

that miners' children who live in neighbouring areas are sometimes not permitted into the creches and there are no adequate facilities in most of the mines for the care of infants or children, even where creches exist in name with very few exceptions ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I do not know how the Honourable Member knows that there are no creches when she does not go and visit.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : The Honourable Member had gone to the mining areas.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have also gone.

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*** Steps for Enforcing Mines Maternity Benefits Act in Mining Areas**

437. **Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan :** Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

- (a) what steps Government have taken to enforce the provisions of the Mines Maternity Benefits Act in mining areas since women miners are illiterate and ignorant of their rights ;
- (b) whether Government have any report about the application of this Act since it was passed in 1941 ;
- (c) whether four week's absence before and after delivery of a child has not proved insufficient to give adequate relief to the women miners and avoid injury to their health; and
- (d) whether Government have obtained medical opinion on the subject referred to in (c); and, if so, whether Government will place a copy of it on the table of the House ; and, if not whether Government propose to take steps to secure such opinion ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) One Senior Labour Inspector and two Junior Labour Inspectors who are qualified doctors have been appointed, under the Chief Inspector of Mines in India.

(b) Although Government themselves have not received reports about the working of the Act, the Inspectors under the Chief Inspector

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. I of 1945, 21st February 1945, pp. 610-11.

of Mines submit reports to him regularly and suitable action is taken by the Department of Mines.

(c) and (d). The four-week period before and after delivery in respect of women is in line with similar provision under Factory legislation. The question of increasing the period before delivery in respect of women employed underground is under consideration.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : What about after delivery ? Will Government also consider the advisability of extending the period after delivery ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is not necessary. There is complete prohibition on the employment of women who have delivered.

Mrs. Renuka Ray : Is the Honourable Member aware of the fact that since the ban on the employment of women underground was withdrawn, there have been cases in some mines of children being born underground.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no information.

Mrs. Renuka Ray : Will the Honourable Member kindly find out and take steps to see that such cases do not occur ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : If the Honourable Member will refer me to specific cases, I shall certainly make inquiries.

Mrs. Renuka Ray : I am prepared to do so.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : May I ask for an assurance that Government will get the opinion of a competent medical authority on this important question, before they come to a decision on it ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : They will undoubtedly, if they find it necessary.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : Is it not a fact that the International Labour Conference during its last session suggested that the period before and after confinement should be about two months under the Maternity Benefits Act ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no information. I do not recall that.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : I understand that it is mentioned in the report which the Government have circulated to us.

Mrs. Renuka Ray : Since the Honourable Member considers that he is justified in ignoring the International Convention prohibiting women working underground, I should like to know if he thinks it also unnecessary to consider the maternity benefits provision of the International Labour Conference ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : We are considering that matter.

272

*** Abolition of Distinction between Orthodox and Un-Orthodox Quarters**

451. Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

- (a) the reasons that led to the decision to abolish the distinction between “orthodox” and “un-orthodox” types of quarters as stated in the Labour Department Memorandum, dated the 25th January, 1945; and
- (b) the effect of this decision on (i) the present occupants of such quarters and (ii) those who qualify for these quarters in the future ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) According to the allotment rules hitherto in force, applicants for accommodation had to apply either for the orthodox or the un-orthodox type of quarters and those who applied for one type of quarters were considered ineligible for the other type. In view of the present shortage of accommodation, the above rules very often worked to the disadvantage of the officers eligible for these types of accommodation, and produced the anomalous result that if an applicant failed to secure accommodation in the type he had applied for, he was obliged to go without any accommodation at all, even though he might have secured accommodation in the other type, had he applied specifically for that type.

Further, the maintenance of the distinction between the two types of quarters entailed extra work in the Estate Office in as much as the allotment of the two types of quarters had to be kept separate. Besides, it was also felt that the maintenance of the distinction between orthodox and un-orthodox quarters and their allotment on the basis of the orthodoxy or otherwise had become out of date.

(b) (i) None.

(ii) The decision of 25th January 1945 has since been slightly modified on 15th February 1945. Those who are eligible for the particular category of ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’ and ‘D’ type of accommodation will be eligible to apply for both types of quarters.

