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THE  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES  
Official Report

Volume III, 1945

(14th March to 29th March, 1945)

TWENTY-SECOND SESSION  
OF THE  
FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,  
1945



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 15th March, 1945

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

## MEMBER SWORN:

Mr. Wilfred Harold Shoobert, C.I.E., E.D., I.C.S., M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official).

## STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### (a) ORAL ANSWERS

#### PRODUCTION OF MATCHES

1003. \*Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state how the total production of matches in India compares with the production of matches in the year 1938-39?

(b) What steps have Government taken to increase the supply of matches?

(c) Have Government noticed the deterioration in the quality?

(d) How many more plants are now functioning with regard to match manufacture compared with pre-war?

(e) Are any supplies received from abroad? If so, from where and how much?

(f) Is it a fact that the price permitted by Government to be charged for matches is very liberal and leaves a very great profit to Wimco?

(g) What is the total number of factories, apart from Wimco factories, working in India, and what percentage of the total production is accounted for by them?

(h) By what stages and in what manner do Government propose to bring down the price of matches in this country?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** The question will be answered by my Honourable friend the Member of Industries and Civil Supplies on the 21st March, 1945.

**Mr. Manu Subedar:** May I know if this is one of the industries which the Honourable the Finance Member had in mind when he talked of nationalisation for the purpose of revenue?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** That has to be answered by the Honourable the Finance Member.

#### HIDES AND SKINS PRODUCED

1004. \*Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Has the Honourable the Supply Member any estimate of the total amount of hides and skins produced in this country?

(b) How does such estimate compare with the production before the war?

(c) What is the rise of price in the case of hides and skins as compared with the pre-war price?

(d) By what method have Government secured their requirements?

(e) Have they received representations from the boot and shoe industry regarding the shortage of material available for the civil population?

(f) Are Government aware that prices of footwear of every description have shot up and that the middle class and people with limited incomes are suffering heavily?

(g) What steps have Government taken to increase the production of the shoe industry in India for war purposes and how do they propose to maintain such increased capacity after the war?

(h) What steps have the Government of India taken to ease the situation for the civil population?

(i) In what stages and in what manner do they propose to achieve this result and to bring down the price of shøewear in India?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** (a) and (b). According to information published by the Agricultural Marketing Board in 1942 and 1943 the estimated production of hides and skins in India were as follows:

Cow Hides—2,00,00,000 per annum. Goatskins—2,75,00,000 per annum.  
Buff Hides—57,00,000 per annum. Sheepskins—1,70,00,000 per annum.

Current figures are not available but it is considered the production today is lower than in immediate pre-war years, particularly in the case of hides.

(c) Cow Hides 100 to 150 per cent.

Buff Hides 200 to 250 per cent.

Goatskins 50 per cent.

Sheepskins 100 per cent.

(d) By negotiations with the various sources of supply.

(e) Yes.

(f) Government are aware that prices of shøewear of every description have increased.

(g) *Part (first).* Government have assisted firms producing footwear for war purposes in the import of necessary material and machinery not manufactured in this country and by arranging supplies of leather required, where necessary.

*Part (second).* By diverting the increased capacity to civil needs, both internal and foreign.

(h) The steps taken are: (1) Fixing prices of footwear through Footwear Control Orders of 1944 and 1945; (2) Fixing prices of hides and buffalo leather to enable manufacturers to buy at reasonable rates; (3) Prohibiting or restricting export of certain types of hides, leather and footwear to make larger supplies available for the production of footwear; (4) Arranging imports and distribution of grindery and distribution of sole leather.

(i) Prices of footwear as notified are periodically reviewed by the Government Department concerned in consultation with all branches of footwear industry, particularly with a view to reduction in the notified prices immediately such reduction is possible.

**Mr. Manu Subedar:** The Honourable Member spoke of diversion of increased supply for civil population. Will he allay the public feeling on this subject by issuing a press note saying the amount so diverted and how much increased supply is the Government going to give?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I shall consider the question.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** With reference to part (i) may I know by how much percentage the present fixed price is higher than pre-war prices?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I want notice, but I would suggest that the question should be addressed to my Honourable colleague, the Member for Industries.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman:** With reference to part (f) how much percentage was allowed on the pre-war level of prices prevailing in 1938-39?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** That is exactly the question which my Honourable friend Mr. Chettiar asked just now and I suggested that it may be addressed to my Honourable Colleague, the Member for Industries who is directly in charge of fixing the price for civil population.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman:** The Supply Department has no say in the matter?

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

#### PRODUCTION OF POWER ALCOHOL

1005. **\*Mr. Manu Subedar:** (a) What efforts has the Honourable the Supply Member made to increase the production of power alcohol in India?

(b) How many factories are now working?

- (c) What is the quantity of molasses which is going waste in India?  
 (d) What progress has been made in the establishment of power alcohol plants?  
 (e) How many plants have been so installed since the beginning of the War?  
 (f) How many have been licensed?  
 (g) How many plants are on order?  
 (h) Do Government propose to give some indication of the target, towards which they aim with regard to the production of power alcohol in India and in what time do they hope to reach it?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** (a) Considerable quantities of the raw materials required in the fabrication within India of Distillation plants have been released.

(b) No Distillery is devoted exclusively to the production of Power Alcohol. A percentage of the production of the Mysore and Hyderabad State Distilleries, the Central Distillery at Meerut and the Daurala Distillery (U. P.) is in Power Alcohol.

(c) Statistics of molasses not utilised fully are not available.

(d) Against licences issued by the U. P. Government, Distilleries for the production of power alcohol and high strength rectified spirit are being erected at (1) Simbhaoli, (2) Shamli, (3) Hargaon, (4) Gla, (5) Captainganj and (6) Deoria.

The Daurala Distillery referred to in the answer at (b) came into production in 1944 but the power alcohol Column is not yet in full operation.

(e) One, the Daurala Distillery.

(f) No licences have been issued solely for the production of Power Alcohol. 13 licences for the erection of new Distilleries for rectified spirit have been granted by Provinces since the outbreak of the war.

(g) Two, from the U. S. A. other plant so far licensed have, or are being, fabricated in this country.

(h) The question of developing power alcohol production will be investigated by a Panel under the P. & D. Department.

**Mr. Manu Subedar:** May I know whether the Government of India had any communication with petrol interests and whether the Government can say anything about the general feeling that petrol interests are opposed to increased production of power alcohol?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** The Government of India have had no communication on this subject with any petrol interest.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** May I know whether the Panel Committee will enquire into the question how far it will be profitable for the State itself to undertake the manufacture of power alcohol either as a State monopoly or as one of the producers in the country?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I shall convey that suggestion to my Honourable colleague who is in charge of this Panel.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** What is the extent of power alcohol that will be manufactured if all these plants are set up?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I am not sure, but I think about 25 million gallons were computed at one time.

#### SETTING UP OF HEAVY INDUSTRY FACTORIES IN INDIA

1006 \***Mr. Manu Subedar:** (a) Has the Honourable the Supply Member seen the latest publication of Sir M. Visvesvaraya called "Reconstruction in Post-war India" the complaint that heavy industry orders went to Canada and Australia and India was denied these orders?

(b) What is the total volume of orders, which will be the production of heavy industries, placed with Canada and Australia since the beginning of the War?

(c) Is it a fact that some of these orders were extended to new factories set up in Canada and Australia?

(d) What attempts, if any, were made by Government to secure the setting up of such factories in India?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** (a) I have seen in the publication referred to the reference to certain orders having been placed on Canada and Australia. It is not correct to say that these countries had no heavy industries at the time the orders were placed. The orders were placed abroad for the reason that India either could not handle them or available capacity was already fully booked.

(b) A statement is laid on the table.

(c) Government have no information.

(d) Subject to the availability of plant and materials and the time factor Government's policy in regard to war demands has been to extend existing indigenous capacity or create new capacity wherever possible.

*Statement*

Item	Unit	Canada	Australia
Railway wagons (less wheels and * vacuum break-gears)	Nos.	8,000	..
Locomotives	"	434	..
Locomotives Boilers	"	100	..
Motor Vehicles	Dollars	Five hundred million dollars	..
Steel	Tons	34,000	62,000
Wagon component parts	Tons	4,110	250

\*Coming from U. K.

*Note.*—The above does not include any orders which may have been placed by the Defence Services.

**Mr. Manu Subedar:** In view of the fact that Canada and Australia were able to install heavy industries plant even during the war and that some of these plants are supplying India, may I know why the Government of India did not install such plants in India instead of placing orders with these Commonwealth countries?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** Because plants were not available, generally speaking, so far as India was concerned.

PURCHASING AT CONTROLLED PRICES ARTICLES SUPPLIED TO BRITAIN, ETC.

1007. **\*Mr. Manu Subedar:** (a) Has the attention of the Honourable the Supply Member been drawn to the address of Rai Bahadur Syamnandan Sahaya, C.I.E., President of the Bihar Chamber of Commerce, where he says as follows on the 25th of January, 1945:

"Then again every article supplied to the British Government has been at controlled prices, steel and pig iron has been supplied at pre-war prices with an allowance for increased cost of production, shellac was sold to America at controlled price and the same can be said of mica, manganese, and of skin and hides, etc. One wonders whether there is any other country among the Allied nations which has charged less from its overseas customers and more from its own countrymen. In these circumstances the desire of Indians to have the full value in return of these sterling accumulations is very legitimate indeed"?

(b) Are the facts stated therein correct, that controlled prices were charged and that these controlled prices were in many cases less than the prices which the civil population of this country had to pay?

(c) For what other articles not mentioned herein, were the controlled prices charged for (i) the United Kingdom, (ii) the U. K. C. C., (iii) U. S. A., and (iv) Australia and the Eastern Group countries?

(d) Have Government received any complaints from manufacturers that the controlled prices in some cases do not enable the concerns even to pay a six per cent. dividend?

(e) What is the total volume of purchase at controlled prices for all parties with the exception of the Government of India themselves, *i.e.*, for (i) the U. K., (ii) the U. K. C. C., (iii) U. S. A., and (iv) Australia and the Eastern Group countries?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). It is not clear what exactly the Honourable Member means by "controlled" price. I presume the reference is not to statutorily controlled prices, in the case of which there can be no difference between the prices paid by Government and those paid by the civil consumer, but to stores the prices of which have been indirectly controlled during the war. The general position in this respect is that, while until some time ago the prices paid in respect of purchases made by Government were subject to a certain measure of control, as the result of negotiations with an Industry as a whole or with some of its efficient units, or as the result of carefully negotiated individual contracts, there was, save in respect of a few items, no similar control over prices paid by the civil consumer in the ordinary market. This position has now altered, and after the introduction of certain measures of control over "civil" prices there has been a steady attempt on the part of Government to reduce the margin between prices paid by Government for their purchases, and ordinary civil prices. This reduction could not, in the nature of things, be accomplished immediately, but is being steadily achieved, so that at present the average margin of difference is small. It must be understood, however, that certain differences are bound to exist, mainly for two reasons: that Government make their purchases in bulk, and are also able to eliminate distribution cost. Moreover, when Government have some control over the raw material and are able to supply it to contractors at a reduced price, as in the case of footwear, they pay less for the finished article than the civil consumer does.

I must point out that the mere fact that Government, in many cases, are able to buy commodities at somewhat lower prices does not mean that producers are being made to sell at sacrificial rates. On the contrary, all prices are based on an appraisal of the costs of production, and in many cases, e.g., hides and tanned kips, the loss of pre-war overseas markets is also taken into consideration.

With the exception of certain purchases by the U. K. C. C. and of shellac, mica, and East India Kips, by agents of the U. K. and U. S. A., all substantial purchases for H. M. G., the Dominions, U. S. A., etc., have been made by or with the assistance of the Government of India. No distinction could obviously be made between prices of stores bought for the Defence Services in India and those that were exported either to the U. K. or to Allied countries.

(d) No such complaints have been received.

(e) The information is not readily available.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman:** With reference to hides may I know if the Ministry of Supply is paying for Madras Kips a price which is about 10 per cent. higher than what it was in 1938-39?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** That may be so, but this is virtually a negotiated price with the industry which the industry has cheerfully accepted.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman:** But was it not through the influence of the Supply Department which was to receive all these hides?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** Not through the influence of the Supply Department but with the good offices of the Supply Department the industry has been able to get the price which it does now.

**Mr. Manu Subedar:** Will it be correct to state, arising out of the Honourable Member's reply, that as it was not possible to distinguish between purchases made for any of the allied nations which were made jointly, the benefit of the small difference between the prices which the civilian population pays and the prices which Government pay has also gone to these Governments?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** The purchases on behalf of other countries are made on exactly the same basis as purchases made by this Government for its own use. They are negotiated contracts, not prices at controlled rates, if by control is meant the prices arrived at taking into consideration the bulk purchases and the ease with which the seller gets money directly and the avoidance of distribution costs, the same price was paid by the Government of India and the same price has been demanded by other Governments to be paid to the sellers.

**Mr. Manu Subedar:** Is it not true that the civil population has to pay very much higher, e.g., for steel, cement and for other things than the negotiated price which Government pay?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** That is what I have been trying to explain in this long answer. It is not very much higher but a little higher price. That is inevitable even in peace-time when Government were getting their contracts at lower prices than at what the civilian population was getting.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** In view of the fact that unit per unit labour and industrial services abroad are remunerated in their own countries at a very much higher figure than in India, and consequently Indian goods are priced at much lower figures than goods of other countries, why is it that Government insist upon selling to other countries at prices cheaper than those at which they are able to purchase for their own needs?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** That involves a long disquisition on the economics of international trade.

**Mr. K. C. Neogy:** Is it a fact that some time ago the Metals Reserve Company, an official organisation of the American Government, offered prices for certain rare minerals which were not sufficient to cover the mining costs and that a complaint to that effect was made by the officers concerned to the Labour Department?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I must confess that I am quite ignorant of this. Perhaps the question may be addressed to the Honourable the Labour Member.

**Mr. K. C. Neogy:** That arises out of clause (b).

#### NATIONALISING ROAD TRANSPORT

1008. **\*Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Othttiar:** With reference to his statement on page 7 of his budget speech, will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

(a) whether any of the Provincial Governments have come to any definite decisions on this matter;

(b) whether any Provincial Government has launched upon the programme of completely nationalising road transport and running it themselves; if so, which Governments;

(c) whether any Government proposes to run transport by launching big companies for this purpose; if so, which Governments; and

(d) the policy of the Government of India with regard to Centrally Administered Areas?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) It is not clear to which particular aspect of road-rail co-ordination the Honourable Member refers. As the recent meeting of the Transport Advisory Council all Provinces were unanimous upon the general need for road-rail co-ordination and six Provinces agreed to railway administrations acquiring a substantial interests in road transport companies provided acquisition of shares was by negotiation with the companies and in consultation with the Provincial authorities concerned. Seven Provinces had no objection to railways participating in the carriage of goods by road either parallel or complementary to railways. There was no objection to railways operating their own collection and delivery services for goods. The general position of the Provincial Governments at present appears to be that they are awaiting the views of the Central Government following on the discussions which have taken place in this House pending which they are themselves unable to come to any definite decisions concerning the methods of co-ordination.

(b) I am not aware that any Government has yet come to a final decision.

(c) Concrete proposals have been received only from the Government of the Central Provinces and Berar where the Provincial Government proposes to take shares in a joint road-rail transport company. The Governments of the United Provinces and Bombay have had certain schemes under consideration, but, as mentioned in reply to part (a), further progress is dependent upon the views of the Central Government.

(d) The policy in respect of Administered Areas will depend largely on that adopted by adjoining Provinces and States.

**Mr. Badri Dutt Pande:** Will the Honourable Member state if motor transport running in the hills which does not compete with the railways will also be co-ordinated?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I hope so, yes.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** When the Honourable Member said that six provinces agreed to the Railway administrations acquiring a substantial interest, did he mean that they will get majority shares?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** Not necessarily.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Then what is meant by "substantial"?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I think I endeavoured to explain that to the House once before. I said that if there was to be any financial co-ordination it was obvious that it would have to be something more than 5 per cent. which would be an inconsiderable figure. But it need not necessarily be a majority holding.

**Mr. Abdul Qaiyum:** With reference to the decision of the C. P. and Berar Government, will the Honourable Member state what are the respective shares of the railways, the Provincial Government and other interests?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I do not think I have that with me at present. But, as I said, the whole position is suspended pending further consideration by the Central Government.

**Mr. Abdul Qaiyum:** I think I heard the Honourable Member state that the C. P. and Berar Government had come to a final conclusion in the matter.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I said that concrete proposals have been received only from the Government of C. P. and Berar, where the Provincial Government propose to take shares.

**Mr. Abdul Qaiyum:** And what is the extent of these shares to be taken by the railways, the provincial Government and other interests?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** No final conclusion has been reached.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** In view of the fact that many Provincial Governments are awaiting a decision of the Government of India in this matter, do they propose to come to any conclusions about this?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** The Government of India had plans for proceeding, but then there took place in this House a debate which expressed contrary views, and obviously Government must have time to consider those views.

#### RAILWAY STATIONS CLOSED FOR COAL ECONOMY

1009. **\*Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

(a) how many stations have been closed to economise coal in all the Railways in India after the beginning of the war;

(b) how many in the South Indian Railway;

(c) the average cost of coal for a train to stop in and start from a station; and

(d) the total economy of coal made by this step?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) and (b). I am afraid it is impossible to differentiate between the numbers of stations closed, either for passenger or goods traffic, solely for reasons of the coal economy, and those closed in pursuance of the general policy of conserving all resources to enable our railroads to deal with the most essential requirements of civil and military traffic. I can, however, give the Honourable Member the approximate total number of stations closed, and they are 512 for goods traffic and 511 for passenger traffic. Of these, about 125 and 26 were closed on the South Indian Railway for goods and passenger traffic respectively.

(c) I understand that the elimination of one train stoppage results in a saving of anything from one to 3 cwts. of coal, according to the type of train, the local and operating conditions prevailing, etc.

(d) It is not possible to arrive at an accurate computation of the coal economies effected by the elimination of such halts, since the war began, as many halts have also been cut out at stations which still remain open.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** With reference to part (c) of the question, will the Honourable Member give the monetary value of the coal saved for a train to stop in and start from a station?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** That depends upon the price of the coal.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** At the present rates?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** It would be about one to three-twentieths of somewhere about Rs. 11.

#### SCALES OF PAY FOR INFERIOR SERVANTS, ETC., IN POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT

1010. **\*Mr. Abdul Qaiyum:** Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state:

(a) the reason why there are two different scales of pay in each grade for inferior servants, postmen, clerical, and supervisory staff in the Posts and Telegraphs Department;

(b) whether it is a fact that people doing exactly similar work are receiving different scales of pay for the same; and

(c) if the answer to (b) be in the affirmative, whether Government propose to redress this grievance?

**Mr. W. H. Shoobert:** (a) The Honourable Member is presumably referring to the old and revised scales. If so, there are two different scales of pay for all classes of staff. This is due to the fact that at the time of introduction of the revised scales of pay, officials already in permanent employment at that time were allowed as a special case to retain their old scales as a personal concession.

(b) Yes.

(c) No, as there is no real grievance as explained in the reply to part (a).

**Mr. Abdul Qaiyum:** With reference to part (a) of the question, may I know what is the difference between these two scales for the same type of work, I mean difference in pay?

**Mr. W. H. Shoobert:** It depends entirely upon the appointment. I mean we are dealing with clerks, we are dealing with postmen, we are dealing with runners and staff of all categories. I am afraid I cannot out of my head give the Honourable Member the exact difference.

**Mr. Abdul Qaiyum:** Is it proper to give different wages to people doing the same kind of work in the same class of workers?

**Mr. W. H. Shoobert:** That, Sir, is being done in every other Department of the Government of India, and probably I think all over the world.

