Proceedings of the Assam Legislative Council assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1919.

The Council met in the Council Chamber at Government House, on Wednesday, the 22nd March 1922, at 11 A.M.

PRESENT:

The Hon'ble Mr. J. C. Arbuthnott, C.I.E., *President*, the Hon'ble two Members of the Executive Council, the Hon'ble Minister of Local Self-Government and 34 nominated and elected Members.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(UNSTARRED QUESTIONS.)

RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DATTA asked :—

1. Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table copies of forest leases for extraction of timber granted in Assam during the last 10 years ? Forest leases.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID replied :—

1.—A list of the leases in question is laid on the table. If the Hon'ble Member wishes to inspect copies of the leases, facilities will be afforded to him during the present session.

Serial No.	District and Forest Division.	Area and its extent.	Name of lessee.	Date of commencement of lease.	Period of the lease.	Concessions (if any).	Revenue derived during 1920-1921.	Remark.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Lakhimpur district, Lakhimpur division.	Jaipur Reserve and West Block of Upper Dehing Reserve, 147 sq. miles.	Gillanders Arbuthnot & Co.	1st January 1912.	15 years	Lease abandoned in 1914	...	
2	Cachar and Lushai Hills districts. Cachar division.	The reserved and Unclassed State Forests in the drainage area of the Katakhal river. Exact area not known.	Surma Valley Sawmills, Ltd.	1st April 1918.	30 years	A flat rate of 6 pies per c. ft., in the log for all timber for the first ten years, thereafter at rates to be prescribed by Government subject to certain conditions.	Rs. 13,334-13	
3	Sibsagar district, Sibsagar Division.	Rengma Reserve, 54 sq. miles.	Furkating Sawmills.	23rd January 1921.	5 years	Flat rate of one anna three pies per c. ft. in the log.	Rs. 3,000 (advance deposited).	
4	Darrang district, Darrang Division.	Blocks Nos. 1 and 2 Nowduar Reserve and Nos. 9 and 10 of Balipara Reserve (area not known).	Assam Sawmills and Timber Co.	From July 1921 to 1st June 1926.	5 years	Flat rate of one anna and one anna nine pies in the log for Nowduar and Balipara Reserves respectively.	Work not commenced.	
5	Sadiya Frontier Tract district, Sadiya Division.	The plains portion of the district (area not known).	Ditto ...	9th July 1921.	30 years	Royalty at log rate of six pies per c. ft. for the first five years; thereafter at rates to be fixed by Government, subject to certain maxima.	Rs. 11,978 (work commenced before execution of the lease).	
6	Lakhimpur district and Forest Division.	Upper Dehing Reserve, East and West Blocks, 157 sq. miles approximately.	The Assam Railway and Trading Co.	22nd August 1921.	30 years	Ditto Ditto	Work not yet commenced.	

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY asked :—

Appointment of petition writer in Jowai Court.

1. (*a*) Will the Government be pleased to state whether the Jowai Court in the Jaintia Hills has power by itself (*i*) to regulate the appointment of petition writers or to allow or disallow any one to write petitions as it thinks fit, (*ii*) to allow or to disallow pleaders from outside to plead in the Subdivisional Officer's Court ?

(*b*) If the answers to these questions be in the negative, will they be pleased to state in whom the authority to make such regulations rests ?

THE HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID replied :—

1. (*a*) (*i*)—No.

(*ii*)—The Subdivisional Officer has the power to allow or disallow pleaders under rule 38 of the Rules for the administration of justice in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills.

(*b*)—The only regulation which is at present in force at Jowai on the subject of the writing of petitions is that a petition must be singed by the writer, and that it must be clear and not unduly prolix. This is based on an order of the Chief Commissioner of Assam.

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY asked :—

Post of Extra Assistant Commissioner of Jowai.

2. (*a*) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the Jowai Notes which appeared in the "Sylhet Chronicle," Volume I, No. 24, September 12th, 1921, page 7, and Volume I, No. 26, September 26th, 1921, page 6 ; and also in the Khasi paper " U Khasi," Volume I, No. 4, August 1921, " U Lurshai ", Volume XI No. 9, September 1921, page 2, and " U Jaintia," Volume XX, January 1922, No. 1, on the subject of giving the subdivision of Jowai the benefit of the experience of some other Extra Assistant Commissioner or Assistant Commissioner ?

(*b*) Will the Government be pleased to state the reasons why in the courts of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills the plan of giving the Extra Assistant Commissioners change from one place to another, and also of giving the subdivisions or district a change of other experienced Extra Assistant Commissioners is not followed ?

(*c*) Will the Government be pleased to state whether in the Asam Valley or in the Surma Valley there is any Extra Assistant Commissioner or Subdivisional Officer who has the privilege of staying for over 9 or 10 years at a time in one place ?

MR. A. W. BOTHAM replied :—

2. (*a*)—Yes.

(*b*)—Some officers have remained longer than is usual in other districts because knowledge of the language and local customs is especially necessary in the case of officers of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills.

(*c*)—One Extra Assistant Commissioner has been posted at Silchar for over 10 years and another at Sylhet for nearly 9 years.

MUNSHI SAFIUR RAHMAN asked :—

Pay of Subdivisional Head clerks.

1. Is it a fact that in spite of the recent Government order sanctioning the raising of the scale of pay of the Subdivisional Head clerks in the plains districts of the province to Rs. 100—5—150 the old Head clerks who have been more than five years in the same post have not been permitted to draw their pay according to their length of service? If so, will Government be pleased to allow them to draw their pay according to their length of service with effect from the date of sanction?

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID replied :—

1.—The pay of the clerks in question was Rs. 100 a month. Under the revision which come into effect from 1st April 1920 they were put on a scale of Rs. 100—5—125 and were then allowed to draw pay according to the length of their service. Under the recent revision the scale was raised to one of Rs. 100—5—150. The clerks affected were given no immediate increase of pay and were not allowed for a second time to count length of service towards their initial pay. This was never contemplated.

RAI BAHADUR AMARNATH ROY asked :—

Promotion of officers of Assam Civil Service to the I. C. S. rank.

1. (*a*) Will the Government be pleased to state if any decision has been arrived at in the matter of promoting a few Assam Civil Service officers to the I. C. S. rank?

(*b*) In submitting it proposal, if any, in respect of such promotion has the Government tried to satisfy the claims of officers from both the divisions of this Province?

MR. A. W. BOTHAM replied :—

1. (*a*) and (*b*)—The orders of the Secretary of State on the proposal of this Government are still awaited and until these have been received Government are not prepared to make any statement as to the details of their proposals.

RAJ KUMAR CHANDRA NARAYAN SINGH asked :—

Officers of the Subordinate Educational Service.

1. Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table a list of officers of the Subordinate Educational Service containing the following points :—

Name of officers and present class.	Number of years in continued service of the Subordinate Educational Service either permanent or temporary.	Pay and allowance on 31st December 1920.	Initial pay on 1st January 1921.	Remarks.
1	2	3	4	5

(*a*) Is it a fact that the initial pay of the officers of Class I of the Subordinate Educational Service was not fixed on an absolute time-scale basis but in accordance with the Director of Public Instruction's letter No. 16—7-S-8 of 1920 of 11th January 1921, paragraph 6?

(*b*) If so, will the Government be pleased to fix the initial pay of the said officers in an absolute time-scale basis as provided by the Secretary of State's sanctioning letter No. 145-Public, dated 29th July 1920, Rs. 60—5—150 according to the length of service, *i.e.*, Rs. 5 for each year of their service?

(*c*) Is it a fact that the revision of the Subordinate Educational Service and the initial pay fixed by the Comptroller have made the position of the members of Class I very uncertain, *i.e.*, Junior officers getting equal pay with senior ones and even more in certain cases?

If so, will the Government be pleased to correct the anomalies?

MR. A. R. EDWARDS replied :—

1.—In view of the answer to question (*c*) the statement asked for could serve no useful purpose.

(*a*)—The initial pay was fixed in accordance with paragraph 6 of the letter referred to.

(*b*)—The answer is in the negative. But the suggestion that the action already taken is in any way contrary to the orders of the Secretary of State is not admitted.

(*c*)—It is a fact that the revision involved certain anomalies. Orders have just been issued correcting the anomalies. Government think it well however to point out that it is not necessarily anomalous that a senior officer should draw a lower rate of pay than his juniors in service.

DISCUSSION OF DEMANDS FOR GRANTS.

THE HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID :—I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 21,03,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923 for the administration of the "Police Department" (other than Assam Rifles).

There are several motions, Sir.

RAI BAHADUR AMARNATH RAY :—Sir, an identical motion stands in the name of my Hon'ble friend Srijut Nilmoni Phukan. As I am not fully prepared to move this motion I would request Hon'ble President to kindly allow him to move his motion.

RAI BAHADUR PRAMODE CHANDRA DATTA :—Before these motions are taken up may I be permitted to make a suggestion? With regard to this subject there are certain amendments which press for the entire omission of the grant while there are certain others which press for only reductions. There was a certain amount of discussion about these matters amongst certain members of the Council and I think the general sense is that the amendments pressing for the entire omission may not be pressed. If that is so it will simplify matters so far as these motions are concerned. I would ask the Hon'ble Members just to concentrate on one item, whether it is to be a reduction of Rs. 74,000 or a reduction of half the amount as proposed by some members. If the Hon'ble Members who have given notice of amendments for omission will please withdraw them then we can take up the questions of reductions.

THE HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID :—It rests of course with the Hon'ble Members.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—So far as I am concerned I am ready to abandon my motion in favour of the one moved by Srijut Nilmoni Phukan for a reduction to the extent of half. If the other members also withdraw their motions in favour of Mr. Phukan's motion it will make matters easy.

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORAH :—I am also ready to withdraw my motion proposing the entire omission of the grant and I support the resolution proposing a reduction of half the amount.

Armed Police Reserve.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—Sir, the motion that stands in my name runs thus :—

That the provision of Rs. 1,74,000 for increasing the Armed Police Reserve be reduced to half.

Sir, before I enter into the subject I should like to refer to the speech of the Hon'ble the Finance Member in introducing the Budget where he invited opinion for the general discussion of the Budget as a whole and on any principles involved therein. Sir, in this connection I should be allowed to refer a little to the item of Assam Rifles which will have some connection with my present motion. I remember the Hon'ble Finance Member to have said

in the last Budget speech while some reduction was moved by some of the members regarding the Assam Rifles expenditure, perhaps to this effect,—that these Rifles are kept here not only for frontier purposes but sometimes they are used for internal police administration as well. I quite agree with him, and to speak the truth we found it difficult not to support the maintenance of the Assam Rifles partly from our own provincial Budget on the strength of this argument. I have already expressed my views as regards this in my Budget speech, that this situation of the province is anomalous. However, we have been given to understand that these Rifles are often used in cases of emergency to quell internal disturbances. Then, why this additional provision, a recurring expenditure of Rs. 1,21,000 and about a lakh for buildings and other equipments should be spent now only on the ground of emergency which might occur in this province. So, the reason of emergency, I think, does not justify the expenditure,—this recurring cost of about Rs. 1,21,000 to begin with. I find in the explanatory notes of the Budget that "under the present conditions of the province there is a pressing need for increasing the strength of the Armed Police Reserve. This branch of the force which is intended to restore or maintain order in case of emergency has proved to be inadequate in most districts and consequently the services of the Assam Rifles have to be requisitioned very frequently." And exactly that is the case at the present moment. But latterly, I find, that :—"The Assam Rifles are not trained for this sort of work and for many reasons the Governor in Council would prefer in respect of civil disturbances to regard them strictly as a reserve and not to have to call upon them at the first sign of distrubance." That is also desirable. But my point is this,—if these Assam Rifles are not to be called at the first sign of disturbance, then, why they are already used for that purpose? And if they are actually used for that purpose and if they are partly maintained by our Government on account of this reason only,—because, unfortunately we are contiguous to Frontier Tracts and therefore occasionally require greater attention of the Police to quell any internal disturbances,—and if for that reason we are substantially spending about six or seven lakhs to provide for the Armed Rifles, then why this additional expenditure should be incurred by the Government at this time of stress. So, on principle I should either strengthen the civil police or omit the item of Assam Rifles altogether from the Budget. If we pay for the Assam Rifles, and if they are occasionally used to quell internal disturbances, then I do not see why in addition to that we should have an Armed Police Reserve. These are my arguments and on the strength of this I am not at all prepared at this moment to strengthen the hands of the Police by a permanent establishment only for temporary emergency. If these temporary emergencies arise the Assam Rifles may be usefully utilised, and if they are not to be usefully utilised for internal purposes, then why the Provincial Government should maintain them. This is my argument and on the strength of this I am inclined to reduce the budget provision to half, as I find that sanction has already been given from the 1st January 1922 in some of the districts to entertain these Armed Police Reserves. I of course do not understand clearly what it means,—whether the present provision includes the item of expenditure for this Armed Police Reserve from the 1st January 1922 in some of the districts. But whatever it may be, I take it, that the work has already begun in some districts and on that ground I am inclined to reduce the provision to half, thinking that that half will at least be sufficient, if necessary, for the present purposes. I am sure the Government will be pleased to accept my recommendation and the House will agree in this matter.

THE HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID :—It will clear the ground for discussion, Sir, if I begin by saying why we want the Armed Police Reserve. The civil police of the province are divided into unarmed (on thana) police and Armed Police. The Armed police provide guards for treasuries, etc., and escorts for treasure and prisoners, and a certain fixed number of them in each district form what is known as the Armed Reserve, that is, a body of men kept at the headquarters ready at any time to proceed to any place to deal with a local disturbance or to maintain order without the aid of the army. It must be remembered, Sir, that the ordinary thana police includes a very small number of unarmed constables, the standard being four constables for miscellaneous duties and two extra for each Sub-Inspector attached to the thana. These are ordinarily required in connection with investigation and arrest in ordinary cases. The ordinary Armed police are fully occupied in providing guards and escorts. The armed reserve therefore constitute the only force at the disposal of the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police for dealing with disturbances on anything but the smallest scale. The present strength of this force is 76 constables in Sylhet, 12 in Cachar, 20 in each of the other plains districts, the total being 244 constables with five Inspectors, seven Sub-Inspectors and nineteen head-constables. Let us take Cachar. It consists of two subdivisions, comprises an area of 3,565 square miles, has a population of 5,27,228 souls, and contains 164 tea gardens, some of which are in remote and isolated places. The 12 constables provided for the district are hopelessly inadequate. They do not provide the force necessary to deal effectively with a single turbulent mob, and it is obvious that in a district containing a large number of tea gardens each with an ignorant and excitable labour force the occurrence of more than one disturbances at a time is a contingency which is by no means unlikely and has occurred in actual experience. The district of Sylhet, Sir, contains 5 subdivisions, comprises of an area of 5,388 square miles, has a population of 2,541,311 souls and contains 155 tea gardens. The force of 76 constables available in Sylhet gives an average of only 15 men to deal with disturbances in each of the 5 thickly populated subdivisions. In other districts the force is equally inadequate. Sibsagar contains 3 subdivisions, has an area of 4,996 square miles, a population of 8,23,197 souls, and contains 184 tea gardens. Lakhimpur has two subdivisions, an area of 4,529 square miles, a population of 5,88,295 souls and 177 tea gardens. There are 26 constables in each of the districts of Sibsagar and Lakhimpur which with large areas and enormous labour forces to control is clearly almost ineffective. The inadequacy of these forces has been repeatedly demonstrated of recent years.

While sporadic crimes will always occur, there arises sometimes an epidemic of crimes just as we are faced sometimes with epidemics of cholera and small-pox. On the top of that, Sir, we have been confronted with the non-co-operation movement and its activities, and we must be fully prepared to deal with them. Hon'ble Members will remember the epidemic of hât looting which broke out in the year 1918 in so many parts of the province during the war. In the early days of January in that year, 16 hâts were looted in different parts of Sylhet. The Civil Police were altogether unable to deal with the situation. A force of Assam Rifles had to be brought in to help, and the services of the Surma Valley Light Horse were also called upon. There was an outbreak of 9 cases at about the same time in Cachar. In the Assam Valley, hâts were looted in Goalpara and Nowgong in January and

February. In April there were no less than 149 cases of looting in Dibrugarh district in addition to 15 in Sibsagar. The Assam Valley Light Horse and a detachment of Assam Rifles had to assist in restoring order.

Serious disturbances occurred again in the shape of riots on tea gardens in the neighbourhood of Doom Dooma in the Lakhimpur district in September 1920. In one of them a jamadar was beaten; in another the Manager's bungalow was attacked and mobbed and a jamadar beaten; in a third a bungalow was mobbed, and Assistant Manager beaten, and the Superintendent of Police and two constables severely wounded; in a fourth three traders' shops were looted; in a fifth a hât was looted. It was necessary to employ 5½ platoons of Assam Rifles, *i.e.*, about 275 rifles in restoring and maintaining order.

In May 1921 occurred the exodus of tea garden coolies from the Chargola Valley in Sylhet, and a most anxious period of unrest on a large number of the gardens in Sylhet and Cachar. On the top of this a strike broke out on the Assam-Bengal Railway. The resources of the Civil Police were inadequate to maintain order in the tea areas and to protect those who wished to work on the railway, and it was necessary to employ a considerable force of Assam Rifles, as well as a body of the Manipur State Military Police, which His Highness the Maharajah very kindly placed at the disposal of Government for these purposes. Then in October last there was a series of strikes attended with riots on tea gardens in the Darrang district. Managers and tea garden mohorrirs were assaulted, and on one garden the Superntendent of Police was knocked down and beaten when attempting to protect the head mohurrir. Here again it was found necessary to employ a large number of Assam Rifles to restore order.