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***Deaths of Women Workers in Mines**

453. **Mr. K. S. Gupta :** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the number of deaths of women workers in the mines of India (including coal) in the years of 1942, 1943 and 1944 due to (i) diseases, and (ii) accidents ?

(b) Is it not a fact that men workers are not available to work in coal mines as the wages offered are not commensurate with the rise in prices of foodstuffs and other necessities of life ?

(c) Is there any attempt on the part of the mine owners or the Government of India to offer better wages and special amenities of life in the supply of foodstuffs and housing accommodation to mine workers to attract enough men workers to enable the Government to apply the ban on women working underground and thus save the dignity of womanhood in India as in every other civilized country ?

(d) Is it not a fact that infant mortality is very high in the mining areas due to lack of milk from the mother who is automatically getting dry due to hard and strenuous work underground ?

(e) Is it not a fact that no pure milk is available to the workers in the mining areas ?

(f) Are any attempts made by the mine-owners or Government to supply milk free of cost to children at least below one year in the various mining areas ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The number of deaths of women in all mines in India due to accidents both on surface and underground for the years 1942, 1943 and 1944 were 9, 11 and 53 respectively. No figures of deaths due to diseases are available.

(b) No.

(c) Yes. The following improvements in regard to wages, welfare and amenities have been introduced ;

- (1) subsidisation of foodstuffs and the provision of grain shops ;
- (2) improved health measures including malaria control and increased provision for construction of hospitals ;
- (3) provision of an adequate range of consumer goods for purchase;

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. I of 1945, 21st February 1945, p. 620.

- (4) provision of transport to and from work ;
- (5) increase in the rates for coal raisings at Railway Collieries so as to enable the contractors to offer more attractive wages to labour; and
- (6) an informal agreement between Government and the mine-owners for an increase in the wages of colliery labour.

(d) It cannot be said that infant mortality is very high in mining areas due to lack of milk. Infant mortality figure in the coalfields is less than the All-India figure.

(e) Pure milk is available in mining areas. Samples of milk are frequently taken and examined by the Inspectors employed by the Mines Boards of Health and action is taken when adulteration is discovered.

(f) No. Government are examining further possibilities in regard to improvement of health of women and children in mining areas.

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*** Women Workers Working Underground in Mines**

454. **Mr. K. S. Gupta :** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the number of women workers underground in the years 1942, 1943 and 1944 ?

(b) Is there any attempt made to reduce the number of women employed underground ? If not, why not ?

(c) Is it a fact that in certain coal mines women are allowed or compelled to work even in stages of advanced pregnancy, thus giving rise to child births underground ? Was any report to that effect brought to the notice of Government ? If so, what is the action taken to put a stop to such a malpractice ?

(d) Would Government consider the question of applying a strict ban on women working underground as soon as the seventh month of pregnancy is complete ? If not, why not ?

(e) Are Government aware that maternity benefit offered to women workers is only nominal and that several complaints are made to their

immediate superiors who do not care to report to the authorities concerned ?

(f) Does the Honourable Member propose to make an enquiry and remedy the defects ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) 1942—*Nil.*, 1943— about 7,000, 1944—16,000.

(b) Yes. Every effort is being made to expedite the bringing about of such conditions as would enable Government to reimpose the ban on the underground employment of women in coal mines. In other mines, the ban already exists.

(c) No. So far as I am aware no children have been born underground in mines. No such reports have ever been received. The last part of the question does not arise.

(d) A proposal on these lines is under the consideration of Government.

(e) There are one Senior Labour Inspector and two Junior Labour Inspectors working under the Chief Inspector of Mines to administer the Mines Maternity Benefit Act, and every effort is made to see that the requirements of this Act are complied with.

(f) No.

275

*** Scheme for Recruitment of Gorakhpur Labour for Employment in Coal Mines**

464. **Mr. K. C. Neogy :** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to explain in detail the scheme for the recruitment of Gorakhpur labour and its employment in the coal mines ?

(b) What is the total number of labourers so far recruited under this scheme ? What has been the total expenditure incurred therefor, and how much of it has been and is expected to be recovered from the collieries in which the labourers are employed or intended to be employed ?