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

#### LEAVE RULES FOR ENTRANTS TO POSTAL DEPARTMENT

1011. **\*Mr. Abdul Qaiyum:** Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state:

(a) whether the leave rules for persons who entered the Postal Department on or after the 15th July, 1931, have been altered;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that leave beyond 90 days in the case of superior staff and 30 days in the case of inferior staff is not allowed to accumulate and lapses; and

(c) if the answer to (b) is in the affirmative, the reason or reasons which led Government to effect the change in the rules?

**Mr. W. H. Shoobert:** (a) Yes. The revised leave rules are of general application and not merely to the Posts and Telegraphs Department.

(b) It is a fact that certain categories of the superior staff (other than those of Non-Asiatic domicile recruited in India and entitled to passage concessions) and certain categories of the inferior staff, are not allowed to accumulate earned leave beyond 90 and 30 days respectively. When the aforesaid maxima have been reached, such staff cease to earn further leave. But earned leave does not lapse.



(c) The change was effected because it was considered that the leave rules should not be unduly liberal for persons serving in their own country.

**Mr. Abdul Qaiyum:** May I know if the leave lapses if the worker is unable to avail himself of the leave owing to circumstances beyond his control? Is it a fact that even then the leave lapses?

**Mr. W. H. Shoobert:** It is a fact.

**Mr. Abdul Qaiyum:** Is it fair that if a man is unable to avail himself of his leave because of the exigencies of service that he should have to forego his leave?

**Mr. W. H. Shoobert:** That, Sir, is a matter of opinion.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Is there any proposal to abolish this distinction between Asiatics and non-Asiatics in regard to these privileges?

**Mr. W. H. Shoobert:** That, Sir, is not a question for me to reply to.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Why is it considered to be unduly liberal to accumulate leave up to 90 days in the case of inferior staff and it is not considered unduly liberal in the case of higher staff to accumulate leave up to 90 days?

**Mr. W. H. Shoobert:** I have already pointed out that these rules apply not only to the Posts and Telegraphs Department but to every other Department of the Government of India, and I am afraid I am not in a position to reply to this question.

CONVEYANCE ALLOWANCE TO INFERIOR SERVANTS OF POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS  
DEPARTMENT IN CALCUTTA, ETC.

. 1012. **\*Mr. Abdul Qaiyum:** Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state:

(a) whether any conveyance allowance is being paid to the inferior servants of the Posts and Telegraphs Department in Calcutta, Madras, Bombay and Delhi;

(b) whether the same is being paid to other employees; and who they are;

(c) the reasons for the discrimination between the two classes; and

(d) whether Government propose to grant the conveyance allowance to the inferior staff as well?

**Mr. W. H. Shoobert:** (a) No.

(b) No Sir; except at Delhi where a conveyance allowance is being paid to Non-Gazetted Government servants in superior service drawing not more than Rs. 500 p.m. and living at a long distance from their place of work. It is presumably this allowance to which the Honourable Member refers.

(c) As Government servants in superior service residing at a distance from their offices habitually use conveyances to take them to work, it was considered necessary to compensate them to some extent for the steep rise in the rates for the hire of public conveyances. As inferior servants are not generally in the habit of using conveyances to take them to work, the question of compensating them did not arise.

(d) No, for the reasons explained in the reply to part (c).

**Mr. Abdul Qaiyum:** May I know whether Government have provided any accommodation for members of the inferior staff close to their place of business?

**Mr. W. H. Shoobert:** In some cases accommodation has been provided, in other cases it is not.

**Mr. Abdul Qaiyum:** What is the upper limit of the pay of the inferior staff?

**Mr. W. H. Shoobert:** I must have notice of that question.

**Mr. Abdul Qaiyum:** May I know why it is considered equitable to grant conveyance allowance to people drawing high salaries and to deny the same to people drawing low salaries?

**Mr. W. H. Shoobert:** I have already given the reply to that in my reply to part (c) of the question.

**Mr. Abdul Qaiyum:** There is something wrong with the Government's sense of justice.

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

## FOOD INSPECTORS ON RAILWAYS

**1013. \*Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state the number of Food Inspectors on the various State-managed Railways and the number of Muslims till December, 1944?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I regret I cannot undertake to collect the details under present conditions.

## RAILWAY. PRIORITY FOR SALT

**1014. \*Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Will the Honourable Member for War Transport please state:

- (a) what the priority allotted to salt is for purposes of transit by rail;
- (b) whether he is aware that in some places salt is sold at high prices at black market rates owing to paucity of supply;
- (c) whether he has received any representations to this effect; and
- (d) whether he proposes to consider giving to salt higher priority next to the foodgrains?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) Salt for human consumption and foodgrains both of which have been included in the definition of essential food-stuffs receive the same priority for rail transport. The priority accorded varies slightly in the regions of the different railway priority controllers, but the lowest priority given to programmed movements and movements on Government account is class III.

(b) No, but when this is the case, it is for the Provincial Government to take action in consultation with the Regional Controller.

(c) I have recently seen some representations from South India in which it is alleged that whereas salt was formerly given priority in Class III, it has now been reduced to Class VI. But this is incorrect. The Regional Controller, Madras, has reported that salt required for public consumption moves in class III while that required for industrial concerns is moved in class VI. The movement of salt on the S. I. Railway has been zoned with the approval of the Commissioner of Civil Supplies and Collectors of Central Excise, Bombay and Madras, and no complaint from the Government of Madras has been received.

(d) Does not arise.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** With reference to part (c), the Honourable Member has said that the salt for human consumption is put under Class III and that for industrial consumption is put under Class VI. How does the Government make sure that a certain quantity of salt for human consumption is not made available to industrial concerns?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** Presumably it depends upon the consignee.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** May I take it that when wagons are asked for carrying salt for human consumption they are put under Class III and when wagons are sent for the carriage of salt for industrial concerns then they are put under Class VI? Is that the way in which they do things?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** Subject presumably to the verification of the facts.

## WOMEN EMPLOYED IN RAILWAY MINES

**1015. \*Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan:** Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state:

(a) the number of women employed in mines owned by the Railway (i) for underground work and (ii) for surface work;

(b) the number of women now working underground who used to work on the surface previous to the removal of the ban on such work;

(c) the number of women working underground who are not wives of men miners working underground in mines;

(d) the number of boys and girls between the ages of 12 and 18 working underground in Railway mines;

(e) the average wage of the miners referred to in (a) and (c) and the dearness allowance;

(f) whether the physical condition of these miners is medically examined before they are employed for underground work; and, if not, why not; and

(g) the facilities provided by Government for medical aid, care of infants and children of women miners and for protection of their homes when they are working?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** (a) to (g). The information will be collected as far as practicable and will be laid on the table of the House.

**Mrs. Renuka Ray:** As regards (d), will the Honourable the Supply Member

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The answer is that the information will be collected and then supplied to the House.

#### DISCONTINUING EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN FOR UNDERGROUND WORK IN RAILWAY MINES

**1016. \*Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan:** Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state:

(a) whether the Railway Administration have considered the question of discontinuing the employment of women for underground work in mines; and, if so, what their decision is;

(b) what steps Government have taken to secure more male labour in order to withdraw women from underground work, and with what result;

(c) what improvements Government have made in the condition in which miners work since June 1943; and

(d) whether Government are aware that the poor health of the miners is affecting their efficiency and the production of coal; and, if so, what steps Government have taken in the matter?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** (a) Railway Collieries are now under the control of the Supply Department. The question of discontinuing the employment of women underground in these collieries as in coalmines generally, has been examined a number of times recently and the decision is to make no change for the present.

(b) Special steps have been taken to recruit and instal Gorakhpur labour in the coalfields and according to recent reports the number of those now employed exceeds 15,000. Approximately 3,000 labourers from the Kolar Gold Fields have also been drafted into coalmines. Apart from this, a Labour Recruitment Control Order was promulgated in November 1944 to regulate the recruitment of unskilled labour so as to ensure an adequate supply of labour for collieries from the areas from which colliery labour is normally recruited. All these steps have helped to augment colliery labour but even so the situation does not permit of the withdrawal of women from underground work.

(c) The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply given in this House to part (c) of Starred Question No. 453 on the 21st February 1945.

(d) The health of miners is certainly capable of improvement and with such improvement, production *per capita* should also rise. The Coalmines Welfare Fund has been created to secure amongst other things and improvement in the medical facilities available to miners and in their housing conditions. A study of the nutrition of this class of labour will also be undertaken.

**Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan:** May I ask Sir, what is the experience of the railway administration with regard to the introduction of women to work underground in mines and whether the production has improved because of their working there?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** On a previous occasion my answer was that the production of coal would drop if women were removed from those mines.

(At this stage Prof. N. G. Ranga attempted to speak.)

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): **Mr. Joshi,**

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Is it a fact that the workers who are brought to the mines from Gorakhpur and also from the Kolar Gold Fields are paid more than the ordinary miners of the province though they produce less?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** The first part of the assumption of my Honourable friend is correct. With reference to the second part, at the initial stages their production is less but it gradually improves as they gain experience of this technical work.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** What is the present position? Is their production as good as the production of the ordinary miners?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** Those who have had sufficient training and experience do more or less produce the same quantity.

**Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan:** Will the railway administration come to a decision with regard to employing women underground according to their own experience or will they wait till the Labour Department comes to a decision on the matter?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** It is not for the railway administration to come to a decision as this is under the Supply Department, but the Supply Department and the Labour Department will jointly come to a decision on this subject.

(At this stage Prof. N. G. Ranga again attempted to speak.)

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

#### MALARIA INSPECTORS ON BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY

1017. **Mr. Muhammad Nauman** (on behalf of **Shahk Rafuddin Ahmad Siddiquee**): (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if it is a fact that on the Bengal and Assam Railway in the years 1943 and 1944 in the advertisements for the posts of Malaria Inspectors, only qualified doctors were required but some posts were given to non-Muslims with no medical qualifications?

(b) If the reply to (a) is in the negative, will he be pleased to state the number of the Malaria Inspectors selected and appointed to the said posts during the said period together with their medical qualifications?

(c) Is it a fact that Muslims were debarred from this employment on this plea?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) No; the candidates were required to possess certificates in practical field and laboratory work in connection with malaria, though the advertisement stated that preference would be given to candidates holding a diploma as a licentiate. The reply to the last portion of this part of the question is in the negative.

(b) I lay on the table a statement giving the number of Malaria Inspectors selected together with the qualifications of the persons.

(c) In view of the reply to part (a), this part of the question does not arise.

*Statement giving the number of Malaria Inspectors selected together with the qualifications of the persons*

Number	Qualifications
Hindus—7	4 L.M.F. In addition, one possessed the L.T.M. in Malariology, one the L.T.M. and a third had completed the L.T.F. Course. 1 Health Inspector—Malaria Training. 1 held a certificate from the Royal Sanitary Institute, London. 1 held Compounder's Certificate (has not been employed as his name has since been removed from the panel.)
Muslims—1	L.M.F.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman:** May I know if it was stated in the advertisement that they need not have any particular qualifications in respect of malarial work, or something like that?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** That is not correct.

**SUB-ASSISTANT SURGEONS SELECTED FOR TRAINING AS RADIOLOGIST ON BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY**

1018. **\*Mr. Muhammad Nauman** (on behalf of **Shaikh Rafuddin Ahmad Siddiquee**): (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if it is a fact that the Chief Medical Officer, Bengal and Assam Railway, selected non-Muslim Sub-Assistant Surgeons for training as Radiologists during the period from January, 1943, to February, 1945?

(b) If the reply to (a) is in the negative, will he be pleased to state the number of Muslims selected and given training for the said posts?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** Parts (a) and (b). Government understand that the Sub-Assistant Surgeons on the Bengal and Assam Railway selected to undergo a refresher course for appointment as Radiologists had all undergone preliminary training in X-Ray work outside a railway hospital. None of these was a Muslim so there were no Muslims with this requisite training.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman:** Was any Muslim given a chance to appear before and selection board for the purpose?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I understand the position to be that there were no Muslims with the requisite training.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman:** But probably no Hindu had the requisite training.

**Mr. Latchand Navalrai:** They always possess the necessary qualifications.

**CERTAIN POSTS SANCTIONED IN MEDICAL DEPARTMENT OF BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY.**

1019. **\*Mr. Muhammad Nauman** (on behalf of **Shaikh Rafuddin Ahmad Siddiquee**): (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if it is a fact that the Chief Medical Officer, Bengal and Assam Railway, has got the following posts sanctioned by the General Manager in the year 1945:

(i) Assistant Medical Officers, (ii) Malaria Inspectors, (iii) Assistant Malaria Inspectors, (iv) Sub-Assistant Malaria Inspectors, (v) Clerks in higher grades, (vi) Clerks in lower grades, and (vii) Laboratory Assistants (Senior and Junior)?

(b) If the reply to (a) is in the affirmative, will he be pleased to state the total number of vacancies and the number of vacancies in each category to be filled by Muslims?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) and (b). The posts which have been sanctioned, and consequently the number of vacancies created, are given below:

Number of posts	Category	Duration	Rates and scales of pay
1	Assistant Medical Officer	12 months from 1-4-1945	Rs. 250—25—525 new Rs. 500—50—700 old
30	Sub-Assst. Surgeons (A. B. Zone).	7 months from 1-4-1945	Rs. 120 fixed.
26	Sub Assistant Surgeons (E. B. Zone).	7 months from 1-6-1945	100 fixed.
4	Malaria Inspectors (Junior)	7 months from the date the posts are actually filled.	Rs. 100 fixed.
1	Malaria Supervisor	Do.	Rs. 100 fixed.
75	Sub-Assistant Malaria Inspectors.	Do.	Rs. 40 fixed.
1	Senior Clerk	12 months from 1-4-1945	Rs. 100 in scale. Rs. 100—10/2—120

The vacancies open to direct recruitment will be filled in accordance with the instructions relating to communal quotas, as far as practicable.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman:** Am I to understand that no Laboratory Assistant will be appointed?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I do not see any in the list.

**PAUCITY OF MUSLIMS IN MEDICAL DEPARTMENT OF BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY**

1020. **\*Mr. Muhammad Nauman** (on behalf of **Shaikh Rafiuddin Ahmad Siddiquee**): (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if it is a fact that in the Medical Department of the Bengal and Assam Railway during the period January, 1943 to December, 1944, Muslims were not recruited according to their quota in all the vacancies advertised in papers?

(b) If the reply to (a) is in the negative, will he be pleased to state the categories where the deficiency in their quota was made up?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) and (b). Government are informed that due to the paucity of suitable Muslim applicants, the quota prescribed for them could not be observed. The deficiency will be made good, wherever possible, in accordance with the rules.

**MUSLIMS SELECTED AS ASSISTANT SURGEONS ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY**

1021. **\*Mr. Muhammad Nauman** (on behalf of **Shaikh Rafiuddin Ahmad Siddiquee**): (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if it is a fact that in response to advertisements for the posts of Assistant Surgeons on the East Indian Railway in the year 1944-45 several qualified Muslim Doctors applied for the posts but only one Muslim was selected?

(b) If the reply to (a) is in the negative, will he be pleased to state the number of Muslims who applied for the posts and their qualifications and experience and the number of those who were selected?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) and (b). Only one advertisement for the post of Assistant Surgeon was issued during 1944-45 and it was limited to Muslims. Of six Muslims who applied, three were over age and, of the remaining three who were interviewed, only one was found suitable and he was appointed to the post.

**SUMMARY REMOVAL FROM SERVICES OF RAILWAYMEN**

1022. **\*Mr. Frank B. Anthony:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware that Railway personnel are usually removed from service without any enquiry;

(b) whether he is aware that this procedure has led to the summary removal of Railwaymen with many years' service;

(c) whether Government propose to consider the question of according an absolute right to Railway employees to a departmental enquiry at which they can be represented by a lawyer before they can be removed from service;

(d) whether copies of the proceedings which have resulted in the removal or dismissal of Railway personnel are denied to those who have been so removed or dismissed; and

(e) whether Government propose to consider granting an absolute right to persons so removed or dismissed to get certified copies of the proceedings?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) The rules dealing with the procedure to be adopted in connection with cases of removal from service are contained in Rules 1708 to 1710 of the State Railway Establishment Code, Volume I, a copy of which is in the Library of the House, and it will be seen that these rules do not permit of removal from service without any enquiry.

(b) Government are not aware that the procedure laid down has led to the summary removal of railwaymen.

(c) Government have in the past, considered the points raised by the Honourable Member, among others, and the present rules represent the results of such consideration.

(d) and (e). The proceedings of departmental enquiries are intended for use by the authority passing orders in the case and for dealing with an appeal. An employee is not entitled to a copy of the proceedings and, since he is given an opportunity of cross-examining witnesses and of being accompanied by another railway servant, Government do not propose to modify the existing procedure.

**Mr. Frank R. Anthony:** With regard to the answer to part (a), is the Honourable Member able to recall the facts of a case which I brought to his notice in which the driver from Bhusawal was summarily removed in twenty-four hours and in order to justify the removal a farcical enquiry was subsequently held in order to endorse this action?

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member need not make a speech.

**Mr. Frank R. Anthony:** No, Sir.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member should resume his seat when he has put his question.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I recall the case into which I enquired very carefully and I was satisfied that no injustice was done.

**Mr. Frank R. Anthony:** With regard to this case, did the Honourable Member look at the proceedings of the Court in which the officer alleged to have been assaulted by this employee was himself convicted?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** Yes, Sir, I have enquired into the case. If the Honourable Member had put the question in a concrete form I would have refreshed my memory regarding the details of the particular case but I have nothing further to add now. I have investigated the case very closely and I do not propose to pursue it further.

#### DEARNESS ALLOWANCE TO AND CHEAP GRAIN SHOPS FOR POSTAL EMPLOYEES AT ALLAHABAD

†1023. \*Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: (a) With reference to the answer to starred question Nos. 490 (d) and 491 on the 17th November, 1944, regarding dearness allowance to the postal employees and provision of cheap grain shops for the postmen at Allahabad, will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state what has been the result of the examination by the Post Master General of this question?

(b) Has any increase in the dearness allowance been granted or not?

(c) Have any steps been taken for the opening of cheap grain shops for the postal employees especially in big cities, such as Allahabad, Cawnpore, Lucknow, Benares?

**Mr. W. H. Shoobert:** (a) and (c). Great difficulties have been encountered in opening the proposed new grain shops, chief amongst which is the question of staff and accommodation. The matter is, therefore, still under consideration.

(b) Not yet but the matter is under the active consideration of Government.

#### REMOVAL OF GRIEVANCES OF POSTAL EMPLOYEES

†1024. \*Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: (a) Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state if it is a fact that on representation by the postal employees the Government was pleased to appoint a committee to enquire into the grievances of the Post Office Lower Grade Staff Unions of Bombay and Poona in December, 1944?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that the Postal Unions of other Provinces, especially of U. P., were assured that their grievances would also be redressed on the lines suggested by the committee and it was on that assurance that the notices from the postal employees for going on strike were withdrawn?

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

(c) What has been the result of the enquiry of that committee? Will their report be published and be available to the postal employees or their Unions?

(d) What steps, if any, have been taken in pursuance of that report?

**Mr. W. H. Shoobert:** (a) and (b). The facts are as stated.

(c) The report of the Committee has not yet been received by Government. The question of publication will be considered after the report has been received and examined by Government.

(d) Does not arise.

#### LANTERNS FOR LETTER BOX PEONS WORKING EARLY MORNING

†1025. \*Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kasmi: (a) Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state if it is a fact that in most of the big cities the hours of first clearance are early in the morning, for example in Allahabad the letter box peons are required to start from the office at 5 A.M. for opening the letter boxes?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that for this the peons have got to leave their houses as early as 3 to 4 A.M. when it is quite dark?