It is, I think, clear Sir that whatever may have been the case in the past in the unsettled times which we in common with the rest of the civilised world have inherited as a consequence of the great war a force of 12 or 26 constable is not sufficient to deal with disturbances in a district with a population of over half a million. While a force of 25 men may be capable of dealing with an outbreak in one place, it is utterly insufficient to cope with widespread trouble, or with simultaneous outbreaks in widely-separated area. In consequence of a recommendation made by Inspector General of Police, we propose therefore to increase the Armed Reserve to 102 in Sylhet and Lakhimpur, to 76 in Sibsagar, and to 51 in each of the other plains districts, with of course the necessary complement of superior officers. At this stage, it may be mentioned that the corresponding force in some of the districts of the neighbouring province of Bengal is as follows :—

Mymensingh	...	...	...	130	Constables.
Burdwan	...	...	...	117	„
Midnapur	...	...	...	114	„
Backerganj	...	...	...	100	„
Chittagong	...	...	...	100	„
Jalpaiguri	...	...	...	100	„

It will thus be seen that compared with these our proposals are moderate, fair and reasonable. The total force comprised in the Armed Reserve will be increased by 2 Inspectors, 4 Sub-Inspectors, 23 Head constables and 291 constables, or including provision for the usual leave and sickness reserve, by 2 Inspectors, 5 Sub-Inspectors, 23 Head constables and 317 constables.

The only alternative to the increase of our armed civil police is the alternative which we have had repeatedly to employ during the last year or two, *viz.*, the use of the Assam Rifles at the first sign of disorder. The Assam Rifles are of course intended to safeguard the province against internal disorder as well as against outside aggression, and they must always constitute a reserve of force to fall back upon when the ordinary resources of the province are insufficient to maintain law and order. But they are and have to be specially and highly trained for a particular species of warfare. To use them for ordinary police work is to use them for a purpose for which they are not trained, and moreover if such use extends over a long period it interferes seriously with their training for their proper duties. It also necessarily interferes with the duties for which the force is primarily intended. During the recent cold weather, operations of frontier officers have had to be curtailed, outposts have had to be withdrawn and we have been prevented from putting down a reign of murder, lawlessness and savagery in a portion of the frontier area under our political control. If the frontier hill tribes find that guards are practically withdrawn often, there is the possibility of their committing raids on our frontier villages. To judge by the views which have found expression in several quarters, the employment of military police on ordinary civil police work is disliked by the public as much as it is by themselves. The view taken by the Government is that the civil police should be strong enough to deal promptly and effectually with ordinary every-day disorder, and that it should be necessary to call in the help of the Assam Rifles only in the case of widespread disturbances.

The question may be examined from another standpoint. Our present force of civil police provides one policeman for every 13·8 square miles of area and for 2,086 of the population. But—

Bengal has one policeman to every 3 sq. miles of area and 1,917 of population.

Bombay	„	„	„	5·15	„	„	727 „
United Provinces	„	„	„	2·9	„	„	1,243 „
Punjab	„	„	„	5·17	„	„	952 „

Bihar and Orissa alone have a smaller proportion of policemen to population but they have one policeman to every 5·2 square miles of area. Burma alone has a smaller proportion of policemen to population and they have one policeman for every 842 of the population.

Clearly therefore we are not making any undue proposal in proposing to increase our force. The civil police budget for 1922-23 imposes a charge on us of 4 annas 9 pies per head of the population. In Bengal the corresponding figure is five annas nine pies. For the other provinces we have not got the budget proposals, but calculating on their budgets for 1921-22 the only province where the incidence of cost is lower than in Assam is Bihar and Orissa, but Bihar and Orissa had to call in the aid of the regular army ; and Hon'ble Members may remember that only a few years ago we had to send Assam Rifles to hat province at the request of the Government of that province

to help in quelling disturbances. The charge is, in the Central Provinces, 6 annas 6 pies, in Madras 7 annas; in the Punjab 8 annas; and in the other provinces it is higher still.

I hope, Sir, that I have shown that our present force of Armed Police is insufficient for our ordinary requirements and that the addition which we propose to make to it is a moderate one. It only remains to explain why we propose to incur this expenditure at a time when the strictest economy is imperative. The explanation lies of course in the disturbed condition of the province of which every Member of the Council must be aware. Assam enjoyed the reputation of being a peacepful province and her people of being peaceloving and law-abiding. But where peace and order reigned, there the followers and supporters of the non-co-operation movement introduced disorder and disturbance and interfered with our people in our towns and villages living their own life and pursuing their lawful occupation. The non-co-operation movement, after failing to attain its object amongst the vast majority of the educated section of the community, deliberately aimed at fomenting unrest, race and class hatred and disaffection towards Government amongst the masses. Towards the latter months of 1921 the masses had been persuaded that the present Government was coming to an end on the 31st December, and that it would be succeeded by " Swaraj " or " Gandhi Raj ", the chief feature of which was to be the abolition of taxation. In a speech which was made at Gauhati by one of the leaders of the movement in the Assam Valley, the approach of Swaraj and the contemplated launching of civil disobedience were announced, and the audience was encouraged not only to refuse to pay taxes and disregard civil orders, but " to establish the people's right on Government offices, thanas and treasuries ".

The facts unmistakeably point to the conclusion that the leaders and active supporters of the movement sedulously prepared the soil for starting civil disobedience; and it is highly probable that, unless checked, the recruitment of volunteers though prohibited by Government will go on and if this does there can be no reasonable certainty that civil disobedience will not be started. Only on the 18th March, I saw a press telegram which contains this report.

"after about seven hours discussion the working committee of the All-India Congress Committee passed several resolutions " and

I will refer to the resolution that is most relevant for the purposes of this discussion.

" The Committee desires to make it clear that Gandhi's arrest makes no change in the programme recently laid down in Bordoli Delhi resolutions and calls upon all Congress organisation to devote themselves to prosecution of constructive pragramme laid down therein."

Recruitment of volunteers seems to be one of the items in that constructive programme.

To pass on again to the development of events in this province.

Information was received that volunteers who had been enlisted in thousands were openly interfering with personal liberty, with the administration of the law and with the maintenance of order. The higher Government servants were boycotted and insulted, petty Government servants such as constables were told that their present employment was coming to an end and that the sooner they transferred their allegiance to the coming power the better it would be for them. Special efforts were made to unsettle the

tea garden coolies, one of the means employed being the boycotting of hâts and the stoppage of supplies to all connected with tea garden. It must be obvious to anyone who remembers the epidemic of hât looting in 1918, what must have been the outcome of this stoppage of supply if it had been allowed to continue. All over the country, meetings were held at which highly inflammatory speeches were made. Headquarters stations and in particular the precincts of the Government offices were the scenes of noisy and rowdy anti-Government demonstrations. All this stirring up of anti-Government feeling has had its natural result. In November last, an attempt was made to murder a police Sub-Inspector in Sylhet who had in the course of his duties sent up for trial certain members of the revolutionary party. In Sibsagar, an Inspector of Police has been beaten, as he was suspected to have helped in dispersing an unlawful assembly of volunteers at Jorhat; two Managers of the tea gardens acting as Special Sub-Inspectors of Police have been attacked and their motor-cars smashed; a railway survey party has been assaulted, its records destroyed and instruments broken. In Goalpara, a Sub-Inspector who had arrested some volunteers was assaulted and the accused rescued; and a man who ventured to purchase some articles at a civil court sale was mobbed and his purchases snatched from him. At the end of January, it was reported from Sylhet that every Government officer who went to the muffusil was pursued with insulting cries of "Lore" "Lore" "Bilaty Golam," "Bilaty Kootha" "Engrejer Batcha." The result of an agitation in course of which the people were incited to disregard authority and taught to be hostile to the Government, Government officials, Britishers or any loyal supporter of Government, became manifest so much so that the mass became intolerant of any views which did not coincide with theirs, and provocatively abusive to anyone whose political views differred from theirs or who did not seem to agree with them. It was considered unsafe for anyone to go about in some quarters except in khaddar caps. Can such illegal activities by which a noisy minority seek to impose its will upon a quiet submissive majority, be allowed to prevail to the infringement of popular rights and liberties? In the Assam Valley at Jamunamukh a month ago a number of prisoners convicted by the Deputy Commissioner of Nowgong were forcibly released by a turbulent mob which also attacked the train in which the Deputy Commissioner was travelling. On the same day, the Commissioner of Surma Valley, who is held in high esteem, whose noble qualities of head and heart I learnt to value while we worked together here—he as the Chief Secretary and I as the Legal Remembrancer—and whom, I found during my visit to Sylhet, idolised by the people while he was Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet, for the unflagging devotion with which he worked to alleviate the miseries of the poorer people when they were confronted with the ghaunt spectre of scarcity, was attacked when dispersing a prohibited meeting at Kanairghat in the district of Sylhet, and a small body of armed police with him were compelled to fire on the mob.

To pass on to another cognate topic up to the end of January last, when a substantial amount of the land revenue in the Assam Valley should have been collected this year, practically nothing had been collected. Mauzadars everywhere depaired of their ability to enforce collection and some of them preferred to resign their posts and their means of livelihood rather than make the attempt. In the Sibsagar subdivision, collections up to the 21st January amounted to Rs. 1,000 as compared with 67,000 by the same date last year.

In the Jorhat subdivision, the figure was Rs. 1,400 as compared with Rs. 52,000. The firm and energetic measures which have been taken by Deputy Commissioners have since altered this state of affairs and revenue is now coming in very satisfactorily. In other respects, also, the position, has improved, but this improvement has been effected by the use of certain of the emergency powers which Government possess and by the employment in the plains district of some 15 or 16 hundred of the Assam Rifles. And as I have already explained, it will be necessary to fall back upon the Assam Rifles as a reserve in the case of unusually widespread disturbances. The proposed addition will however give District Officers sufficient local reserves to enable them to deal with ordinary disturbances, and I think it is clear that conditions in the province are such that it is bounden duty of Government, in spite of the serious financial position, to provide such strength of police as they consider to be the minimum compatible with ordinary maintenance of law and order.

The Hon'ble Members will please recall to mind what is happening beyond the province. The wave of unrest which has been passing all over the country has led to serious outbreaks attended with loss of life and property in different parts of India and with widespread distress over wide areas in some parts. The Government of India in discharge of their responsibility for the maintenance of law and order and the preservation of public security have called the attention of the Local Government to the necessity and desirability of strengthening the armed police. Although we fully realize the time is not propitious for incurring extra expenditure, we feel that in discharge of our loyal obligation to the Government of India, we have no option but to propose the increase.

I may add that this is the only province where we have no regular troops. It was pressed upon us to apply for British troops and employ machine guns, etc. But we carefully considered these suggestions and the conclusion which we arrived at was that these measures were not necessary. We closely and critically examined the proposal of the Inspector General of Police and determined what is the minimum force of armed reserves we require to maintain peace and order, and we are asking merely for that.

RAI SAHIB MANOMOHAN LAHIRI:—I beg, Sir, to withdraw my motion for a reduction of the item of Rs. 1,74,000 by Rs. 74,000.

In supporting this motion for reduction by half the provision of Rs. 1,74,000 for reorganization of the Armed Police Force, I do not minimize the gravity of the situation that made the Government provide this expenditure for increasing the strength of the Armed Police Force, on the contrary, I consider it expedient to increase its strength at least for avoiding the excesses of the Assam Rifles if not for anything else. Because in cases of emergency the services of the Assam Rifles have to be requisitioned if the then existing Armed Police Force be incapable of dealing with it; and of the two evils the Armed Police is better than the Assam Rifles.

Now admitting the necessity of increasing the strength of the Armed Police I would ask the House to consider if the situation is still so grave as to justify the expenditure of Rs. 1,74,000. The Hon'ble Members are aware that the situation has improved and they will agree with me when I say that the lawless agitation to suppress which the increased Police Force is wanted has been checked and will have a natural death if it is not provoked or does not get stimulus in the meantime from our overzealousness in dealing with it. To meet emergencies Rs. 87,000 will, I think, be quite sufficient.

MAULAVI RUKUNUDDIN AHMED:—Sir, there is an identical motion standing against my name and I beg to withdraw it as I am going to support this motion.

The motion standing against the name of Maulavi Rukunuddin Ahmed was, by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

MAULAVI RUKUNUDDIN AHMED:—In my opinion it would have been better to try our luck first to throw the entire expenditure of the Assam Rifles upon the Central Government. Then we should have thought of any reorganization of the Armed Police Reserve. Of course after hearing the Home Member I am fully convinced of the necessity of the reorganization of the Armed Police Reserve. But now the question is whether the grant of Rs. 1,74,000 is precisely proportionate to the present political disturbances. My point is that, it should be raised only to the extent of our necessity but no more. Hence I think that the expenditure of half of the amount allotted for the purpose would be quite enough for the proposed reorganization. Having regard to this fact I propose that the lump provision of Rs. 1,74,000 be reduced by only half.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI:—Sir, may I be permitted to ask the Government Member to tell us whether this Armed Reserve Force is going to be a permanent measure or a temporary one only?

THE HON'BLE Mr. A. MAJID:—We want to make the addition permanent. I hope I made it clear that our present strength of the Armed Police Reserve was inadequate.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI:—Sir, it will appear that a motion on the same subject demanding a reduction of one lakh stands in my name. Before I lend my support to the motion I beg for permission to withdraw mine.

The motion standing against the name of Maulavi Munawwarali was, by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI:—I lend my whole-hearted support to the motion placed before the House. It has been clear that the principle of rigorous retrenchment has been accepted by the House. Now the question is whether the demand is proportionate to the necessity that has arisen. The proposal of so many motions indicated beyond the shadow of a doubt that the House is not convinced that the whole amount is necessary. I think the consensus of opinion is that half the amount will suffice. Sir, the question has been pressed on the Government side, on the strength of statistics of different districts. I beg to say that the statistics are not always sufficient data for accurate decision. Statistics often mislead and statistics are not scientific generalisations. Mymensingh is a district which varies—as a matter of fact it must vary—from circumstances obtaining in our district by population, by the number of the population, by the characteristics of the people and by many other local circumstances. So also Chittagong and other districts that have been mentioned. The only criterion ought to be the necessity within the district or province itself, that is to say, we have to determine the amount of expenditure on the amount of necessity existing within the province. So I would ask the House not to put very much importance on the statistics that have been placed before it. My calculation is that half the amount will be sufficient and I would also request the House to consider if that amount will not suffice, as the situation is improving daily.

MR. A. J. G. CRESSWELL :—Sir, it is with much regret that I find myself compelled to oppose the resolution to reduce by half the grant considered by Government to be necessary for the purpose of increasing the Armed Police. My reason being, that in my opinion the interests of the Tea Industry in the Surma Valley, the security and welfare of the Europeans, the Indian staff, and the coolies connected therewith, the protection of Manipuris, Patnies, Naths, Namasuts, and all other loyal and peaceful citizens, *can for the present* only be efficiently secured by maintaining in the Surma Valley a total armed force of not less than 1,000 Rifles. Thus the proposed increase in numbers of Armed Police as indicated to-day by the Hon'ble Mr. Majid, in view of at least the situation as described by him, distinctly point to being totally inadequate. Whether the proposed increase in the Armed Police may best be done with Armed Police, Regular Troops, Assam Rifles, is a matter I am without prejudice not in the position to here discuss. Doubtless Government has reasons for the proposed increase of Armed Police. For a number of years the Regular Regiment formerly always quartered in the Surma Valley has been done away with, the districts being more or less left without troops.

Sir, for some time conditions have prevailed in the Surma Valley, complete details of which I should in Parliamentary language find it difficult to fully describe. In January last the marching into Silchar by a large body of so-called volunteers numbering several thousands. Subsequently the parading of gangs of these so-called volunteers in batches of 500 to 2,000 became the order of the day and whenever the Deputy Commissioner proposed to sell ghats and Excise licenses, making it necessary that his Court and other parts of the station be guarded by a considerable force of Armed Police or Assam Rifles. Further, Sir, the crossing of Government ferries without payment, assault of the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar, destruction of local board property, picketting of bazaars, interference with those who wished to sell their goods. The holding of large and excited meetings with the conspicuous display of the Red Flag, generally considered to be the emblem of Revolution and Anarchy. The enrolling of ignorant tea garden coolies as volunteers with promises of land in the near future when tea gardens would cease to be held and managed by Europeans. Difficulty experienced by the Police in carrying out the Order of the Court amounting to request for civil assistance, the affray in Silchar Bazaar between the police and those opposed to Law and Order,—such occurrences, Sir, I claim, reasonably point to the fact that sedition, unrest, insecurity, and widespread disregard for law and order have prevailed.

Sir, the recent terrible catastrophe at Kanairghat when the position and state of the district was evidently so critical, that the Commissioner, an officer with mature experience, possessing unique knowledge of the district was compelled to despatch a telegram (not even in cipher) to the Officer Commanding the Surma Valley Light Horse, urgently requesting the immediate despatch of an armed force,—such action, Sir, in view of the Commissioner's most intimate knowledge of the impossibility of Planters being able to leave their gardens owing to the unsettled state of the district, must, Sir, accentuate the fact that there was no other armed force available. Sir, I desire also to invite attention to a report that the Demonstration Column marching through parts of Sylhet have recently actually been attacked and the drinking water prepared for the Troops contaminated. A few details I may here supply. The incident I refer to occurred at Soljai, where a platoon of 50 men were taken to the lines 200 yards distant and there were attacked by 40 coolies. One cooly was shot through the arm and 8 of the coolies were severely beaten with *lathis* and are now in hospital.