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. I of 1945, 21st February 1945, p. 629.

(c) What rates of wages and what amenities are these labourers entitled to, and how do they compare with the average terms and conditions on which other labourers are engaged in the coal mines ? What reports, if any, have been received as regards their output of work and general efficiency as also aptitude for mining work from the different mines where they are employed ?

(d) What are the names of officers directly in charge of the working of the scheme, and what are their respective duties ? What are their qualifications and experience in the line, and what emoluments do they receive ?

(e) From what source is the requisite finance obtained initially ? Are the accounts relating to the scheme regularly audited under the control of the Auditor General ? Up to which period has audit of these accounts been completed ? Has any financial or accounts irregularity been brought to light as a result of audit of the accounts ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The labour is recruited by the Gorakhpur Labour Supply Depot in the United Provinces for employment on various Government works as well as in the coalfield. It is organised in gangs under the following supervisory staff :—

One sirdar for each gang of 50 men.

One unit Supervisor for each contingent of 250 men.

One camp Supervisor for each camp of 1,000 men.

One Group Officer in charge of the personnel of one or more camps according to location.

The officer directly responsible for these labour camps is the Deputy Director, Labour Supply (Coal) with Headquarters at Dhanbad.

The labourers are recruited for six months or one year's service at work site or until no longer required, whichever is shorter. Each labourer is given a set of mazri clothing and blanket; he is also given advances to meet initial expenses and provided free with accommodation, medical aid, cooking fuel and rations. He is remunerated for work done on specified scales of wages in addition to bonus for good work and long service.

(b) Total number of labourers so far recruited for work in mines 33,500. Present working strength 15,000.

Total expenditure incurred—Rs. 74,16,584 up to the end of **January 1945**.

Recoveries

Total amount billed for up to the middle of

January 1945 14½ lakhs.

Actual recoveries 5 lakhs.

(c) Gorakhpur labour is entitled to the following wages and amenities when serving in colliery areas:

Basic wage of 12 annas per day.

Production Bonus of 4 annas per day.

Extra allowance for working underground—4 annas per day.

In addition the labour gets free foodstuffs for a complete diet, the estimated cost of which is about 14 annas per day. They are also entitled to free housing and free medical aid.

Labour from Gorakhpur gets on the whole better terms and conditions than local labour.

Local colliery labour gets :

- (i) as cash wages 50 per cent over the pre-war local rates of wages—the pre-war rates of wages were for an average worker about 8 annas in the case of surface workers and 14 annas in the case of those employed underground;

- (ii) food concessions as follows:

½ seer of rice free for each day of attendance.

Adequate supply of dal at concession rate of 6 seers to the rupee. Such further supplies of rice and dal as he may require at controlled rates.

The intention of the present concession rates is to supply full ration at concession rates for the miner himself and to require him to pay controlled rates for his family. These concessions were introduced in May last, but previously the concessions extended to the worker's family and were for rather larger quantities of grain. The

worker is now given in lieu an additional cash allowance of two annas in the case of a bachelor and five annas in the case of a married man with children.

Reports from various sources including colliery owners show that Gorakhpur labour is adaptable to most kinds of work such as building camps, removing over burden in quarrying schemes, loading coal into wagons as well as cutting coal. It is also reported to be regular in attendance, and under proper supervision, its output is as good as that of any other labour.

(d) (1) Mr. Walsh—Deputy Director, Labour Supply (Coal) Pay Rs. 1,925 per mensem.

(2) Mr. Morris—Assistant Director Coal (Production). Pay Rs. 1,215 per mensem.

Mr. Walsh is in complete charge of all matters relating to Gorakhpur labour including rations, pay, accommodation and welfare. He has 12 years' planting experience, was 3 years' Army Staff Officer in administrative capacity and was Labour Staff Officer at No. 3, Indian Reserve Base for 10 months where he was responsible for original organisation of Gorakhpur labour into Centralised force.

Mr. Morris is in charge of the labour on work sites, output of work, provision of tools and transport. He has handled labour of various classes during last 25 years in India and Burma. He raised and commanded Pioneer Battalion during past two years.