(c) Is it or is it not a fact that due to want of light the letter box peons are very much handicapped in their work?

(d) Is it or is it not a fact that in August, 1944, a letter box peon named Parmatma at Allahabad on opening a letter box found a snake sitting therein, and was just saved from being bitten?

(e) Is it or is it not a fact that representations have been made by this staff for the supply of lanterns or torches or some other light, but it has yet gone unheeded?

(f) Have Government considered the advisability of providing letter box peons with necessary lights? If not, why not?

**Mr. W. H. Shoobert:** (a) Yes.

(b) At Allahabad the peons leave office at 5-15 A.M. for the first clearance of letter-boxes. At other stations in the United Provinces the first clearance is not so early.

(c) No. Not to any appreciable extent.

(d) A peon brought to the Post Office a dead snake which he stated was found in a letter-box.

(e) A resolution by the Postmen and Lower Grade Staff Union, Allahabad, in September 1944 for provision of lanterns for all staff required to leave their residences in the small hours of the morning was received by the Postmaster-General. Apart from any other considerations it was not possible to comply with this demand owing to the difficulty of obtaining lanterns and kerosine oil.

(f) No, but the Postmaster-General is considering the question of making late the hours for the morning clearance at Allahabad.

#### DEARNESS ALLOWANCES TO POSTAL DEPARTMENT PENSIONERS

†1026. \*Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kasmi: (a) Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state if it is a fact that persons getting less than Rs. 40 per mensem as pension in his Department are allowed a dearness allowance of about Rs. 3 per mensem?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that persons getting pensions below Rs. 200 find themselves in a difficult position due to the abnormal rise in prices?

(c) Do Government propose to consider the case of the old pensioners with a view to granting them a dearness allowance?

**Mr. W. H. Shoobert:** (a) to (c). Pensioners of the departments under the Posts and Air Department are entitled to the same temporary increases as are

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



admissible to other Civil pensioners of the Central Government (other than pensioners of Railways).

I would therefore refer the Honourable Member to the reply given by the Honourable the Finance Member to starred question No. 481 on 16th November, 1944, asked by Mr. Frank R. Anthony, on the same subject.

#### NON-RECOGNITION OF ANDHRA RAILWAY PASSENGERS' ASSOCIATION

**1027. \*Prof. N. G. Ranga:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state how many Railway authorities (Railways) have recognised the Passengers' Associations and how many have not?

(b) Why was not recognition given to the Andhra Railway Passengers' Association which is a registered body, functioning for the last twelve years?

(c) Does he propose to consider the advisability of suggesting to the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway Authorities to reconsider this matter and accord recognition to this Passengers' Association?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) Four passengers associations have dealings with four Railway administrations. Government have no information, however, as to the number of other passengers associations which may be in existence in the country or of their relations with Railway Administrations.

(b) and (c). I am not aware whether the M. & S. M. Railway have dealings with the Andhra Railway Passengers Association, but I will convey the suggestion of the Honourable Member to the General Manager of the M. & S. M. Railway for consideration.

#### BOOKING AND TRANSHIPMENT FACILITIES FOR GROUNDNUT OIL FROM METRE GAUGE TO BROAD GAUGE AND VICE-VERSA

**1028. \*Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) if it is a fact that booking and transshipment facilities are not made available from metre gauge to broad gauge and *vice versa*, especially for groundnut oil; and, if so, why;

(b) if it is not a fact that booking facilities are not made available for merchants who want to transport groundnut oil from places on the metre gauge of Guntakal and Bezwada to any places on the broad gauge of Bezwada-Nellore and Bezwada-Vizagapatam; and

(c) whether Government propose to reconsider this matter and allow the requisite transshipment of goods from one gauge to another provided the stations concerned are within the prescribed supply or demand zones for the commodity concerned?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a), (b) and (c). Information is being collected and will be laid on the table.

#### CLOSURE OF TEXTILE MILLS DUE TO COAL SHORTAGE

**1029. \*Dewan Abdul Basith Choudhury:** (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state whether his attention has been drawn to the news which appeared in the issue of the *Hindustan Times* of Delhi of the 22nd February, 1945, at page 5, under the caption "11 Ahmedabad Mills to close down for 4 days" due to acute shortage of coal?

(b) Is he aware that due to such closure of textile mills due to coal shortage, the country is facing a devastating cloth famine?

(c) Has his attention been drawn to the proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly which appeared in the issue of the *Hindustan Times* of the 24th February, 1945, at page 6, where it is stated that suicides are taking place in Bengal for want of cloth? Does he find any link between the closure of mills at Ahmedabad and suicide in Bengal for want of cloth?

(d) Does he propose to make a comprehensive statement about the causes of such serious shortage of coal for this industry though it is estimated by him

that the output of coal has increased by 25 per cent. due to employment of women labour in mines?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** (a) Yes.

(b) I understand that the quantity of cloth at present available for meeting civilian requirements is about four-fifths of the pre-war consumption. I must add that though the recent closures of textile mills due to coal shortages have undoubtedly affected total production and availability of cloth for civilian consumption, the loss is a small fraction only of present annual consumption.

(c) I have seen the proceedings referred to but no authenticated instances of such suicides have been brought to the notice of Government. The answer to the second part of the question is in the negative.

(d) No. In numerous replies in this House, I have given a sufficiently clear idea of coal production and distribution.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Are any special steps being taken by Government in the Labour Department to recruit more men miners and to train them as efficient cutters?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** Yes, Sir, attempts are being made in that direction.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** How many have thus been trained to be efficient coal cutters and introduced into the mines in the last one year?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I should like to have notice of that question.

**Sardar Sant Singh:** Is the Honourable Member aware that in the Punjab there is complaint about the distribution of coal to the ginning factories?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I would not be surprised if there was such a complaint.

**Sardar Sant Singh:** May I know from the Honourable Member if he is doing anything to make the distribution more equitable to the ginning factories?

**The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I do not agree that it is not equitable. Sometimes either owing to shortage of wagons or coal, there is a shortage but I do not agree that the distribution is inequitable. It is cut down to the same extent.

#### SELECTIONS FOR CONTROL TRAINING ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

1030. **\*Lala Sham Lal:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the post of Assistant Controller on the North Western Railway is a selection post, and that the candidates fit to receive training are nominated by the Selection Boards;

(b) whether it is also a fact that only certain categories of staff are eligible for selection for control training;

(c) whether it is a fact that certain candidates who were otherwise ineligible for selection for control training obtained facilities for the same on the plea that they will be willing to serve in danger zone on the Bengal and Assam Railway;

(d) whether it is a fact that candidates for training for service in danger zone on the Bengal and Assam Railway were selected on the condition that they would claim no benefit in appointments on the North Western Railway;

(e) whether it is a fact that after receiving training the candidates referred to in (c) and (d) backed out and refused to go on transfer to the Bengal and Assam Railway;

(f) whether it is a fact that the persons, so trained, have now been taken up as Assistant Controllers on the North Western Railway; if so, why the assurances given to other staff were violated; and

(g) what steps Government propose to take to remedy the situation?

- The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) The reply is in the affirmative.
- (b) Yes.
- (c) No employee who belonged to a category ineligible for Control training was given this facility.
- (d) The reply is in the negative.
- (e) Government understand that some of the persons who volunteered for service on the Bengal and Assam Railway subsequently withdrew.
- (f) The reply to the first part is in the affirmative; the latter part does not arise in view of the reply to part (d).
- (g) This does not arise.

#### REVISION OF SCALES OF PAY OF CONTROLLERS ON RAILWAYS

**1031. \*Lala Sham Lal:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that, in view of the recommendations in the Inglis-Appleton Report, the scales of pay of Controllers on the Railways were recently revised by the Railway Board; if so, whether the Honourable Member will lay a statement on the table of the House giving old and revised scales of pay for Section, Deputy and Chief Controllers on the North Western, Great Indian Peninsula and East Indian Railways;

• (b) if the revised scales of pay for various Railways differ, and why;

(c) whether it is a fact that the policy of revising scales of wages as adopted in 1934 was to have common scales for all Railways; if so, why a departure was made in the case of Controllers;

(d) the racial composition of control staff on these three Railway systems; and whether it is a fact that the Great Indian Peninsula Railway employs less number of Indians and, has sanctioned, higher revised scales; if so, what are the reasons in fixing higher revised scales; and

(e) what steps Government propose to take to equalize the scales of pay of the Control staff on all important Railways; if none, why?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) and (b). With a view to improve Control work as a result of the Inglis-Appleton Report and to obtain staff of the requisite ability, general principles were prescribed by the Railway Board for the purpose of reorganizing Control working on Railways and these included the maximum rates of pay which were considered suitable for Control staff. These maxima having been based on the rates of pay for certain existing categories other than Control staff on Railways, it was necessary to allow railways to adjust the pay of the latter staff in keeping with the local rates. I lay on the table a statement giving the old and revised scales of pay for Section, Deputy and Chief Controllers on the North Western, G. I. P. and East Indian Railways.

(c) The reply to the first portion is in the negative; the rest of the question does not arise.

(d) The information asked for in the first two portions is not readily available and I regret I cannot undertake to collect it. The reply to the third portion is in the negative. As regards the last portion, the fixation of slightly higher scales on the G. I. P. Railway was considered necessary in view of the higher scales of pay already obtaining on the railway in the case of staff of categories of equal importance.

(e) In view of the divergent conditions prevailing on railways, it is not possible to introduce uniformity in scales of pay.

Statements showing the scales of pay of Train Controllers.

Chief Controllers

Deputy Controllers

Section Controllers

Scales prior to recent revision. Scales after revision. Scales prior to recent revision. Scales after revision. Scales prior to recent revision. Scales after revision.

North Western.	*Old.	Ra. 400-25-500	Ra. 425-25-500	375	360-20-400	260-10-300	260-10-300
	†Revised	Ra. 350/-	350/-	300/-	300/-	230/-	230/-
G.I.P.	Old	Ra. 450-25-600	500-25-600	365-20-10-395	425-25-450	300-20-20-5-345 & 200-10-250	250-15-325.EB.-25-400
	Revised	Ra. 400/-	400/-	300/-	350/-	275 & 180	180-10-235.EB.-15-300.
East Indian.	Old	Ra. 450-20-530 & 400-20-500	430-20-530 & 400-20-500	355-20-475 & 310-10-350	Particular snot available	Old { 300-10-400 & 200-10-300	Particulars not available 160-10-250
	Revised	350	350	260	300	Revised { 160 & 140	Particular not available. 100-10/2-120

\*Those existing prior to 1st July, 1931.

†Those introduced in July, 1931.

## DUTIES OF CONTROLLERS ON CERTAIN RAILWAYS

**1032 \*Lala Sham Lal:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state the duties of (i) Section, (ii) Deputy, and (iii) Chief Controllers on the North Western, Great Indian Peninsula and East Indian Railways, separately?

(b) Are Section Controllers given the assistance of a Recorder or a clerk on any Railway? If so, where and for what purpose?

(c) On which Railway are Section Controllers entrusted with both the duties of Train and Traffic Control?

(d) Which Controller, whether Section, Deputy or Chief, is responsible for stock allotment on the three Railways referred to in (a)?

(e) What are the maximum and minimum duty hours per day for Controllers on these Railways, separately?

(f) What is the average maximum and minimum number of (i) trains passed, and (ii) messages received and sent by a Section Controller in his duty hours on each of these Railways?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) to (c). Complete information is not available but is being obtained and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

(f) I regret I cannot undertake to collect such details under present conditions.

## RECRUITMENT OF TRAIN CLERKS ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

**1033. \*Lala Sham Lal:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the North Western Railways services Commission cannot find candidates for employment as Train Clerks;

(b) the number of candidates who offered for recruitment at the last selection, the number selected and the number which actually turned up for duty;

(c) how many vacancies of Train Clerks exist on the North Western Railway;

(d) whether it is a fact that the Train Clerks have to perform hard duties and that it is considered as a penal cadre for other branches of service whose members are demoted as Train Clerks as a measure of punishment;

(e) whether it is a fact that the prospects for Train Clerks are meagre;

(f) whether Government have under consideration the question of revising scales of pay of the Train Clerks or amalgamating grades I and II for them; and

(g) if the reply to (f) be in the negative, whether it is proposed to take some steps to make the Train Clerks' service, conditions of service and wages, attractive; if so, whether the revision will apply to old employees also; if not why not?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) It is not generally a fact, though on occasions the response has not been sufficient to meet requirements.

(b) Of the thirty-two candidates who offered themselves for recruitment at the selection held in January, 1945, thirteen were considered suitable by the Commission; one of these failed in the medical examination, four did not join the school for training and one failed to pass the course. The number who joined for duty at various centres is not readily available.

(c) 28.

(d) Train Clerks are required to perform duties for which they are recruited and trained. Whether these duties are hard or not is a matter of opinion. The reply to the latter portion is in the negative.

(e) No; apart from advancement in the higher grades in their own line, Train Clerks are also eligible for promotion as Guards or Yard Foremen if they qualify themselves for these posts and are considered suitable.

(f) The reply is in the negative.

(g) Thirty-nine posts of Train Clerks, Grade I, have recently been permanently upgraded to Grade II. Divisional Superintendents have also been authorized to sanction, at their discretion, temporary upgrading, if justified by a temporary increase in work or responsibility. This benefits the senior Train Clerks who are mostly on the old scales of pay. Their working conditions are also being improved as opportunity offers.

**SCALES OF PAY OF ASSISTANT WAY INSPECTORS, ETC., ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY**

**1034. \*Lala Sham Lal:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the scales of pay—old and revised—for (i) Assistant Way Inspectors, (ii) Assistant Inspectors of Works, (iii) Assistant Signal and Interlocking Inspectors, (iv) Assistant Block Inspectors, and (v) Assistant Bridge Inspectors on the North Western Railway;

(b) the duties of each class of these employees;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Assistant Way Inspectors are responsible for the maintenance of Railway track and public safety; if so, whether their scales of pay are higher than those of other Assistant Inspectors referred to in (a) above; if not, why not;

(d) whether it is a fact that two grades of Assistant Permanent Way Inspectors are employed on the North Western Railway; if so, what their scales are and whether there is any difference in their duties and responsibilities; and

(e) if the reply to the last portion of (d) be in the negative, whether it is proposed to equalize their wages; if not, why not?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) and (b). I lay on the table a statement giving information regarding the scales of pay and principal duties of the staff referred to.

(c) Assistant Way Inspectors, subject to the supervision of Permanent Way Inspectors, are responsible for the maintenance of railway track and public safety. The reply to the second portion is in the negative. As regards the last portion, the pay of Assistant Inspectors has been fixed in a manner commensurate with the duties and responsibilities attached to the posts and the technical skill required.

(d) Yes; the scales of pay of the two grades are shown in the statement referred to in the reply to part (a). As regards the last portion, while there is no difference in the duties and responsibilities of Assistant Way Inspectors, Grades I and II, the higher grade is earmarked for staff who possess higher qualifications and have had three years training as apprentices as compared with Grade I staff who are promoted from inferior categories after they have qualified in a course which lasts for five months only.

(e) No, in view of the reply to part (d).

*Statement showing the scales of pay and principal duties of Assistant Inspectors of the Engineering Department, North Western Railway*

Designation	Old scale	New scale	Principal duties
	Rs.	Rs.	
Assistant Way Inspectors.	125-10-155	100-10/2-120 (Grade II)	Assistant Permanent Way Inspectors in the maintenance of track
Ditto.	60-2-90-2/8-110.	65-5/2-85 (Grade I)	
Assistant Inspector of Works.	..	100-10/2 Yrs 120.	Assist the Works Inspectors in supervising the construction of, and repairs to, bridges, buildings, water supplies and other engineering works, which is entrusted to them, and execute all works in accordance with the standing rules and regulations.

Designation	Old scale	New scale	Principal duties
	Rs.	Rs.	
Assistant Signal & Inter-locking Inspectors.	170-10-240 135-5-165	180, 160. 140. 100-10/2 Yrs. 120	To carry out alterations or to erect and super-wise a new sanctioned installation under open line working conditions. They are also responsible for carrying out alteration to existing safety measures in train working and for safe-guarding the working of trains in an emergency.
Assistant Block Inspectors.	170-10-240 135-5-165.	180, 160, 140. 100-10/2 Yrs. 120.	To assist the Block Inspectors in the proper maintenance of double and single line Block Instruments, Signal Arms Repeaters and Light Indicators, Key and Transmitters, slide and other equivalent apparatus, Electric Lever Locks, Electric Slots and/or Reversers and Traffic Control Apparatus.
Assistant Bridge Inspectors.	130-10-160	100-10/2 Yrs. 120	To carry out Bridge repairs and renewals under traffic with due regard to the safety of trains and staff under them.

#### IMPENDING IMPORT OF MOTOR CARS

1035. \*Mr. Abdul Qaiyum (on behalf of Mr. Satya Narayan Sinha): (a) Will the Honourable Member for War Transport please state if there is any truth in the report which has been published in papers that a large number of motor cars are going to be imported into this country in the near future?

(b) If the reply be in the affirmative, will the Honourable Member please inform the House the exact number of cars and the probable date by which they would reach the Indian Port?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) It is true that the Government of India hope to obtain a certain number of light British cars for the use of essential users some time during the year.

(b) The number of cars expected is about 2,000, most of which will probably be 10 h. p. Austins, but it cannot be stated even approximately when they will arrive.

**Mr. Abdul Qaiyum:** May I know if these cars will be available for Government use only or for civilian use as well?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** They will be allotted in consultation with the Provincial authorities after taking the war needs into consideration.

#### ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR POSTS AND AIR DEPARTMENT.

**Mr. W. H. Shoobert** (Government of India: Nominated Official): Sir, in the motion that stands in my name I request leave to substitute the word 'five' for the word 'three', which I understand will be in accordance with the wishes of certain Honourable Members of this House. Sir, I move:

"That this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct, five non-official members to serve on the Standing Committee to advise on subjects dealt with in the Department of Posts and Air, during the year 1945-46."

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is: "That this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct, five non-official members to serve on the Standing Committee to advise on subjects dealt with in the Department of Posts and Air, during the year 1945-46."

The motion was adopted.

#### ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR ROADS.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall** (Member for Railways and War Transport): Sir, I move:

"That this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct, six members to serve on the Standing Committee for Roads which will be constituted to advise the Governor General in Council in the administration of the Central Road Fund and such other questions relating to roads and road traffic as may be referred to it during the financial year 1945-46."

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

"That this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct, six members to serve on the Standing Committee for Roads which will be constituted to advise the Governor General in Council in the administration of the Central Road Fund and such other questions relating to roads and road traffic as may be referred to it during the financial year 1945-46."

**Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait** (West Coast and Nilgiris: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I move:

"That for the word 'six' the word 'eight' be substituted."

My object in moving this amendment is this. This Committee is becoming a very important one now. It was constituted under a Resolution passed by this House on the 10th of February 1937. Subsequently very important duties have devolved on this Committee, and now the question of Roads and co-ordination of road and railway traffic is also coming before it. The funds at its disposal are, I think, increasing a great deal. Therefore I think that this House should have a greater voice in the administration of this Fund, and accordingly I move this amendment.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall**: Sir, the Honourable Member is perfectly correct. This Committee differs somewhat from most of the other Committees of this House as it was set up as a result of considerable debate on a Resolution of the House. It was, I think, originally set up, as a result of the report of the Roads Development Committee, 1927-28.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have not put the motion to the House.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall**: The point is, Sir, that this Committee was set up by a special Resolution of the House. There is a fixed representation of this House on it and the Council of State is also involved. I suggest, Sir, that if it is to be altered, the Honourable Member should really move a special Resolution to deal with it.

**Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait**: May I make a submission? As he says, this Committee was set up by a Resolution of this House. I believe, Sir, and I think you will be pleased to agree with me, that this House has a perfect right to amend its own Resolution. This may be taken as an amendment to the Resolution. We are not barred from moving it.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjee** (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): I rise to give my full support to this motion.