Sir, suggestions made at the Surma Valley Conference held in Sylhet in September 1920 would seem to have met with considerable success, the significance and importance of which Government, in my opinion, so fatally failed to appreciate. The Chargola exodus resulting in such untold suffering and deplorable loss of coolies' lives, came as a surprise, while sedition and disregard of authority obtained a " flying start ".

Sir, having lived in peace and harmony with the people around me, interesting myself with pleasure in the many topics concerning the general welfare of all, it is indeed with disappointment and sorrow that I to-day find myself at variance with so many I have considered friends, but, Sir, I conscientiously consider I have no alternative but to support Government in all measures taken if possible to check and prevent occurrences that must inevitably lead to serious disturbance, semi-rebellion, if not to civil war.

SRIJUT LOHIT CHANDRA NAYAK :—Sir, I have a motion for reducing the provision of Rs. 1,74,000 for reorganization of the Armed Police Reserve by Rs. 74,000, which with the permission of the House, I beg to withdraw in favour of the one so ably moved by my Hon'ble colleague Mr. Nilmoni Phukan.

The motion standing in the name of Srijut Lohit Chandra Nayak was, by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

SRIJUT LOHIT CHANDRA NAYAK :—Sir, in supporting Mr. Phukan's resolution, I wish to make a few observations. First of all, Sir, it is a new item. It has been made to strengthen the hand of the Police,—in other words to make the Police more efficient. Now, Sir, efficiency is an irrelevant term. We deserve only that which we can pay for. Now this amount is a very big one—*viz.*, Rs. 1,74,000. The question is whether we can afford to pay it at this time of financial stringency. That is to be seen. Yes, there is no gainsaying that the Police are the bedrock of the administration. A strong and effective police is absolutely necessary for the maintenance of peace and order, but I think, Sir, that the situation for which this provision has been made has been so now as it was before the 31st December. At that time there was a vision of the establishment of a Swaraj and the followers of that movement did their level best to subvert the established Government by all means in their power, but after the 31st December the situation has eased down to a great extent. It is now to be seen that after the non-co-operation movement which was first neglected having come to standstill whether this large amount can be budgetted for the arrest of that movement. To my mind, Sir, this movement will not be able to lift its head for some time to come, when almost all its leaders have been removed from the scene of their activities. The provision of half the amount as is proposed by my Hon'ble friend Mr. Nilmoni Phukan will be quite sufficient to deal with the situation and, Sir, if this amount be reduced I think it will not scrape the item to the bone. Some amount of course will be necessary, *i.e.*, half the amount—to give effect to the start which has already been made in some districts for the reorganization of this armed police. One thing that has struck me, Sir, is that the Assam Rifles cannot be utilised for the ordinary police duty, which is not more difficult than that which a sepoy is ordinarily called on to perform. I think they can be trained easily to do police duties. I do not really understand how it has come to pass that if this Assam Rifles are reserved for the maintenance of order on the frontiers, we should pay for them. The whole amount must come from the Central Government.

With these remarks I beg to resume my seat.

SRIJUT PADMANATH GOHAIN BARUA :—I think, Sir, I have already entered my protest against this item of expenditnre entailing a recurring expenditure of Rs. 1,21,000 and a non-recurring expenditure of Rs. 99,000 while discussing the Budget the other day and I reiterate the reasons which I put forward in that connection. I would at this stage recommend the total omission of the proposed grant of Rs. 1,74,000 for the re-organisation of the Armed Police Reserve but for what I have just heard from the Hon'ble Home Member admitting that it is not of a permanent nature and for the information that the work of re-organisation has already been taken in hand in some districts in the Assam Valley. I am however agreeable to the Hon'ble Mover in recommending that the total amount should be reduced to half, and as I have already expressed my views and supported him elaborately in my Budget speech I have now only to associate myself with what the Hon'ble Mover said in support of his motion. And, in consideration of the number of motions on this one and the same subject by different movers, I have little doubt—and I confidently hope—that it will be carried by a large majority, if not unanimously.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, in the first place I must protest against so many things both inside and outside the province being referred to by the Hon'ble Member of the Government, regarding the present state of political unrest. I confess I was not prepared to hear so much. The Hon'ble Member of the Government and the Hon'ble Member on my left have between them touched upon too many themes and things the accuracy of which I deny. It is quite possible to go on discussing about these things from opposite standpoints for days and hours together, and so without presuming that I shall be able to reply to all the questions raised I am just trying to touch upon a few points as far as I can. In the first place, Sir, the case for making an addition to the existing armed police force has been stated in the explanatory memorandum attached to the Budget statement which the members have already seen and this case has been amplified and supplemented by the Hon'ble the Home Member. First of all he tried to justify it by showing us the proportion which the police force bears to the population of the entire province comparing the same with that in other provinces. I think this is a wrong line of reasoning. Each province must be judged according to its own peculiar circumstances. Of course it is only a question of policy that is involved here which is whether the Government of this country is to be carried on by mere force or by any other method. If it is their real intention to rely solely on the increase of the police and military forces growing arbitrarily with the increase of the population, it may be useless now to oppose the Government policy. But, otherwise, we might be willing to know from the Government side what is the proportionate increase of literacy and industries in the growing population as compared with Police. But as to that the Hon'ble Member has not said or suggested anything. He has simply asked us to believe that we must be ready for an increased police in a particular proportion just as the population increases, as if police is the sole remedy for discontent whether there are any other methods of quieting the future or present unrest and disquiet nothing has been said or suggested. But I think instead of labouring much on this point I shall be able to make my ideas clear by quoting passages from a letter which appeared in the "Englishman" a few days ago. I think it is a letter from Sir Hamilton Grant.

He says :—

"There are two things that it would be well that people in England should realise : first that it is quite untrue that the only thing that the oriental understands is force ; and second that there is much in the character of the peoples of India that deserves respect, affection and often admiration. Generally speaking the oriental fears force less than the Europeans. For he is a fatalist and often a very brave man. The psychology of the view that machine guns are the panacea for Indian unrest is as false as the Prussian doctrine of 'frightfulness.' Even the unmartial Bengalee can walk steadily to the gallows for a cause in which he believes. As to character those who have served among Pathans, Sikhs, Dogras, Punjabee Moslems, and the many kindly peoples of the plains and hills of Northern India will agree that for personal courage, self-sacrificing devotion and hospitality it would be difficult to find their equal. It would be well that this should be remembered, and that there should be no wholesale condemnation of India because of the dangerous activities of a comparatively few agitators. Law and order must of course be ruthlessly maintained but we should deplore rather than welcome the necessity for drastic measures against peoples by nature so fine and lovable."

So, here we see the real difficulties of the problem, and on this point of Government policy I do not like to say anything more. The Hon'ble Member of the Government, Sir, has referred to things of pre-non-co-operation periods and ask us to imagine a post non-co-operation period ; of hât-lootings which took place immediately following the outbreak of the war and when the war was going on and also to things which he apprehends will take place when this generation has passed away. He has also referred to things which touch on Indian economic problems rather than political. He has referred to strikes in tea garden and other labour strikes and so forth. I do not know what justification he had to travel over so wide an area when we are simply discussing a particular budget item of this province. But I have my short reply and it is this, that much of the disturbances to which he refers, hât-lootings, and strikes, and so on ;—these had their origin not at all in any sort of the political unrest for which the present increase in the armed police is required. We should not mingle political with economic causes. If, Sir, the owners of tea gardens refuse proper wages to the coolies, if they were not kind in their treatment, and if the coolies rose against them, is it necessary for the Administration to incur expenditure in raising an armed force simply to protect tea gardens and planters who are not getting on well with their coolies ? But Government are too much for the planters. This is the impression which I regret was created on me by the Hon'ble Member of the Government. Many other questions were raised which are more of a private and local character, matters which ought not to have been introduced now as matters of provincial or Imperial importance. Beginning from mass civil disobedience overshadowing the whole empire, he has come down to urchin cries of *lure lure* (লুচে লুচে) in my part of the country, a thing unintelligible to most of us here. It was an abrupt fall. If street urchins cry (লুচে লুচে) consciously or unconsciously in the sight and hearing of particular co-operators or from motives of individual enmity or jealousy, is it a proper subject of provincial politics and actual insult to the Government, so that the members of the Government should take notice of these and send an armed force or post punitive police to guard the co-operator or the gentleman who thinks or reports himself insulted ? It is simply a matter to be dealt with by the existing police and the local Magistracy, which is enough.

Sir, the Member of the Government also referred to questions of excesses committed by the volunteers and so on and my friend on my left Mr. Cresswell also supplemented the Hon'ble Member of the Government with further allegations, but I think that the excesses committed by the members of the police force also may be in the same way brought before the Council. But I am not going to do that because it is likely to disturb feelings which I am anxious to avoid. I think this is not the occasion, nor is this the place to give vent to our individual passions and feelings of grievances and insults. The Government we know are already in an extremely indignant and excited mood, and we should be very cautious in adding fuel to the fire and giving further provocation to the Government in their present excitement. I remember reading that if a man gets angry and if I place a stick or cudgel in his hand during his anger it will have an effect on the nervous system of the man and he will get more angry and may lose self-control: This is called somatic resonance. The present increase of the police force is I think a similar case. We know that the Government are in an excited mood and if we go on adding to the police and keep them ready for use by the Government everywhere in the province it will have a very bad effect on their nervous system and they are likely to use their powers in a way detrimental to the interests of the public and the Government alike. I would wish the Home Member to keep out of sight with his armed police as far as possible.

I will appeal to my non-official European colleagues in the Council not to go on thus exciting the Government. They should realise how much of the labour discontent is due to themselves. The Labour Committee is still sitting and we do not know what their verdict will be—and I do not know why their verdict should have been forestalled by my friend on my left. Not being satisfied with reference to things that happened some years ago as the combined effect of non-political causes existing all over India, the Hon'ble Member has introduced matter of a purely private and local character. Sir, reference has been made to the demonstration march of the troops in the province, and the dangers of the employment of the Assam Rifles for ordinary purposes. Myself and others of the town of Sylhet have some first-hand knowledge and I think much about the Assam Rifles is also within the knowledge of many members of this Council. I may, for the information of the House and for the information of my Hon'ble friend on my left, just say how these men are behaving in going round on their marches, these men of the Assam Rifles, not when proceeding in march formation but when they were walking or strolling along public thoroughfares by twos and threes. They robbed people of their things, looted particular shops, caused injuries to people, snatched their umbrellas and compelled respectable people to abandon the public roads, and walk down along the drains. I shall not detain the Council with citing other instances..... .....

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—I do not think we are discussing "Assam Rifles," we are discussing the question of the armed police.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM:—I say so because it has been said that the blame for the present discontent lies upon the people alone and not upon the Government or their Agents. Whatever the case may be my submission is, let the Government consider how much of the present unrest is due to the people and how much to the Government. I am not going to deny that there is disrespect and disaffection to Government, but I only ask the Government to realise why it is so, and whether this frequent employment

and exhibition of the police force is not responsible for aggravating the present feeling against the Government. I think the Hon'ble Minister who is the accredited leader of the people will not accuse me of misrepresentation when I say that the people who used to love and respect the Government as *mai bap* some years ago have lost the same respect for them now and think and speak of them in a different way. The people's feelings have been wounded in such a way by the frequent and excessive employment of the police force that they are losing their confidence and respect for the Government. So I submit that instead of incurring increased police expenditure as the sole remedy for peace and order, Government should more carefully scan and go to the root cause of the economic and political situation and spend the money in other directions. One word more and I have done. It has been suggested in the explanatory memorandum that the ordinary police force is not sufficient to maintain law and order, whatever may be meant by these two words, and that armed police is required. It has been said that the Assam Rifles are not trained to do this sort of work. May I ask what they are trained to do? Are they trained to pull people's by their noses, break their umbrellas and molest gentlemen? I find an expenditure of Rs. 1,74,000 under this head for an addition to the police force. It would be better to spend this sum for training the Assam Rifles how to preserve peace in times of unrest and disorder. Another argument is that the present conditions require it. I do not think that this refers to the present situation at this date. It may have been true when the budget was framed but the conditions I submit have changed with the incarceration in jail of the great founder of the non-co-operation movement, the saintly sinner against the law of sedition. His present instructions to his followers are, as everybody knows, to refrain from mass civil disobedience and violence and not even to follow him into jail; he has asked them for changing their course of action and that is to follow a constructive programme of *charkha* spinning and so on, and we know that his instructions are sure to be obeyed by those who profess to be his true followers. I do not think that the conditions which existed some months ago do exist even now and the present policy will only continue an excitement for nothing to the detriment of the people and the Government alike.

Last of all, Sir, I have an appeal to make to the non-official European Members of the Council—I mean the non-official members—I think that in one sense they have a larger interest at stake in the country than the official Europeans. I think that they have better opportunities of understanding the the people of the country. They are connected with them in their daily business, and I think they can do much to allay the present unrest more by love than by an appeal to Government to help them with Gurkhas and riflemen at the merest suspicion, difficulty or trouble with the employés. It may be said of the Government officials that they have not come to stay here but it must be admitted that the non-official Europeans who carry on trades or industries—the capitalists—with larger vested interests have come to stay, and they should realise this. They know what our villagers are. They can never enter into an armed conflict with the Government. It is true that they sometimes create a *golmal* but this is for pricking poverty and through ignorance and can easily be put down by sympathy and leniency and their economic amelioration.

Much has been said about the Kanairghat tragedy. Of course the Commissioner, *i.e.*, Mr. Webster, is as well known to me as to anyone else here and for him personally I have the greatest respect .....

Not he but the policy of the Government .....

THE HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID :—Sir, I rise to a point of order. We are not discussing that incident.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, I am not also going to deal with it in details. Whatever took place at Kanairghat is owing to the policy which the Government are following. So I would in conclusion once more appeal to my European colleagues that they should treat the people with love and not excite the Government to continue the policy that they have been following any longer and it will not be good either for the rulers or the ruled to continue in this state of abnormal excitement, which ought to disappear as soon as possible.

SARDAR BAHADUR ANJAB ALI KHAN :—Sir, I am on old man and I hope to be excused for my boldness in offering an opinion. In my opinion an increase in the Armed Police is an absolute necessity. In matters of this kind doing things by half is not desirable. If we cut down the grant we cannot get the required number of men. I should have been pleased to see a fire engine provided, but as buckets only have been provided we must do the best we can with what we have got.

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORAH :—Sir, I have already expressed my willingness to withdraw my motion dealing with the entire omission of the sum provided under this head and I now formally beg leave of the Council to withdraw it, and to speak a word or two in respect of the motion under discussion. I had sufficient grounds in order to support my resolution had it not been for the fact that after taking the sense of the Council I felt myself constrained to side with the majority of the Members who are in favour of a reduction of the amount. The object of the strengthening of the Armed Branch of the police force is obvious as has been explained by the Hon'ble Finance Member in his explanatory note and as has now been explained by the Hon'ble Member in charge of police. I admit, Sir, along with every peaceable citizen and with every Member of the Government that everyone is interested in quelling down disturbances and maintaining peace and order and also in saving from molestation by lawless people the public, among which the Members of this Council are also included. As a matter of fact when there was a disturbance of the coolies in the Tezpur subdivision of the Darrang district some gentlemen, some of whom are present in this Council, took an active part in quelling these disturbances, so our interests and the interests of the European community who are carrying on a trade or some other business are indentical. Now, Sir, the question is whether at this time or at any time whatever we are justified in undertaking such an exorbitant amount of expenditure as provided for in the budget for the purpose. I hope the Hon'ble Members present here will enlighten us on this particular subject from their experience.

Sir, I already expressed my willingness to withdraw my motion for total omission of the grant, *viz.*, Rs. 1,74,000, provided for organisation of additional police force. I now formally beg leave of the Council to withdraw and to support the motion under discussion.

I proposed the total omission of the grant but taking the sense of the Council I feel constrained to withdraw my original resolution and to fall in with the majority of the Hon'ble Members who are in favour of half reduction. Sir, I venture to say that I could succeed in convincing the Hon'ble Members of the soundness of my original resolution had it not been for my regard for the sentiments of the Council. However, I will come to this point later on.

In the meantime I should like to say that the object for strengthening the Armed Police is obvious as explained by the Hon'ble the Finance Member in his explanatory note to the budget and now explained by Hon'ble the Judicial Member. Everyone of us is interested in keeping the internal peace and order and in saving from molestation the general public in whom the members of this Council are also included. As a matter of fact there are some gentlemen among the Hon'ble Members who took part in quelling the coolie disturbance at Tezpur. We identify our interest with those of the Europeans who carry on trade and other profession here. We certainly cannot be held responsible for all disturbances caused by the coolie population. This is due to the fault of the garden authority. The Assamese population cannot pay for maintenance of peace and order among the garden coolies.

Now the question is whether under the present circumstances, we are justified in taking such an exorbitant amount of expenditure as provided in the budget for the purpose. I hope the Hon'ble Members will enlighten us on this point from their personal knowledge and experience of the situation.