(e) The expenditure is initially debited to the head "Advance Repayable—Special Advances" while recoveries effected from the mine owners are credited to the receipt head "XXXVI—Miscellaneous Departments". The difference between the expenditure incurred and the recoveries effected is recouped from the Coal Production Fund. The Audit Department is responsible for the audit of the expenditure. No audit or accounts irregularities have been brought to light so far.

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*** Late Publication of Legislative Assembly and Council of State Debates (1944 Autumn Session)**

13. **Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam :** Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state :

- (a) the dates on which the Legislative Assembly and Council of State Debates for the Autumn Session (November), 1944, were made available for sale and for supply to the Honourable Members, respectively; and
- (b) the reasons for the late publication of those Debates ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The information is given in the statement@ attached.

(b) The delay in the publication of the debates was due to various causes, *e.g.*, rush of operational war work, defective working of machines for want of replacement of spare parts and shortage of staff due to non-availability of suitable men.

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† Annual Reports of Supervisor of Railway Labour, Calcutta

532. **Mr. Lalchand Navalrai :** Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Supervisor of Railway Labour, Calcutta, has submitted to the Government his annual reports on the working of (i) the Payment of Wages Act, and (ii) the Hours of Employment Regulations subsequent to 1940-41 ; if so, whether these reports have been published in full or part and whether the Honourable Member will be pleased to lay copies thereof on the table of the House; and

*Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. I of 1945, 21st February 19-15, p. 630.

@ *Statement omitted.*—Ed.

† Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1945, 28th February 1945, p. 797.

- (b) if the reply to the last portion of part (a) above is in the negative, whether the Honourable Member proposes to supply the following information in a tabular form for each Railway, separately, for the financial years 1941-42, 1942-43 and 1943-44 :—
- (i) the amount of fines inflicted on the Railway staff;
 - (ii) the total number of cases in which fines were inflicted ;
 - (iii) the total number of irregularities detected in the working of the Payment of Wages Act;
 - (iv) the total number of irregularities detected in the working of the Hours of Employment Regularities ;
 - (v) the nature of instruction issued to the various Railway Administrations to avoid a repetition of such irregularities ;
 - (vi) the nature of representations made by the Labour Supervisor to the Labour Department of the Government of India on points where a conflict of opinion existed between the Supervisor and the Railway Administrations or the Board ; and
 - (vii) the decision given on points referred to in (vi) above ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Since the year 1940-41, annual reports on the working of the Payment of Wages Act and the Hours of Employment Regulations for the years 1941-42 and 1942-43 have been submitted by the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour. As I informed the Honourable Member in answer to his unstarred question No. 43 on the 10th February 1944, Government have decided not to publish these reports in view of the acute shortage of paper. They have, however, now decided to issue a press note in respect of the reports for the year 1942-43 as also in respect of future report until such time it is found possible to renew the previous practice of publishing them.

(b) Such information as is readily available is being complied and a statement will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

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*** Composition of Employees' Delegation to
the Tripartite (Labour) Conferences**

† 533. **Mr. Lalchand Navalrai**: Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Employees' Delegation to the Tripartite (Labour) Conferences or Standing Committee is composed of representatives of—
 - (i) the Indian Federation of Labour;
 - (ii) the All-India Trade Union Congress ; and
 - (iii) other workers ;
- (b) which industries and workers are included in category (iii) of "Other workers" and how their representatives are elected or nominated ;
- (c) if the representatives of "other workers" are nominated by Government whether it is proposed to discontinue the practice ; if not, why not; and
- (d) on what basis and considerations Government nominate these delegates and whether the Provincial Governments have any hand in such nominations ; if so, to what extent ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes.

(b), (c) and (d). Category (iii) relates to labour interests not adequately represented on the two all-India labour organisations, viz., the All-India Trade Union Congress and the Indian Federation of Labour. The nominations are made by the Government of India after taking into consideration suggestions received from Provincial Governments. It is not the intention to discontinue the practice at least for the time being. Such nomination is necessary at the present stage of development of workers' organisations in the country.