**Honourable Members**: Order, order.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question that has been raised is whether a Resolution of this House fixing the quota of membership for this Assembly can be altered by an amendment like this. I dare say that the number of members allotted to this House should be increased now that the co-ordination of Roads and Road Traffic have been added to the Railway Department. Still the question remains whether a former Resolution of the House which has been acted on for so many years can be departed from or altered except by another resolution. This is an important question, and I do not know if there is a precedent. I think that this resolution which has been acted on for such a long time can only be altered by another Resolution on which all the aspects can be fully considered by the House. I think the Members will be well-advised to bring in a Resolution. The amendment is not in order.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjee**: Sir, may I suggest that this motion stand over for a few days, and that Mr. Essak Sait or any other Honourable Member of this House may bring forward a Resolution amending the previous Resolution? That will get over this difficulty. It is very desirable, Sir, that this House should be fully represented on this Committee. My Honourable friend has pointed out that very important functions are going to be given to this Committee, and all the Parties in this House should be fully represented on it. Now that the Congress Members are attending the Session and are getting elected to the Committees, it is very desirable that they should get their full quota. The Muslim League Members should get their full quota. Then there are two



other Parties, smaller Parties, they should at least have one member each, and the unattached Members should have one. In view of all this it is very desirable that there should be eight members, and the previous Resolution should be amended to that effect. This motion may be moved again in this House.

**Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait:** Just one submission, Sir, on the ruling you have given. I accept the ruling. My only request is that Government should bring in a Resolution instead of leaving it to non-official Members to do so. If we have to bring in a Resolution, we shall have to ask for a day, it will have to be balloted, but it will not be a problem for Government to bring in a Resolution and get it passed by the House.

**Mr. Bhulabhaj J. Desai** (Bombay Northern Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, may I point out this, before the matter is finally closed, 12 Noon that the terms of the Resolution which was passed applied to a different subject matter? Technically the Resolution may be the same. I accept your ruling. Sir, I wanted to intervene but could not catch your eye. But even if a formal Resolution is necessary, may I request that the matter can be put forward by the Government by way of Resolution on more or less agreed lines? I do suggest that because the fact is that technically the subject matter and the two Resolutions are different; but I accept your ruling; and in view of that may I suggest that we must come to some agreement on this matter and a Resolution can then be moved.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** Sir, I quite see the point of the Honourable Member who has just spoken. One of the difficulties of course is that I think fifteen days' notice has to be given. . . .

**An Honourable Member:** Not for Government resolutions.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): It can be moved at short notice.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I would like to make one or two points which I did not think the Honourable the Leader of the Nationalist Party quite understood. When this Committee was formed, it was the subject of a considerable debate and as a result of the report of the Indian Roads Development Committee; and the method of electing the members from this Assembly and from the Council of State has been at various times the subject of discussion in both Houses. Originally there was nominated a panel of 12 members out of which Government selected 6: that was done away with and ultimately it was settled, I understand between the two Houses, that there would be six members from this Assembly and three members from the Council of State, which I understand agrees to special weightage to this House in view of the special functions which this committee performs. . . .

**Dr. P. N. Banerjee:** But the numerical strength of this House is twice as much—more than twice.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I understand that the usual proportion is about 5 to 3, and that special weightage is given because of the special functions of this Committee. The House will doubtless recall that in allotting expenditure from the Road Fund, a majority of the present and voting, who are members of the Legislative Assembly, is required. Therefore, this allocation between the two Houses has, I understand, raised some comment in another place, and a resolution would also be necessary there. That is one of the reasons why I am a little hesitate about suggesting any alteration of the Committee. Also, it is not correct to say that the functions of this Committee are being altered. It was set up primarily to allocate funds from the road funds, but it is also charged with advising the Governor General on any matters which may be referred to the Committee and it has as a matter of fact already considered certain aspects of the road policy. I think these facts should be before the House when considering this. All I can say in reply to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition is that I will consider the position in the light of what he has suggested.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Then, is it the desire of Government that this motion should stand over?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): "Then this motion will stand over.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have to inform Honourable Members that for the purpose of election of Members to the Standing Committee for the Department of Posts and Air, the Notice Office will be open to receive nominations upto 12 Noon on Friday, the 16th March, and that the election, if necessary, will be held on Wednesday, the 21st March. The election, which will be conducted in accordance with the principle of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote, will be held in the Assistant Secretary's room in the Council House, between the hours of 10-30 A.M. and 1 P.M.

#### ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE STANDING FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR RAILWAYS.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have also to inform the Assembly that the following Members have been elected to the Standing Finance Committee for Railways during 1945-46: (1) Mr. Saiyid Haidar Imam; (2) Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan; (3) Mr. Satya Narayan Sinha; (4) Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar; (5) Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj; (6) Mr. Muhammad Nauman; (7) Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury; (8) Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad Shahban; (9) Sardar Sant Singh; (10) Sir F. E. James; and (11) Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra.

#### THE INDIAN FINANCE BILL—contd.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The House will now proceed with the discussion of the Finance Bill.

**Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha** (North-west Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, this is the only occasion where we can raise our protest in respect of certain matters on which we cannot otherwise express our views.

When I rise to speak, I do so with a little hesitation because when I plead the cause of my community in this House I shall be called a communalist—a most hated word with some of our friends—although they are practically the worst type of communalists themselves. But I leave it to be judged by the Honourable Members when I lay before the House the facts that I will shortly narrate about the Muslim representation in services, and in the direction of the country's policy. The question of services and the share of the Muslim community therein is an old subject and I think will never end for some more years to come. It was in the year 1935 that the Government recognised the existence of the Muslim community in this country, and their 25 per cent. share in the services; and a resolution was passed by the Government to that effect. I think that the subject of this resolution has been and will be the most talked of in this House. Besides its reference in the speeches of the Honourable Members every year, thousands of questions have been asked in the Assembly on the basis of this resolution and on the practical working of it by the Government. I regret to say that the Government have totally failed in carrying it out in right earnest. I do not for a moment think that the Government was ever anxious to do so; for if they liked it could have been very easily done.

The Railway department is the biggest department of the Government of India and in which the number of persons employed runs into lakhs. The recent report published by the Railway Board shows that out of 8,89,000 people employed by them, the number of Muslim employees is 2,09,000 only. To complete their quota about 18,000 more would have to be employed. The same report reveals that the percentage of the Muslim subordinates on scales rising to Rs. 200 is only 8.21 per cent, while Muslim gazetted officers are 9.86 per cent only. This shows the speed of the working of the Government resolution in twelve years, since the resolution was passed. In reply to protests and

questions of the Muslim representatives in this House it has always been urged by the Government that the resolution only covers new appointments in all departments and not grade to grade promotions and selection posts. Even if it be so, what about those departments that have been established after the passing of the Resolution, nay, even after the break of war, where hundreds of new appointments have been made in all grades of service. Sir, to scrutinize all these departments will be a very vast and tiring subject for the House and the limitation of time will not even allow me to do so. I will therefore confine myself to saying something about the two most recently set up departments, that is, that of our Honourable friend the Food Member whom I do not find in his seat and that of our Honourable friend the Member for Planning and Development, who also I think is not in the House. While speaking only with regard to the Muslim position in the services or otherwise, I would leave it to the good sense of the House to decide how ruthlessly the rights of the Muslim community have been massacred in these departments. Sir, I will take up the department of Post-War Planning and Development first. Sir, I have no illusions regarding the importance which Government attaches to the speeches of the Honourable Members of this House, nay, even to the Resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly. In the last November Session of this Assembly we passed a Resolution recommending that a committee of the House consisting of not more than 15 members be appointed for the purpose of considering the several plans for post-war economic development of India, Agricultural and Industrial, with instructions to report to the House. The Resolution was passed without a division and yet it has met the fate of all other similar Resolutions which are not palatable to the Government. I notice from a reply given by the Secretary, Industries and Civil Supplies Department in the Council of State that the Government of India had decided not to take any action on this most important Resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly. This was really to be expected since the Honourable Member in charge of Planning and Development Department did not show this House even the courtesy of participating in the debate on the Resolution and explaining to the House and to the public outside the purpose and policy of his department. During my 15 years experience of the Legislative Assembly I can recall no other case in which the Member in charge of a department showed such complete indifference to the feelings and wishes of the elected Members of this House and yet we know that whenever it suits Government, they get a Resolution passed by the Assembly and then it becomes sacrosanct for all time to come. Sir, if we persist in raising this issue, it is not because we have any undue hopes of Government taking notice of it but because this is the only means left to us to record our protest against the policy and the plans of the Government of India regarding post-war development and the complete negligence of Muslim interests. Sir, you will recall that in my speech on the Resolution regarding the 15 year plan I mentioned that true to the Tata tradition to which he belonged, the Honourable Member for Planning and Development had taken good care to see that Mussalmans were conspicuous by their absence from all positions of responsibility in the new department. At that time there was only one Muslim Officer in that department and as far as I know since then only one more Muslim had been appointed to a comparatively subordinate post, although a considerable number of new posts had been created and filled. The important and highly paid post of Industrial Adviser fell vacant by accident and I learn has been filled by a non-Muslim I.C.S. officer, although there is no shortage of qualified Muslim I.C.S. officers, not to speak of technical men all over India. There is no indication to show that in the future Mussalmans will receive any better treatment in so far as appointments to important posts in this department are concerned. My prognostications regarding the colour and composition of the industrial panels set up by the Planning Department seem also to have come true. I said at that time that there will be the Birla Panel, the Walchand Hirachand Panel, the Purshotamdas Thakurdas Panel, the Kasturbai Lalbai Panel and of course the Tata Panel and so on and so forth. I must however say that I underrated the ingenuity of my friends. If there is any industry which the Mussalmans of

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India can call their own, it is the hide and leather industry. A large number of our people have been engaged in this industry for centuries and before the war it was the Mussalmans who had the virtual monopoly of the export trade and yet we learn that even for the panel for the leather and hides industry, the Planning Department has succeeded in finding non-Muslims for the Chairmanship of the panel as well as for the bulk of its membership. I have made inquiries from my numerous friends in different industries, particularly in the hide and leather trade and there are many obviously qualified men of my community who could have been, but have not been invited to serve on these panels. I did not wish to rely in this debate on hearsay information and I tried by means of a short notice question to elicit accurate information regarding the composition of the various panels set up so far. I regret to inform the House that this information has been denied to me. The Honourable Member is obviously conscious of the weakness of his position and feels shy to admit in public the manner in which he has permitted the interests of the Muslim community to be sacrificed in the setting up of the industrial panels. I can understand the reluctance of the Honourable Member and of his officials to exclude Mussalmans from salaried appointments but it is a matter of astonishment to me that they should also decline advice from qualified Muslims free of charge. Sir, so far I have drawn your pointed attention to the gross injustice to the Mussalmans in the filling of responsible posts and in the composition of the industrial panels. But this does not mean that we are hankering after petty favours. What we are concerned about, first and last, is the policy of the men who in an official or in an advisory capacity are going to formulate the post war policy and programme of the Government of India. Given the present complexion of the Planning Department and of its industrial panels, can any fair minded man blame the Muslim community if they feel that the sole object of the establishment of this organisation is to preserve and extend the monopoly that capitalists and financiers have been able to secure during the war. While Mussalmans by the hundreds of thousands have flocked to the army and laid down their lives in defence of the country and the Allied cause, our other brethren have been busily engaged, in the less risky and more profitable work of Government contracts.

Sir, I do not grudge the other communities their anxiety to improve their economic position. This is indeed a very laudable object. The masses of India are so poor that anything that is done to better their lot is to be welcomed. What I wish to do is to warn my friends against their short sighted policy of feathering their own nests and leaving the Mussalmans out in the cold. Let me quote to you from two speeches delivered by distinguished representatives in this House. Speaking on the Resolution regarding the 15 year plan on the 17 November 1944, Shrimati Radha Bai Subbarayan said:

"Therefore it is essential that any committee which undertakes the onerous task of planning should be fully representative of all interests in this country and inspire confidence among all sections of the people, particularly among those who are in an oppressed and backward condition."

Sir, my Honourable friend Mr. Joshi was no less emphatic on this point when he said that the real and full objective of a plan should be to secure all-sided development of the citizens of this country and secure for them equal status and equal opportunities, with all other sections of the population. These are wise words and it is high time that the Honourable Member for Planning and Development and his collaborators took them to heart. He must realise that the body politic of India, can never be healthy so long as one of its limbs is deliberately starved and paralysed and that unless the minority communities and the Muslims in particular are given their due share in the economic and industrial development of the country, they will become a source of positive danger to all schemes worked out in the sole interest of the majority community. If any justification were needed for the Muslim insistence on Pakistan it is to be found in this exclusive and short sighted policy of the

Planning and Development and similarly managed other Departments of the Central Government. If the industrial development of India is planned with the object of reserving all the benefits for non-Muslims and if the new factories to be set up are in effect going to forge chains for the enslavement of the Muslim masses, then the 100 million Muslims of India will have no option but to dynamite these factories and nip this danger in the bud. I sincerely hoped that this state of affairs would not come to pass, but until those in power give a definite indication of a change of policy and change of heart, we have no alternative but to refuse the grant for the Planning and Development Department.

Now, Sir, I would draw your kind attention to the position of Muslim representation in regard to the Food Department. It is a pity that I do not find the Honourable the Food Member in his seat. Sir, although the Honourable Member for Planning and Development felt shy to supply me in answer to a short notice question with a statement showing Muslim representation on the various panels for Post-War planning, the Honourable the Food Member, I must admire, was bold and straightforward to give such statements regarding his Department and in some cases to say with pride that there was not a single Muslim there. I must also admire frank expression of his feelings towards Muslims as, not less than four or five times in a period of five minutes, while replying to questions on the 8th March, he said that he was not prepared to consider the recruitment of Muslim officers on communal basis, according to the much talked of Resolution of the Government. I would refer the House to the answer given by the Honourable the Food Member in reply to my own questions and that of my Honourable friend Mr. Abdullah on the 8th March. Answering Question No. 832, the Honourable the Food Member was pleased to state that out of 29 gazetted posts in the office of the Regional Food Commissioner and Sugar Controller of India, only two posts were held by Muslims and these posts are only of the Assistant Regional Food Commissioners, while in the Sugar Controller Department, none is a Muslim. When asked if the Honourable Member proposes to consider the appointment of suitable Muslims, he was pleased to say: "I cannot undertake to recruit to these posts on a communal basis". Sir, again in answer to my question no. 835, the same day, the Honourable the Food Member was pleased to tell us that out of 32 posts of Superintendents, Assistants and clerks in the office of the Famine Enquiry Commission, none was held by a Muslim, and when asked in a supplementary question by Mr. Abdul Ghani whether he drew the attention of the Commission to observe the communal ratio, again his reply was "No, I do not propose to do so". Then, again in reply to my question no. 836, the Honourable the Food Member said that in his Department, out of 29 posts, of Secretary, two Joint Secretaries, four Deputy Secretaries and two officers on special duty, 12 Advisers and special officers, four Under Secretaries and four Assistant Secretaries, only a post of special adviser and of an under-Secretary were held by Muslims. When replying to my question no. 837 about the constitution of the Selection Committee set up for making appointments of and promotions to certain classes of gazetted posts in Division II and III of his Department, the Honourable the Food Member said that none of the permanent members of the Selection Committee at present is a Muslim. He further said that "it is not proposed to constitute the committee on a communal basis". Again in answer to my question no. 838, the Honourable Member was very frank to say that out of the nine officers in charge of the administration in various branches of the Department "it so happens that none of these is a Muslim". Sir, the figures given by the Honourable Member himself regarding Muslim representation in his department is a clear proof of the antipathy of the Department towards Muslim interests and total absence of any Muslim officer either from the Selection Committee or from the group of officers in charge of the administrative branches is still more evident and clear proof of that.

Sir, I would take some more time of the House to explain the position of Muslims in sections of the Food Department other than those about which the Honourable Member himself has given us information. Sir, the offices of the Food Department are divided into three main Divisions: Division I is probably the main Secretariat of the Department, which deals with the general and

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administrative policy of the Government. Out of 15 officers in this Division, only one is a Muslim holding the post of an Under Secretary. Besides that, there is not a single Muslim holding the post of an Office Superintendent, or even an Assistant in charge. In the II Division which probably deals with food grains and rationing, out of 30 gazetted officers only three posts, that of a Food Executive officer, a Director and an Assistant Director of Purchase of Food Grains are held by Muslims and out of seven office Superintendents, probably only one is a Muslim. In the III Division, which is the most important section of the Food Department as it deals with purchase and contracts side, out of 52 gazetted posts down to the rank of an Assistant Director of Purchase only two posts of Joint Directors; three posts of Deputy Directors, three posts of Assistant Directors and one post of a Technical Adviser are held by Muslims. On the financial and the accounts Branch side, out of ten officers only one is a Muslim holding the post of an Assistant Financial Adviser. Out of seven Liaison Officers, none is a Muslim, while in the rationing section of the Food Department out of 18 officers only one post of Controller of Rationing (Distribution) is held by a Muslim.

Sir, in a Department where the Muslim representation in higher services is such as I have just mentioned it can be very easily judged what would be the position of Muslims in the matter of grant of contracts which are worth hundreds of crores every year. It is unfortunate that in reply to a question put in the Assembly the other day, the Honourable the Food Member did not supply us the number of Muslim contractors out of the registered 500 contractors and the amount of contracts given to them, otherwise the position of Muslims in getting contracts would have been very clear. But I leave it to the judgment of the Honourable Member to decide in the light of the statements that I have just given regarding the Muslims share in the services in the Food Department, if we are justified in raising our voice of protest. Sir, the record of the Food Department in the matter of anti-Muslim activities is not matter of pride for anybody, least of all for an educated person like the present Food Member. The few Muslim officers and clerks in this Department are being served with charge sheets for, what it would be a prostitution of language to describe as, offences. Non-Muslim officers who are known to be corrupt have not only not suffered but promoted and some of the officers do not feel the need to take any precautions to conceal their interest in particular firms, and inspecting officers are forced to destroy their adverse inspection reports, against their favoured firms. While all this is happening in broad day light, the Muslim staff who are in a helpless minority are harassed and persecuted for no fault other than that of performing their duties honestly and conscientiously. All these facts are known to us, but unfortunately our voice lacks thunder and our only hope is that it is still not too late for the higher authorities to realise the short-sightedness, of their policy and the injury it is doing to Hindu-Muslim relations.

**Mr. M. Ghiasuddin** (Punjab: Landholders): Sir, I should like first of all to touch on a few subjects that concern the Honourable Member for Commonwealth Relations. I shall not say much about what is happening in South Africa because the attention of the whole House has been drawn to South Africa, and naturally we all resent the indignities that are showered on our nationals in that country. Furthermore, it is a matter of great shame that some of our Indian officers who travel to and from England on official duties were treated in a most shabby manner. After all South Africa and ourselves are supposed to be on the same side in this war, and the least that we expect is that at any rate our countrymen in uniform should have been spared those indignities. I will not say much but we have got one or two demands from our Government in that respect. Firstly, I would say that if there are any South African troops in this country they should be sent back. I yield to none in promoting the war effort and wishing our success in this war; but I do think that we can carry on this war without the help of the South African troops. Secondly, I understand that there are still a few South African officers in the Indian Army; I request the

War Secretary that these officers should be relieved of their command immediately. This is the least that we can expect from this Government.

