

(b) Is it a fact that women labour in coal mines in India was abolished under popular pressure ?

(c) Is it a fact that Mr. Amery, Secretary of State for India, evaded the question put to him recently in the House of Commons, as to whether women labourers were paid the same wages as men, and whether they were working under ground ?

(d) Does the Honourable Member propose to make a statement on the two points referred to in (c) above ?

(e) Is it a fact that man labour for coal mines is available in India ? If so, why is not that labour being utilized instead of women labour ?

(f) Is it a fact that the women are employed because they work harder and are satisfied with little, though their health suffers and their families are broken ? If not, what are the special reasons to re-engage women instead of men ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Women labourers are now allowed to work underground in coal mines in the Central Provinces and Berar, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

(b) It has been for many years the deliberate policy of the Government of India that women labour should not be allowed to be employed underground in coal mines in India. Provision to this end was made in the Indian Mines Act, 1923. In 1929 women began to be excluded from underground workings and the process was complete in 1937.

(c) I have no information.

(d) No. I made a statement on these two points in answering the adjournment motion moved by Mrs. Renuka Ray on 8th February.

(e) Women have been allowed to work underground owing to the severe shortage of male labour. As soon as there is an assured male labour force sufficient to raise the quantity of coal required by Government, Government will consider reimposing the ban on the employment of women underground. Government are taking immediate steps to import male labour into Bengal and Bihar coalfields.

(f) No. As stated in answer to (e) women have been allowed underground in certain coalfields because sufficient men were not available.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: With reference to part (b), may I know if it is a fact that labour of women was abolished under public pressure ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I cannot answer that question, because I do not know.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if before lifting the ban on women labour, the public was consulted or if the Government removed that ban *suo motu* ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The Government consulted the interests concerned.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Did they object to it?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : No objection.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: With reference to part (c), does the Honourable Member say that he has no information whether women are paid equal wages with men ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The point of the question was whether the Secretary of State evaded the question. I said I have no information on the point. Women are paid the same wages as men.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: As regards equal payment of wages, is the Honourable Member aware that for men and women who work underground, wages are fixed on the basis of joint work of both ? How then does he say that men and women are paid equal wages ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : If it is brought to the attention of the Government that methods are adopted by which this rule is evaded, the Government will certainly take action in the matter.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Will the Honourable Member enquire whether there is a proper method by which they can find out whether men and women miners are paid equal wages ? My own information is that men and women are paid for joint work and, therefore, it is impossible to find out whether the wages are equal, because both of them get joint payment.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am unable to go into that. I can assure the Honourable Member that Government are contemplating about the appointment of Inspectors whose duty it will be to see that the welfare measures which have been announced by the Government are carried out.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : In view of the fact that trade unions both in this country as well as Great Britain are interested in this question of women working underground, will the Honourable Member publish a sort of report on the present conditions of women working underground ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I will consider the suggestion.

159

* Centres for Training War Technicians

120. **Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang:** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to lay on the table a statement mentioning the names of the centres for training war technicians, and the number of trainees permitted for each centre ?

(b) How many centres have been opened in connection with :

- (i) Government institutions;
- (ii) Railway workshops; and
- (iii) private institutions ?

(c) How many of these private institutions belong to the Hindus, and how many to the Mussalmans ?

(d) What is the number of trainees sanctioned for each of these categories ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) A statement@ is laid on the table.

(b) (i) 125 [including centres belonging to Indian States (25), Municipal Corporations (4), Municipal Committees (4), District Boards (5)]. (ii) 26. (iii) 119.

(c) and (d). The private training centres are attached to industrial concerns, technical institutions, etc., and in many cases are managed by limited companies, Board of Trustees, etc. In such cases it is not possible to say without detailed inquiries whether they are predominantly Hindu or Muslim owned. There are seven training centres with 763 seats, which are clearly owned by Muslims, and 27 centres with 5,184 seats which are clearly owned by Hindus.