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@ Hydro-Electric Schemes

539. **Mr. Manu Subedar** : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state how many hydro-electric schemes are at present functioning in India ?

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1945, 28th February 1945, p. 798.

@ *Ibid.*, p. 804.

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

(b) What is the amount of power generated by each of them ?

(c) How much of this power is used for industrial purposes ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) 34 excluding private, industrial and military installations.

(b) It is not possible to give information about individual stations. The total energy generated by all the stations is approximately 1983 million K.W.H.

(c) About 56 per cent.

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* Hydro-Electric Schemes

540. Mr. Manu Subedar : (a) Will the Labour Member please state how many other hydro-electric schemes have been considered ?

(b) How many of them are going to be dealt with by (i) the Government of India, (ii) the Provincial Governments, and (iii) the Indian States ?

(c) What will be the total horse-power of these schemes ?

(d) How many of them have been already sanctioned by the Government of India ?

(e) For how many of them is machinery either under negotiation or under order ?

(f) What is the approximate date when they are expected to function and make power available ?

(g) Which of these schemes will be the first ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) A large number of schemes have recently been considered ; several of them are in various stages of investigation. Plant requirements for 31 have so far been notified to the Secretary of State.

(b) (i) Under the present constitution, development of Hydro Electric Schemes falls within the purview of the Provincial Governments. The Government of India are, however, rendering them such assistance as is asked for through the Central Technical Power Board which they have recently set up for the initiation, co-ordination and pushing forward of electricity development schemes.

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1945, 28th February 1945, pp. 804-05.

(ii) and (iii). Of the 31 schemes mentioned in reply to part (a), 14 are being dealt with by Provincial Governments, 13 by Indian States and 4 by private concerns.

(c) Approximately 6,70,000.

(d) 28 schemes requiring plant before the end of 1947 have so far been approved by the authorities concerned.

(e) Seven.

(f) Between the end of 1946 and 1949.

(g) The Mohammadpur Hydro Electric Schemes of the U. P. Government will probably be the first to start functioning out of postwar schemes.

Mr. Manu Subedar : Is it a fact that the Government of India are unduly strict with regard to hydro-electric projects which are submitted to them from the Provinces and from the States ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I do not suppose there is any ground for believing that they are more strict than the necessities of the case require.

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* Electrical Commissioner's Report

† 541. **Mr. Manu Subedar :** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member state why a copy of the report produced by the Electrical Commissioner with the Government of India has not been placed in the library of the House ?

(b) Has the Policy Committee, in connection with power, reported ?

(c) If so, will a copy of their report be made available to the Members of the Legislature ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Presumably the Honourable Member refers to the proceedings of the Technical Power Conference of which the Electrical Commissioner was the Chairman. The report is under print and a copy will be placed in the Library of the House as soon as the printed copies become available.

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1945, 28th February 1945, p. 804.

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

(b) and (c). Presumably the reference is to the second meeting of the Policy Committee held on 2nd February 1945. The Record of the meeting is being finalised and copies will be placed in the Library of the House in due course. The Record of the first meeting of the Committee is already available in the Library of the House.

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*** Scheduled Castes Employees of Central Public Works Department**

556. Mr. Piare Lall Kureel : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

- (a) the number of members of the scheduled castes employed in the Central Public Works Department as Executive Engineers, Sub-Divisional Officers and Subordinates in the permanent, temporary and work-charge staff, separately ;
- (b) whether it is a fact that none of the temporary incumbents of the posts of Subordinates belonging to the members of the scheduled castes were confirmed as permanent staff during the year 1944 ; and
- (c) what measures Government propose to take to secure a fair representation of the members of the scheduled castes among the permanent staff of the Central Public Works Department ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) and (b). The number of permanent and temporary Executive Engineers in the Central Public Works Department is 12 and 55 respectively. Two of the temporary Executive Engineers are members of the Scheduled Castes. There are no officers of that community among the permanent Executive Engineers and there are no posts of Executive Engineers borne on the work charged establishment.

The rest of the information required by the Honourable Member is not readily available. It is being collected and will be supplied to him as soon as possible.