Sir, then I come to East Africa. As regards South Africa it is sometimes said that it is a self-governing dominion; but no such plea can be put forward in the case of East Africa. In East Africa the best portions of the country—the highlands—are reserved for Europeans; and, mind you, they may be Europeans of any type. They may be German nationals or Italians, and so on. And yet it is a matter of great disgrace that Indians are excluded from those parts. If we look at the geographical position of East Africa we find that that country is next to Abyssinia, and if Italians had been holding Abyssinia the position of East Africa and the Kenya colony would have been very precarious. The whole world knows what part the Indian soldiers played in liberating Abyssinia. The services that the Indian soldiers were able to render were recognised in most generous terms by His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie, who said that the liberation of his country was to a very great extent due to the Indian soldiers. And so indirectly we can say that Indian soldiers defended East Africa; and it is therefore a great shame that Indian nationals should be excluded from the best parts of a country which the Indian soldiers have saved from being over run.

Then, Sir, I come to some of the Indian nationals in Great Britain. Some Honourable Members are aware that last year I had occasion to visit England, and while there I was requested by the Ministry of Information and others to address some of the Indian workers who are working in the factories in the United Kingdom. I had a chance of meeting and addressing them, and it appeared that these people are doing very useful work for the country of their adoption. But there is a great fear in their mind that as soon as the war ends and there is retrenchment they will be the first to be kicked out. I would therefore strongly urge on Government to take some action in this matter and I think our High Commissioner should be instructed to look after the interests of these people because they have helped England in her hour of distress. And really I was amazed to find how these people are doing some of the most important war jobs there. For instance, the enemy radio says if these people have a chance to indulge in sabotage they will do so and that sort of things. In some factories they are doing the most delicate type of work, and if they were so inclined they could blow the whole thing sky-high. But these people are doing very good work and they are trusted, and I hope their interests will be looked after at the end of the war and they will be treated as citizens of England where most of them are permanent residents.

Sir, I will touch briefly on the post-war employment of our present soldiers and officers. Naturally there is great fear among them as regards the future. We all know that these young people who have joined the army today cannot be retained because after all, at the end of the war, the army has to be retrenched, and so most of these people will lose their employment. In this respect I will suggest one or two things. When retrenchment comes, before any English officer is employed, the last Indian officer must be given a permanent commission. Because after all India is a country for the Indians and as many of our young people, who have come forward today, as possible should be given employment. And, further, there are going to be a good many post-war expansions, and I would request the Post-war Planning and Development Member (Sir Ardeshir Dalal) who, I understand, has great influence with the financial magnates and heads of firms, etc., to make some effort to find employment for them. During these days good many business firms are making money out of the war contracts and I suggest that it should be made as one of the conditions at the time of giving a contract that employment would be given to ex-servicemen and ex-service officers. I think this is the least that a grateful country can do for those young men who came to help and defend her in her hour of need.

I may say that I have been one of those people who have conscientiously supported the war effort of this country. I have done so, and there are many



[Mr. M. Ghiasuddin.]

millions of people in this country who have done so, because we have utter hatred for the abnoxious principles for which Nazism stands and we have always held that these obnoxious doctrines of Nazism should be fought under whatever flag it can be done. But we yield place to none in the love of our country. We are as much keen for the freedom of our country as anybody else, but we feel that the freedom of the world comes first, and surely there would have been no freedom in this country or in the world if the Axis powers, God forbid, win this war. There are other peoples who are supporting us in this belief and we draw great moral satisfaction that we are fighting on the same side as the democratic countries of China and Russia and also that we are fighting on the same side as the Muslim States of Middle East—Turkey, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, and so on. As far as Turkey is concerned, it has given a great moral filip to the United Nations as well as to the Muslims of the whole world to have Turkey fighting on the same side. It is argued in certain quarters that Turkey entered the war when she was sure that the Allies were going to win the war. That is not the belief amongst the responsible people. The other day Mr. Churchill while speaking in the House of Commons, said that surely the sympathies of Turkey were on the side of the United Nations, but it was only after the declaration of war that it was found that Turkey had not enough arms and so the arms were supplied to her under the Lease/Lend system for a very long time and she was able to render a great deal of help to the cause of the United Nations. When German pressure was being brought to bear on the Turks to give them way when our armies were in Syria and we were hard pressed they resisted it and thus Syria was saved from falling in the hands of Axis powers.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): It is not relevant. What has this Assembly got to do with all that?

**Mr. M. Ghiasuddin**: Sir, I give up this point and bow before your ruling.

Coming nearer home I would say that great publicmen even in other Parties, like the Congress Party, have also believed in supporting the war effort unconditionally. For instance, there have been men like Dr. Satya Pal and Dr. Mahmood. Dr. Mahmood in his letter to the Viceroy, which he wrote some time ago, said that he did believe in unconditionally supporting the war effort and there was no difference between him and other people who have been supporting the war, excepting the fact that it took him two years to speak out what he believed in.

Then, Sir, a great deal of criticism has been levelled in press against us who went to the United States to propagate the war effort of this country. First of all, I would say that giving publicity to the war effort is war effort in itself. It is a recognized fact that each country gives publicity to its own war effort and thus hardens its Allies. While in England we came across people from the United States, from Canada, from New Zealand, from Australia and from other countries on the side of Allies, who had travelled all the way from their countries to Great Britain to give publicity to the war effort of their own countries. Similarly, while we were in the United States, we came across Englishmen and people from other allied countries who had also gone to the United States to give publicity to the war effort made by their respective countries. But, Sir, it has been said that we went to malign our country, that we did not go there to talk about the war effort but to tell the American public that India is unfit for Independence that there are quarrels between Hindus and Muslims and we will be at one another's throat if a chance is given to us, and so on. I repudiate these allegations.

**Mr. Badri Dutt Pande** (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Non-Muhamadan Rural): American papers said like that.

**Mr. M. Ghiasuddin**: I have got cuttings from some of the American papers which, with your permission, Sir, I would like to read to this House. Press representatives took down proceedings of the meetings, at which we spoke and



the Honourable Members will judge from these cuttings that we did not say any of these things which have been attributed to us. If anything, we always

**Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan** (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): Did you not say that the two major parties in India, which represent the majority of Indians, were opposed to the war effort?

**Mr. M. Ghiasuddin**: Will the Honourable Member show me any paper which has produced this remark as having been made by us?

**Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan**: I read it before this House and the Leader of the House accepted it.

**Mr. M. Ghiasuddin**: I definitely repudiate it. I never said that the Congress and the Muslim League were quarrelling between . . . . .

**Mr. Badri Dutt Pande**: What did you say?

(Interruption by Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan.)

**Mr. M. Ghiasuddin**: I am not giving way. Sir, I wanted to prove to the American public that millions of our countrymen and country-women were helping the war effort and therefore why should I have said all that. It would have weakened my case. I never said that, and I repudiate any suggestion that has been made that we went there to tell the American public that Hindus and Muslims were quarrelling and that we were not fit for self-Government and all that. I do not know wherefrom these people got these ideas.

Sir, I have a few cuttings from the American papers before me, and they given more or less the correct version of what we said there. Naturally, of course, all those Honourable Members of the House who attended these press conferences in various parts would know that it is something worse than answering supplementary questions on the floor of the House, especially in America where they are bombarded from all sides. The Party papers sometimes put the news in their own colour. I would just read a few cuttings.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Not long extracts.

**Mr. M. Ghiasuddin**: I am not going to read all that.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member could read brief extracts.

**Mr. M. Ghiasuddin**: Yes, Sir, I shall read brief extracts. This one is from *New York*. The headlines are:—

"INDIA'S HELP TO ALLIED CAUSE.

LION'S SHARE IN ROUT OF AXIS IN AFRICA.

'We have travelled many thousands of miles to give the great American public the story of blood, sweat and toil that India is giving to the common cause.'

This was told to a press conference in a joint statement today by Mr. M. Ghiasuddin (M.L.A., Central, India), and Mr. R. R. Bhole, Indian delegates to the International Labour Conference, who arrived here on Monday. The statement continued: 'Here are some bare facts of our proud record: On the Burma Front more Indian units are fighting than the combined forces of all the other Allies. We have an army of two million and a navy twelve times the peace time strength. The army is the largest ever assembled on India's soil for any cause.

'India's industry is as much geared to the war effort as yours here. For the first time it may be revealed that over five million men and women in India are now engaged in factories devoted to war production. The Aerodromes which have been built in India since Pearl Harbour, if laid end to end, would make a broad highway from New York to Chicago. Millions in our fighting forces, civil defence and war production, are no less determined than the Americans, not to cease and not to draw back from any effort or withhold any sacrifice till these eastern barbarians surrender.

'India claims the lion's share of glory for tearing Mussolini's East African Empire to pieces, for the reconquest of Abyssinia, and for forestalling German schemes in Syria, Iran and Iraq.

'It was an Indian Division that accepted the surrender of the Duke of Aosta, and thus resurrected the first victim of Fascist aggression. Rightly, indeed, might Field Marshall Wavell say that but for India's help Suez and the Middle East could not have been held, or the Axis kicked out of Africa. Even more eloquent perhaps, is the enemy's opinion. You may be interested to know that Rommel's Afrika Korps had standing instructions to stand by whenever there was any sign of the Fourth Indian Division moving. Today our troops are fighting side by side with your boys and their British comrades.'

[Mr. M. Ghasuddin.]

Replying to a reporter's question. Mr. Ghasuddin said: 'Rumours that there is any sympathy whatsoever for Japan in India are false. We have seen the cruel treatment of our neighbouring Chinese at Japanese hands. We are resolved as a nation to hurl the Japanese not only from India but all the way back to Tokio.'

Then Mr. Bhole said something about the Negro question which I need not read to this House.

**Nawab Siddique Ali Khan** (Central Provinces and Berar: Muhammadan): Do read it. It must be very interesting.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjea** (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): No, no. No more extracts.

**Mr. M. Ghasuddin**: If my Honourable friend wants it I can read it.

**M. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member must not read anything which is not necessary.

**Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan**: I hope it is not a verbatim report of what you said?

**Mr. M. Ghasuddin**: Yes, it is. Do you object to my English?

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I must ask Honourable Members not to go on interrupting.

**Mr. M. Ghasuddin**: Continuing the report says:

"Mr. Ghasuddin, who was invited to America by the West Virginia Federation of women's clubs to address its State convention, said to *Reuter*: 'We have spent the past few months in England, where we saw Indians holding responsible jobs in British war factories and talked with Indian sailors, doing a splendid job transporting food supplies at great hazard to themselves. It was gratifying to see the Indians' growing participation in the war effort and to realise that they were thereby earning the world's respect and consideration of some of their national aspirations. We were also impressed by the co-operation and fellowship between British and American personnel aboard the ship which brought us over, the operation of which was jointly Anglo-American'."

Similarly I could quote from many more cuttings from American papers. I do not know from where they got the idea that it was part of our job to tell the American public that we are not fit for independence.

I won't use the strong word used by the Deputy Leader of the Congress Party for the Honourable the Leader of the House. But all I would say that it is not a fact. I am a very polite man.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi** (Dacca cum Mymensingh: Muhammadan Rural): The Honourable the Leader of the House?

**Mr. M. Ghasuddin**: Yes, he said that. Furthermore I would say that we have borne very patiently all these taunts and lies hurled at us for over eleven months and I am really thankful to you, Sir, for giving me an opportunity to tell the House how false these charges have been. We never said that we were the representatives of this House. I remember at the press conference in London held at the Ministry of Information I said: "I do not represent either the Government of India or any political party". But I do say that I belong to India. I did not say I represented those millions of people who are helping in the war effort. That would be too presumptuous. I say humbly I am one of them. That is the claim we have laid and that is to what I adhere. I do not say that all these two million people joined the army because I asked them. I do not even claim that a considerable minority came forward because I asked them. Sincerely we have believed that it is in the interest of humanity and India to defeat the Axis and so we have worked for that end. For that reason one form of abuse or another has been hurled on us from the Axis radios. Of course the gentlemen who speak from Tokyo or Berlin have told my friend Mr. Bhole, who is soul of honour and integrity, and myself that we were the hostages of the British Government and when India was freed we would be treated as traitors. But I want to tell those miserable and contemptible traitors who have spoken from the radio stations of Berlin and Tokyo on the behests of their German and Japanese masters that their days are numbered.

(Interruption.) I do not know the names of those people. We were told by the Ministry of Information in London "This is what Berlin and Tokyo is saying about you" and we had a good laugh at it.

**Nawab Siddique Ali Khan:** I believe they come from the Punjab.

**Mr. M. Ghiasuddin:** I do not care where they come from.

I would now draw the attention of the Honourable the Leader of the House as to what is going on in America, on the other side. I would say that some of the most obnoxious lies are uttered against our brave soldiers by some of those gentlemen who are Indians and who permanently reside in the United States of America. A regular whispering campaign is being carried on against our soldiers who are represented to the American public as mercenaries and cowards and further more they are painted in the light that when an Indian soldier is on the battle field with the British against the Japanese he is waiting to see whoever pays them more so that they would fight for them. It was really shocking to see such brave people, the flower of our youth, as honourable as anybody sitting in this House being libelled by our countrymen in this way. It is a whispering campaign. You cannot give the lie to them. I really do not know whether I should disclose the name of a certain very well known American gentleman who lent himself to that sort of thing. Because it is common knowledge that in America there are isolationists and since Pearl Harbour the Isolationists went underground in a way but they are trying their level best to bring rupture between the relations of various United Nations and they are spreading false alarms and false reports. I will give you one instance. As Honourable Members are aware, when the Japanese forces came into India, they came as far as Imphal. One of the American papers published headlines "Road to Delhi Open". And then furthermore it gave what Subhas Chandra Bose said, "they have come to India they will capture Imphal, capture Calcutta and march on to Delhi". And the headline was that the road to Delhi was open. Whereas all gentlemen who know anything of the geography of India know that it was a minor penetration, really it was no invasion at all. It was just infiltration and yet this is how the isolationist in America painted the story. I would further say that some of our countrymen unfortunately are going absolutely hand in glove with these isolationists' group in America, who are mostly of German descent and the publicity they get is tremendous and they are able to spread lies. They do not hesitate to include big names and that is because they do not publish them they just whisper such and such a thing is happening in India, this thing is going on and the soldiers are ready to desert. I am sure it will be in the interests of Anglo-American co-operation and the co-operation between our Allies, if that sort of lies are met and answered.

In this House I was very sorry to hear some of the attacks that have been made on Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, who for a very long time was a most respected member of this House. All I can say is that all the reports that Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai is carrying on anti-Indian propaganda are absolutely false. He is as much a patriotic Indian as any Member of this House and I do not know how these things come about excepting that those people, when they find that some sort of reply is given to their lies, they start making all sorts of allegations around. The other day the *Hindustan* press published a big report and said that Sir Srinivasa Sarma admits that the mission was a failure. I do not know whether and how far that report is correct and if Sir Srinivasa Sarma did say these things I am sure he was speaking for himself alone, because the American public were very kind to us and listened with very great attention and we are quite thankful to them. I also take this opportunity to say that all those people who said that Indian soldiers are cowards and mercenaries, I know on the authority of some foreign observers, they had no right to bring those charges like that against these brave people and there can be no more effective reply to their lies than the statement of General Mark Clarke, who commanded these troops in Italy. He said that Indian troops were one of the best under his command and similarly other American impartial officers would say the same.

Now, Sir, I think I have taken too much time, not too much, I had to say

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all these things and I say that we went to America in the spirit of duty, in the interests of the war effort. We did that to the best of our ability. We never indulged in politics but sometimes all those people who pose as very great patriots they put difficulties in our way and we tried to meet them as best as we could. Now I am glad to see that other people are coming to our point of view. For instance, we hear very good news from the Frontier, and I am glad they are falling into line with us. They will do now what we have been doing in the last four years and I welcome them. I have personal respect and regard for Dr. Khan Saheb and I think it will not be too presumptuous on my part to welcome him in our ranks. I hope gentlemen oppose will not blame us for doing the thing which we have been doing, now that they are following our lead after waiting for four years. Furthermore, I would say that I am going to support this Finance Bill because I believe that money voted in this House will be for our soldiers who will fight with young men of other Allied Nations, China, Russia, Turkey and other great countries. May God grant Victory to our Arms. Sir, I support the motion.

**Mr. C. P. Lawson** (Bengal: European): Mr. President, I am rather distressed to see that War Secretary has just left the House, because I wanted to catch him before he went. I have three subjects to deal with. The first is the most important, and I propose to leave it over until after lunch, because the Honourable the Food Member has informed me that he will not be here until after lunch and this portion of my speech greatly concerns him.

Sir, I have two other points, rather shorter ones, which I am anxious to raise, since they concern more closely my constituency. The first of these, Sir, is in connection with A. R. P. arrangements and Civil Defence generally in Calcutta. It was here that I particularly hoped the War Secretary to be present, because the military control that is exercised over lighting in Calcutta is at the moment rather tight, and, if I may say so, rather inflexible. I have had certain negotiations in Calcutta both with the Police and the Military authorities about the situation which I think is exercising all our minds very considerably. I am one of those unfortunates who for most of the days of the week have to return from work in darkness, and on my way home I am almost invariably confronted by lines of military lorries with very bright headlights shining straight into my eyes. And I am not alone in that. We civilians all have a very strict black-out on our motor-cars. We have had up to about a month or two ago just one masked head-light which I may tell the House for their information gives no light at all, because inside the mask there is not only frosted glass, but also a layer of newspaper. Therefore, Sir, we, with this one head-light obscured even when it can get through the mask, have to confront these long lines of military lorries which seem to have no kind of black-out restrictions at all. In a series of negotiations I am glad to say that I was successful in pressing a claim for two masked head-lights instead of one. The difference, Sir, that makes is that you can now just about see the ditch on your left. Hitherto you were able only to see a somewhat problematical white line, white in name rather than in fact. So, Sir, after considerable negotiations we have got these two masked head-lights, but we still have to confront these incredibly strongly lighted military cars which seem to observe no black-out restrictions at all. I understand that there are black-out restrictions for these military people, but they are not the same as our civilian black-out regulations. They do, however, exist, and the only thing I hear about them is that though they exist they are not carried out.

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

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

**Mr. C. P. Lawson:** Sir, is there a quorum in the House?

**Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta):** If you bring it to my notice I have to take note of it; otherwise I would not.

(It was found after a count that there was no quorum.)

There is no quorum; therefore you have to wait.

(The bells were rung and more Members came in.)

There is a quorum now. You can resume your speech.

**Mr. G. P. Lawson:** Sir, before the House rose for lunch, I was speaking about the black-out in Calcutta and I was comparing the black-out regulations as applied to civilian cars and military cars. There are of course the black-out regulations which apply to houses and the streets; but that I will touch on in a minute. As the House rose, I was remarking that the military themselves have certain black-out regulations for their cars, but these black-out regulations do not appear to be generally observed. In the various negotiations that I have had on this subject, I once remarked to a senior police officer in Calcutta that certain differences appeared to exist between the black-out regulations as applied to civilians and black-out regulations as applied to the services, and I asked him in public as a matter of interest, if he could tell me how for obscurity a properly blacked-out civilian vehicle compared with a properly blacked-out services vehicle. His reply was not particularly helpful: he apologised that he could not answer me because, to be absolutely frank, he had never seen a properly blacked-out military vehicle. That illustrates the point that I will come to presently, when I sum up the whole matter.

During the course of my negotiations I have frequently been somewhat sternly admonished to the effect that the war is not yet over and that the Japanese are still in Burma, and I accept that admonition with due humility, but I am forced to remark that I cannot see why the Japanese should be able to discern my little masked headlights any more easily than they can discern the quite unmasked headlights of service vehicles. In fact, it seems to me that if these conditions still apply, the conduct of the services in this respect is inexcusable. If the need for these precautions still exists, obviously the services should be the first people to carry them out and to carry them out rigorously.

