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* Election of a Member to the Advisory Committee for the Utilization Branch of the Geological Survey of India

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Further consideration of the motion moved by the Honourable Dr. Ambedkar on Monday, the 14th September. Dr. Ambedkar had then stated that this motion might stand over so that he might be able to give some information.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member): May I know, Sir, how you propose to deal with the amendments ? Perhaps it would be better if the amendments are moved so that I may deal with the motion and the amendments also.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I think, the Honourable Members who wish to move their amendments may formally move them now. Then, the motion and the amendments will be for discussion before the House.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait (West Coast and Nilgiris : Muhammadan): Sir I beg to move :

> "That in the motion for the words 'one representative' the words 'four representatives' be substituted."

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

> "That in the motion for the words 'one representative' the words 'four representatives' be substituted."

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural)**:** Sir, I beg to move :

> "That in the motion for the words 'one representative' the words 'three representatives' be substituted."

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*Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. HI, 21st September 1942, pp. 339-42.

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

> "That in the motion for the words 'one representative' the words 'three representatives' be substituted."

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Sir, the motion and the amendments raise two questions. Last time when I moved the motion, my Honourable friend, Mr. Neogy, asked for some information to be given to the House with regard to the constitution of the Utilisation Branch of the Geological Survey of India. As the House will remember, on the very next day the Honourable Mr. Neogy had tabled a question with regard to the very same question. In the course of my reply, I gave some information with regard to the Utilisation Branch and I do not know whether my Honourable friend and the rest of the Members of this House desire any more information with regard to this Branch. But I see that there is probably some information which it was not possible for me to give to the house by reason of the fact that it could not be put either as answer to the main question or because of the peculiar nature of the supplementary questions that were asked on that day. I propose to give to the House some information now which I was not able to convey to it the other day.

The first thing that I wish to refer from the point of view of information is the duties of the Utilisation Branch which, I think, I did not mention that day. I should like to inform the House that according to the constitution of the Utilisation Branch, it will have three main duties; firstly, to carry out the necessary field work for proving mineral deposits; secondly to initiate, where necessary, preliminary mining operations ; and, thirdly, conduct experimental work as may be necessary to solve problems in ore dressing and smelting and other problems of production that may be capable of solution by the utilisation of India's minerals. Those are the duties of the Utilisation Branch.

Then, with regard to the programme of work of the Utilisation Branch. I would like to inform the House that at present it falls under six heads: (1) re-opening of the lead and zinc mines of Zawar in Udaipur State in Mewar; (2) development of Rajputana mica mines ; (3) working of sulphur deposits in Baluchistan; (4) operations on wolfram in Bengal and the Central Provinces ; (5) examination of

certain deposits in Bihar; and (6) search for certain minerals, stones and salts and other related substances.

The third question on which my Honourable friend, Mr. Neogy, wanted information was the relationship in which the Utilisation Branch stands to the Board of Scientific and Industrial Research. Now, Sir, the position is this. The Board of Scientific and Industrial Research deals with three things, namely, inventions, heavy chemicals and naturally occurring salts. The Utilisation Branch deals with the discovery of minerals and proving them, obviously, their funcitons are different. At the same time, there is a certain amount of interrelationship between the Board of Scientific and Industrial Research and the Utilisation Branch, and the inter-relation has been brought about in this way. Dr. Fox, who is in charge of the Geological Survey of India, is the Chairman of the Committee on heavy chemicals which is working under the Board of Scientific and Industrial Research. On the other hand, the Director of Scientific and Industrial Research is a member of the Advisory Committee to the Utilisation Branch of the Geological Survey, and, secondly, by this arrangement, the House will see that exchange between the two Departments has been arranged.