(c) Under the orders regarding communal representation in the Public services, one out of every twelve vacancies (other than vacancies

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1945, 25th February 1945, pp. 812-13.

filled by promotion) is set aside for members of the Scheduled Castes. These orders, which are generally applicable to all classes of posts in the Central Public Works Department will secure a fair representation for members of the Scheduled Castes, in that Department.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad : May I ask whether the Scheduled Castes are reckoned as one of the minorities so that their share comes from 33 per cent ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : They are a separate category.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad : Then if you put them in a separate category how will the percentage of 33 per cent, reserved for minorities, be affected by this category ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is not affected at all; it is quite apart from that.

283

* Liens on New Delhi Quarters of Government Servants Transferred to Calcutta and Bombay

564. **Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang :** Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that allotment to Government servants of Government quarters at New Delhi is made according to seniority in service which is reckoned from the date of a person's continuous appointment at New Delhi/Simla ;
- (b) whether such persons transferred to Simla hold their liens on quarters at New Delhi during the period of their transfer ;
- (c) whether Government laid down recently that officers transferred to the Branch Secretariat at Calcutta are also allowed to retain liens on Government quarters at New Delhi whereas those transferred to Attached Offices will not be eligible for this privilege ;
- (d) whether it is a fact that the staff transferred to Calcutta with the office of the Additional Chief Engineer, Central Public Works Department, was allowed to retain liens on their quarters at New Delhi and were allotted quarters on their return to Delhi;

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1945, 28th February 1945, pp. 817-18.

- (e) whether it is a fact that the period of break in the continuous employment of certain persons employed in the Central Public Works Department which occurred on account of their transfers to places other than Simla has been condoned on their re-transfer to Delhi, as a special case ;
- (f) whether it is a fact that the Central Government servants transferred from Delhi to Calcutta, Bombay, etc. in the interest of service are not allowed to hold liens on their quarters at New Delhi and on their return to New Delhi are considered not to be continuously employed for the purpose of allotment of quarters ; and
- (g) whether Government propose to accord such persons the same treatment as is accorded in the cases mentioned in parts (c) and (e) above ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes.

(b) Persons transferred to Simla on or before 10th November, 1942 retain liens on quarters occupied by them in New Delhi but those transferred to Simla after that date temporarily are allowed to retain liens for a period of one year from the date of their transfer.

(c) Yes.

(d) Two members of the staff of the Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, Central Public Works Department were allowed to retain the quarters allotted to them in Delhi for the period of their stay in Calcutta which was less than one year.

(e) Yes, but the break in such cases was under one year.

(f) Central Government servants are allowed to retain liens on their quarter if the Departments concerned certify that the individuals will return to Delhi within a period of one year.

(g) Does not arise, in view of reply to part (f).

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* Production Cess on Coal Mines

565. **Prof. N. G. Ranga :** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state if Government have levied a Production cess of Rs. 1-4-0 on portion of coal despatched from mines in British India ?

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1945, 28th February 1945, pp. 818-19.

(b) Is the cost of recruiting unskilled labour from Gorakhpur, Ballia and other districts of the United Provinces and their maintenance at the coal fields defrayed out of the proceeds of the cess ?

(c) What is the Contract Form the labour (including women) have to sign ? Will Government place on the table of the House a copy of the order under which this labour is recruited and their contract form ?

(d) What is the machinery to recruit them ?

(e) Where are they usually stationed ?

(f) What was the approximate number of this labour at the various coalfields on the 31st December 1944 ?

(g) Have separate camps been established for them ? If so, are latrine and bath-room conveniences provided ?

(h) How many batches have been sent by now and what is their numerical strength ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes.

(b) The expenditure is initially met by Government. A part of it is recovered from mine owners and the balance is recouped from the Production Cess Fund.

(c) No form of contract is signed by labourer who verbally agree to serve for a period of 6 or 12 months.

(d) Labour Supply Depot, Gorakhpur, run by the Government of the United Provinces.

(e) Coalfields in Bengal and Bihar and Singareni colliery in Hyderabad.

(f) (i) Bengal/Bihar coalfields. 15,400.

(ii) Singareni Colliery. 2,500.