We need not be prejudiced by the description of one or two instances of lawlessness which had already met with condign punishment and the existing military or police force was enough to cope with such a situation. It will not be too much to say that one Gurkha with gun and bayonet is more than a match for thousands of street urchins carried away by impulse or emotion.

It is urged that the Assam Rifles who have practically no work at present to do are not properly trained for quelling the civil disturbance of the nature complained against. They are reserved for more urgent purposes, probably for tragic purposes. I should like to say that if the Assam Rifles be trained in such a way as to cope with the civil disturbances our expenditure will be less than maintaining an additional police force in Armed branch.

It is contended that other provinces have adopted similar measures for suppression of outbreaks and lawlessness. I submit, Sir, the state of affairs here and in other provinces are quite different and their revenues also stand on quite a different footing.

The peculiar feature of this lump provision out of which Rs. 1,21,000 to be devoted to recurring expenditure, is that it does not disclose any definite scheme shewing the number of officers to be maintained in each grade of services with their salaries and the locality or localities where the forces to be garrisoned. Unless these details are placed before us I do not understand how the Hon'ble Members can reasonably come to any definite conclusion as to the desirability or otherwise of the provision made for the purpose and to support the Government in its demand in entirety.

Sir, I may be excused if I point out to the Hon'ble Members that provision has already been made for strengthening the Armed Police reserve. I may refer them to page 82 of the Budget—the first two headings—the number of the head constables in 1921-22 is 74 and the estimated expenditure

Rs. 25,560, the number and expenditure provided in the budget for the next year are, respectively, 80 and Rs. 27,600. Again under the head constables the numbers of the current and the next year are respectively 756 and 811 and the expenditure provided being Rs. 1,50,252 and Rs. 1,86,864, respectively, in brief, the total number of persons maintained this year under the head Police Force Armed Branch is 830 and the estimated expenditure Rs. 1,76,080 whereas the provision has been made in budget for maintenance of 891 persons at an estimated cost of Rs. 2,14,464. It appears that Rs. 38,384 have already been provided for increasing the strength of the Armed Police. I really do not understand if this sum of Rs. 1,74,000 is provided over and above the increased provision already made and I do not know what explanation the Hon'ble Member in charge of the Department has to offer. Some explanation, of course, might be advanced, but it is difficult to reconcile ourselves with any amount of explanation that might be given on this point. It is from this consideration that I remarked at the outset that I would be in a position to convince the Council of the reasonableness of my motion suggesting the entire omission of the demand. I should like to remind the Hon'ble Members the more the number of police force is increased the more will be the spread of discontenment among the peaceful and law-abiding citizens. I submit, Sir, the behaviour of police is now the principal topic of conversation among our simple folks. In conclusion, I fully endorse the observations already made by my predecessors and support the motion under consideration.

MR. W. E. H. GREYBURN :—I think the Hon'ble Mr. Majid has made out a very good case for the grant of Rs. 1,74,000 for the Armed Police. He has told us the extra Armed Police are necessary to relieve the Assam Rifles in coming into the valley to quell internal disturbances. The Assam Rifles are stationed on our Frontiers really for trouble on the borders. If the Armed Police force is not increased it seems to me that at the time of internal trouble the Assam Rifles will be sent to quell the internal trouble. Then what will be the probable result of all this ? The past history of the Hill Tracts I believe has been a series of raids. The next point is that when the gentle savage of the hills find that the guards are being taken away continually they will find the opportunity to start raiding again.

Another matter which several Hon'ble Members to-day have mentioned is that matters are much quieter in the province, I can say from the information that I get this is probably only temporary. Is it not therefore wise for the Government to be prepared in case of further outbreaks and not be caught as they have been quite recently with insufficient forces to quell the disturbances ? I only hope what some of the Members have said that there will be no further disturbances will prove to be true, but at the same time I think it will be a good insurance to spend this extra money asked by Hon'ble Mr. Majid.

KHAN SAHIB ALAUDDIN AHMAD CHAUDHURI :—Sir I regret that I have to take upon myself a very unpleasant task of opposing this reduction. The information given by Hon'ble Mr. Majid district by district and subdivision by subdivision about the disturbances and unrest from some years past up to the present time, both in and out of the province, are simply convincing and leave no room for doubt that such state of things, as stated, do not exist. We have our own personal knowledge of the things that we have seen. Those who are not prepared to place any reliance upon this information and are thinking lightly of

the present agitation and are still insisting upon the proposed reduction after hearing Mr. Cresswell who has given a story of violence upon the soldiers on their way of march are surely doing injustice to the country they represent, for I am sure, any further progress of the violence on the part of the people, will lead the country to a complete disorder which must be checked with all the forces the Government can command. The proposed number of the Armed Police to my mind, is not too much, if we consider the responsibility of each District Magistrate to maintain law and order.

MR. E. S. ROFFEY :—I rise to oppose this motion very strongly. A few years since the Assam Branch, Indian Tea Association, made certain enquiries with regard to the strength of the Armed Police and then discovered so far as I remember that there were about 25 residing at Jorhat, the headquarters of the Sibsagar district, and about the same number at Dibrugarh, the headquarters of the Lakhimpur district. It was also found that those 25 in each district were generally employed either in escorting prisoners, or opium, or currency, so that if and when they were called on they might not be ready for any emergency. What was the position then ? So far as I remember there were a few riots on and adjoining tea gardens and it was then thought they would spread and thereupon the Association represented very strongly to the Local Government that the Armed Police should be increased. The Local Government refused to increase it. That was the position then. What is the position now or quite recently ? I am not going into the details, as they have been given us by the Hon'ble the Home Member and Mr. Cresswell. All I can say in very moderate language is that the condition of this province is a very extraordinary one. What has been the result ? The Assam Rifles have had to be called out on many occasions and a large number of managers of tea estates have been made Sub-Inspectors and coolies have been made constables. Now I say that that fact alone proves that the Armed Police are insufficient. If the Assam Rifles have had to be called out and civilians have had to be made Sub-Inspectors I submit it is conclusive proof that the Armed Police or the protective force of this province are not sufficient.

Now, Sir, I must say I am rather surprised to hear the Hon'ble Mover advocating the employment of the Assam Rifles to carry on the duties of the police. On the other hand we have heard Mr. Dam objecting very strongly to such employment and alleging objectionable behaviour on the part of some members of the Assam Rifles. Surely, Sir, that is one of the strongest points why they should be asked to look after their own business and withdraw from police work and that the Armed Police should be increased. That point is unanswerable. The Assam Rifles have their own work in protecting the Frontiers of this province and should only be otherwise called upon in case of emergency. If they are withdrawn from police work, I think the proper course to adopt is to increase the Armed Police to such an extent as will preserve peace and order in this province. Now, Sir, what it comes to is this. Are the Government here to govern or not ? If they are here to govern, then they must protect the residents of the province, and if they say the police are insufficient, it is not in my opinion for the members of this House to say that they are sufficient. The Government are surely the best persons to decide as to the quantity required for the protection of this province and I therefore submit that, if they say that the grant they ask for is the least that they can do with, this House should vote this grant.

In conclusion there is one statement against which I wish to protest on behalf of the Tea Industry. Mr. Dam suggested that the riots which have occurred are due solely to the low wages on tea gardens. I challenge him to substantiate this statement. In my opinion he has no facts upon which to base that suggestion. I cannot do better than repeat the remarks of Mr. Rhodes, President of the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce, made in the Legislative Assembly last week when he stated that the Tea Industry is one of the best in the world, which statement evoked the applause of that House.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—One Hon'ble Member has supported the motion partially at any rate on the ground that apart from the special provision to which the motion refers the Budget contains provision for a substantial increase in the Police force and points to the figures at page 82 of the Budget against "Head Constables and Constables." If he will look a little further down that page, Sir, he will find that last year's budget included provision for certain projects, one being a lump provision for the re-organization of the Subordinate Police, and another being a lump provision for the increase in the strength of *sentry* police which involved an addition to the force. This, Sir, explains the increase shown in the sanctioned force for 1922-1923 as compared with 1921-1922. It has nothing whatever to do with the Armed Reserve. I think, Sir, in view of the withdrawal of the motion for the omission of this grant, it may fairly be assumed that the question before the Council is not one of principle. Apparently it is admitted that Government are justified in increasing the force of Armed Police and the only question really before the Council is whether the addition which has been proposed by Government is reasonable or whether it is excessive. One Hon'ble Member has complained that the scheme has not been explained. Well, Sir, I do not understand his complaint. I think the Hon'ble Judicial Member told the Council exactly what Government propose to do, but as the complaint has been made I will mention it again. The present Armed Reserve, which I would remind the Council is the only force which the district authorities have for the maintenance of law and order, is as follows :—

Seventy-six constables in Sylhet, 12 constables in Cachar and 26 in each of the other districts. Government proposes to raise this to a force of 102 constables in Sylhet and Lakhimpur, 76 in Sibsagar and 51 in each other plains district. Sir, I think that the Hon'ble Members who consider that these proposals are excessive might have attempted to show that the force which it is proposed to maintain in some particular district or in each district is unnecessarily large. No attempt has been made to do this, and I think it is a fair inference that when we get down to hard facts and figures, it is impossible to argue that a force of 100 men is unnecessarily large in Sylhet and Lakhimpur or that the force proposed for each of the other districts could safely be reduced.

MAULAVI RASHID ALI LASKAR:—Sir, it appears a bit confusing—rather puzzling—to me to understand why, if the decision of the necessity of the number of the Armed Police were not with the House, the money for expenditure was with the House. I think it would have been better that the money should have been put under some non-voted item and in that case all these *golmals* (laughter) would not have arisen.

Sir, on the one side, I say, if this agitation takes a serious form, there are the Assam Rifles and if the agitation is not of a very serious nature and also not peaceful, then the contrivance is for a re-organisation of the Armed Police I see, and there is the ordinary civil police on the other side. So far as my own experience goes, it appears as if the agitation took the shape of a boil which this Armed Police have the business to swell up for lancing or to make it easier for lancing by the Assam Rifles so to say, otherwise, Sir, the Indians by nature—the people of the country by nature are sentimental and peaceful at the same time. If they are poked and pricked (laughter) naturally their sentiments rise. If they are let alone, these sentiments and rufflings may for a time remain dull, but after a few days or a few months will naturally subside. I have seen in several places where postings of these Armed Police have occurred that agitation took rather a keener shape. Then, Sir, as for the increase and necessity of the force I see the necessity seems to appear more through an inner fear than from real necessity. The precaution for guarding the inner weakness always takes the shape of outside guarding and the result is that if there be no strength in our mind or in the inner machinery of the Government there cannot be any certainty of amount of the outside guards or force which would make the Government secure. In Russia and Turkey the Government and their rulers after all possible precautions could not remain satisfied with their personal security until and unless they posted dogs besides their beds. Sir, from what the Hon'ble the Home Member has said and from what I gather from the speeches of some of the European Members, I see certain incidents are rather given beautiful but awful dresses and from these particular instances a dangerous generalisation is made, but if these Hon'ble Members could kindly give the instances of the *zoolum* and malpractices of the agents of non-co-operation I think those instances would have been ten times more than the instances given of the activities of the non-co-operators. Then, Sir, as to the increase. It is not only an increase. We see side by side intensity and "extensity" in the Armed Police so to say—"extensity" signifying an increase in numbers, and intensity in increase in pay of some of the police officers. Then, Sir, there is one thing more. Certain Hon'ble Members have remarked: How could we judge that half the sum would suffice and not the entire sum. You might say whether the entire sum is required or not, but not half the sum. I say there might be certain materials for judging that half may suffice one of which may be that wherever this Armed Police in the shape of punitive police are located in villages, these people get their lodgings and food from their unfortunate hosts (laughter). So long as they are located there, they do not require any expenses. Then again Sir, I think it would be wise if certain people of this province be a bit over-afraid and if they require the help of the Armed Police, they should also sometimes be required to pay part of the expenses of the Armed Police. In that way also some expense might be reduced. Then as a certain Member coming from my district makes mention of the assault upon the Deputy Commissioner—of course the occurrence is subjudice—still I say that this occurrence had nothing of the political aspect in it, nothing in fact to do with non-co-operation. The cooly females for certain private reasons became enraged and in consequence of the Manager's conduct, the coolies unfortunately mistakenly assaulted the Deputy Commissioner in conjunction with the Manager.

As for the challenge of certain Hon'ble Members that there was no *golmal* on account of the low wages of the coolies, I may mention the case of Khoreal

Tea Estate and three or four contiguous gardens the coolies struck work for a month or so before and those gardens are contiguous to the Hon'ble Mr. Cresswell's garden.

MR. E. S. ROFFEY.—I said riots.

MR. A. J. G. CRESSWELL :—On a point of order, Sir, I have had no strikes on my garden.

MAULAVI RASHID ALI LASKAR :—Only contiguous to your garden.

MR. A. J. G. CRESSWELL :—I rise to a point of order, Sir. There has been no strike on my garden or on any gardens connected with mine.

MR. E. S. ROFFEY :—My reference was, Sir, to riots, not to strikes.

MAULAVI RASHID ALI LASKAR :—One thing more, Sir, and I have done. Seeing that so many Hon'ble Members coming from different corners of the province representing all castes and creeds of the people are moving these motions and pressing them so forcibly—I ask, are they so many fools that they won't understand these things but would still press their motions—I, however, beg to support the motion and be such a fool.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—Sir, since I do not find any other members speaking on the subject I wish to make a reply. Sir, when I gave notice of this motion I did so with a full sense of the responsibility, and I yield to none in my appreciation of the difficulties the Government and the people had to face these few years of political and economic disturbance—the effects of the war in combating which Government had to take the greatest trouble. Still I felt that this item was not very necessary. To speak the truth I wanted to move for the omission of the whole provision, but subsequently, as I said already I found that Government had already accorded sanction to entertain the force in several districts and I found it would be wiser for me to move a reduction by half. I have heard with respect and attention the speech of the Hon'ble the Home Member and I quite agree with him that the political situation of the country was not normal during these years. He has given many instances, some of which I respectfully beg to say, he might have better left unsaid—because the instances of mischief done by the street boys to the co-operators or Government officers are not the reasons for which an armed police should be maintained. I also found many of the members made reference to tea garden disturbances, riots, hât looting and so on. I also quite appreciate their views. But, Sir, as the Hon'ble the Home Member has already pointed out—and many of the Members have also suggested—the ordinary business of the armed police is guarding the treasury, escorting prisoners and opium and doing similar things and sometimes quelling ordinary disturbances, like bazar disturbances and other disturbances of a smaller magnitude. But for the widespread disturbances throughout the length and breadth of the country this armed police cannot suffice. We have also seen what was the actual procedure adopted by the Government at this moment for quelling these widespread disturbances. Punitive police has been requisitioned as one of my Hon'ble friends has already said. I think that is a proper way—to make those who have gone against the law to pay for restoring order. Again for any widespread disturbances military will have to be called. We have seen strikes, political disturbances, labour troubles. These are every day occurrences in western countries. And what do they do in these cases? We find in newspapers that they at once call for the military. They

never strengthen the ordinary civil police. That procedure should be adopted here also, if necessary, though we do not like it. Of course some of the members have already referred to their intimate knowledge in this respect. But I think such intimate knowledge is not the monopoly of any one community or any one person. We also live, move and have our being amongst our people. We know their condition, we know their feelings, we know their circumstances to a great extent. It is my firm conviction that at this moment there is no greater necessity for any strengthening of the police, whether ordinary or armed. Further, if we look at the budget we find that we began the year 1918-19 with Rs. 14,64,000 on this item of police. Since then it has increased to Rs. 24,11,000 this year. Well, that shows we are not blind to the necessity for gradual increase of this item. We have increased the cost of the police from time to time. I do not know whether by way of remuneration or by way of strength. Whatever it may be, we have provided every year in a progressive manner for police, and if their ordinary business is the ordinary civil duties, I do not think that it is at all necessary at this moment to increase the force. If the Government say that their services will be required to quell widespread disturbances in the country then I think this very provision will not be sufficient for that purpose. They will have to call the military, even after the provision of this amount for strengthening the armed police. Of course if Government can give this assurance, that for further disturbances there will be no employment of the Assam Rifles, then there may be some justification for this. But I think that assurance cannot be safely given. Many of the gentlemen in this Council have referred to the tea garden disturbances—and I am sorry to differ from my friend Mr. Roffey on this matter—that these disturbances are generally due solely to political reasons. So far as I understand—and to the credit of the tea garden concerns of my Valley be it said—there was little of this disturbance during these troublesome years in that Valley. As regards the Surma Valley disturbances, it is my honest conviction that there was economic distress already in some of the gardens and some of the non-co-operators might have taken advantage of that. They only added fuel to the fire. And besides this, if Government is always to keep a large number of civil police in order to quell the probable disturbances and riotings in such vast tea garden areas, well, that demand is not reasonable. We are not in a position to maintain such a strength of civil police in order to quell occasional disturbances in such big industries, and for such purposes an everyday provision cannot possibly be made by any Government. The Hon'ble the Home Member has already given the statistics of different provinces. He has given the areas of the provinces including ours and the strength of the police maintained in these provinces. I respectfully differ from him in this matter. Area does not count always in such matters. We are to see what sort of people we are to deal with. I think it will be conceded that the people of this province are most docile, they are the gentlest of the gentle. To take their case into consideration along with the other provinces is not a safe criterion. So I think I have nothing to add to this. I have to make one remark about the epidemic of crimes. Of course if such epidemics appear again in the country I say the small strength of the civil police will not help. So, on principle, when this civil police is maintained for the ordinary civil duties of the country, I do not see why their hands should be strengthened for these exigencies which do not at all fall within their province. There are other remedies for these exigencies and Government have already resorted to some of them and could be repeated, if necessary. I therefore do not think Government will be justified in giving the work of the soldiers to the ordinary civil police.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—There are only one or two points, Sir, on which I propose to address the Council, and if inadvertently I anticipate my Hon'ble Colleague in replying to any other matters in the discussion I trust that he will forgive me. After all either of us speaks for the whole Government. Well, Sir the Hon'ble mover referred to some remarks I made last year in the course of a discussion on the apportionment of the cost of the Assam Rifles. I think that possibly there has been some misunderstanding. As far as I heard him I understood him to say on my authority that the Assam Rifles was a force maintained partly for the security of the external frontiers of the Empire and partly to maintain internal peace and to quell disturbances. Well, Sir this is true enough, but if he thought that in saying what I did, I meant that one of the ordinary functions of the Assam Rifles was to maintain internal peace and quell disturbances in the plains districts that was very far from being my meaning.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—I did not mean that of course.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—We have in addition to the plains districts in the hill districts and the Frontier Tracts. The one we administer. In the other we exercise a measure of control. And I maintain, Sir, and no one I think, will dispute it, that neither the Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills nor the Political Officer at Sadiya nor the Political Officer at Balipara could maintain internal peace in his charge without the Assam Rifles. We are not for the moment concerned to defend the Assam Rifles or even with the necessity of maintaining such a force.