160

† Deputy Directors, Senior Regional Inspectors, Regional Inspectors and Technical Inspectors

121. **Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang:** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state the number of Deputy Directors,

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. I of 1944, 16th February 1944, pp. 290-91.

@ *Statement is omitted.*—Ed.

† Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. I of 1944, 16th February 1944, p. 297.

Senior Regional Inspectors, Regional Inspectors and Technical Inspectors ?

(b) How many of these are Mussalmans ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The numbers are as follows :

Deputy Directors of Training	...	2
Senior Regional Inspectors of Technical Training		7
Regional Inspectors of Technical Training	...	15
Technical Inspectors	...	8

The fifteen Regional Inspectors include seven, who are part-time and four who are honorary officers. The 8 Technical Inspectors include three part-time officers.

(b) None.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad : None of these are Muslims ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I said so.

161

* Bevin Boys sent to England for Training

122. Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state how many Bevin Boys have already been sent to England for training ?

(b) How many of these are Mussalmans ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) 563.

(b) 110.

162

@ Chairmen of National Service Labour Tribunals

123. Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the total number of Chairmen of National Service Labour Tribunals ?

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. I of 1944, 16th February 1944, p. 297.

@ *Ibid.*, p. 297.

(b) How many of these are Mussalmans ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Ten. Of these four are whole-time Chairmen; and the remaining six are part-time Chairmen who hold other whole-time appointments either under the Central or the Provincial Government.

(b) One.

163

*** Qualifications and Duties of Coal Commissioner**

142. **Mr. K. C. Neogy :** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please refer to his reply given in the Legislative Assembly on the 17th November 1943, to question No. 250, that “the principal factor that contributed to the shortage of coal is undoubtedly the shortage of labour”, and state why it was deemed necessary by Government to appoint a Coal Commissioner to help to increase coal raising when the primary cause of shortage, according to his above-mentioned reply, was shortage of labour ?

(b) What will be the duties of the Coal Commissioner, and what are the qualifications of the person appointed ? Are Government satisfied that no Indian of the requisite qualifications is available ?

(c) What will be the official relations of the Coal Commissioner with the Labour Department, the Railway Department and any other Department of the Government, respectively ?

(d) What emoluments will the coal Commissioner be entitled to ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The Honourable Member for War Transport has agreed to answer the question on the 24th February 1944.

164

@ Measures for Increasing Coal Output

273. **Mr. K. S. Gupta :** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the measures adopted to increase the output of

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. I of 1944, 21st February 1944, p. 345.

@ *Ibid.*, Vol. II of 1944, 1st March 1944, p. 719.

coal to meet the bare necessities like train service and maintenance of indigenous industries ?

(b) Is it a fact that service in the mines (coal) is highly injurious to health of the miners ?

(c) Is it a fact that no special amenities are offered to coal miners to attract efficient and skilled workers to the service ?

(d) Is it a fact that miners and their families are housed in insufficient and insanitary surroundings ?

(e) Is it a fact that no medical aid and facilities for education of children are available in the coal mining areas ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) I would refer the Honourable member to my reply to Sir F. E. James starred question No. 82 on 10th February, which gives the principal measures which Government have adopted to increase the output of coal.

(b) No. Mining is a dangerous occupation but not necessarily injurious to health.

(c) No. Coal miners have been offered food at concession rates and Government are taking steps to increase the supply of consumer goods in the coal fields, it is proposed to increase the amenities offered to coal miners by measures taken under the new Coal mines Labour welfare Fund Ordinance.

(d) In the Jharia and Raniganj coalfields housing consists of pucca buildings built in accordance with specifications laid down by the Jharia and Asansol Mines Boards of Health. In other coalfields the housing is arranged at the miners' discretion for the resident labour which is usually very small. Government are, however, not satisfied with the present arrangements for housing and sanitation in coalfields and schemes to improve these are being prepared under the Coal mines Labour welfare Fund Ordinance.