(g) Yes, latrines are provided in most camps and will soon be provided in all, but not bath-rooms. Adequate water supply is however made available.

(h) The total number of labourers despatched is :

Bengal/Bihar coalfields. 37,000.

Singareni collieries. 5,000.

285*** Medical Aid at Coal Mine Workers Camps**

566. **prof. N. G. Ranga :** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to say if there is any provision for rendering medical aid to the coal mine workers at their camps ?

(b) If so, has any schedule been drawn up for maintaining any minimum stock of medicines and surgical instruments at such camps ? What is the number of medical staff and their qualifications ?

(c) Is, there any arrangement for the treatment of venereal diseases, at these camps ?

(d) Is any record maintained of the incidence of sickness ?

(e) If so, what is the total number of cases of malaria and venereal diseases from the beginning of these establishments of the labour camps up to the 31st December, 1944 ?

(f) Is there any arrangement for periodical medical examination of the workers ?

(g) If so, what are the diseases most prevalent which these examinations show and their percentage ?

(h) Have any deaths taken place ? If so, how many and due to what reasons ?

(i) Is there any supervision machinery for the Medical Department of the Camp ? Does the local Civil Surgeon visit the camps and treat serious cases ? Are serious cases taken to Civil Hospitals ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes.

(b) An adequate stock of medical supplies and surgical instruments are kept at each camp. One graduate in medicine is in charge of each camp with more than 1,000 labourers ; while one licentiate in medicine is in charge of each camp with less than 1,000 labourers.

(c) Yes.

(d) Yes.

(e) The camps, are spread over a large area and it has therefore not been possible to collect the information in the time available.

(f) Yes.

(g) Annemia. In this case also time is required to collect the statistics asked for.

(h) yes. 156 up to end of last December. The majority of deaths is due to natural causes. A small number is due to accidents at work sites.

(i) Yes. A post of chief Medical Officer of the Directorate of Unskilled Labour Supply has been sanctioned. In view of the special provisions made the local Civil Surgeon does not visit the camps. Serious cases are taken to Civil Hospitals.

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* Rations at Coal Mine Workers Camps

567. **Prof. N. G. Ranga :** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state if the workers living at these mining labour camps are provided with rations directly by Government or through a contractor ?

(b) Is each worker allowed to draw his ration separately or are the rations given in bulk to a gang of fifty men ?

(c) Is it a fact that labour are usually supplied short weights by the contractor ?

(d) Can this labour purchase their rations from the Local Government Ration Shops or Depots ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Workers in mining labour camps are issued rations by Government through a contractor under the supervision of Group Officers.

(b) Rations are issued weekly in bulk for each gang.

(c) No.

(d) No, as they are issued free Government rations.

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@ Corporal Punishments at Coal Mine Workers Camps

568. **Prof. N. G. Ranga :** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that corporal punishment

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1945, 28th February 1945, pp. 819-20.
@ *Ibid.*, p. 820.

is being given to the workers at these coal mining labour camps ? Does this apply to men and women both ?

(b) Does any machinery exist for the redress of these workers' grievances ?

(c) Are the Labour Welfare Adviser to the Government of India and his Assistants or the Coal Mines Welfare Commissioner and the officers under him empowered to look after the welfare of these workers or conduct inquiries into their grievances ? If not, why not ?

(d) If so, who investigates their complaints ?

(e) Is any record maintained of these cases ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) No. There are no women's camps.

(b) Yes. The workers can approach the Deputy Director Labour Supply (Coal) for redress of grievances.

(c) No. The Labour Camps are looked after by the Deputy Director Labour Supply (Coal) and his staff.

(d) Chief Liaison Officer and the Group officers of the Unskilled Labour Supply Directorate.

(e) If cases are submitted in writing, the records are kept in the office of the Deputy Director Labour Supply (Coal). Oral complaints are dealt with on the spot. Where considered necessary records are kept.

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* Mica Commission

661. **Mr. Manu Subedar :** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the object of appointing the Mica Commission ?

(b) What were its terms of reference and composition ?