I suggest, Sir, that one or two members have misunderstood what has been said about this force not being trained for such duties as those on which it is now employed. Well, Sir the Council must realise that the training of a soldier to meet an armed enemy in the field is necessarily very different from the training required for a policeman who is sometimes compelled to use force but has not to deal with a disciplined and armed enemy. He is dealing usually with misguided people who are dangerous only temporarily because they have been misled. My Hon'ble Colleague said that from the point of view of the Assam Rifles their deputation for long periods for these duties is most undesirable. Their training clearly suffers. You cannot give military training to small detachments spread throughout the province.

It has been suggested, Sir, that the political situation is improving, that this as a reason either does not now exist or is rapidly disappearing, and that therefore there is no reason for increasing the police force. Well, Sir, I cannot help thinking that the first few words of the note may possibly have led to a misconception. The note began :—"Under the present conditions of the province there is a pressing need for increasing the strength of the Armed Police Reserve." There is one thing certain, Sir. If my Hon'ble Colleage made anything clear he made it clear that for some years past we have been conscious that the strength of the Armed Police was insufficient for the ordinary everyday requirements of the province. The one thing that the present political situation has made clear is that it would have been criminal for this Government to allow this needed increase to be further postponed for a single day. Mr. Roffey has borne testimony to the fact that the need for the strengthening of the force was apprehended by at least some in the province some years back.

We were told, Sir, that no definite scheme was before the Council. Well, Sir, Mr. Botham has dealt with that and my Hon'ble Colleague himself gave the fullest details of what we propose to do. We want so many officers, so many men, a small leave and sick reserve and certain buildings to accommodate the men.

There is no question that the Council recognises our difficulties. The general sense of the Council clearly is that some increase in strength is required. Is the Council in a position to judge our requirements better than we can? We have put our proposals in detail before the Council. We have said that we cannot undertake the responsibility of maintaining peace and order with less than these. I have not heard it suggested that we propose too many men for any single district. Is it fair or reasonable to propose a reduction without giving any reasons or to assume that Government invariably asks for more than it really requires? This, Sir, I submit is to treat us very arbitrarily. This is the issue before the Council.

RAI SAHIB BEPIN CHANDRA DEB LASHKAR:—Sir, may I speak a few words on the subject?

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—No. The Hon'ble Member should have taken the opportunity of addressing the Council before the Hon'ble Mover exercised his right of reply.

THE HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID:—Sir, two points have arisen for discussion. The first is, is the Armed Police sufficient or not? If not the next is, is our demand reasonable or not? On the first point, Sir, it seems from the reasolutions moved and withdrawn and the speeches made, that the Council have realised the necessity of strengthening the Armed Police. The Hon'ble Members who have spoken, practically admit that the present force is not sufficient but they want to give us only half of what we ask and not the whole. They admit the necessity but they think that we have asked for too much. In my opening speech I explained what force we had and what additional we wanted, and attention to this has also been invited by my Hon'ble friends the Chief Secretary and the Hon'ble Finance Member. I specially invited the attention of the Council to the fact that there were only 12 armed constables in Cachar and said that they were quite insufficient. The Hon'ble Member for Cachar who spoke has not shewn that 12 men are sufficient and 58 men excessive for Cachar. The Hon'ble Mover who hails from Lakhimpur has not explained that 26 men are sufficient and 116 men excessive for that district.

Sir, my friend the Hon'ble Mover remarked that when I referred to the figures of other provinces I did not give sufficient data. He said that I only referred to the number of men and the incidence of taxation, but he will remember that I referred to the area, population and incidence of charge. He further said that the people of Assam were docile. I did not say that they were not. I also spoke of the good reputation which they enjoyed, but referred with pain, to the fact that their peace-loving and law-abiding instincts were being prejudicially affected by the new force which were at work owing to the activities of the non-co operators as regards the insulting cries used in Sylhet. I am not sure that I know the meaning of the terms "Lore, Lore;" but we all know what the other terms means. I referred to

those epithets as synchromatic of the unrest which has prevailed and of the spirit of contempt for authority which has been created and fostered. In view of the spirit and unrest and contempt and disregard for authority which has been fostered, it is necessary and desirable we should take all reasonable precautionary measures and I have not referred to the counter-propaganda which has been carried on and the other measures we have taken ; it is because that they are not relevant for the present discussion. If, Sir, the armed police is to be increased, as it is to be, we urge that it should be sufficiently increased.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The question is that the provision of Rs. 1,74,000 for increasing the strength of the Armed Police be reduced to half.

The motion was put and a division was taken with the following result :—

AYES.	NOES.
Maulavi Abdul Khalique Chaudhuri.	The Hon'ble Mr. W. J. Reid.
Rai Sahib Padmanath Gohain Barua.	The Hon'ble Mr. A. Majid.
Srijut Bishnu Charan Borah.	The Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Ghanasyam Barua.
Srijut Dalim Chandra Borah.	Mr. A. W. Botham.
Babu Krishna Sundar Dam.	Mr. A. R. Edwards.
Srijut Bepin Chandra Ghosh.	Mr. J. R. Cunningham.
Khan Bahadur Muhibuddin Ahmad.	Khan Sahib Alauddin Ahmed Chaudhuri.
Maulavi Rashid Ali Laskar.	Sardar Bahadur Anjab Ali Khan.
Rai Bahadur Amarnath Ray.	Srijut Siva Prasad Barua.
Rai Bahadur Nalini Kanta Ray Dastidar.	Mr. A. J. G. Cresswell.
Munshi Safiur Rahman.	Mr. D. S. Withers.
Rai Sahib Bepin Chandra Deb Laskar.	Mr. W. E. H. Grayburn.
Rai Bahadur Promode Chandra Dutta.	Mr. E. H. Featherstone.
Rai Sahib Manomohan Lahiri.	Mr. W. K. Allies.
Maulavi Munawwarali.	Mr. E. S. Roffey.
Hazi Muhammad Abdul Ahad Chaudhuri.	Dr. H. G. Roberts.
Khan Bahadur Muhammad Bakht Mazumdar.	Raj Kumar Chandra Narayan Singh.
Srijut Lohit Chandra Nayak.	
Srijut Nilmoni Phukan.	
Maulavi Rukunuddin Ahmed.	

The "Ayes" being 20 and the "Noes" being 17, the motion was adopted

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The Council will now adjourn till 2-30 P.M.

The Council re-assembled at 2-30 P.M., after lunch.

RAI BAHADUR AMAR NATH RAY :—Sir, the motion which stands in my name proposes to do away with the provision of Rs. 40,000 for the revision of pay of Inspectors of Police. It will be found at page 82 of the Budget Estimate.

I shall next refer the Hon'ble members to page 26 of the Explanatory Memorandum on the Budget where they will find in the note the reason for the proposed revision. The reason is that the pay of all members of the Assam Police Force has been revised except that of Inspectors. This is a plausible reason no doubt and I do not mean to say that Inspectors of Police do not deserve an increment, but I may tell the Hon'ble House that most of the existing Inspectors of Police have risen to their present position by promotion from the ranks of Sub-Inspectors, Head Constables and even literate constables. There have been very few, if any, direct appointments to Inspectorships of Police and if the existing grades of Rs. 150, Rs. 175, Rs. 200 and Rs. 250 are higher than the pay of Sub-Inspectors of Police, there is no reason why there should be serious discontent among the Inspectors if the revision be put off for some time.

In September last this Council refused to vote a revision of pay of members of the Subordinate Educational Service and Government refused to accept the resolution and the various amendments moved on the ground that funds were not available. During the current session a similar resolution has had to be withdrawn for want of support. Our Hon'ble colleague the Director of Public Instruction should be able to tell us how many Bachelors and Masters of Arts and Sciences and Bachelors of Teaching are to be found in that Service. Will it be right for the Council, Sir, to neglect the claims of these deserving persons and to grant an increment to Police Officers with much lower educational qualifications who have risen to their present position by promotion and in some cases by a series of promotions from subordinate positions? The amount required for the revision is Rs. 40,000. It is by no means a negligible amount in the present state of our finances. And the expenditure will be a recurring one and will grow in coming years as the proposed scale is a time-scale.

The next ground on which I stand is that even if otherwise desirable, the revision should not be made now. The majority of the Retrenchment Committee have proposed the abolition of posts of Deputy Superintendents of Police — some high Police Officers who deposed before the Committee were of the same opinion. But they suggested that if abolition were decided upon it would be necessary in order to attract a better type of men then we have at present to pay the Inspectors on a much higher scale than the time-scale now proposed by the Inspector General of Police, *viz.*, Rs. 175 — $\frac{25}{2}$ — 300. The Government and the Council have not yet considered the recommendations of the Committee and my humble suggestion is that it will be advisable to put off the revision till a decision has been arrived at.

I would appeal to the Hon'ble the Home Member to accept this motion and to defer the revision by a year or so especially in view of the fact that detailed proposals are not before him. It is certain that the Council will agree to a decent increment being given when the finances of the Province look up. To my mind the revision of pay of Inspectors of Police is much less urgent than the construction of Central Jail at Jorhat. Yesterday, Hon'ble the Home Member earned the thanks of the Council by putting off the construction of the Jail. May we not ask him to defer this costly scheme of revision also?

MAULAVI RUKUNUDDIN AHMED :—Sir, may I ask the Hon'ble Government Member the length of time since when these Police Inspectors have not been given any increase in their salary ?

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—Not since 1902.

Sir, the present pay of the Inspectors of Police as the Hon'ble Mover has just stated is a graded pay of Rs. 150, Rs. 175, Rs. 200 and Rs. 250. The higher grade contains only two officers. The Government proposals are to introduce a time scale starting at Rs. 175 and rising by biennial increment of Rs. 25 to Rs. 300. In the case of the Armed Branch it is proposed to make the pay Rs. 50 a month higher. I think the Inspectors of Police are now the only class of officers in the province who have not had any compensation for the increased cost of living. Their present pay is based on the recommendations of the Police Commission of 1902-03 and I do not think it is necessary for me to argue that the scale of pay which was considered suitable 20 years ago is inadequate now. I think this disposes of the Hon'ble Mover's argument with regard to the Subordinate Educational Service. I understand that that service has practically had two revisions within the last year or two. It was first of all given an all round 20 per cent. increase and then again it was given a time scale which was at any rate a great improvement on the previous scale of pay.

The Hon'ble Mover's second argument was that the Council should wait till the question of the abolition of the post of Deputy Superintendents of Police has been decided because it might be necessary in future to increase the pay on a different scale. Well, Sir, I do not think this is an argument that will appeal strongly to the Inspectors. They have seen officers of the same status in Bengal being given with effect from 1st April 1921 the time scale which we are now proposing. I am afraid, in any case, they will be disappointed that their increment is coming only from 1st April 1922, and if the financial position had been different, I think the Hon'ble the Finance Member might have been induced to consent to retrospective effect being given to our proposals. I do not, however, think the Council will consider that it is possible to delay any longer the improvement in pay of this important and most deserving class of officers.

MAULAVI MUNAWWAR ALI :—I beg, Sir, to give my support to the motion. The question, Sir, is not one of principle but it is certainly one of adequacy of the provision. The Subordinate Educational Service Officers might have had two or three or more revisions within recent memory, yet the provision for them has not been one that is most desirable. The question, Sir, is certainly not one of number of revisions, but it certainly is one of adequacy and propriety. I think, Sir, that the maximum salary of class (1) of the Subordinate Educational Service people is exactly what the minimum salary of the Inspectors is, *i.e.*, Rs. 150. On a reference to the Budget it will be found that there are 34 Inspectors of Police of whom two are getting Rs. 250 each.....

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—The number of Inspectors is 44 and not 34.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—Five are getting Rs. 200, 12 are getting Rs. 175 and 15 are getting Rs. 150 and that is the maximum salary given to a graduate in the Subordinate Educational Service in class (1). It has been suggested, Sir, that there might be discontent among the members

of the service of the Inspectors. I would request the House to see if that discontent should be allowed to prevail in the present circumstances of the country. It has also been suggested, Sir, that more liberal pay has been granted in Bengal. Well and good; if Bengal can afford to give such a scale of pay. Our question is the question of our capacity. I must be frank in arguing this point and must say that our capacity does not afford us to give the scale proposed to the Inspectors. I should think, considering the educational qualifications of the Inspectors, that the present scale of pay they are getting is a very liberal one and there ought not to be any clamour on the part of the Inspectors. They are good servants of the country if they have any regard for the financial situation of the province, they must not be discontented. If anybody is discontented let him find his contentment elsewhere. Let us be free and frank because we cannot afford to pay a single pie more to them and it must be remembered that the pay that they are drawing at present is quite sufficient for them.

With these few words, Sir, I beg to offer my strongest support in favour of the motion.

RAI SAHIB BEPIN CHANDRA DEB LASKAR:—Sir, seeing the attitude of the Council with regard to the motions for reducing the provisions made in respect of increased pay to officers, I beg to withdraw the resolution which I wished to move regarding the increase of pay to the Subordinate Engineer Service. Besides this two of my resolutions were lost regarding increase of pay and allowances I think this House will not support the increment of the pay of the Police Inspectors. I think the Hon'ble Mover of the amendment rightly moved the amendment and I support it.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM:—Sir, I rise to support this motion. We will surely place on record our good wishes to the Inspectors for the improvement of their pay and prospects. We now only ask Government to look at the question from the standpoint of the present capacity of the tax-payers and not from the needs of the recipients alone the Inspectors. Where is the money to come from? The result of creating for the tax-payers an immense burden of new items of expenditure has been disastrous from the popular standpoint as I will show from reading the note at page 19 of the Explanatory Memorandum. In the note it is said, under 41—Civil Works in charge of Civil Officers—"the reduction in the Budget figure is due to the financial stringency which has made it necessary to omit for the present any grant to Local Boards for the improvement of rural water-supply and to reduce by Rs. 1,50,000. The grant of Rs. 5,50,000 which was given to these bodies last year for the improvement of our communications and which it was hoped to make a recurring grant." So that what was hoped and what was promised to be made a recurring grant, has not only been denied, but has also been reduced by so much as Rs. 1,50,000. Why? Because Government are desirous of giving an immediate increase of pay to Police officers amongst others. The Council will decide whether the poor villagers require more urgently tanks to drink water, and better roads, or whether they should surrender a part of what was promised to be a recurring grant to them in order to pay Police Inspectors out

of the amount proposed. I should also like to bring to the notice of the Council that from certain figures which I obtained of expenditure for 10 years in the Police Department, I found on calculation that in the course of 10 years the expenditure of the Police Department has increased by 250 per cent. so that a halt should be cried and the department subjected to proper retrenchment. Then the question of principle arises here. The Retrenchment Committee's report is before us with specific proposals for retrenchment in the Police Department. Of course we have heard from the Hon'ble the Finance Member that the Government are trying to consider the Committee's recommendations. We have observed what has been the ultimate fate of the various Committees and commissions that have been appointed from time to time, and we are not inclined to be very sanguine of any real good arising therefrom. There is no harm Sir, in waiting for a year or so if the Inspectors could wait for 20 years as they have done up to now. We have to take a comparative view of our needs in different directions. Taking all things into consideration I submit that on the question of principle also which arises from the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee, the Council cannot give their support to the present provision for increasing the pay of the Inspectors of Police.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Sir, I understood the last speaker to say that as the Inspectors had waited for twenty years they could wait for another twenty years. I suppose he does not forget that for five of those twenty years there was a war, and that conditions have very materially altered, and that the last twenty years have been anything but normal ones.

Well, Sir, we have heard it contended that Government have resisted applications for increases of pay to various other services. I have protested before, Sir, and I protest again against any attempt to argue here, casually and without going into details or fully understanding the circumstances, that the duties and responsibilities of members of only two services are identical. And apart from this general protest, after what we heard this morning—every one in this Council knows what conditions in the province have been during the past year—every Hon'ble Member can judge for himself the burden that has fallen on Inspectors of Police. The Chief Secretary has told us that they practically alone among Government servants have had no improvement in their pay or prospects to meet changed conditions. I have no hesitation in saying that no public servants has the burden of administration fallen more heavily.