(e) Medical aid and educational facilities which at present exist are not very satisfactory. Schemes to improve these facilities are being prepared under the Coal mines Labour welfare Fund Ordinance.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : Will the Government of India make some report to the Legislature on the conditions in coal mines with regard to housing and other conditions and also the improvements made by Government, and place that report before the House ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : There is nothing to report upon, so far as I can see. We have just begun the work and if after some time this Ordinance has been in operation my Honourable friend wants to have a report I shall be quite prepared to consider the matter.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : The House is greatly interested in this matter and would like to have information about the conditions there and the improvements made. Will they therefore, make a report to the House ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have answered that already.

165

* The Factories (Amendment) Bill

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member): Sir, I move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the factories Act, 1934.

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

“That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the factories Act, 1934.”

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

166

@ Scheduled Castes Subjected to Forced Labour and *Begar*

Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

- (a) whether protection and welfare of agricultural labour is the function of the Labour department of the Government of India ;
- (b) whether he is aware of the resolution passed at the annual Session of the All-India Scheduled Castes Federation held at Cawnpore on the 29th and 30th January, 1944, condemning the system of *begar* forced labour prevalent all over India and of which the Scheduled Castes are the only victims;

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1944, 3rd March 1944, p. 798.

@ *Ibid.*, 7th March 1944, pp. 903-4.

- (c) what action Government propose to take to stop the system of *begar*; and
- (d) whether the Government of India propose to appoint a Committee to investigate into the system, with a view to abolishing the same by law ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The subject falls under the Labour department, among departments of the Government of India; the general subject is one included in the list of concurrent subjects in part II of list III of the Seventh-Schedule to the Government of India act, 1935.

(b) No formal communication has been received from the All-India, Scheduled Castes Federation.

(c) Government of India has not considered the question so far.

(d) The suggestion will be considered in due course.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh : Is the Honourable Member aware that in the Central Provinces and Berar this *begar*, has been abolished ?

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

Mr. K. C. Neogy : May I know if it is not a fact that His Excellency the Crown Representative and his agents have been impressing upon the state administrations that this sort of forced labour should be discontinued, and that this has led to very beneficial results in certain parts of the country ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am glad to have the information.

Dr. Sir Zia uddin Ahmad : May I know whether the Honourable Member is aware of the fact that in the United Provinces, out of what they call the cultivators, 35 per cent are village labourers and they do not get any benefit on account of high prices. The cultivators do not get them in kind. They are paid in money and they find it exceedingly difficult.....

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : What is the question ?

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad : The question is whether the Honourable Member is aware of this fact that the cultivators.....

President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) : The Honourable Member has made a long speech.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad : I want to know whether the Honourable Member is aware of it and what action do the Government propose to take. That is the question.

(No answer)

167

*** Extension of Activities of the Conciliation
Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of
Railway Labour**

394. **Mr. Lalchand Navalrai :** Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state if any decision has been taken in the matter of extension of activities of the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour, to Railways other than those with headquarters at Calcutta, as said in reply to my starred question No. 131, asked on the 13th November last? if not, when is it likely to be taken ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : A decision on the question has been postponed pending consideration of wider proposals regarding the machinery for settlement of trade disputes in central undertakings generally.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will that take place after the war is over or will it be introduced now ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : That is not an inference which is justified by the answer I have given.

168

**@ Scheduled Caste Commissioned Officers
in the United Provinces Civil
Pioneer Force**

415. **Mr. Piare Lall Kureel:** With reference to his answer to starred question No. 111 regarding Commissioned Officers in the Civil Pioneer Force, asked by Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu on the 15th February, 1944, will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state the

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1944, 14th March 1944, pp. 1024-25.

@ *Ibid.*, p. 1036.

names of the scheduled Caste commissioned Officers in the United Provinces Civil Pioneer Force ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : A statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement showing particulars of Scheduled Caste candidates appointed as Commissioned Officers in the United Provinces Civil Pioneer Force Units.

Name of Scheduled Castes Officer	Date and Rank of first appointment	Present Rank	Total No. of Officers appointed	No. of Scheduled Caste Officers appointed.	
1. Nand Lal Kureel	19-5-43	2nd Lieut	2nd Lieut.	28	4
2. S. K. Mulick	3-7-43	do.	do.		
3. K. B. Bhale Rao	19-11-43	do.	do.		
4. Kshetra Pal Singh Sagar	29-1-44	do.	do.		