Now, Sir, whenever I go down the Calcutta streets and see our street lighting obscured and when I think of the coal shortage, I get quite a pain. We have had at one time and another gas restrictions owing to the coal shortage and all our street lighting in Calcutta is burning this extremely precious gas; and over the gas manholes is placed a little thing like a hat, so as to prevent the light even of that little bit of gas supply coming into the road. In fact, we are burning all this good coal to get our gas to light our streets, and then, as it is lighting up the streets, we put something on it so as not to let the light out. It seems to me to be an uneconomical, if necessary, method; and while I am not criticising the method for the moment, my point is this: that the black-out is a dangerous and wasteful process, which is introduced for specific reasons; and I do not want that wasteful and dangerous process to continue any longer than is absolutely necessary. The purpose of my remarks is therefore to ask the military authorities whether they will now review the whole of the circumstances of the war and see whether it is not possible to relax these black-out regulations and to avoid the danger and the waste that they entail. We are civilians and we presumably are not in a position to sum up the military necessities of the situation. All I am suggesting is that the military necessities of the situation may be considered, particularly now after the magnificent victories that the 14th Army have gained in Burma. If it is possible to let up a bit on these black-out regulations, it will undoubtedly relieve the danger that we all face in coming up against these very strong headlights which the services appear to be unable to control; and it will also make the streets safer in every respect. Our roads in Calcutta are deteriorating, have deteriorated to

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a very large extent; and those of us who are restricted in petrol frequently find it necessary to use more humble methods of conveyance, such as bicycle or a light motor bicycle. I do not know whether any of our Honourable friends on the Treasury Benches have experienced the phenomenon of entering a large pot-hole in the dark on a bicycle without many springs. If they have not, I would like to assure them that the shock to the system is considerable. I hope that the War Secretary who, I notice, is now not in his own seat but in some one else's will attend to this matter and perhaps for his benefit I might repeat once again that all I am asking for is a review of the military situation, particularly after the recent magnificent victories of the 14th Army, and an examination of the black-out regulations which we find irksome and dangerous, and which we would like removed as soon as that is possible in the military sense. We are not asking for anything which will damage the war effort and perhaps the necessity for certain military vehicles to abandon any black-out regulations may be accepted, although I do not think in all cases it can possibly be justified.

Now, Sir, while the War Secretary is paying us one of his rare visits I should like to mention one other point which I mentioned last year regarding the claims that are put in for damage to life and property. These matters are still being unduly delayed and I am getting quite a number of applications for expedition in dealing with these cases. While I am on the point I would like just to give the War Secretary one particular instance. On the 1st June 1943 a man by name Mr. Robson was knocked down by a military vehicle in Bombay and he finally died in hospital. He had a small tailoring business valued at about Rs. 60,000 and the medical expenses incurred were about Rs. 4,000. On the 4th August, compensation from the military authorities was paid to his widow and this compensation amounted to Rs. 500. I protested against the inadequacy of this compensation. A further claim was made on the 14th April 1944 and correspondence has ensued. The accident occurred in June 1943. The compensation of Rs. 500 was paid in August 1943 and since then we have protested and the last letter that I have received is dated the 24th February of this year. That is nearly one year and 9 months after the accident. It reads as follows:

"With reference to the correspondence ending with your letter of the 24th January I am directed to say that the matter is being investigated and every effort is being made to expedite the case."

I only mention that as an instance. I have had quite a number of cases of delay in dealing with these claims.

These are the only points that I had to raise, which concern the War Secretary and the real purpose of my getting up to speak was to raise a matter which I am surprised to find has not hitherto been raised by this House in debate. As regards the food position I have heard fears expressed regarding adulteration and regarding black marketing and a number of other pressing complaints but I have not so far heard any fears expressed regarding the future and I myself am not happy about the race which is taking place between the population of this country on the one hand and the food supply of this country on the other. We have had the Grow More Food campaign which has produced a certain amount of results but I think, more than the campaign, the high prices produced the extra supply which we so greatly needed and which have relieved the situation for the present. But the point that I wish to make is that this enormous increase in the prices of grains, which has resulted undoubtedly in a very large increase in cultivation, is a factor which is now fully exploited. We cannot exploit it again. That rapid increase that we have seen in the last two years is unlikely to be repeated. I suppose the population is increasing at the rate of something like 1 per cent. a year. In other words we have to find food for an extra 4 millions of people in this country every year. The population increase was winning the race with food production before the war and it is difficult now, with all the complications that have occurred, to know just how

that race is progressing. We were informed last Session, I think by the Honourable the Secretary, Education, Health and Lands, that the country was probably now producing something like a total of 60 million tons of all grains and if that is the case it means that roughly there is a pound of all grains per day per head of the population or was when he made that statement. Well, that is evidently enough. It is enough to feed the population as it stands but as I will indicate afterwards there are a number of factors which will undoubtedly influence that figure and which will lessen the margin of safety, if there is one. The whole point is that we have got to evolve a system whereby the food supply of this country increase normally by one per cent. per year. We may have a little safety margin now but there must be a permanent solution of this problem of the race between population and food supply. Unless there is a permanent solution, the palliative of high prices which cannot be applied again and we will soon land ourselves in another position such as we have found ourselves in the last two years and that, Sir, is why I am not happy about the situation. We may for the present have found a way out of our difficulties. But have we found a permanent way out of our difficulties? I think the answer to that is 'No'.

Now, Sir, I have often heard it said in this House that we should increase the acreage under crops. If we assume that there are now in India about 300 million acres under crops, in order to meet the increase in population of one per cent., we would need to increase that acreage under cultivation by something like 3 million acres a year. That, of course, is quite impossible. It could not be done. Moreover, Sir, if we did adopt that policy of increasing the acreage every year by one per cent. we would shortly reach the position of saturation. In thirty years, every acre of cultivable land would have been exhausted even if it is in fact cultivable which is extremely doubtful. Communications, roads and water supply have to be there, and they are not there. For that reason, the increase in acreage that is so much demanded is, to my mind, a completely wrong road. Our road should be an increase in yield and for an increase in yield, there is the widest scope. We could go on and before we reach the rice crop yields of China and Japan, we could double or treble our food supply. We do not know what food resources there are in the hands of various Governments. To a large extent, I take it that those figures cannot safely be made known because of market movements. But I would like to hear from my Honourable friends to my left, sometime or other, during this Finance Bill debate how they view the future. They know what reserves they hold and although the rest of their information is sketchy and completely inadequate, it would at least be something for us to go on. I personally am not happy about the situation. I think that the snake of famine has been scotched but not killed and while we may see this year through in safety, I am by no means certain of the year after that or the year after that, bearing in mind that every year, we will probably have to supply food for four million more people. So, Sir, I would like that statement from the Government Benches and I would also like to know what their information is regarding food that is being consumed in this country. We know that there has been a change over in diet. We know, for instance, that in many parts of U. P., the cultivators are now eating wheat because they can afford to do so and I am very glad they are eating wheat because it is infinitely better food, but that undoubtedly will have thrown the situation out of balance. The estimates that may be held of our wheat reserves may not now be correct. The country may equally be holding far larger reserves than usual of pulses and millets and these grains do not keep. Are we quite certain that the excesses in gram, for instance, that were found in the Punjab during the past six or seven months, are we sure that these surpluses are not being repeated in pulses and millets in private hands in other provinces. It seems to me that if we do not know what the dietary is of the people generally we might easily find that enormous reserves upon which we are counting are reserves which will not in fact keep. They may be the grains which perish in storage. I am quite certain that if any one goes short in these circumstances it will be the deficit provinces. That is why the Presidencies of Bengal and Bombay are extremely

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seriously affected and that is perhaps at the back of my mind when I raise this point.

Now, Sir, I will shortly enumerate the factors which to me render this food supply position dangerous. In the first place, the prices have not been stabilised. Food will always drift towards high priced areas. No matter what controls you impose, you will not be able to stop it. There are certainly 45 thousand miles of railways in this country and upon them you can control the transport of grain. But there are 300,000 miles of roads upon which that grain can and will be moved. That again, Sir, must obviously upset the balance of your supply. Then, there is at present owing to the increase in war industries, very considerable inter-provincial immigration. We have rationing in certain cities, but we have no rationing in the *mufassil*. We do not know really how populations are moving and therefore we do not know the consumption which occurs locally. The factor of grain deterioration, I have already mentioned. If it is large, if there are large surpluses of coarse grains, about which we know nothing, they may equally upset that situation which at the moment we regard as safe. Then, there is undoubtedly the safety margin that all the Provinces are providing themselves with. There is no Province, even the most surplus Province, that will allow their own grains to go below the level of complete safety. There again the deficit-Provinces may suffer.

Now, Sir, although we have heard a good deal about State control and State interests in industries, we have heard very little about State control or State interest in agriculture. It seems to me that it is here that a solution must be found.

**Mr. Sri Prakasa** (Allahabad and Jhansi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): But the Honourable the Food Member is sleeping.

**Mr. C. P. Lawson:** I am glad that my Honourable friend Mr. Sri Prakasa has awakened the Food Member. I am sorry to have sent him to sleep.

**The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava** (Food Member): I was never asleep.

**Mr. C. P. Lawson:** Undoubtedly this question of State interest in agriculture will be against the views of many Provinces, but I do most sincerely hope that Provinces will realise the necessity for joint action regarding this. On the matter of food supply, in the face of increase in population, as I have already said, I am by no means happy that we are not going just for palliatives and not for permanent cures. I would be interested to hear if in fact the Government have some rather further forward schemes for the solution of this problem. We have had a good deal of plans thrown at us at one time or another. What is their plan for this? There is the plan of grow more food which may have met the situation for the present. What is the further forward plan? Are we certain that there will be a progressive increase in the food supplies of this country, which quite apart from the present situation will cover the increase of four million people per year. I have detained the House long enough with these matters. But I feel them keenly and that is why I have raised them. I would again ask that some time during the course of this debate our friends on my left will give us some indication of their plans.

3 P.M.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** Sir, my Honourable friend the Finance Member has presented to this House his last budget. The debate on his budget must therefore be a review of his work in the last six years during which he has piloted the finances of this country. Much may I have differed from many of his proposals of taxation and in respect of many important issues which he has raised, I cannot help feeling that my Honourable friend Sir Jeremy Raisman has been more sinned against than sinning. Within the limits of the present constitution as it stands and with a war of most stupendous dimensions from which India had no escape—that is a fact—Sir Jeremy has always stood up for the interests of this country. I will give an instance of that. When the history of the war finances of India will be written my Honourable friend the Finance Member will get full credit for the way in which he has resisted year after year ever



pressure for the revision of the Financial Settlement of 1940 which, thanks to him, continues to remain the sheet-anchor for the purpose of allocation of war expenditure between India and His Majesty's Government. Sir, we do not know what passed at the Bretton Woods Conference at which he led the Indian delegation, but we have the testimony of the non-official members of the Indian delegation as to the Finance Member's integrity, fair-mindedness and cooperative spirit at that Conference. Moving a Resolution at the annual meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Mr. A. D. Shroff, one of India's non-official delegates at the Conference paid a handsome tribute to Sir Jeremy Raisman, and every one of the Indian delegation has spoken very highly of him, as regards the manner in which he discharged his duties and kept the interests of India in mind. I very much wish that he should continue to take interest in the affairs of India and particularly tell his countrymen in England about the war effort of this country, how India has contributed to that war effort, not merely in terms of recruitment to the army, navy and air force, but also in terms of human suffering which, even if it may not be comparable to the sufferings of the civilian population in England during the days of the Nazi fury, certainly proves that in this war none can escape hardship and sacrifice.

Sir, I wish to make a few general observations. The coming year is full of hope because victory is in sight. It was in this spirit of hopefulness that England and America took steps to make a beginning in the transition from war economy to peace economy. Unfortunately for my Honourable friend the Finance Member, he has so far been almost exclusively engaged in war finance, but the time has come when even in India the problems of transition from war to peace economy have to be faced and solved. It is a singularly difficult task, I realise, to prepare India's war-ravaged economy to meet the difficult and perilous period of reconstruction and transition from war to peace. But I hope and trust that his successor will seriously deal with this issue in a spirit of helpfulness to India and its economy.

Sir, in saying this I am not unaware of a few crumbs which fell from the table on which my Honourable friend was carving India's resources for distribution for war ends, and for civilian needs. What are these crumbs? A pitiful 20 p. c. initial depreciation allowance for new machinery, and an equally pitiful 10 p. c. allowance on buildings erected by industry from now onwards. Sir, crumbs do not make a loaf of bread. As I mentioned, India should prepare for the peace that is coming. The problems that are now constantly coming for solution require a radical change in the policy of Government. War-time restrictions on export and import trade are now out-dated. The sphere where economic warfare was necessary has almost vanished. No more there is any fear that our exports to an exportable country would ultimately be diverted to enemy countries. The enemy is at bay—encircled and isolated. Hence the whole basis of issuing export licences should be radically changed. The export licences have been much abused and the granting of export licences have been very arbitrary. I am not referring to the Honourable Member who is sitting before me; I am talking of the period when he was not a Member of that department. The principle hitherto pursued by Government has been to give export licences to established shippers only. But if there is or was a commodity which was never before exported to a particular country where could there be an established shipper? Furthermore, even if there were established shippers did the Government enquire and find out whether they were Indians or non-Indians? It was decided by Government that established shippers alone had a right to carry on export business. This principle, if I remember aright, was introduced by the then Commerce Member, Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar in 1940, who had the advantage when he constituted the Export Advisory Council to constantly advise him on export matters. The Export Advisory Council functioned regularly only till the middle of 1942 and it was not revived till the end of 1944 by my Honourable friend who is sitting in front of me. Hence the Export Advisory Council

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had no opportunity to advise Government in regard to the questions relating to exports, particularly regarding the grant of export licences. The result was confusion, chaos and mismanagement in which all kinds of arbitrary actions were taken by Government. I am glad to know that the Export Advisory Council has been reconstituted by my Honourable friend Sir Azizul Huque. Trade has already passed into non-Indian hands to a greater and greater extent. It is time that the Indian exporter is restored and given place in the nation's export business. I may add that Muslim exporters have suffered still more. Time has come now when these rules should be considerably liberalized, if not altogether abolished. It may not be out of place to state here that there is a large number of cases in which the Custom records show that a Munshi or a Clerk of a firm used to get the custom papers passed in his own name on behalf of his firm for whom he acted as an Agent. Now the export licence is being given to that Munshi or Clerk on the basis of the Custom records where his name appears as Exporter. He sells the licence at a very high premium to whomsoever he likes. Although the firms of this class are able to prove with ample evidence that the Munshis or Clerks were in their service and employed by them and used to get their Customs challans passed on their behalf, no heed is being paid to their claims and prayers and the Munshis or the Clerks are continuing to get the benefit of an Exporter.

As regards the imports, I know that Government have taken some action now to liberalise imports. Sir Akbar Hydari has been sent to England on a mission. But we do not know whether Sir Akbar Hydari would bring back goods that we want in this country or the goods that will come in the way of Indian industry. Similarly, we do not know to what extent Indian industry would be allowed to cater the civil demand in their own country and war demand be met from the United Kingdom and elsewhere. This must be the first step so far as this country is concerned towards re-conversion, for, after all, when we take the commodities which Government today is buying at controlled rates from the industries we come across a very significant state of affairs. Most of the commodities are not merely required for the war. These are the same commodities which people also need. Much of the scarcity in the country and much of the inflation are due to this situation. Re-conversion therefore in this country is very simple. Let Government buy less goods of the kind the civil population requires and let industries be allowed to sell more goods to the people. In proposing this formula I do not propose to starve the war demand. The war demand can be met from the United Kingdom and the United States of America instead of from the Indian industries. This, Mr Deputy President, would give much-needed relief to the Indian masses and would lay the foundation of transition from war to peace.

Imports of course are necessary but imports must be of such goods which would help industries or which industries are not able to manufacture in the country or the supplies are so short because the Indian industries are not producing sufficient quantities. Sir, in this connection, I will read the last paragraph of the Resolution moved in the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce:

"(c) The Federation urges on Government to take public into confidence regarding operations of the Empire Dollar Pool which in the opinion of the Federation should be dissolved henceforth and to credit to Indian account all dollars as and when they become available through trade balances or otherwise with the U. S. A."

Now Sir, the Honourable the Finance Member stated the other day that 20 million dollars have been assigned for this year and 20 million dollars for the next year. I would like to know on what basis has this 20 million dollars arrived at. The other day my Honourable friend the Finance Member stated that this is over and above our current requirements and thus India has been treated more favourably than Egypt which got 45 million dollars in 1945. However, this

is not the complete picture. If India spends dollars for her current requirements, she spends them from her own dollar income. No country is charitable enough to give its dollars to India. India has favourable trade with the United States of America and in fact for the last five years dollars which should be India's own have been put in the Empire dollar pool. Yet India does not know nor does the Government of India tell us how much dollars we have put in the Empire dollar pool. It is high time that my friend the Honourable the Finance Member gave us this information because there is a general feeling that India is being deprived of much of her rightful dollars. Do the twenty million dollars represent the excess at India's credit over current transactions—exports and imports? I am certain, Sir, that her favourable balance in dollar countries is much more than this. Then why should she not get the full benefit of her favourable balance in dollars? Why should she swell this in sterling so as to make it appear that England owes such a big amount for her own purchases from India?

•Mr. Deputy President, the other day the Department of Commerce of the United States of America estimated that the twenty-five per cent of the sterling that accrued in England are the result of transfer of dollars to the Empire dollar pool against which these countries got sterling. On that basis India seems to have contributed at least nine hundred million dollars to the Empire dollar pool. The other estimate which the American bankers have made is that the Empire dollar pool has now in it about two and a half billion dollars. If these estimates are correct—I cannot say that they are correct, neither can I say that they are not correct—India should have been given a far larger share than this paltry twenty million dollars. We want dollars not because we are in love with dollars. But we want them because we know we shall require many things from the United States of America which England may not be able to offer us. Further, even if the United Kingdom is able to offer them, unless we have dollars we can never tell the United Kingdom that, look here, if your prices are not reasonable, we shall go and buy from the United States of America. We require these dollars as a sort of hedge so that the goods which we would like to buy from the United Kingdom would not be quoted at exorbitantly high prices, which I might say they are now doing, and I am sure the fair-minded Finance Member cannot deny this right to India to have a safeguard against being cheated if India is compelled to buy only from one market, namely, the United Kingdom.

Now, Sir, coming to some domestic matters, I cannot understand why the Honourable the Finance Member should have proposed to increase the duty on tobacco. I remember that in 1939 when the duty on tobacco was increased in England the people used to say that in these days of war scare people consume more tobacco, smoke a greater number of cigarettes and the only recreation of these days of war of nerves was taxed by the Chancellor. The war of nerves is no longer there, but a far more exhausting war is on and the Indian people, who have not many recreations to enjoy, retire into a peaceful smoke or a peaceful chewing of tobacco to have rest from fatigue, anxiety and care. I wish the Honourable the Finance Member had spared these poor people.

The people who do not smoke tobacco resort to betel-nuts. Furthermore the betel-nuts are used not merely by way of relaxation but also for a good many religious purposes. If the poor man cannot afford to pay a rupee to the gods, he puts the betel-nut instead as a token of his tribute. The class of people who have suffered because of the excise duty on betel-nuts are not only the poor consumers but the poor cultivators also particularly of my province. Bengal produces a slightly inferior quality of betel-nuts and yet the excise duty does not differentiate in favour of this inferior quality. Furthermore the administration of the excise in betel-nuts has created enormous difficulties and harassment to the merchants. I am informed that although the excise duty is collected at the growing and the despatching centres, merchants who import this commodity in Calcutta are constantly harassed.

[Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi.]