I have only one word more, Sir, I have myself on various occasions opposed motions or resolutions that pay should be increased. I have in each such case stated that Government opposed the motion not only because funds were short, but because we honestly believed that justice had already been done. In this case we do not think that a continuance of the present rates of pay is doing justice to this most deserving class of public servants.

RAI BAHADUR AMARNATH RAY :—Sir, the question may now be put.

The question was put and a division was taken with the following result :—

Ayes.	Noes.
Maulavi Abdul Khalique Chaudhuri.	The Hon'ble Mr. W. J. Reid.
Rai Sahib Padmanath Gohain Barua.	The Hon'ble Mr. A. Majid.
Srijut Bepin Chandra Ghosh.	The Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Ghanasyam Barua.
Maulavi Rashid Ali Laskar.	Mr. A. W. Botham.
Rai Bahadur Amarnath Ray.	Mr. A. R. Edwards.
Rai Bahadur Nalini Kanta Ray Dastidar.	Mr. J. R. Cunningham.
Rev. J. J. M. Nichols-Roy.	Sardar Bahadur Anjab Ali Khan.
Munshi Safiur Rahman.	Srijut Siva Prasad Barua.
Rai Sahib Bepin Chandra Deb Laskar.	Mr. A. J. G. Cresswell.
Rai Bahadur Promode Chandra Dutta.	Mr. E. H. Featherstone.
Rai Sahib Manomohan Lahiri.	Srijut Nilmoni Phukan.
Maulavi Munawwarali.	Mr. E. S. Roffey.
Haji Muhammad Abdul Ahad Chaudhuri.	Maulavi Rukunuddin Ahmed.
Khan Bahadur Muhammad Bakht Majumdar.	Mr. D. S. Withers.
Babu Krishna Sundar Dam.	Mr. W. C. H. Grayburn.

The Hon'ble the PRESIDENT :—There are 15 votes in favour of the proposal and 15 votes against it. On the principle laid down yesterday when I decided that in the case of an item in the budget the item should stand, that there should be no change in the budget figure, the motion is lost. A similar decision was arrived at in the Bengal Council by the President a few days ago, so that I think I am right in following that principle.

The motion was accordingly negatived.

Rai Bahadur AMARNATH RAY :—Sir, this motion aims at reducing the sum of Rs. 7,500 provided for Secret Service expenditure by Rs. 2,500.

Sir, the public know very little about the nature of this item of expenditure. I understand that accounts are kept but that they are not subject to audit or even to inspection by the Standing Committee of Public Accounts. The actual expenditure under this head in the year 1919-20 was Rs. 2,401 only, in 1920-21 it was Rs. 3,488, the revised estimate for the current year is Rs. 4,300. It is now proposed to spend Rs. 7,500 next year. The political situation may be responsible for an increased demand under this head but I think, Sir, that this questionable item of expenditure should be kept down and Government should be able to manage with Rs. 5,000.

The Hon'ble Mr. A. MAJID :—Sir, there is check on expenditure under this item. I will explain how this check is exercised. Superintendents of Police have to send the actual pay receipts. Then they have got to be checked by the Superintendent of the Special Branch. He has got to submit certificates to the Comptroller showing that money drawn has been paid to the actual persons for whom it was sanctioned in every case. It may be remembered that the expenditure is secret and is to be made in a secret way. Hon'ble

Members know that this provision is made to meet cases in which the police incur expenditure in the payment of agents employed to supply information as to crime and criminals and the normal provision is very small. The Superintendent of the Special Branch has been complaining that the provision is too small and Government have carefully considered the matter and have come to the conclusion that in the abnormal conditions now prevailing—the Hon'ble Member himself admits that such conditions now prevail,—it is absolutely necessary to increase the provision considerably. In this connection my Hon'ble friend will also remember that the non-co-operation movement has probably larger funds at their disposal with regard to this matter than we have. We must be prepared to spend as much money as is necessary to obtain information. I am prepared to undertake that expenditure under this head shall be reduced as soon as this is justified by conditions.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—If I may add one word to what my Hon'ble Colleague has said, I thought that the Rai Bahadur had mastered the principles of finance and budget procedure better than he has. He is here confusing the budget provision and expenditure. Because the sum is entered in the budget it does not mean that Rs. 7,500 will be spent. If we can get along with Rs. 1,000 no one will rejoice more than my Hon'ble Colleague unless possibly the Finance Department which is always on the look out for savings, however small.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—I suport this resolution, Sir, but before I do so I should like to say that a motion for reduction under this head stands in my name—motion No. 5, and before I support the motion before the House I should like to have my motion withdrawn. My motion also of course affects the same subject and similar reduction.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—Under Standing Order 32 it has been automatically withdrawn.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—It seems we are being gradually put between increasing pressure of the public service and the secret service. We are already under an immense pressure from the public service and now we find that the Secret Service also is rearing its head slowly and slowly. Secrecy and darkness, Sir, I submit is very bad. Of course it must be admitted that it cannot be avoided altogether. But I want to say that the reduction proposed will not in any way affect the efficiency of the administration, having regard to the preparation which has been made by the proposed increase and addition to the armed force and soon for fighting the non-co-operation movement which I understood the Hon'ble the Home Member to refer to. Speaking on the utility of Secret Service I think the Hon'ble Member for Government said that it was meant to fight down non-co-operation agitation.

THE HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID :—I said detection of serious crimes, whether ordinary or revolutionary.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Non-co-operation movement also ?

THE HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID :—I said crimes either ordinary or revolutionary.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—What I say is that if that movement has anything to do with this increase I think it is not fair because this movement has practically ceased to exist and other arrangements have been made to meet it, so that this reduction is reasonable and ought to be supported

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI:—I beg to support this motion. It will appear that a motion under the same head also stands in my name proposing a larger reduction which automatically by the ruling of the President stands withdrawn. I was prepared, Sir to stick to the *status quo ante*, that is to say the sum provided in the current year's budget, *i.e.*, Rs. 4,300. It seems to me that the sum that the Hon'ble Mover is prepared to spare for this purpose is larger, probably on account of the fact that he thinks that larger secret service might be necessary in view of the abnormal conditions prevailing in the province. However he has given a margin and I think that margin might be justifiable though many members would not approve of the desirability for the same. It will appear by a reference to the budget, that during the current year the sum provided was only Rs. 2,000. Then it was increased to Rs. 4,300. Perhaps the Hon'ble Mover saw the progression in the amount and has thought it better that he should provide for a larger amount, with that view I think he has shown much discretion and wisdom and I think the Council may give their support to it in that view. The sum now provided would be Rs. 5,000 instead of Rs. 4,300; and if it be found necessary, as it was probably found necessary as is shown in the revised budget, to increase the amount it might be increased as it was done during the last year. At any rate, Sir, it would not be good budgetting and it would not be economical if we put a larger amount in the hands of the Government than it may be justifiable. Need I tell the House that whenever we have got more money it is our natural instinct to be rather not very economical. Therefore, Sir, I am not willing to leave the figure as has been shown in the budget. It is always good thing not to give a larger amount than may be necessary.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—Am I to understand that the Hon'ble Member wishes to withdraw his resolution?

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI:—Accordingly to your ruling, Sir, my resolution stands withdrawn automatically.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—Not quite, because it is not absolutely identical. Your motion is to reduce the expenditure to Rs. 4,300 and the other two motions are to reduce to Rs. 3,000. There is a difference of Rs. 700.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI:—Yes, Sir, I withdraw, because I notice much discretion in the proposal of my friend the Hon'ble Mover.

The resolution was, by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

RAI SAHIB BEPIN CHANDRA DEB LASKAR:—Sir, It appears from the budget that Rs. 2,000 was budgetted for the current year for Secret Service. It was raised to Rs. 4,300 in the revised estimate. For the year 1922-23 Rs. 7,500 has been provided for the purpose, *i.e.*, more than that provided in the revised estimate. So I support the amendment.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—The question is "that the sum of Rs. 7,500 provided for Secret Service expenditure be reduced by Rs. 2,500."

The motion was put and a division taken with the following result :—

Ayes.	Noes.
Maulavi Abdul Khalique Chaudhuri.	The Hon'ble Mr. W. J. Reid.
Rai Sahib Padmanath Gohain Barua.	The Hon'ble Mr. A. Majid.
Srijut Bishnu Charan Bora.	The Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Ghanasyam Barua.
Srijut Dalim Chandra Bora.	Mr. A. W. Botham.
Babu Krishna Sundar Dam.	Mr. R. Edwards.
Srijut Bepin Chandra Ghose.	Mr. J. R. Cunningham.
Maulavi Rashid Ali Laskar.	Sardar Bahadur Anjab Ali Khan.
Rai Bahadur Amarnath Ray.	Srijut Siva Prosad Barua.
Rai Bahadur Nalini Kanta Ray Dastidar.	Mr. A. J. G. Cresswell.
Munshi Safiur Rahman.	Rev. J. J. M. Nichols-Roy.
Rai Sahib Bepin Chandra Deb Laskar.	Srijut Nilmoni Phukan.
Rai Bahadur Promode Chandra Datta.	Mr. E. S. Roffey.
Mr. E. H. Featherstone.	Mr. D. S. Withers.
Rai Sahib Monamohan Lahiri.	Mr. W. E. H. Grayburn.
Khan Bahadur Muhibuddin Ahmad.	
Maulavi Munawwarali.	
Haji Muhammad Abdul Ahad Chaudhuri.	
Khan Bahadur Muhammad Bakht Mazumdar.	
Srijut Lohit Chandra Nayak.	
Raj Kumar Chandra Narayan Singh.	

The 'Ayes' being 20 and the 'Noes' 14, the motion was adopted.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, the motion for reduction that stands in my name is this—That the sum of Rs. 10,560 for temporary establishment in the Criminal Investigation Department be omitted.

It appears at page 18 of the budget under the heading "Detailed account No. 26B —Police—Criminal Investigation Department". I do not understand what is meant by this item "temporary establishment". Is this expenditure to be incurred in the current year or whether the Government in anticipation of our sanction have already incurred the expenditure which it is only our bounden duty to sanction ? Of course if the Government have already incurred this expenditure and wish now to obtain our sanction as in some other cases they have done, then I leave it to the Council to decide, but if it is proposed to undertake new work with the sanctioned money, then, Sir, I have serious objection because it is not clear for what purpose the money is required and how and where this money will be spent. In the current year it was Rs. 3,316 but in the coming year it has been raised almost to an amount three times as much as this. I leave the matter to the serious consideration of the Council.

SRIJUT LOHIT CHANDRA NAYAK :—Sir, I had a similar motion on the subject which has been moved by the Hon'ble Member which stands withdrawn, but, Sir, before I resume my seat I should like to know what is the meaning of this. Was the existing staff not sufficient for the purpose and therefore temporary establishment is going to be entertained? I want some information. I see that there is a provision in the current year of Rs. 3,360 which has not been spent, and I think that with the dawning of a new atmosphere in the political horizon this amount may be diverted to some more deserving scheme.

THE HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID :—Sir, this is a temporary staff to meet actual requirements. It will be discontinued as soon as these requirements disappear. We found that we were not being fully informed of what was going on in the interior, as we must be fully informed before we could take action, and as the ordinary District Police and the existing staff of the Criminal Investigation Department could not give us the information we required we appointed in all 8 temporary Sub-Inspectors with effect from 1st September 1921, five of these Sub-Inspectors were entertained in Sylhet, 2 in Sibsagar and 1 in Kamrup. The grounds which created the necessity for their appointment still exist, the retention of the force for a further term of 6 months was sanctioned. Sir, I repeat again that it is a temporary staff entertained to meet actual requirements. This assurance, I think will satisfy the Council.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, the statement "It will be discontinued when the necessity for it no longer exist" does not help me much. May it be discontinued after six months, one year or two years ? A suspicion also arises that it may remain for years to come or continued permanently.

THE HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID :—It may be voted for one year.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, a similar motion was made by Srijut Lohit Chandra Nayak who withdrew it in my favour. I leave it to him to say whether this motion should be withdrawn or not.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Sir, I suggest that the matter is not one of such moment that the Hon'ble Member might not have the courage to withdraw or to pursue it on his own responsibility.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—I think, Sir, that there will not be a breach of confidence or trust in regard to this if I withdraw my motion.

SRIJUT LOHIT CHANDRA NAYAK :—Certainly, Sir, there will not be a breach of faith on the part of the Hon'ble Mover to rely upon his judgment in this matter, but I think after the assurance given by the Hon'ble Member, Judicial, this motion can be withdrawn.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Then I withdraw the motion.

The motion was, by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, under the same heading "Criminal Investigation Department" the motion that stands in my name is this :—

That the sum of Rs. 9,648 for Sub-Inspectors in the Criminal Investigation Department be reduced by Rs. 2,000.

In 1921-22, Sir, it appears that there were six Sub-Inspectors in the current year which will appear at page 80 of the Budget. In the coming year, provision has been made for eight Sub-Inspectors and it would appear from a comparison that in 1921-22, the expenditure was Rs. 5,218 whereas in 1922-23 the expenditure is almost double—Rs. 9,648. Having regard to the nature of the expenditure that it is going to be a recurring expenditure and having regard to the financial stringency which we have already descussed, I think, Sir, that the expenditure under this head should not be allowed to progress beyond what it was in the current year. I have proposed a reduction of Rs. 2,000 and the effect of this is that there remains Rs. 7,000 that is about Rs. 1,500 more than was budgetted for the current year. Of course I anticipate the Hon'ble Government Member would give his usual explanation of the useful character of the police officers in particular parts of the province. But I think that in any case it will not be wise enough for us to accept the explanation of the Hon'ble the Home Member, if this is really an additional burden.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—Sir, the Hon'ble Mover is quite right in saying that an increase appears in the sanctioned strength of the Sub-Inspectors of the Criminal Investigation Department at page 80 of the Budget. The increase occurs in the Finger Print Bureau and it is actually an increase of one officer. The second officer shown is an officer who has for some years been employed in the Finger Print Bureau although he belonged to the sanctioned district staff, and during the course of the current year it was found necessary to withdraw him to duty in connection with the district staff. He had to be replaced by a specially sanctioned officer. The other officer is an increase. This increase of staff was found to be unavoidable partly owing to the growth in the number of records preserved in the Finger Print Bureau which involved an increase of work in making any particular search and partly owing to the increase of searches which it was necessary to make. I have got the figures and if the Hon'ble Mover would like to have them, I can show them to him. The matter was carefully looked into and the increase was sanctioned only when it was found unavoidable.

The motion was put and negatived.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—The motion which stands in my name under the same head is "that the provision of Rs. 13,800 for the salary of Inspectors in the Criminal Investigation Department be reduced by Rs. 1,800."

It appears, Sir, that in the current year, there are six Inspectors but in the coming year there will be seven Inspectors. Like the two Sub-Inspectors of whom I have heard now this new officer I am afraid will also be permanently necessary. The expenditure involved will be in the first year Rs. 1,800 and then it will go on increasing necessarily according to the terms of the time-scale. Of course, we hope to hear a sufficient explanation about the utility of this additional officer and I will leave it to the Council to decide after they have heard the explanation that is to come from the Chief Secretary.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—Sir, here again, the Hon'ble Mover is entitled to an explanation. The increase in this case is due to the transfer of one Criminal Investigation Department Inspector from the temporary to the permanent staff. The Criminal Investigation Department Inspector was sanctioned on a temporary basis for Gauhati some three or four years ago. It has been found absolutely necessary to retain him there and there is no prospect of his not being required when normal times return. In these circumstances, the post was made permanent. There is no actual increase in the staff : it is merely an increase in the permanent staff with a corresponding decrease of one man in the temporary staff.

The motion was put and negatived.

SRIJUT LOHIT CHANDRA NAYAK :—Sir, the motion that stands in my name runs as follows :—

That the provision of Rs. 10,000 for an investigating centre at Gosaingaon and that of Rs. 10,000 for the Dharampassa police station be omitted for the present.

RAI BAHADUR AMAR NATH RAY :—On a point of order, Sir. These are two distinct items and may be taken up separately.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—I was just going to ask the Hon'ble Mover if these two places are contiguous and would suggest that the motions should be taken up separately.

SRIJUT LOHIT CHANDRA NAYAK :—I think they can be taken up together I beg to move the motion only for an explanation.

I suppose that these things are being done for fear of non-co-operation and if that fear is now gone I think the starting of these works of investigating centres at Gosaingaon and Dharampassa may be omitted for the present. These things came before the House last year and the affairs were managed without increasing any expenditure till now and they were not given effect to while the trouble was on its height. So in these days of financial stringency this may be postponed till the return of normal times. So I move both the motions together.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—I can assure the Hon'ble Member that these proposals have nothing to do with non-co-operation. Both of them are required in the ordinary course in order to deal with criminal areas.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—I should like to know where Gosaingaon and Dharampassa are.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM:—Gosaingaon is in the Goalpara district and Dharampassa is in Sylhet.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—I think it would be convenient if the Hon'ble Mover moves the items separately unless he wishes to proceed on general principles and object to any new police stations.

SRIJUT LOHIT CHANDRA NAYAK:—Then, Sir, I take them separately and for formality's sake. I have said what I had to say. It will run thus:—

"That the provision of Rs. 10,000 for the investigating centre at Gosaingaon be omitted for the present."