169

* Communal Composition of Civil Pioneer Force Clerks

416. **Mr. Piare Lall Kureel:** Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state :

- (a) the total number of clerks in the Civil Pioneer Force in various Provinces; and
- (b) how many of these clerks are Hindus, Muslims, Scheduled castes, Christians and anglo Indians, separately in various provinces ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Many units are in a war area and others are with the army at outstations and that, therefore, it is not possible in these circumstances to collect the information asked for.

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1944, 16th March 1944, p. 1037.

170

*** Disparity between Unorthodox and Orthodox
Quarters in New Delhi**

493. **Sardar Sant Singh** : Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state :

(a) whether the plinth and ground area, including outhouses and garden, is much larger in the case of unorthodox clerks' quarters than in the corresponding type of orthodox clerks' quarters (especially in the Minto Road Area), so much so that, while the tenants of unorthodox quarters raise a good crop of vegetables, lay flower beds, rear poultry, can keep milch, cattle and have badminton or tennis ground, there is not enough open space in orthodox quarters even to lay charpois for an average family during summer, and that the roofs of the "D" and "E" orthodox types are so low that they become heated very quickly during summer and cannot be occupied;

(b) whether the quality of materials, *viz.*, timber, bolts, etc., used in the construction of an unorthodox quarter and the furniture supplied therein are much superior to those used in the orthodox type of quarters, the workmanship also being superior;

(c) whether the following special amenities and fittings provided in unorthodox quarters are absent in orthodox quarters :—

- (i) gardens and shrubs,
- (ii) servants' quarters,
- (iii) iron grates in fireplaces,
- (iv) wall almirahs,
- (v) fittings for curtains and rings for hanging chicks,
- (vi) wash basin in bath rooms,
- (vii) unfiltered water connection in compound, and
- (viii) Venetian window shutters in the "D" and "E" orthodox quarters;

(d) whether no cattle sheds are allowed to be constructed in orthodox quarters below the category "B" while they are allowed in unorthodox quarters;

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1944, 17th March 1944, pp. 1217-18.

(e) whether in the Public Works Department Enquiry Offices, more prompt attention is given to complaints from unorthodox quarters and preference is also shown to unorthodox quarters in the matter of annual repairs and general maintenance, etc.;

(f) whether the cost of maintenance of an unorthodox quarter is much more than that of an orthodox quarter, and that, while return on capital in the case of an unorthodox quarter is comparatively negligible, the orthodox quarters provide adequate revenue to Government;

(g) if the reply to (a) be in the affirmative, the reasons for discriminating between unorthodox and orthodox types of quarters in regard to amenities referred to and for charging rent on the same basis, *i.e.*, ten per cent for both types; and

(h) whether Government are prepared to amend their Fundamental Rules so as to make them conform to strict business principles ; if not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The answer to first part of the question is in affirmative and to the latter in the negative.

(b) No.

(c) yes so far as items No. (i), (iii), (iv), (v), (vi) and (viii) are concerned. A room for servant exists in other than D and E orthodox quarters and unfiltered water connection is provided in the open compound outside the orthodox quarters.

(d) Yes.

(e) No.

(f) The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, the position is as follows :

Government servants occupying quarter of both the types pay standard rent or 10 per cent, of their pay, whichever is less, but the standard rents of orthodox quarters being lower, a larger number of occupants pay the standard rent.

(g) The amenities provided in the two types of quarters are in accordance with the standard designs which were prepared to suit the orthodox and unorthodox styles of living. Rent is charged according to rules.

(h) No. Government provide accommodation at concessional rates as laid down in the rules, which cannot be varied to suit the varying circumstances of officers.

Sardar Sant Singh : May I know if it is a part of the rule to provide water in the compound of the orthodox quarters and in the case of the unorthodox quarters only in the quarter itself?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : That must be so.

