. Even in a country like India where agriculture is a gamble in rains, it is seldom that we get a failure both of *rabi* and *kharif* crops. The shortage amounted to about seven million tons. The only reason why we have been able to get through this unprecedented calamity is the discipline of the people and the alertness of the administrations. I am sure, Sir, we can hope for a great future for this country when the people of this country can show such discipline under such trying circumstances.

Mr. Deputy President: The original motion was:

That the food situation in India be taken into consideration."

[Mr. Deputy President]

To which an amendment has been moved:

“That at the end of the original Motion the following be added:

‘and that the particular attention of Government be directed towards the matter of losses in storage’,”

The question is:

“That at the end of the original Motion the following be added:

‘and that the particular attention of Government be directed towards the matter of losses in storage’,”

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Deputy President: The question is:

“That the food situation in India be taken into consideration and that the particular attention of Government be directed towards the matter of losses in storage.”

The motion was adopted.

The Assembly then adjourned Till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, the 7th November 1946.