This is one motion and the second part will be "that the provision of Rs. 10,000 for Dharampassa police station be omitted for the present."

My idea was as I have explained before the Council that the investigating centres at Gosaingaon and Dharampassa started for suppressing non-co-operation and I wanted to know whether these centres had anything to do with the non-co-operation. As I find that they are required in the ordinary course, I am willing to withdraw the motion.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID:—If it will help the Hon'ble Member I can tell him that as Commissioner of the Assam Valley Districts I pressed years ago—before the non-co-operation movement had come near Assam—for the establishment of the Gosaingaon thana. Although the Dharmapassa project did not come up when I was Commissioner of the Surma Valley I would have supported that strongly if it had. We had never heard about non-co-operation in those days.

SRIJUT LOHIT CHANDRA NAYAK:—I am much satisfied, Sir, and I withdraw the motion.

The motion was, by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI:—Sir, the motion that stands in my name is:—

That the provision of Rs. 2,760 for the appointment of a new clerk at page 79 be omitted.

By a reference to this page it will appear, Sir, that this is a new item and a clerk is to be appointed on Rs. 230 per mensem. I think, Sir, the existing establishment should be able to cope with the work even though the pressure might have increased a bit. This is in view of our financial difficulties. I think all will think with me alike on this point. We should as far as practicable decrease rather than increase the establishment. This increase of staff I think we should not allow.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—I am afraid, Sir, that the figures are not quite what they seem. The position is that when the Deputy Inspector General of Assam Rifles was abolished his clerk who had previously been paid for, like the Deputy Inspector General, from Government of India funds, was absorbed in the establishment of the Inspector General of Police, because although the Deputy Inspector Generalship was abolished the clerical work remained as before. That accounts for the increase of one clerk. The staff was raised from 14 to 15. The entry of the clerk on Rs. 230 against the figure (1) is I think a mistake. The clerk who was transferred from the Deputy Inspector General's office was a junior clerk on Rs. 50. The clerk on Rs. 230 whom the Hon'ble Member proposes to abolish is the head clerk of the Inspector General's office. This head clerk has by mistake been put separately from the other clerks, but he is not really the clerk who has been added to the establishment.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—At any rate, Sir, it appears that in 1921-22 there was no such clerk.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—He appeared amongst the 14 clerks in 1921-22. Possibly on account of the idea of his own importance he has separated himself.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—I do not see how this discrepancy can be explained away, because in 1922 there were 14 clerks and in 1922-23 again there were 14 clerks and this is an addition evidently. The items below also quite tally under 1921-22 with those of 1922-23. By adding the two columns one will be found to be in excess of the other by one.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—I have given the explanation to the Council and I leave it to the Council to judge.

The motion was put and negatived.

TRAVELLING ALLOWANCE—POLICE FORCE AND ESTABLISHMENT.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—The next motion, Sir, standing in my name is :—

That the provision of Rs. 3,000 for the travelling allowance of officers at page 80 be omitted.

By a reference to the same page, Sir, it will appear that this is also a new item, and I request the House for its omission on that ground merely. I do not know if the Hon'ble Member in charge has got a satisfactory explanation to make about that.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—I think the explanation is pretty clear from the Budget itself, Sir. The Hon'ble Member will find in the Budget Estimate for 1921-22 a figure of Rs. 16,000 for Travelling Allowance—Police Force and establishment. In the Budget for 1922-23, it has been split up. We have got 'Travelling Allowance—Police Force and establishment'—Rs. 13,000, and 'Travelling Allowance of officers'—Rs. 3,000. The provision is the same.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—At any rate the revised estimate is Rs. 15,100. Taking this into account I think the provision of Rs. 16,000 is a little bit too large and need be explained.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—I do not think it needs any explanation, Sir. It is a question of a few hundred rupees more and that cannot be known exactly at this time. I do not think the Hon'ble Member should press this question.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI (Sitting) :—I simply suggest .....

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—Will the Hon'ble Member kindly stand up if he is going to address the House ?

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—I simply suggest its reduction merely.

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORAH :—I do not think the Hon'ble Member is acting fairly by taking objection to such matters as travelling allowances, as travelling is a part and parcel of the officers' duties. The exact figure cannot be given as it is merely an approximate estimate. It might be few hundreds more or few hundreds less. If however it is meant that the officers should be kept confined in the Shillong Peak then of course there should be no such charge as travelling allowance. But when the officers are required to travel and it is a principal part of their duties, I do not think we can reasonably raise any objections against any inaccuracies.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The question is that the .....

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—Sir, may I draw the attention of the ...

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—The motion is being put, Sir. Is the Hon'ble Member entitled to interrupt ?

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—I merely want an explanation.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—I understand you wish to withdraw the motion ?

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—Yes, Sir.

The motion was, by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

HOUSE-RENT AND OTHER ALLOWANCE TO POLICE OFFICERS.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—Sir, the next motion standing in my name is :—

That the provision of Rs. 1,500 for house-rent and other allowance at page 80 be reduced to Rs. 400.

It appears, Sir, on a reference to the Budget that in the revised estimate the sum provided was Rs. 400 for the purpose and it is not clearly understood whether a larger amount was provided. If a larger amount were not provided I should request the Hon'ble Member in charge to explain why the rise has been so abnormal.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—Sir, the provision is for the allowances in lieu of free quarters which have been sanctioned to Inspectors of Police in the course of the present year. Consequently there was no provision in the budget for 1921-22 and the revised figure of Rs. 400 which is shown is, I submit, insufficient material on which to reduce the budgetted figure. The budgetted figure is based on the Inspector General's report of the expenditure that will be necessary in accordance with the orders which have recently been passed. The difference is a small one and I would suggest to the Council that it really is not worth while reducing it.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—I do not, Sir, wish to speak anything in reply, but will leave it to the discretion of the House.

The motion was put and negatived.

POLICE REWARDS.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—Sir, the next motion standing in my name is :—

That the provision of Rs. 1,000 for Police Rewards at page 80 be reduced to Rs. 500.

By a reference to the Budget it appears that the figure for the current year's budget was Rs. 500 and the figure stood the test of the revised estimate, inasmuch as the same amount and not more was needed. I think this deserves the credit of constancy, and on that account should not be increased.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—The Hon'ble Member has not mentioned the last actuals available which are Rs. 705. The Inspector General has assured us that provision of Rs. 500 in the current year's budget is insufficient and he is supported by the fact that the last actuals available are Rs. 705. We accepted his assurance that the sum of Rs. 1,000 was actually required. It is possible to argue that Rs. 1,000 is too much but I suggest to the Council that it is not really worth while splitting hairs.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—I should say, Sir, that we must not consider Rs. 500 as a trifling amount, or even Rs. 300 or Rs. 200. Whatever amount we can lay our hands upon we must curtail ; our position is so critical. I did not make a reference to the actuals because it belonged to remoter times. I confined myself simply to the current year ; to the budget estimate and the revised estimate. I think if there be anything very urgent it might be pressed before the Finance Committee for a revision. I am at any rate not very much satisfied with the explanation put forward by the Hon'ble Member in charge. I think therefore that the figure should be reduced by what I have proposed.

The motion was put and negatived.

RENT.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—The next motion standing in my name is that the provision of Rs. 1,800 for rent at page 80 be reduced to Rs. 600.

On a reference to the budget it will appear, Sir, that the figure provided in the budget for the current year was Rs. 1,600. It was then reduced in the revised estimate to Rs. 600. It therefore calls for an explanation. I think the Hon'ble Member in charge will give the same explanation as he did in the case of another item of similar nature which was put forward before the House by me. If this be the case I think I shall not stand in need of pressing this to a division.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—The explanation is the same, Sir.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—I do not press this, Sir. I withdraw it.

The motion was, by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

Travelling allowance of Police Force and Establishment.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI:—The next motion, Sir, is that the provision of Rs. 34,000 for travelling allowance of police force and establishment at page 83 be reduced to Rs. 15,000.

On reference to this page it does not clearly appear what the estimate for the current year actually was. I would request the Hon'ble Member in charge to make this point as clear as possible before I enter into a discussion on the subject.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM:—Does the Hon'ble Member wish to withdraw the resolution, Sir, or does he press it?

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—I think he wants an explanation from the Member in charge.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM:—I shall be prepared to give it when I have heard what he has got to say.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI:—I have asked, Sir, with your permission the Hon'ble Member in charge to say what the item provided in the current year's budget was—what was the item, if any, provided in the current year's budget against this.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID:—I would ask, Sir, if the Hon'ble Member is asking a question or moving a reduction. Our rules for questions require notice to be given.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI:—I think, Sir, such information might be asked for during the Council time because such will simplify matters very much. In the light of the answer to that question I wish to decide whether I should give up the resolution or press it.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—Would you kindly repeat the question?

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI:—The question is,—whether in the current year's budget any amount, and if so, what, was provided.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM:—The item in the current year's budget is included in the general item of Rs. 1,20,000 which he will find against the bracket.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI:—That is so, Sir. It is the sum total of several items. I want to know exactly what was provided against this very item.

MR A. W. BOTHAM:—No amount was specifically provided against this item as far as I know.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI:—If that be the case then I beg to press this motion because this is an item for which too much might have been provided, and necessity might not arise for such an amount, and it is a very large amount—Rs. 34,000. Agreeing with the principle that travelling should be done as much as possible I have not asked for a total omission of the amount, I have simply asked for a reduction of the amount to Rs. 15,000, that is to say I am asking for a reduction by Rs. 19,000. I therefore think that the Hon'ble Member in charge may kindly see his way to agree to my suggestion.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—Sir, I am not sure whether the Hon'ble Member understood what I said. What I meant to say was that the provision in this year's budget shown against "travelling allowance of police force and establishment" was in last year's budget included in the single entry of Rs. 1,20,000 against all travelling allowances under police—District Executive Force. This year in order to give Hon'ble Members as much information as is possible several of these heads have been split up in this way. It is not the case of course that there was no expenditure under this head ; there was no separate provision. There was provision for this item with other items of travelling allowance. In this year's budget each separate class of travelling allowance is shown separately. The provision in last year's budget, Sir, was Rs. 1,20,000. The actuals for 1920-21, the last year available, were Rs. 1,29,000. The revised for the current year is Rs. 1 80,000 and now under these classes we provide this year Rs. 1,57,000, that is to say there is a considerable saving as compared with the revised for the current year. There is an increase over the actuals for 1920-21 and the budget estimate for 1921-22 and this is accounted for by the increase of horse allowance which has been granted to Sub-Inspectors of Police. It probably is not necessary to explain to the Council, Sir that travelling allowance is regulated by fixed scales and it is not possible for the Council to regulate the amount which is actually incurred. All that we can do is to make an estimate of the amount which is likely to be incurred. The Finance Department has done it in this case and I do not think it is worth the while of the Council to attempt to revise the Finance Department's estimate.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—I must submit, Sir, that a criterion is wanting. I do not know if this amount is not too much. We have not been able to forecast what we should grant under this head. At any rate as it appears that the lump provision remains almost in tact I should think I need not take more time of the Council on this subject. At the same time I should draw the attention of the Hon'ble Finance Member to taking such item into consideration so that in the next year's budget such misunderstanding may not arise.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—The Finance Department, Sir, will always endeavour to give effect to useful suggestions from Hon'ble Members. But perhaps I may be allowed to suggest that the Hon'ble Member has been more critical than all the rest of the Council put together and that other Hon'ble Members do not seem to have experienced quite the same difficulties that he has done.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—But, Sir, it remains clear to the Council that the Council has not been able to make out what was the item provided against this item last year.

After hearing the Hon'ble Member in charge and the Hon'ble the Finance Member I beg to withdraw my motion.

The motion was, by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

Probationary Sub-Inspectors.

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORA :—Sir, the motion that stands in my name is that a sum of Rs. 12,000 for probationary Sub-Inspectors be omitted.

I find from the budget figures that every sort of luxury and delicacies are supplied for the comfort of the Police Department and we find the expenditure under this head is increasing from year to year. Under this head we find in 1921-22, 25 men were admitted. In the year 1922-23 it is provided for 20 probationers and at the same time it is to be observed that the rate of their pay goes on increasing and increasing. In 1921-22 provision was made for Rs. 9,000 for 25 probationers. For the next year provision is made for 20 probationers at an expenditure of Rs. 12,000. Of course if this provision is made temporarily in order to cope with non-co-operation and if the Hon'ble Member in charge can satisfy us as to the desirability of maintenance of such a force then we have no objection to allow this item to stand but if it is contemplated that this sort of thing will go on for ever, then we have the strongest objection.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—Sir, this is not a case of temporary establishment which is entertained for a special purpose. The provision is for the ordinary recruits for Sub-Inspectors who are first appointed as probationers and sent to the Training School at Dibrugarh. There they are put under a course of training and made ready for appointment to the thanas as vacancies occur. It is a regularly sanctioned grade although the number of officers to be admitted to it is sanctioned each year on the basis of actual and prospective vacancies. The Inspector General asked this year to be allowed to appoint 30 probationers, but in view of the financial position his requirements were cut down by Government to 20 and it is not possible to reduce the number further.

As regards the increase of pay this is a part of the increase of pay of Sub-Inspectors generally which was sanctioned at the beginning of the current year.

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORA :—I understand, Sir, that this is on a permanent basis.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—Yes, this is on a permanent basis.

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORA :—Sir, my contention is, as I have already said, that in the Police Department more appointments are made than in the Education Department which is a more important one. In that department we do not admit so many probationers from year to year, and I propose that the Hon'ble Members of this Council will see their way to cut off such expenditure under the Police head. The Police Department is not so important from the people's point of view as some other departments, and is not attractive to the public at large.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—I think, Sir, the explanation simply is that when an ordinary graduate passes out of the schools and the universities he is prepared for an educational post. When our candidates enter the police they are certainly not prepared for the ordinary thana work. They have to go through this course of training at Dibrugarh and it is necessary to pay them while they are there.

MAULAVI MUNAWWAR ALI :—To me it seems, Sir, that the Hon'ble Member wants to stop the recruitment of Sub-Inspectors next year. If that be the case I think that it will be a drastic measure. I do not know if we can do without recruiting a certain number annually.

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORA :—Sir, I think the Hon'ble Member is afraid of the recruitment for the police from among our people being effected. So I think it is desirable that I should not press this motion to a division and I should withdraw it.

The motion was, by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The question is that a sum not exceeding Rs. 20,13,500 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923 for the administration of the Police Department.

The motion was put and adopted.

Forest Department.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 9,68,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923 for the administration of the Forest Department. We have sundry motion for reductions, Sir.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—Rai Bahadur Amarnath Ray.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—He is absent, Sir, I think he was under the impression that the Council will be adjourned.

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORA :—Sir, I think the Council may be adjourned as it is getting late.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I object to this, Sir. I do not think the Council should be adjourned before five o'clock especially when there is such a large amount of business before us.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The regular business hours of the Council are 11 to 5.

RAI BAHADUR AMAR NATH RAY :—Before, Sir, I proceed with my motion I understand that Babu Krishna Sundar Dam who has a similar motion on the point wishes to withdraw it.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, my motion refers to two things, and I withdraw the bigger motion and shall support the Hon'ble Rai Bahadur. The motion is No. 2.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The question is that the motion "that the lump provision of Rs. 25,000 for the revision of pay of Assam Forest Service Officers and Subordinate Establishment" be omitted.

The motion was, by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

Revision of pay of Assam Forest Service Officers and Subordinate Establishment.

RAI BAHADUR AMAR NATH RAY :—Sir, I beg to move, that the lump provision of Rs. 25,000 for the revision of pay of Assam Forest Service Officers and Subordinate Establishment be reduced by Rs. 6,000 being the amount provided for revising the scale of pay of Assam Forest Service Officers.

I would refer Hon'ble Members to page 25 of the explanatory memorandum. It will be found that a sum of Rs. 25,000 has been set apart for the revision of the pay of the Assam Forest Service and also of the pay of the subordinate establishment. My motion does not touch the revision of the pay of the subordinate establishment. What I propose is that there should be no fresh revision in the case of the Assam Forest Service Officers as I think that the existing scale of Rs. 200—250—750 is quite adequate. The reason given for the revision is that as all other services have been given increased rates of pay Members of the Assam Forest Service are also anxious to have an increment. I think, Sir, that this revision might be put off for the present.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Sir, I shall be very brief in my explanation. The Assam Forest Service unfortunately is not a popular one. We have from time to time tried to make conditions better. We have all of us and I in particular been grieved and disappointed for years to see how few young men belonging to the province think of entering the Forest Department. It is a great Department with great possibilities but I am sorry to say that conditions of service seem to be uncongenial. We did obtain a few admirable officers from Assam, but we have of the recent years had unfortunate casualties. I was personally acquainted with three very promising young officers who belonged to this province who died in the discharge of their duty.

This is the reason, Sir. We are not anxious to pay more, but if by some means like this we can increase the attractiveness of service we are anxious to do so. The matter is one which the Council must decide.