171

*** Promotion of Qualified Copyholders and Revisers as Readers in Government of India Presses**

501. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury : (a) With reference to the reply to part (d) of starred question No. 231 put by Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi, on the 25th February 1944, regarding promotion of Copyholders and Revisers as Readers in the Government of India Press, will the Honourable the Labour Member kindly state whether the ‘anomaly’ is due to the fact that departmental men passing in earlier dates do not get any preference whatsoever over those who pass in the second chance in subsequent examinations?

(b) Is he aware that those who pass the examination earlier stand distinctly higher in order of merit and efficiency and experience in Readers’ posts?

(c) Is it a fact that the present anomaly and the hardship that existed before the promulgation of the existing rule can not be removed unless the date of passing is accepted as a criterion for determining the position of the candidates for Readers’ posts?

(d) Do Government propose to promote the candidates to readers’ posts on the basis of seniority *cum efficiency*, i.e., according to seniority but in order of the dates of passing the examination? If not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) No.

(b) No. The earlier passing of the examination does not necessarily mean higher merit.

(c) There is no anomaly in the case of persons who qualify at the Readership examination in the first or second chance. As regards men

who qualify in the third chance, certain anomalies have arisen and the question of removing them is now under consideration, as stated in reply to part (d) of Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi's question No. 231.

(d) The Readership examination is a qualifying examination and every candidate is permitted to avail of two chances. Government do not propose to regulate promotion in order of the dates of passing the examination.

172

* Biharis as Assistant Geologists

@ 504. **Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall:** Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state :

(a) if it is not a fact that in the Department of Geological Survey of India vacancies are filled on the basis of quota fixed for each Province;

(b) the quota fixed for Bihar for the posts of Assistant Geologists ;

(c) how many Biharis are working at present as Assistant Geologists or in a higher capacity ; and

(d) the quotas for different Provinces ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

(d) Does not arise.

173

† Promotion of Qualified Copyholders and Revisers as Readers in Government of India Presses

@ 506. **Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall:** Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the case of amending the rule regarding the promotion of qualified Copyholders and Revisers as Readers in Government of India Presses is under consideration;

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1944, 17th March 1944, p. 1226.

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

† Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1944, 17th March 1944, p. 1226.

- (b) whether it is a fact that the views of all the Government of India Presses, their Works Committees and Workers' Union which were invited, are also under examination;
- (c) whether it is a fact that some qualified Copyholders who passed the Readership Examination in the year 1936, according to the present rules, have been superseded by those who qualified, after four years (in 1940); and
- (d) whether it is a fact that these men who passed the examination at a sufficiently earlier date, were superseded by those who qualified after a long period ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes. Attention is invited to the reply given on the 25th February 1944, to Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi's question No. 231.

(b) Yes.

(c) and (d). No. As the Rules in force till 1940 required re-qualifying, no supersession was involved.

174

*** Transfer of Languages Section of Bureau of Public Information to Lahore**

140. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state the area of the space allotted to the Languages Section (excluding officers) in Lahore, and the total strength of the staff accommodated therein ? Do Government consider this adequate for the efficiency of the staff ? Was not even this much space available in Delhi ?

(b) Are Government aware that the lavatory has been provided for the staff and the improvised urinal has no drainage arrangement ?

(c) What is the strength of the staff belonging to the Brureau of Public Information which has been transferred from Delhi to Lahore ? Of them how many were provided with quarters in Delhi, and how may in Lahore ? How many of them have so far surrendered their quarters in Lahore on grounds of inadequate accommodation ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) An area of 4,587 Sq. ft. was allotted to this office. The ministerial staff consist of 48 persons.

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1944, 17th March 1944, p. 1227.

Second part—Yes.

Third part—No.

(b) The answer to the first half of the question is in the affirmative and to the second half in the negative.

(c) Strength of the staff that moved from Delhi ... 35

Number of the Staff provided with quarters in Delhi ... 7

Number of the Staff provided with quarters in Lahore ... 18

Number of the Staff that surrendered accommodation in 5

Lahore on grounds of inadequacy.