(c) What assistance have Government rendered at any time to the mica producers of this country ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) and (b). The Honourable Member presumably refers to the Mica Enquiry Committee. His attention is invited to Resolutions No. MD-55, dated 15th May, 1944 and 23rd October 1944, copies of which have been placed in the Library of the Indian Legislature.

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1945, 5th March 1945, pp. 1022-23.

(c) Under the Government of India Act, 1935 Mineral Development is a Provincial subject except to such extent as is declared by a Federal law to be expedient in the public interest. No such federal law at present exists and Mineral Development has therefore been left entirely to Provincial Governments. But even so during the war the Central Government has given considerable assistance to mica producers in helping them to get supplies and by allowing the bonus on excess production to be free of excess profits tax.

Mr. Manu Subedar : Is it a fact that Government have controlled the price of mica and that bulk of the mica has been purchased both for this Government and for the Allied Governments at controlled prices, and that the control has been introduced by the Central Government ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Prices have been fixed.

Mr. Manu Subedar : May I know how these prices compare with the pre-war prices ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : They compare very favourably.

Mr. Manu Subedar : How much is the difference ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Sir, I must have notice of that question.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : May I ask whether the Mica Commission is going to consider the conditions of work of the mica miners, and, if so, whether the miners are represented on the Mica Commission ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : No, that is not one of the subjects which the Commission will make enquiries about.

Mr. G. W. Tyson : With reference to part (c) of the question, will the Honourable Member say whether he is satisfied that during the war, in which period the Central Government has had a good deal to do with the mica industry, Government has accorded protection to the mechanized mining companies which have suffered very heavy losses as a result of the illicit trade in mica ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : That is one of the reason why the Committee was appointed.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : May I know if the Maternity Benefit Act is applied to mica factories ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It applies to all mines.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : Is it a fact that the Factories Act is not applied to mica splitting factories. If so, why ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no reason to believe that it is not applied.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : May I draw the attention of the Government to the report in the Trade Unions Record of September, 1944?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Probably that might need further corroboration.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : May I ask whether the Honourable Member will make enquiries to find out whether the Factories Act applied to mica factories, or not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I will make enquiries.

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***Abolition of Distinction between Orthodox and Un-Orthodox Quarters**

662. **Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari :** (a) With reference to the Honourable the Labour Member's reply to the adjournment motion on the 10th February, 1945, regarding the abolition of the distinction between orthodox and un-orthodox quarters, will he be pleased to state whether other Departments of Government were consulted and which and how many of the Departments of the Government of India were for and against the proposal to abolish the distinction ?

(b) Has the Estate Officer been vested till now with the discretion to allow un-orthodox quarters ? If not, why has he now been vested with such discretion ?

(c) What is the method or machinery by which the Estate Officer will be able to satisfy himself whether an applicant, who is an Indian, professes European habits and thus becomes eligible for a unit in the un-orthodox quarters ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes. Government do not consider it necessary to specify the Departments who were against or in favour of the proposal.

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1945, 5th March 1945, p. 1023.

(b) No. The Estate Officer will have no discretion in the allotment of un-orthodox quarters as Government have decided that a declaration by an applicant in respect of his style of living should be accepted without question.

(c) Does not arise.

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***Abolition of Distinction Between Orthodox and Un-Orthodox Quarters**

663. **Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari** : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether, according to his reply of the 10th instant in connection with the adjournment motion on the same subject, mentioned in the preceding question, it is proposed to disturb the provisional lien holders of un-orthodox quarters? If so, will they be allotted similar accommodation of the type to which they are eligible, if available?

(b) In the event of such higher category accommodation not being available, is it the intention to allow them as heretofore to continue in the type of house they are already in occupation until such time as the higher type accommodation is available? If not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The reply to the first part of the question is in the negative. The second part does not arise.

(b) Yes.

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@ Break-Down of Trade Disputes Arbitration Machinery in Ahmedabad

668. **Mr. K. S. Gupta** : (a) Is the Honourable the Labour Member aware of the serious situation arising out of the break-down of the permanent machinery of arbitration for settlement of disputes capital and industry in Ahmedabad?

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1945, 5th March 1945, pp. 1023-24.
@ *Ibid.*, p. 1027.