There were two other questions to which my Honourable friend referred. They were by way of criticism of Government's actions. He stated that there was a neglect of India's mineral resources and, secondly, he suggested that the Utilisation Branch was started more for the purpose of providing occupation for evacuees from Burma. Now, Sir, with regard to the first question, I say I regret as much as my Honourable friend does that the question of the development of India's mineral resources was not taken in hand earlier than it was done. But I think my Honourable friend realises that there were three principal difficulties in the way of India's undertaking a project such as the one we have now undertaken, namely, the establishment of the Utilisation Branch. It is to be admitted that up to the present time the Geological Survey of India had not qualified official mining personnel. Unfortunately, the Indian Geological Survey of India followed the functions which the Geological Survey in England had followed, namely, to act merely as an inspectorate of mines rather than as a technical body of experts who were engaged in developing the mineral resources of India. Secondly, there is a certain amount of

shyness in the mineral exploitation due to the risks involved in opening up mineral deposits. There was a general belief prevalent in India, probably due to long disuse of mining operations in the country, that India was not well-endowed with minerals other than those which were suitable for export, such as manganese and mica. What I would submit to the House and to my Honourable friend is that while we may regret that we have not tackled the business much earlier than we have done, whether it is not a case where one ought to say that better late than never.

With regard to the question of the employment of Burmese evacuees, I would like to point out to my Honourable friend as well as to the House that in this matter, we really had no choice. As I told my Honourable friend we have been suffering from lack of official mining personnel. Burma was the only place where mining, such as, for instance, of lead and zinc, was carried on on an extensive scale. Burma is the only place where mining engineers were trained. Consequently rather than saying that we have opened this branch to give employment to Burmese evacuees I think the correct interpretation would be to say that it is because we were able to use the services of the Burmese evacuees that we have been able to undertake this project which I have no doubt is going to be not merely an item in India's war effort, but is going to be one of the greatest things for the future of India.

Sir, turning to the question of the amendments, one thing I would like to say I am really very glad that these amendments have been made. I can now say that the account which I have given of the Utilisation Branch is so convincing that those who came to scoff have remained to pray. But the temple is a very small one and although I welcome the enthusiasm of the worshippers, I cannot allow this small temple to be so overcrowded as to leave no breathing space. I am sorry I cannot accept the amendments.

Sir Syed Raza Ali (Cities of the United Provinces : Muhammadan Urban): Would you refuse them entry into the temple even.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am sorry I have to oppose these amendments. I will tell the House exactly the reasons which have dictated this policy. I would like to draw the attention of the Honourable Members who have moved these amendments to bear in mind that this Committee is not an Executive Committee. It is not a Committee which

can take decisions and, therefore, anything that is done in this Committee is not going to commit this House one way or the other. It is purely an Advisory Committee. The second thing which in my judgment presents a stronger reason than the first arises out of the object of the Committee. The object of the Committee is to bring together experts of the representatives of trade and industry together. That is the primary object of this Committee. I would like to draw the attention of Honourable Members to the composition which has been devised for this particular Committee in order that this principal object may be achieved. Sir, there are altogether 16 members on this Committee as planned for the present. The House will see that what has been done is to put five experts on the Committee and to put five representatives of trade and industry along with them. First of all, there is the Director of Geological Survey, the Director of the Board of Scientific and Industrial Research, one representative of the Mining and Metallurgical Institute, one representative of the Indian Mining Association and representative of the Indian Mining Federation. They constitute a body of experts who will sit on this Committee. Then, as representatives of trade and industry, we have given two scats to the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce. We have given two seats to steel industry and we have the Secretary of the Commerce Department to represent the Commerce Department on this Committee. From this the House will see that the object of the Committee is really to bring experts who will tell the industrialists and the representatives of the trade what minerals they are in a position to prove and representatives of trade and industry will tell the experts how they could be commercially exploited.

Now Sir, if the House bears in mind that this is the principal object of this Committee, there is really not much scope left for the inclusion of what I might call general opinion in the country.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea (Calcutta Suburbs : Non-Muhammadan Urban): Representatives of the general public.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes, representatives of the general public. The next argument to which I wish to refer is the fact that the Committee is already a large Committee. As planned now, there are 14 Members on it. If I accept the amendment which demands four, then the Committee will consist of 18 and I must take into consideration the fact that if I allow four Members of this House, the Upper House

will demand at least three. That means that the Committee will consist of 21 Members which I have no doubt the Mouse will agree will be too unwieldy for doing the business which it will be called upon to undertake.

The next point to which I should like to draw the attention of the House is this: that the constitution of the Committee already provides for the nomination of four Members by the Labour Member and without committing myself to any particular line of using this power of nomination I think it is perfectly possible that one Member of the House may find a place on it through nomination. Therefore, Sir, having regard to the considerations which I have placed before the House, I am sorry to say that I cannot accept these amendments.

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