175

* Delays at Sales Office of Manager of Publications, Delhi

141. **Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall:** Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state if it is a fact that a person has to wait for hours for publications at the counter of the Sales Office of the office of the Manager of Publications, Old Bihar?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The reply is in the negative.

176

@ Election of Members to the Standing Committee for the Labour Department

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member):
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, with which the Labour Department is concerned.”

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1944, 17th March 1944, p. 1227.

@ *Ibid.*, p. 1235.

177

*** Scheme for Control of Price and Distribution
of Coal, etc.**

577. Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya : (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state if it is a fact that a scheme for control of distribution and price control of coal and for encouragement of increase of output has been made? If so, will the Honourable Member be pleased to state and lay on the table as well a statement giving detail of the policy forming the background of this scheme?

(b) Is it a scheme which does away with the middlemen between colliery owners and actual consumers? If so, what are the advantages accruing in consequence of the scheme, and the disadvantages created by the scheme to the present coal suppliers?

(c) Why should a bonus be paid to collieries for excess raising of coal, or why should a commission of 0-4-0 be paid by collieries and consumers to any middleman when collieries can supply to consumers directly?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes. A statement@ regarding the scheme, is placed on the table. The scheme consists of five parts: (a) an estimation of the monthly output of each colliery, (b) the formation of a Coal Control Board to advise Government on the working of the scheme, (c) the distribution of all output by Government at fixed prices, (d) the encouragement of production by the grant of bonuses on increased output free of Excess Profits Tax, and (e) control of mining operations. The intention behind the scheme is (i) to ensure that all the coal available is properly distributed at fair prices to the consumers who require it and (ii) to afford every encouragement to the maximum production of coal.

(b) No. The second part of the question does not arise.

(c) The bonus is paid to encourage production. The amount of the commission has not been fixed. It will be fixed by the Government of India. A middleman will only be employed if a colliery and consumers mutually agree that he should be employed.

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1944, 22nd March 1944, p. 1393.

@ Statement omitted.—Ed.

178

*** Levy of Cess on Coal for Bonus
Fund Purposes**

@ 578. **Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya** : Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state whether it is a fact that cess will be levied on coal for creating a fund to meet the bonus to be paid to collieries ? Is it not a double tax on consumers ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The answer to the first part is that that is the intention. As regards the second point the imposition of the cess would mean in all probability a tax on consumers—but the bonus is itself for the benefit of consumers as tending to increase the production of coal which at present is insufficient for consumer's needs.

179

**† Deduction from Overtime of Muslim Employees
of the Government of India Press, New Delhi, for
Friday Prayers**

587. Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon (on behalf of **Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi**): (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that one hour is deducted from the Overtime of the Muslim employees of the Government of India Press, New Delhi, who go on Friday to offer Friday Congregation Prayers ?

(b) Is it a fact that previously no deduction was made for this one hour?

(c) Have Government considered the advisability of resuming the old practice or in the alternative to consider that one hour as a part of the casual leave or leave on average pay ?

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1944, 22nd March 1944, p. 1395.

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

† Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1944, 22nd March 1944, pp. 1398-99.

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

(b) Prior to 1931, no deduction was made, but this practice was irregular and was abolished.

(c) In view of the reply to part (b), the other questions do not arise. Under the Indian factories Act, an employee is entitled to overtime for the hours worked in excess of the normal working hours fixed under the Act. In calculating overtime, prayer intervals are deducted from the total hours worked by the employee.

Seth Yusoof Abdoola Haroon : Does the Honourable Member know that this trouble has arisen because the Government of India have advanced the time by one hour?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I do not think so.

Seth Yusoof Abdoola Haroon : Does the Honourable Member suggest that prayer time can be changed because Government have changed their time ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is not a question of prayer time being changed. The question relates to whether prayer time should be allowed as overtime work.

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*** Wages in the Government of India Press, New Delhi, for work on Sundays and Other Holidays**

588. **Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon** (on behalf of **Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi**): (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that on the instructions of the Manager of the Government of India Press, New Delhi, employees come on Sundays and other festival holidays to cope with the urgent work of Government but after the day's work they are given only four hours' wages, but previously twelve hours' wages used to be paid to them ?