I have only one other word, Sir. I said the other day when replying to the budget discussion that we are looking about to see whether we can do with fewer forest officers of the Imperial Service in future than we have had in the past. In fact we are almost contemplating in a modified form the resolution moved by Rai Bahadur Pramode Chandra Datta—that recruitment to one of the All-India Services so far as Assam is concerned should be temporarily abandoned. We have come to no decision. But if we are to do without Imperial Service Officers we must have more and better Provincial Service Officers. It is on this ground and on this ground alone that we have proposed this increase of pay. It may be said that Extra Assistant Commissioners have more responsible duties then Forest Officers. I am not going to argue this. The fact remains that for one man who will accept a post in the Forest Department we can get ten or more who will accept an appointment in the ordinary executive line.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, I rise to support this motion. My point all along in regard to this as well as in other motions for reduction is this that all proposals for increase of the public expenditure should be stayed for some time. This year, Sir, it appears that the Forest Department has come in for a large share of the financial patronage and of course this has not been done without some injury to other departments in which we are more interested, as I have already pointed out. The only question is whether this is so urgent that it cannot be postponed for sometime more. The Hon'ble Members of the Council will find from a reference to the budget the existing salaries of the Forest Officers and they will judge for themselves whether it is sufficient or whether it is so low as not to carry any attraction or as requires immediate increase. Of course the impression generally is

that it is a very lucrative department, but from a reference to the budget it will appear that in the current year the income from this department is shown to be 10½ lacs while in the coming year it is proposed to be 12 lacs a profit of about 1½ lacs. But if we consider that this 1½ lacs is only the income from the re-imposed royalty on lac, it must be said that this department is yet not so lucrative a department as stated so often. So from the point of view of the outturn of works by the department itself or comparing the scale of remuneration in other departments I would submit that there is no proper and urgent ground for increasing the salaries in this department as proposed.

RAI BAHADUR AMARNATH RAY :—I have only one or two words to say, Sir. The present time-scale of the Assam Civil Service is considered to be too generous and very soon we may have to come up with a proposal for a reduction in cases of future recruitment to that service. That being so, I think it will not be right to revise the scale of pay of the Assam Forest Service now.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I only want to say again, Sir, that we want men to come forward for this service. We cannot get them at the present rates of pay.

The motion was put and a division taken with the following result :—

Ayes.	Noes.
Maulavi Abdul Khalique Chaudhuri.	The Hon'ble Mr. W. J. Reid.
Srijut Bishnu Charan Bora.	The Hon'ble Mr. A. Majid.
Srijut Dalim Chandra Bora.	The Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Ghanasyam Barua.
Babu Krishna Sundar Dam.	Mr. A. W. Botham.
Srijut Bepin Chandra Ghose.	Mr. A. R. Edwards.
Rai Sahib Bipin Chandra Deb Lashkar.	Mr. J. R. Cunningham.
Mr. E. H. Featherstone.	Srijut Shiva Prasad Barua.
Khan Bahadur Muhibuddin Ahmed.	Mr. A. J. G. Cresswell.
Maulavi Munawwarali.	Rai Sahib Manomohan Lahiri.
Maulavi Rashid Ali Lashkar.	Srijut Lohit Chandra Nayak.
Rai Bahadur Amarnath Ray.	Srijut Nilmoni Phukan.
	Mr. E. S. Roffey.
	Raj Kumar Chandra Narayan Singh.
	Mr. D. S. Withers.
	Mr. W. E. H. Greyburn.

The Ayes being 11 and the Noes 15, the motion was declared lost.

RAI BAHADUR AMARNATH RAY :—Sir, I wish to withdraw this motion as a similar motion stands in the name of Babu Krishna Sundar Dam.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, the motion that stands in my name is that the lump provision of Rs. 31,000 for deputation allowance and special allowances be reduced by Rs. 6,300.

The Hon'ble Members will find the item to which I refer at page 44 of the budget. It will appear that for the coming year the budgetted total expenditure for both the circles, Eastern and Western, is Rs. 31,300 as against Rs. 23,500 of the revised estimate of the current year and Rs. 24,685, the actuals of the previous year. The difference between the actuals of 1920-21 and the coming year amounts to more than Rs. 6,000 and this explains why the reduction has been asked for to the extent of Rs. 6,000. As the Hon'ble Members know very well a part of the business of the Forest Department has been curtailed by the transfer of the grazing fee collections to the Land Revenue Department. Besides there is at present no scheme of the Forest development ready for execution by the department. I believe all of us have perused the report of the Retrenchment Committee where it has been stated by the majority of the members of the committee that retrenchment is necessary in this department and they have recommended for the abolition of the post of a Conservator and then again there are further observations about the necessary retrenchment in this department and about the complete inability of the Government to undertake any scheme for many years to come. It would appear from the Retrenchment Committee's report that a sum of 60 lacs is necessary for the scheme. What I mean to drive at here Sir, is this ; that at a time when a committee appointed by the Government has recommended reduction in the expenditure of this Department, we should find increase of expenditure under several items under this head—Forests—of which the present item is one, *viz*, Deputation and special allowance. I do not know what will be the reply to this proposal for reduction. It may be said that they get this deputation allowance or special allowance under the particular rules of the local Government. I do not know what the explanation will be, but what I mean to say is this that unless and until the Retrenchment Committee's recommendations have been carried out, or unless and until the Council have been satisfied that the authorities are going actually to accept wholly or substantially the recommendations of the committee, I think we have a right, on principle, to protest against every item of increased expenditure for this department.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I hope, Sir, the explanation which I have to give will satisfy the Hon'ble Member. First of all let me assure him that there is absolutely nothing new in these allowances. He has not told us why he has suggested the specific reduction that he did. He may have liked the look of a round figure of Rs. 25,000. The figure taken is a mere budget figure. Actual expenditure may be a little more or may be a little less. I cannot say. I shall tell the Council what these allowances are. Under the orders of the Secretary of State which have been in force for many years, a variety of allowances are given in Assam. First of all there is the Assam allowance which is given to Forest Officers of all classes serving in the districts of Assam other than the Sylhet district and the plains portion of the Cachar district. Then there are the allowances given to a Forest Officer in charge of a Division, to a gazetted officer attached to a Division, if his pay is above a certain figure, to an officer whose pay is below that figure. Then, Sir, we have a special allowance for the Cachar Hill Tracts as they were called then, that is to say what is now the Haflong Subdivision. Then we have an allow-

ance of Rs. 50 granted by the orders of the Government of India to an Extra Assistant Conservator of Forests who is holding charge of a Forest Division. Then we have occasionally the case of an officer of another Department who has to hold charge temporarily of a Forest Division. He is given an allowance. We have sundry others, Sir The subordinates employed in the Sadiya Division of the Frontier Tract receive a special allowance as do officers of every department who are employed there. Then we have smaller things, fees for medical attendance on forest subordinates at Lumding, Makum, Sissi, Dehingmukh and Badoti, and allowances to certain forest guards attached to the Khasi and Jaintia Hills Division. The point I want to make clear is that there is nothing new in a single one of these allowances. They have been going on for many years. I do not think it is proposed to abolish them. My budget figure may be questioned. If it pleases the Council to cut it down a little I do not know that this will make any great difference. We certainly will not give allowances to officers who are not entitled to them under the rules. I hope we shall not be asked to reduce the allowances of officers who are entitled to them under the rules.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—In these circumstances I beg to withdraw the motion.

The motion was by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

Forest Communication Scheme.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—The motion which stands in my name is :—

That the sum of Rs. 30,000 provided for a forest communication scheme be omitted.

What prompted me to put forward this motion for reduction, Sir, is the reduction to which I have already drawn the attention of the Council—reduction of the promised recurring grants under head 41—Civil Works, page 19 of the Explanatory Memorandum.

It grieves me very much to find that the Government should have thought it necessary to apply the pruning knife on amounts which were promised recurring grants to the Local Bodies and should have diverted Rs. 1,50,000 from these grants to the benefit of the Police and Forest and the Reserved Departments, which shew a tendency to swallow an unduly large share of the Provincial revenues in every year. It cannot be said, here, Sir, that this expenditure will be immediately remunerative—at least during the coming year it will not be so. As I have already shown to the Council by a reference to the budget figures, the income is expected to be about Rs. 12,00,000 in the coming year as against Rs. 10,50,000 during the present year, but this increase of Rs. 1,50,000 represents the income from re-imposed duties on lac so that what we have heard about the expenditure here being immediately lucrative on account of Mr. Milroy's *khedda* operations and the timber extractions do not appear to be quite precise. At least during the coming year we find no where such profit accruing from the elephants caught by Mr. Milroy. So this expenditure cannot be defended on the ground that it is going to be immediately lucrative. Nor do we know where, when and how this particular amount will be spent. Whether it will be spent for the benefit of persons

holding existing contracts with the Government or whether they will be spent for prospective contractors, these matters are not clear. Of course if it is an amount to benefit persons holding existing contracts for timber extraction, I think we should not sanction this amount, and so, too, if it is meant to make a beginning of the forest development scheme to understand which I would invite the attention of the Members to the observations of Rai Bahadur P. C. Datta in the Retrenchment Committee's Report. There it is stated that a sum amounting to nearly Rs. 60,00,000 will be required for executing the forest development scheme and it is taken for granted that it is impossible for this Government to supply this big amount except by raising loan. If, Sir, this Forest Department is meant to be run as a business concern with hopes of bringing profits to Government, then, I think on a question of principle, the amount necessary should be raised by borrowing instead of by depleting the current revenues for the purpose. As a Member of the Finance Committee I also raised this question as it would appear to the Members from the note at page 24; the Hon'ble Finance Member accepted the principle, but pointed out that the sum involved in the present case was only Rs. 30,000. Of course this particular item is Rs. 30,000, but taking together other new and additional items of expenditure it would appear that the total sum would amount to lakhs and lakhs of rupees. So, both having regard to the prior claims of other departments, prior claims of the Local Boards and the prior claims of Primary education - things for which the transferred departments have a foremost claim upon the current revenues of the provinces, I submit, Sir, that this sum ought not to be spent for the Forest Communication Scheme, but rather that it should be applied to the Village Roads Scheme or to the Village Tanks and Village Schools Scheme, or for Village Dispensary Scheme and so on. Knowing full well that villagers are badly in need of roads and tanks and communications I believe it is very proper and necessary on the part of the Council to ask for a diversion of this budgetted sum for the benefit of the transferred departments.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—The Hon'ble Member, Sir, deplores the absence of any provision in the budget this year for the improvement of the rural water-supply and the reduction of the grants for communications which we give to Local Boards. We also deeply deplore this, and I have said so here on one occasion, if not on two. But surely, Sir, he does not mean to argue seriously that for that reason the Council should at once, without consideration refuse to vote the Rs. 30,000 that we have asked for forest roads. The reasons for which we have asked for this sum are set forth in the note which perhaps the Council will permit me to read. "The absence of roads in the reserved forests not only makes the extraction of timber difficult, if not impossible, but deters timber traders from considering an extension of their activities. The Conservators have been asked to submit a programme for the construction of forest roads and it is proposed to provide Rs. 30,000 in next year's budget. The expenditure should before long be more than recouped in the shape of additional revenue."

Well, Sir, in this matter we shall accept the decision of the Council. If it is against us we shall accept it with regret, but none the less we shall accept it. The Hon'ble Member said that at all events even if we spend the money there will be no immediate return, the expenditure will not be remunerative in the coming year. If that, Sir, is a reason for not incurring the expenditure

next year I should like to know when the time will come in which the return will be immediate, when expenditure of this nature will be recouped in the year in which it is incurred. He asked whether we proposed to make roads for the benefit of the existing contract-holders. Well, Sir, I can only say on behalf of the Forest Department that we are better business men than that. What we are anxious to do is to give the small men a chance, to encourage them to come and try some of our unworked forests. I need not tell most Hon'ble Members here what our forests are like and whether the ordinary person would think for a moment of even a small commercial undertaking in a forest which he cannot even get inside. There are no roads. There is no way of bringing out any timber or other forest produce which he may extract. I submit, Sir, that in our forests we have an asset of great value from which we may hope for an expanding revenue, but that we can only hope to get if we are prepared to incur capital expenditure. I am entirely at one with the Hon'ble Member in thinking that large development projects are best financed by borrowing. But in the first place who in the present state of our finances would lend us money? In the second place, as I said to the Finance Committee, this after all is a very small matter. From whom shall we borrow Rs. 30,000? We clearly cannot go into the open market. It may be there is some philanthropic money lender in the Council or outside who would lend us Rs. 30,000 at a low rate of interest. In that case, Sir, I am prepared to close with him immediately; but until he is discovered I must stick to my original proposal. I ask, Sir, are we to wait, are we to do nothing until the time when we can borrow, it may be twenty lakhs, it may be thirty lakhs, it may be fifty lakhs to make a beginning? I say frankly that we have no precise programme for the expenditure of this amount. The Conservators have been asked to send up proposals, and their proposals will I know be much wider and go much further than this very modest one. But this is the utmost that we could allow them to think of having this year. If the Council votes the demand their proposals will be most carefully examined and we shall try to allot this sum judiciously. If the Council negatives the proposal there is an end.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN:—Sir, I think at the present moment our Forest Department means some business. I have seen in my own district the Forest Department has taken up the business of extraction of valuable timbers from the forest; and if there be no good communications to these forests which are being worked, I do not think that will be ultimately remunerative. It is a matter of common knowledge to us all that we do not buy things even three or four times cheaper at a place where there is no good communication. So, as this amount will be spent for the improvement of communications to these different forest reserves, it will be spent on the idea that it will bring some profit, ultimately perhaps, more profit to the department. Of course as a member of the Finance Committee where I was present when the Hon'ble Finance Member very clearly put this proposal before us, on principle we of course objected to spending from the current revenue on such items. And in future, on principle, again, I say the Forest Department should look to some other quarters for these improvements to the forests. But as the Hon'ble Finance Member pointed out to us that this time the amount was a very small one—Rs. 30,000—and for this the Government ought not to go to any place for borrowing, we did not object to voting this amount for real remunerative work of the Forest Department.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—I have only one word to say, Sir. The Finance Member has made it perfectly clear to the Council, and I believe the Members fully understood him, that this sum has been earmarked for the Forest Department because the Conservators—better businessmen than Members of the Council—demanded it ; that they did so without placing any definite or precise scheme before the Government and the Hon'ble Finance Member justly told the Council that he could tell the Council nothing about where and how and when the money would be spent, but that he could assure the Council that the money would be applied judiciously. Now, all that appears from the note is that it is an amount for communications in the reserved forests. Of course it is natural in us to be sanguine, when we hear of improvements in forests and prospects of profit—and I have no quarrel with my friend Mr. Phukan on that point when he says that we may hope for large gain in this direction, but I will ask him not to be too sanguine over the expenditure of this Rs. 30,000 particularly in this year. This is not the right year in which we should think of business and profits ; and there are times—months and years in a man's life in which he should think rather for self-preservation, for fighting against disease, epidemic and such other things as drinking water and so on and should not think so much of business and enormous profits from investments of capital which cannot be spared. So from that point of view of our present needs, I shall ask the Council for postponing all these schemes of spending after business and thinking of our village communications instead of forest communications. Of course I know the saying "nothing venture nothing have." But there is a time for making ventures. Surely the present year is a most unsuitable year for making any ventures, and so I submit that we should ask for the omission of this item.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I must correct one misunderstanding, Sir. The Hon'ble Member painted a graphic picture of too sanguine Conservators attacking the Member in charge and insisting on his providing money for their schemes. Well, Sir, I confess with shame and sorrow that no picture more remote from the truth could have been painted. I was told that one reason why we did not get better returns from our forest was that there were no communications. I said—"Why are there no communications ?" and was told that there was no money, there never had been any money. I asked if there were any schemes and they said :—"We send up schemes before but they were turned down, because there was no money." I then insisted on schemes being prepared, but regret to say I have not yet got them. But the pressure in this case came not from the head of the department but from the Member in charge.

The Hon'ble Member said, Sir, that this year we ought to concentrate on fighting disease and meeting the many pressing needs the existence of which all will admit. Well, Sir, in the first place how far will this Rs. 30,000 go towards restoring the grants that we have reluctantly been compelled to omit. And secondly as a matter of principle if measures of this kind are going to prove remunerative, as I at least hope that they will do, are they not our best chance of getting increased resources for all the admirable purposes that the Hon'ble Member has enumerated ? As I said before, Sir, we leave this to the decision of the Council.

The motion was put and a division taken with the following result :—

AYES.	NOES.
Maulavi Abdul Khalique Chaudhury.	The Hon'ble Mr. W. J. Reid, C.S.I.
Rai Sahib Padmanath Gohain Barua.	The Hon'ble Mr. A. Majid, C.I.E.
Srijut Dalim Chandra Bora.	The Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Ghanasyam Barua.
Babu Krishna Sundar Dam.	Mr. A. W. Botham, C.I.E.
Srijut Bepin Chandra Ghose.	Mr. A. R. Edwards.
Rai Sahib Bipin Chandra Deb Laskar.	Mr. J. R. Cunningham, C.I.E.
Mr. E. H. Featherstone.	Srijut Siva Prosad Barua.
Maulavi Munawwarali.	Mr. A. J. G. Cresswell.
Srijut Lohit Chandra Nayak.	Rai Sahib Manomahon Lahiri.
	Srijut Nilmoni Phukan.
	Mr. E. S. Roffey.
	Maulavi Rashid Ali Laskar.
	Raj Kumar Chandra Narayan Singh.
	Mr. D. S. Withers.
	Mr. W. E. H. Grayburn.

The Ayes being 9 and the Noes 15 the motion was declared lost.

The Council was then adjourned to Thursday, the 23rd March 1922, at 11 A. M.

S. E. STINTON,

Offg. Secretary to the Legislative Council, Assam.

Shillong,
The 12th April 1922.