Sir, from this platform from this very House, year after year I have been urging upon Government to grant comfort and facilities to the Haj pilgrims. My Honourable friend is not here, but this may be communicated to him. Sir, I would bring to the notice of the Honourable the Member in charge of Commonwealth Relations Department the huge muddle that was created in this year's arrangements for the Haj. A blunder was committed by the Government of India in the unfortunate appointment of Mr. Butt as Haj Pilgrim Officer. The post should have gone to no one else but a Muslim I. C. S. Many pilgrims from long distances travelled to Karachi and to their utter disappointment had to go back. Imagine their mental affliction. This inefficient handling of the pilgrim traffic by the Pilgrim Officer resulted in the suffering of many an innocent pilgrim who were not enabled to achieve the sacred cause for which he or she might have been waiting for years for this opportunity. Muslim sentiment was shocked by the filming of the Haj pilgrims and the showing of that picture in Calcutta and elsewhere. In this connection I would refer to a letter which the Special Haj Officer, Mr. J. A. Rahim, wrote to me as Chairman of the Port Haj Committee, Calcutta, on the 6th October, 1941, in which Government proposed to produce a film dealing with the Haj Pilgrimage. After consulting the views of my Committee I informed the Government that feeling was very strong against producing the film. My Committee strongly protested against any such filming. That was by letter dated the 16th October, 1941, to which the then Overseas Member replied that the Government had decided not to pursue the matter of filming the Haj Pilgrims any further. Why then did this Pilgrim Officer, who knew this fact in 1941 as an Assistant of the Department, film the Hajees this time and thereby gave rise to this strong feeling among the Muslim public? I trust and hope that it will never again be repeated.

Now, Sir, may I say a few words to my Honourable friend the Commerce Member. There is still much disaffection among the Indian seamen in regard to their wages and other amenities like housing, welfare, etc., I know that my friend has done and is doing what he can possibly do. I know also the limitations under which he works. I also know, apart from his being a Commerce Member, that when he was in England he did his very best to come to the rescue of these Indian seamen. When he was the High Commissioner he took up the work that he is doing. But he also knows, if I may say so, that the British seamen have been provided with best accommodation, best facilities regarding clubs, recreation, etc. I would like to have a full statement from my Honourable friend, the Commerce Member as to what actually he has achieved in this connection and what he actually intends to do, particularly in regard to their wages and welfare. That will help us a good deal and take us a long way to assure the Indian seamen that so far as they are concerned every thing has been done.

Sir, adverse criticisms have been made on my Honourable friend Sir Ardeshir Dalal, the Member in charge of the Planning and Development Department. I do not propose to go into the details of these criticisms but I do feel that much of this criticism is based on misunderstanding and wrong premises. Sir, it was gratifying to hear the other day a significant statement which Sir Ardeshir Dalal made on the Resolution which was moved by my Honourable friend Mr. Manu Subedar on what is called "commercial safeguards". The statement made by Sir Ardeshir was remarkable for its frankness, for its admission of a genuine case and, if I may say so, for a truly nationalistic sentiment. He said that he had actively taken up the matter of commercial safeguards with White Hall and promised to keep the Legislative Assembly well apprised of the situation as it developed. May I ask who else from the Treasury Benches have been so fair-minded and ready to help the national cause?

Sir, if I do not want to raise the issue of South Africa here, it is not because it is in any way less important. The Government of India which today claims

to have a majority of Indian members cannot escape responsibility from the fact that in their own land under their very noses racial discrimination, though not on the same scale as in the Union, is being practised. Requisitioning in a city like Calcutta and Bombay, for instance, has been such that the Indian residents and Indian owners have been deprived of their houses, and residents who were non-Indians have been very often spared. I know of cases in which golf links of an Indian Golf Club have been requisitioned while a nearby golf link where the Europeans play golf has been spared. At the fishing resort of Okhla, in the Province of Delhi certain portions of the river have been reserved exclusively for the Europeans and the Indian public is not allowed to enter them to fish there. I would suggest that an inquiry should be made into these cases of racial discrimination in this country itself.

Sir, by a cut motion moved by you, Mr. Deputy President, on behalf of the Nationalist Party, the cloth famine in Bengal was discussed threadbare. My Honourable friend the Commerce Member had given a complete reply. I agree. He also further stated that on the basis of per capita requirements of that Province he had given them much more than that basis and that he cannot interfere with her internal administration. It is true that he cannot interfere with her internal administration but my point is this: When the Centre takes the responsibility for the supply of certain commodities, it is the duty of the Centre to see that the distribution of that commodity is not mismanaged or done in such a way as people will suffer. They may give some directives, they may call upon the Provincial Governments to report what they have done, how they have distributed their quota. The Government of India should satisfy themselves that the quota for the distribution of cloth to the wholesale merchants or to the retail merchants, whichever is the arrangement made, is given to those who are in the trade.

Now, Sir, I will give you a shocking instance in this respect. The whole of the quota for yarn has been given—the Government of India allotted a quota of yarn for the Province of Bengal and just fancy what has been done there—the whole of that quota of yarn, instead of allotting to various yarn merchants for distribution, has been given to one man, who was not in the trade.

**Sardar Sant Singh** (West Punjab: Sikh): It has happened everywhere.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi**: It has not happened everywhere. Unfortunately it happens in Bengal. Now, Sir, whoever this gentleman is, it is said that the arrangement of the profit was as between him and the minister. I am not anxious to know what is the arrangement between him and the minister, but what I am anxious to know is under what principle, distribution of this yarn was given to a gentleman who never dealt in his life with yarn or never knew what yarn was. I do not see Sir John Sheehy here. Where are your watch dogs in Calcutta? I do not know but it is reported that he has made two crores, more than two crores. He has made donations to the tune of about Rs. 15 to 20 lakhs, including what he has donated through His Excellency the Governor of Bengal. I am told that that man had not even Rs. 500 in his pocket in 1939. My Honourable friend Sir John Sheehy's watchdogs do not go near him.

**Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad**, (United Provinces Southern Division: Non-Muhamadan Rural): Is this income of 2 crores taxable? Will it be considered earned income or unearned income?

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi**: It is for them to decide. My complaint is that, 20,000-poor weavers of my district of Mymensingh have had to suffer because this man would not distribute the yarn to them. From a very respectable merchant of Calcutta, I learn that this yarn transaction alone would give him a profit of one crores of rupees at least. And still my Honourable friend Sir Azizul Huque says that he cannot interfere with the internal administration of an autonomous province. Was it not the duty of his department to see, before the yarn was given for distribution, whether the distributor was a yarn merchant or not, and then why should it be given to one man for the whole province

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of Bengal? Distribution must not be in the hand of one man; and still no action will be taken by the Government of India. For they are unable to interfere with the internal affairs of an autonomous province run by a Muslim Government.

**The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque** (Member for Commerce and Industries and Civil Supplies): I might say whether it is Muslim Government or Hindu Government or Christian Government, so far as my authority is concerned, it is equally applicable to all.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** What I meant was, a Muslim League Ministry is functioning. I must say before I conclude that my Honourable friend Sir Azizul Huque has done his best, but he thinks that under the existing Government of India Act he cannot interfere with the provinces. Under the existing Government of India Act under which he works he feels he cannot.....

**The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque:** I think I was slightly misunderstood. If I may interrupt for a second, what I said was this. If it was possible for me to get enough staff for the purpose of distribution throughout the country, even under the present constitution, I would have taken charge of distribution; but if for this vast country, I have not got that—and I do not think anybody will say it is possible to have that—the only alternative is to utilise the existing constitutional agencies that are available.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** I believe my Honourable friend has misunderstood me.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman** (Finance Member): He says you have misunderstood him.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** My point was this. Government of India give quotas for various purposes. Is it not their duty to find out who are the persons in the provinces who will distribute those quotas? I ask for a reply from the Honourable Member.

**The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque:** I do not like to interrupt, but I will reply to that.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** If he had asked for the names of those to whom their quota.....

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): You have now spoken for 35 minutes.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** There is no time limit.

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): I know there is no time limit, but you yourself said you were concluding.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** My point was this: that the Government of India when distributing the quotas should ascertain from the provinces, as to who are those people who will distribute, and whether they are of the trade to which the article relates. This kind of information they are entitled to ask, and if they would have asked for that information, surely the Bengal Government would not have dared to give this work to one particular person who is not of the trade. All the same, so far as Bengal is concerned, my Honourable friend the Commerce Member has been visiting Calcutta and explaining the situation and thus has given relief. Many people, particularly the Chambers, are very grateful to him for the manner in which he has explained the situation.

Sir, as regards my Honourable friend the Food Member, I entirely agree with what my Honourable friend Mr. Lawson has said. You should take note of what he said if you do not want to have a second famine in Bengal. We thank you very much indeed, so far as Bengal is concerned, for what you have done for her. But nevertheless you are not out of the wood yet. Do not be complacent. Take the advice which Mr. Lawson has given to you, and prepare yourself for the future: otherwise you will regret to have another famine shortly.

**The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava:** We are not complacent.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** I am glad to hear that. As I remarked before, in this war every country has had to undergo difficulties, sacrifices, etc., but I am sure the Indian population would have been spared to some extent at least

if the controls would have been periodically examined and reviewed. The value of this delegate would be lost if Government do not take the task in hand now. The best opportunity to do so is now. The Finance Member is retiring, a new Finance Member is coming in his place. With this change there is also another change. Victory is almost in sight. What better opportunity could any Government have than this, to take advantage of the situation, to revise their controls, to relax their rigidity, so as to give relief to the people?

In conclusion, Sir, may I offer my Honourable friend, Sir Jeremy Raisman, our warmest thanks for what he has done here during his period of six years as Finance Member? People may say what they like. I am sure my friends in the Opposition would not like the praise of my friend, but the praise is due to him. For six years this war has gone on; and it was not an easy task to balance his budget in the manner that he has done. I would ask him not to forget his land of adoption when he goes back to his country. Do not for a moment think that there are no persons in this country who have appreciated your efforts. There are hundreds and hundreds of them—let them say or let them not say. Remember India when you go back to your country: remember the country that you have served from an early age. Do not forget what Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan has said so strikingly:

*"Stateamen of the Commonwealth, I say to them"—(I address here to my European friends in India and elsewhere)—"Does it not strike you as an irony of the first magnitude that India should have two and a half million men in the field, fighting and struggling to preserve the liberty of the nations of the Commonwealth and yet she should be a suppliant for her own freedom? How long do you think she will be prepared to wait? India is on the march; you may help her or you may hinder her; but none shall stop her. India shall be free within the Commonwealth, if you will let her and accord her the position which is her due, but without the commonwealth if you leave her no alternative."*

Sir, I am sure India will be free.

**Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya** (Burdwan Division: Non-Muhamadnan Rural): Sir, from the beginning of this Session I have been sitting silently as a witness of the proceedings of this House and I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity of placing before this House my views in connection with the consideration of the Finance Bill.

Sir, I am really oppressed with a sense of unreality about this House. This Finance Bill is placed before us at every Budget Session; the Honourable the Finance Member does try his level best to do what he could possibly have done under the circumstances; and we have always been trying to defeat his Bill and vote out, knowing full well that our attempt is futile and puerile. We cannot change the present constitution by a comma or a semi-colon or a full stop.

As regards the Finance Bill, I shall say that the Finance Department is the department which is responsible for the weal or woes of India. Consequently, if we have to deal with it with a sense of seriousness and reality, we should try to be more sensible in criticising it. With regard to the present situation there is a huge deficit, because there is a war on. Consequently the Finance Member has to find means to meet it. If there had been a responsible Finance Member, responsible to this House and to the people, he could not have done any better than what he has done. This Finance Bill, at least this year, has not touched a single poor man, and therefore I say this Finance Bill deserves our support. The Finance Department is the feeder of all other departments; this is the most important department practically, it is the foundation on which this edifice of Government stands. Sir Jeremy Raisman has, during this period of war, conducted the affairs of finance in a way by which he has not allowed the rich to grow richer or the poor to become poorer. I know we have enough grievances against the Government for their acts of omission and commission. We as members of the Assembly have been dealing with him for the last five or six years: we have not been able to help him in any way—that is true—undeniably true.

With regard to the civil administration, I wish to say with all the emphasis at my command that the Honourable the Food Member has failed totally. He has

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not been able to improve the situation in any way. He says—and perhaps the Honourable the Finance Member has also testified to that in his speeches—that the food situation has improved. I say that the food situation has not improved a bit. If there were not a bumper crop of last January, the arrangements which the department had made would be of no avail; and at the present moment the controlled rate of rice in towns is Rs. 16-4-0 per maund. Does he mean to say that in Bengal the middle class and the poorer classes can purchase rice at this rate? We know that Government have purchased and stored rice to an enormous quantity and yet they could not bring down the price at least to ten rupees. I request the Food Member to take into consideration the

4 P.M. real steps that would really give relief to Bengal and other provinces which are deficit. Merely calling of conferences one after another will not help the people of Bengal and of the other deficit provinces. Sir, it was suggested to the Food Member many a time in the Food Committee that his only method is to set up producers' co-operative societies, co-operative distributor societies, co-operative consumers' societies under the Co-operative Societies Act. Nothing has been done in that line. The old traders have been taken into confidence. The whole thing has been in their hands. That black market is going on merrily without any sort of hindrance and it is high time that the Food Member should introduce this system. Corruption is rampant and working havoc.

As regards the Department of Industries and Civil Supplies, only the other day there was a discussion in this House on the scarcity of cloth. Really a famine in cloth is going on in Bengal. This famine in cloth exists in many other places, even in Delhi. The Member for Industries and Civil Supplies had given us to understand that he was trying. In such an emergent period, if he only goes on trying, he would never be able to do the thing at the right moment and it is high time that he should rectify the mistakes which he has committed and remove the delay that has occurred in the arrangements for supply.

The civil administration can take credit only if they can at least keep the people clothed and fed, if nothing else. In this matter the civil administration has failed and really it is a pity that this should happen when the Honourable Members in charge of these matters are Indians. With regard to the Member for Commonwealth Relations, he too has failed because he had no sanction behind him to do anything which we liked him to do. That sanction is wanting; I know his difficulties. But with a full team of Indian Members of Council, he could have induced the authorities over them to take such steps as would really satisfy the needs and the demands of Indians in South Africa. In this he has failed. As regards the Law Member, I say that it would have been much better if he had given us healthy social laws during his regime, laws which would uplift the scheduled castes from their disabilities. He has done nothing in that line. I do not know if he is the author of the ordinances. I think he has nothing to do with ordinances. Therefore I should expect him to take up healthy social laws which will give strength to our social structure in future. He has not taken up this matter seriously.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy (Law Member): Will you support the Hindu Code?

Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: Certainly. Any healthy law which will improve our social structure will be most welcome. I do not mind whether it is the Hindu Code or the Muslim Code. It must be a human code. Whatever is acceptable to humanity will be acceptable to all sensible men. With regard to the Information Member, he too has failed to give us the right sort of information. There are many things which come out with regard to post-war period, the future constitution which should have gone to the Radio Stations. It is not done. The Transport Member could have given more amenities to the third class passengers without losing much of his income. The Posts and Telegraphs Department might have given more amenities to the



postal people who have been loyally serving the whole Government in peace and in war. These things are very superficial. They are on the surface and palpably wrong. Every man knows that the Government is doing their level best but they are failing. Their failure means the sufferings of the people and their inefficiency. Now, there is a new Member for Planning and Development. A Government which cannot help the present can hardly be expected to help the future. It is a portfolio to decide the future economics of India. Unless a policy is adumbrated and placed before the country for the future constitution of India, this planning will not be acceptable nor possible. If the *status quo* will remain, and if planning is made on the assumption that Indian people are not going to be free, then I say that that planning will never be successful and acceptable to the people. I am one of those men who believe in men, in humanity. I want to stand by the people. I want to stand as one of the people, I want to share the sufferings of the people and if this post war reconstruction is based only on the basis of government by the top men without giving any power to the people in general, then I emphatically say that is bound to fail. So, when we found that one of the authors of the Bombay plan had been appointed as the Member for Planning and Development, we felt that the Government were failing in their duty. This Government has no idea of the future free government of this country. They have no idea of a free people's government or Peoples Plan. They want to keep on to the old capitalistic government and perhaps the British capitalists, the American capitalists and the Indian capitalists will conspire and join together to exploit the people again. I give this warning to this House, to the people in charge of post war Reconstruction and to the Government that if they have had anything like this, in their mind, they should stop it. The only redeeming feature in the present Government is that they have carried on the war well, war efforts have been carried on right lines and this Government have helped the war in all possible ways and that is a great thing to their credit. If this Government deserves any thanks of the people, it is only on its war efforts. Sir, I am one of those who think that this is India's war, it is people's war. It is world war and India is not out of the world. If and when the Nazis had trampled the freedom of any nation in this world, then every Indian should feel the agony of that nation, every Indian should have thought that it is his war, every Indian should feel that he stands for the freedom of any country which is in danger of losing its freedom, when Hitler was trampling under foot Belgium, Holland France and other countries, every Indian should have felt that it was his duty to join the war and help the war efforts of the United nations. When China was invaded by Japan, we had our sympathy with China, but this Government did not go to war against Japan which they should have done. So Indians could not fight on behalf of China. Every Indian should have gone there to fight the Japanese. When Abyssinia was taken by Italy, the British did not help the Emperor of Abyssinia and Italy was left free to do whatever it liked with Abyssinia. I am glad that this wrong has been redressed and that the Emperor of Abyssinia has been installed on the throne again. This war is an eye opener to us. When Dunkirk fell, when France succumbed, nobody believed that the British people would rise again and continue this war to such success. It is this earnestness, this zealous protection of independence, this love of independence of the British people that should serve as an eye opener to Indians. If we have to enjoy freedom, we have either to fight for it or we have to co-operate and get it. All my political life, I have fought stage by stage. I began my political life forty years ago under the leadership of Sir Surendranath Banerjee. He was my leader. Then I followed Sri Aroubindo Ghose, then Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak—all these were my leaders. I had passed through all these stages and I need not dilate on that.

**An Honourable Member:** You were now following the path of violence.

**Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** I also joined the non-violent movement in 1919. Sir, in 1930, I was the Dictator.

**An Honourable Member:** Not for democracy?

**Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** Now, I am fighting for democracy. The gift of the twentieth century has come from Russia and not from any other country and had not that gift been so strong, so healthy, so helpful today the whole of Europe would have been groaning under Nazi heels. Today, I feel for my country. Today when the Congress is going to celebrate its sixtieth anniversary at Bombay, I feel that we are a divided house. The Congress has become a party only. We, in Bengal, expected that the Congress would be the only party in the country and on the other side the Government. That was what happened at the First Round Table Conference. Mahatma Gandhi did not attend the same. Then the Gandhi-Irwin pact came about and Mahatma Gandhi accepted the invitation and then the Congress became a Party, like the Muslim League or the Hindu Mahasabha. They all sat together to discuss our future. When the Congress came back from the conference to India, total failure was writ large, on the head of the great political institution. The communal award could not be avoided, Malavyaji and Mahatma Gandhi both could not come to an understanding with our Muslim brethren, or the Muslim brethren did not come to an understanding with the Congress, I do not know; perhaps the third party might have done the trick. But, Sir, the failure was there and since then the Congress has become still less powerful and representative. Any one who had any solution to save the position or held any opinion not shared by the High Command was turned out of the Congress. That made the Congress weaker and weaker day by day. Nariman was turned out, our friend Dr. Khare was expelled, Subash Chandra Bose, the President elect was turned out, M. N. Roy was turned out. These people who were the greatest and strongest supporters of the Congress cause were all sent out of the Congress. Mahatma Gandhi could not accommodate them and thus allowed the Congress instead of being the platform for all people made it into a Party platform. I am sure the Congress would have been the only one party in the country and the Government the other. Our Muslim leader Mr. Jinnah was a Nationalist for 28 years and he was with us from every point of nationalist view, then he became a convert to Party cause and became the leader of the Muslim League. If only he had continued in the Congress he would have become the leader of the Congress as well. What led him to give up his connection with the Congress at its Calcutta session? Because it became a party movement, instead of becoming an all India united movement as was being discussed at the Nehru conference in Calcutta. There Mr. Jinnah attended and when he saw how the proceedings were being conducted, he declared that he was not going to stay in the Congress any longer. Nehru report separated him from the Congress. It may be that he was wrong. But no attempt was made to try and bring him back. This should have been done. We should have tried our level best to bring back the Muslims into the Congress fold. If we really wanted independence of India, that could not be achieved without unity. By simply begging, we cannot achieve independence, it has to be earned, we must stake everything for achieving freedom, otherwise we cannot get that. Look at the picture in Europe? What tremendous sacrifices they are making to retain their independence and freedom. They are laying down their lives, they are giving up their property, they are sacrificing everything for the sake of maintaining their freedom. Simply for shouting, nobody is going to thrust freedom on us.