(b) Have Government considered the advisability of resuming the old practice of paying twelve hours' charges to those who receive

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1944, 22nd March 1944, p.

regular pay after working for eight hours on closed days, or at least increase four hours to eight hours ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, in accordance with the Indian Factories Act, men working on Sundays are allowed, in lieu of a compensatory holiday, an extra payment for 4 hours' work, that is, their day's pay *plus* and additional 50 per cent. For attendance on other closed holidays, an additional 25 per cent. of their day's pay is allowed. Twelve hours' extra wages (that is, a day's pay *plus* 150 per cent.) instead of the 4 hours' permissible were paid by mistake some years ago.

(b) No.

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* Non-Supply of Stools to Lino-Machine Coolies

589. **Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon** (on behalf of **Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi**): (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to slate if it is a fact that the coolies who are working Lino Machine, are not provided with stools and they have to keep standing throughout the day and that they submitted applications, but no attention has been paid to them ?

(b) Is it a fact that the work of Barmen is taken from the Coolies and that the posts of Barmen have been abolished ?

(c) Have Government considered the advisability of removing these grievances of the coolies ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The coolies working Lino Type Machines do not really work standing. They are required to release obstructions in the distributor bar of the Lino machines, for which purpose they have to climb on Lino machines for attending to them. A stool would, therefore, be useless for the purpose of their duty. For resting labourers usually sit on the floor.

(b) and (c). There are no posts of Barmen in the Government of India Presses and no such post ever existed in the New Delhi Press. The questions do not, therefore, arise.

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1944, 22nd March 1944, p.

182

*** Labour Adviser to the
Labour Department**

@ 627. **Mr. K. S. Gupta** : (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state if the post of Labour Adviser to the Labour Department is a new creation ? If so, why is it created ?

(b) If it is an already existing post, who was the last incumbent, and on what salary ?

(c) Is it a fact that Mr. B. L. Waters has been appointed Labour adviser to the Labour Department of the Central Government ? What is his salary and overseas allowance and allowances, if any ?

(d) Is it a war measure that necessitated the appointment of Mr. Waters ? What was he drawing as salary in the British Ministry of Labour and National Service ?

(e) Has he any previous experience of Indian conditions ? If so, under what Head of the Government of India ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) and (b). The post of Labour Adviser was created in December 1942. It was held by Mr. D. T. Jack till June 1943 and is now held by Mr. B. L. Waters. Mr. Jack's salary was Rs. 2,750 a month.

The Labour Adviser is to advise on all important matters of labour legislation and administration, and in particular the manner in which labour problems that are under consideration or which may arise, have been or are being dealt with in England.

(c) Yes. Mr. Waters draws a salary of Rs. 2,000 p.m. He is not paid any overseas or other monthly allowance.

(d) Yes. At the time of his appointment to his present post, Mr. Waters was drawing a salary of £880 in the scale of £850—30—1,000 per annum in the British Ministry of Labour and National Service.

(e) No, Sir.

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1944, 27th March 1944, pp. 1559-60.

@ The question hour for today having been dispensed with, answers to these questions were, in pursuance of convention, laid on the table of the House.—Ed. of D.

183

*** Want of Light in certain North Block Clerks' Lavatories**

629. Sardar Sant Singh : (a) With reference to his answer to starred question No. 432, dated the 30th March, 1943, will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether he is aware that the clerks' lavatory adjacent to the officers' lavatory on the first floor of the North Block facing the north-western court-yard has been without a light for more than a year ?

(b) Is he aware that there is a clerks' lavatory facing the southwestern inner court-yard of the North Block, the frontage of which is now closed due to formation of some rooms, and there is a narrow dark passage leading to this lavatory, and that this lavatory has hardly ever had a light during the last one year or more ?

(c) If an inspection is made of the other clerks' lavatories in the North Block, or in other buildings of the Government of India, is the Honourable Member aware that he will find mostly the same unsatisfactory state of affairs, although apparently the C.P.W.D. authorities have informed him that such is not the case ?

(d) Is the Honourable Member prepared to pay surprise visits to some of these lavatories, without informing the C.P.W.D. authorities, say, once in six months or so, in order to judge the veracity of the statements made to him by the C.P.W.D. authorities ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a), (b) and (c). Yes, I am aware of the unsatisfactory state of lighting in some of the clerks' lavatories in the North Block of the Secretariat buildings. The position is as follows:

Electric bulbs are invariably provided in clerks' lavatories. Replacements are provided as usual and all possible means are adopted to ensure their safety. Despite the fact that locks are used, the bulbs are very often stolen. The records show that since October last about 48 bulbs with an equal number of bulb locks were replaced in six clerks' lavatories in the North Block, out of which only 2 or 3 bulbs

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1944, 27th March 1944, p. 1561.

are intact while the rest have been stolen. In the ordinary course, only 15 to 16 bulbs should have been supplied during this period on all points (taking the average life of a bulb at 1000 hours). As the provision of lamp locks has not prevented thefts, the Electrical Engineer is arranging to provide a special type of fittings to electric points in these lavatories. It is hoped that this arrangement will prevent thefts and improve lighting in the clerks' lavatories.

(d) In view of the measures that are now proposed to be taken, I do not consider surprise visits by me necessary.

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*** Lawns in front of Orthodox Clerks' Quarters in D.I.Z. Area, New Delhi**

630. **Sardar Sant Singh** : (a) With reference to his answer to starred question No. 232, dated the 17th November, 1943, will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether he is aware that the C.P.W.D. Administration have supplied him with wrong information about the lawns in front of the orthodox clerks' quarters in the D.I.Z. Area of New Delhi ?

(b) If the reply to (a) be in the negative, is he prepared to inspect some of these lawns without taking any P. W.D. officials with him and find out the correctness or otherwise of the information supplied to this House through him by the C.P.W.D. Administration ?

(c) If the reply to part (b) be in the negative, will the Honourable Member please state :

- (i) whether in every case beyond the outer wall of the quarters, there is a road on the other side of which the lawns begin ;
- (ii) whether it is a fact that the edge of these lawns runs parallel to the walls of the quarters, i.e., in a straight line as far as the quarters were built in a straight line or follows any turn, etc., but always running parallel, in a regular manner, to the walls of the quarters ;
- (iii) whether this straight alignment of the edges of the lawns is still maintained ; if so, the width of the said roads, *viz.*, between

the quarters and the lawns, as originally fixed and laid on, and their width at the corners or in front of most of the quarters in the Baird Square, Havelock Square, etc.;

- (iv) whether any officer of the C.P.W.D. himself visited all the squares, etc., in order to see the condition of the lawns; if so, who was that officer; or whether the matter was left in the hands of some petty subordinates; and
- (v) whether the Honourable member is prepared to issue instructions to the C.P.W.D. officers to inspect the places about which complaints are brought to light, personally and invite half a dozen or so tenants of each locality and find out their grievances, if any, taking their signatures on a report on the matters in question? If not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) and (b). No. I have no reason to believe that the information furnished to me was incorrect.

(c) (i) Yes, generally.

(ii) The lawns usually run parallel to the walls of quarters.

(iii) The alignment of the edges of the lawns is still maintained and the width of paths is about 8 feet.

(iv) The Sub-Divisional officer goes round to see the lawns frequently and the Superintendent, Horticultural Operations, inspects them occasionally.

(v) Complaints, when made, are attended to by the C.P.W.D. officers and no special instructions appear to be necessary.

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*** Copyholders and Revisers passing Readers' Examination of Government of India Press, New Delhi**

646. **Maulana Zafar Ali Khan :** Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased state :

- (a) whether it is a fact that some Copyholders and Revisers who passed the Readership Examination in the year 1942, in the third

* Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. II of 1944, 27th March 1944, pp. 1567-68.