I therefore appeal to my Congress friends and Muslim League friends that they should make up their minds to achieve freedom and I hope the unity which they are displaying in the House will continue outside the House also. I appeal to my Muslim brethren that they should give up this ideal of Pakistan. Pakistan is an impossibility. They know it for certain that Pakistan is an impossibility, it is only a slogan to unite the Muslims. India—this country—should be the cementing factor to enable us to unite to reach our goal, the welfare of the people should be your common slogan, freedom does not mean free-

dom at the top and that the masses will not be free. Sir, if we do not think on those lines, if we do not think on scientific and popular lines, if we only go on thinking on sentimental lines in politics, we shall not be able to do anything. For 40 years I have worked, and seriously I feel now that it should be a people's movement. It should not be a capitalist movement or movement of three per cent. of the people of property and education. It should not be thought that capitalism is going to survive in India while it is going to die in other countries. Europe has lost that capitalism; England has lost it. England has become a creditor country and the topmost creditor country. England cannot export any further capital to India. She depends either on India or on Russia. If India goes and England depends upon America, England will be a slave to America. Therefore I believe that we are going to get freedom as a result of this war. Force of circumstances and international situation will make India free. That freedom we can earn not by fighting with each other but only by making a united front on the fundamental principles of constitution. Mr. M. N. Roy is the man who has given that constitution. I know Mr. M. N. Roy much better than they do. He was a soldier to me when I was General and he is General to me today. His ideology, his fundamental principles, his constitution they do not read. They blame him for co-operating with Government; I do not. As Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea was the father of nationalism and constitutional politics in India, M. N. Roy is the father of leftism. You do not know what stuff he is made of. People call him dishonest, a spy, and so on. Lenin was called the Kaiser's agent. The Kaiser is dead; Germany is dead but Lenin is not dead; he is immortal and he survives. They call Roy an agent of the British; I tell them with all the emphasis at my command that the British will go and Roy will stay and he will be immortal. Royism will endure.

Sir, I am an old politician; I have laboured and suffered and staked everything for politics and for the freedom of my country. I know we have indulged in all sorts of sentimental politics. There was a time when racial hatred was so much rampant that we would like to kill every European in India. But surely that would not serve the purpose. There was a time when everything that came from England and from foreign countries was taboo in Bengal. Sir, our real political movement began with the partition of Bengal. You have no idea of the enthusiasm that Bengal had and the sacrifice that she was prepared to undergo in order to get that partition annulled. But it was not then a matter of freedom of the country; only a protest against Lord Curzon's indifference towards public opinion. And we did get it annulled, though I think that modification was not good for us, because we lost two districts Singhbhum and Manbhum which went to Bihar. This made Bengal poor and our population became less Hindu and more Muslim. The Delimitation Committee gave these districts to Bihar to give her the coalfields. We did not grudge it then and we do not grudge it now. But, Sir, unfortunately the enthusiasm which then prevailed in Bengal is no longer there. The repressive policy of the Central and Provincial Government had created secret societies and revolutionaries, bombs and revolvers. And Bengal showed that her sons and daughters could die like patriots in other countries for their own land. Those days are gone and forgotten. Mahatma Gandhi with his non-violent and non-co-operative movement has turned that Bengal into a Bengal of non-violence; I am not sorry for it. It was futile to kill Europeans in order to get freedom. Freedom will come out of our own actions. If we want to get freedom we can get it tomorrow. We shall not have to fight for it in this House where one side is no-changer and the other side is pro-changer. Government will not change their policy or personnel. If they had changed their policy they would have got the co-operation of the other side; but they still harp in the same old bureaucratic tune. Why don't they Indianise the Secretariat, where it has taken a long time to have five Indian Secretaries out of seventeen? Why not have all these Secretaries out of Indians? That would show at least that Government have a real desire to change their policy. Sir, the repressive

[Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya.]

policy only is there. Yesterday my Honourable friend Mr. Sri Prakasa introduced stories of the miseries of politicians. These are old tales to me. I have seen the worst atrocities and the worst acts of terrorism. I did not care to know who was responsible; but those who feel that they are responsible know how to suffer. If we are true to our doctrines we do not mind going to jail or dying on the gallows. We shall not be sorry to suffer under the repressive policy of a foreign Government if we want to fight them for our freedom. There is no use appealing to the same party who are our enemies.

Sir, when the Congress came into the Provincial Governments, everybody thought things would improve, but we found that even labourers were shot. Section 144 was not rescinded. So whoever goes to Lanka becomes a Ravana; whoever takes the responsibility of Government changes and is metamorphosed into a different man. I should like to see the Leader of the Opposition come over to the Government Benches; let him take up the Home Membership; I would like to see how he changed. The question is not who is ruling us but the question is the system that rules us. The system must be changed. I shall welcome any Indian there with a system or a policy agreed to by the Congress, and the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha. Let there be an agreed constitution. But if they do not agree, let them all put forward separate constitutions and let the people judge which one they would accept. Let there be hundreds of constitutions which should be discussed by a conference on which there should be judges to decide on one agreed constitution. Mr. M. N. Roy's constitution is already in the field. Congress and Muslim League do not represent the whole country. Sir Stafford Cripps had come with a gift only to be given to the Congress and the Muslim League and therefore he failed. Had he come to the people of India, he would not have failed. (Interruption.) Don't look at me. I was also a member of the Congress, and had I been a Congressman now I would not have been there; I would have been in the jail. Don't try for relief, try to be useful to your country, try to be a patriotic. But patriotism does not only mean 'going to the jail'. Patriotism means helping the people, poor ignorant people—masses of this country. Love them, serve them—raise them up. What have you done for them. What has the Government done for them? What have these rich people done for them? These rich people are the manufactured commodities of British Government, they have acted as commission agents of the European commercial people, as brokers, as lawyers, attorneys, and as solicitors. They have piled. Sir, it is these people who have to make sacrifices for the sake of the people. Let them make up their mind on the right lines and then they will be able to create a new world in India.

Sir, India is a great country. It has its past traditions. It has its great glories, it has its history. India cannot be trifled with. Mughals came to India and built up a great Muslim Empire. That Empire has gone. Englishmen came and they have built up an Empire. That Empire is already in liquidation. I therefore say to my Indian friends here and to those Indians who have been nominated by the Government of this country, to think reasonably, to think sensibly, think boldly and then to act. Let us not think on communal lines or on old obsolete national lines.

The Honourable Dr. Ambedkar belongs to the scheduled caste. He has a scheduled caste mentality. Let us see that he gives up that mentality, let us see that he lifts up the whole scheduled class community. Muslims want Pakistan knowing full well that Pakistan is as impossible as Akhandistan. (Interruption.). It is India, it is Bharatwarsh, and every man is an Indian and every Indian has got a say in regard to the affairs of his country. Give up this idea of having separate regions and different nations. When we can join here, why cannot we join and collaborate outside this House? Why do our Muslim friends say they want Pakistan, and why do our Hindu friends say they want Akhandistan? India indeed is one country with defined geographical

boundary. Some people say they want National Government. Can they explain what is meant by National Government? The old words, Government of the people by the people and for the people—drop the words for the people.

**An Honourable Member:** Ask congressmen.

**Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** We belong to one family in India and let us give our strength to this and let us see that India is free as early as possible. (Interruption.) Independence has lost that significance which it had at one time. This total war has proved that nobody can stand alone, no nation can afford to keep aloof in this world. The whole world is one society of human beings and every country has alliance with other countries. Interdependence is the word. There is no culture which can claim purity—every culture is adulterated.

**An Honourable Member:** Who are the Allies of the British people?

**Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** They are allies of Russia. U. S. A is ally. Don't you remember what feeling they had for Russia, and don't you know what feelings these Americans had against Russia? Don't you know what feelings we had? Russian literature was proscribed; we could not openly read any Russian literature. Now Russia is saving the world and the British and U. S. A. people are fighting along with Russians to defeat Nazism.

Sir, the European war is going to come to an end, and I expect that all political prisoners will be set free with the amnesty. In Bengal there are thousands of young men in jail, they have been there for more than eight years and even longer, and I hope that when the European war ends they will be released. How the European war will end, we cannot say yet, because there is apparently some rift amongst the Allied nations. It may or may not happen, and I wish it may not. Russia is now at the gates of Berlin, and on the Western Front the Allies are fighting very strongly, and there is the news that Ribbentrop is ready to surrender to Russia. This news may create some misunderstandings, but whatever may be the result of that, let us hope that after the war is over and amnesty is declared, not only our leaders and other political prisoners but also those who were charged with having committed violence, will also be released. That is the nature of the British statesmen. After the end of the last war, those who were in prison and were supposed to be most stubborn and astute revolutionaries were all given amnesty. I am sure they will do the same again and it is a question of few months more.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): There are many other Members anxious to take part in this debate.

**Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** I will just finish up my speech.

I will therefore request my Honourable friends on this side and my Honourable friends on the Congress and Muslim League Benches to decide what they should do. Time is ripe now, time is mature to put a seal on this unity. I am sure the moment Congress and Muslim League unite, the Hindu Mahasabha will also join them and there will be a common demand.

To Government I say 'you have failed in your civil administration'. The Government, Sir, have failed in their civil administration: they have not been able to think of the people under their charge. They have failed to clothe and feed the people, which is their primary duty, so far war efforts are concerned—they deserve appreciation. Sir, with these words I support the Bill.

**Mr. A. Satvanaravana Moorty** (East Godavari and West Godavari *cum* Kistna: Non-Muhammadan Rural): This is the sixth Finance Bill after this country is involved in war without its consent. The objection that the country is involved without its consent stands. The continuous rejection of these Finance Bills by the Legislative Assembly proves our want of confidence in the present Government.

Sir, you are incurring Defence expenditure to the tune of 400 crores of rupees in the coming year. The leaders of the people have no knowledge or control over this huge expenditure. Even the European Group which is habitually supporting Government finds the necessity to carry a cut motion against wasteful expenditure.

[Mr. A. Satyanarayana Moorty.]

You say, in Europe, in Asia and in Pacific the tide has more than turned. If that is so why should the Defence expenditure go on mounting up so high.

Under no stretch of language or common sense reconquest of Burma and other lost colonies in the Far East for Great Britain can be called defence of India. Justly all that expenditure should be debited to Great Britain.

Let us see how our economy is affected by the War Finances. All the goods and services which we are supplying to Britain are taken on credit. We get a corresponding book adjustment as sterling debt due to us. Our people have been making great sacrifices as victims of inflation. The purchasing power of the rupee has greatly fallen. The earning capacity of professional and middle class people has largely remained static. You are not aware of the silent suffering of this large class of people. They go without the necessities of life, with a bold face. The necessary articles of daily use are scarce in this country. The Government that has the economic strings in its hand never cared to develop the industries.

What worse indictment can there be against the Government that even pins could not be manufactured in this country in sufficient quantities.

You boast that a debtor country has become a creditor country. But what about the terrible loss of life due to famine? We lost nearly thirty lakhs of our population in Bengal due to bad management of our economy. Has any country among the countries involved in this war suffered worse?

We have got 1,300 millions of pounds to our credit in the books of a debtor who is clever, powerful and influential enough to evade a bailiff. We demand an immediate liquidation of this amount by way of capital goods that we need and choose.

We must be able to buy our requirements in the cheapest market of our choice. The Finance member tells us, he is able to release 20 million dollars from the Empire Dollar Pool but we are not informed what the amount of India's credit in that pool is.

While every country, especially America and England are making arrangements to switch over to peace time economy from war economy, we do not see any signs of such activities here. A large number of committees are set up to prepare reports. Nobody seems to think of finding the money for these schemes. Dominions like Canada and Australia planned their war effort with long ranged view. They have established aircraft, motor and locomotive factories.

I charge the Government of India with either selfishness or callous disregard of the industrial welfare of this country. Can they present the country with a single full-pledged heavy industry as a result of this unwanted war thrust by them on this country?

Now we see from the papers that two lakhs of bicycles are being imported from abroad. You are not helping the Indian industry by dumping foreign goods. Can anybody with utmost goodwill give you credit for honest dealing. The tragedy of it is more poignant as the Department of Supply, Industries and Planning are under the control of Indian Members.

Will they, these Honourable Members, not realise what part they are playing in this sad game? The ambitions of British industrialists are unmistakable. They want to build their industry on the ruins of Indian industry. The Hydari Mission is an ominous portent in this direction. The news that sixty million pounds worth of British goods are being imported into this country is alarming. The fears expressed in all quarters are being realised. The sterling balances are sought to be dissipated in this manner. In the end capital goods also will be denied to this country. The plans of British Industrialists to start their factories in India seem to be maturing. This is nothing short of industrial rape on this country. There are already several "India-limiteds" sucking the wealth of this country. I enter my strong protest against this iniquitous policy. You seem to be hoping for perpetual slavery of this country. Don't be under that delusion. If you impose your goods at the point of the bayonet, the

country will turn like one-man against the present policy. The spirit of boycott will manifest itself in its crude forms. That is a natural reaction to forcible dumping of foreign goods. I warn the Members in charge of Industries that they are bartering away the future of this country.

Then again, Sir, on the loss of Burma, we are confronted with food shortage. Great Britain lost her Far Eastern possessions but we did not hear people dying for want of food. Churchills and Edens would have been kicked out of their places if half a dozen people had died of starvation in the streets of London. Thousands die on pavement of Calcutta and the head of the British Government of India, the former Viceroy, had not the parting grace to visit Calcutta to see the results of his policy.

We have no plan in this country. We begin water-divining when the houses catch fire. England planned her food policy even by the time the war began. What are you all, well-groomed array of British and Indian officials here in Delhi doing? The effect of a bureaucracy enjoying unquestioned power and prosperity is seen in the deaths by the million.

Then, Sir, you do not want the co-operation of the patriotic flower of this country. You go on merrily with your blunders. You have imprisoned a lakh of great souls without trial. You do not want to release our great leaders still. You have blunted your moral senses. You fare well because there are worse people like Hitler to compare unfavourably.

Sooner or later, you have to hand over the reins of this Government to the people of this country. Do it with grace. Meanwhile, do not trouble the poor too much, with new taxes. Tobacco, you are taxing whenever you want. It is a luxury of the poor-man. You want to deprive him of that small pleasure. He has no riches to indulge in costly pleasure. I am against the taxing of the tobacco and the betel nuts.

Judged even by the most liberal standard you are unfit to handle the present and plan for the future of this great land. Please quit and make room for the people's Government.

With these few words I take my seat, Sir.

**Mr. H. M. Abdullah** (West Central Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, I rise to take part in the debate on the Indian Finance Bill with a view to ventilating the grievances and difficulties of the rural classes in the Punjab whom I have the honour to represent in this House. I do not propose to make a long speech but would confine my remarks to a few salient points.

I shall first take up the question of the price level of the agricultural commodities. The Honourable the Finance Member in his Budget speech this year has stated that "while the object has been to maintain a price level which will ensure adequate production without imposing too heavy a burden on the consumer, it is not the intention to attempt to bring it down to pre-war level and we have announced our readiness to intervene in supporting the market should prices fall unduly." In this connection I would like to point out that though Government might feel satisfied with the present level of the prices of agricultural products, the zamindars do not share their opinion. The price of wheat which at one time touched Rs. 15, per maund came down to Rs. 8, although the controlled price was Rs. 9/8 but the Government did not do anything to raise the price. Similarly the price of long staple cotton has fallen from Rs. 25 to less than Rs. 20 per maund. Other commodities have faced the same fate. While there has been a heavy decline in the price level of agricultural products, the prices of manufactured goods and other commodities are still soaring high. On account of this disparity in the price level the pursuit of agriculture has become less profitable as compared with other professions, with the result that agricultural labour is migrating to industrial areas where the wages are higher. The poor zamindar is at present faced with shortages of labour. The cost of production is rising while the reward of his labour is diminishing. It is time that the Central Government should take some measures to raise the price level of agricultural commodities.



[Mr. H. M. Abdullah.]

Another difficulty of the poor peasant is the high prices he has to pay for his live-stock, whose supply is becoming scarce due to the meat requirements of the army. It is the duty of the Government to help the zamindar in securing his livestock at reasonable prices, if they expect him to part with the fruits of his labour at moderate rates.

Sir, it is true that Government have opened some shops for the supply of agricultural implements to the cultivator. As the supply is not equal to the demand these implements can be purchased only by permits. The poor, illiterate and ignorant peasant does not know the complicated procedure how to obtain permits. It would be better if the procedure could be simplified.

I would now turn to the difficulties which the rural classes are experiencing in obtaining their cloth requirements. There is a cloth famine in the country and the people residing in the villages are the worst sufferers. Long cloth and muslin which are mostly used by the poor classes are notoriously not available in the market. The present situation is due to the introduction of control on the production and distribution of cloth and yarn. Previous to this the position was not so bad. After the imposition of control most of the cloth has disappeared into the black market with the connivance of the civil supply inspectors who are mostly dishonest and corrupt. It is really very discreditable for the Central Government that they have not been able to solve this problem. I think it is time that cloth should be included among the rationed articles. Rationing is the only method by which the poor illiterate masses can hope to get their share of this essential commodity.

Next to cloth the rural people are feeling the scarcity of kerosene oil, which is another commodity in short supply. I think in this matter the rural people must be given preference over the urban people, who can use electricity, where it is available. Kerosene oil also should be rationed in the villages. I am fully aware of the fact that the introduction of rationing in the villages is not an easy affair but in order to alleviate the distress which the people are suffering from all this bother must be undertaken.

I now turn to the Grow More Food Campaign, in which the Central Government shows so much interest. It is true that the Central and Provincial Governments are anxious that more food should be grown in order to improve the food position of the country but executive officers of the Provincial Governments are not faithfully discharging their duty in this respect. To support my proposition I would quote a concrete case. Last year I acquired on lease for three years a piece of railway land which was levelled up and made culturable. I, however,

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needed canal water for irrigating it, for which I applied to the Canal Authorities who, after holding out a promise and keeping the application under consideration for several months, turned it down on the ground that the land was waste. In spite of their declaration to the contrary, I still maintain that the land is culturable, provided it is irrigated by canal water.

There are several other instances in which people have not been able to raise crops simply on account of the unsympathetic treatment of the subordinate officials who do not seem to be genuinely interested in the matter.

In this connection I would also like to voice the grievance of the petty zamindars regarding the present method of giving on lease Government lands for growing more food. Such lands are at present being given to big landholders who do not cultivate them themselves, but let them out at a profit to other small cultivators, with the result that the latter do not find it economical to raise crops on these lands. If, on the contrary, these lands are leased to people who till the land themselves at reasonable rates, much better results will be achieved. To every such lease two conditions must be attached, namely, that the lessee should reside in the locality in which the land is situated, and that he is actually engaged in the cultivation of the soil. I am sure that these few grievances of zamindars will receive the sympathetic consideration of the Central Government.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, the 16th March, 1945.