

these cantonment boards. Can that municipality do so ? The boards to which I referred are not well developed. Though they were administered by the then military authorities, the sanitary arrangements are highly deficient as compared to the arrangements in the adjoining areas. In order to bring these backward boards up to a certain level, capital expenditure will have to be incurred; and, who is going to provide that capital ? If we are going to ask the municipal tax-payers to pay, it is really penalising them. Then, take the question of payments. The payments in the boards and municipalities are not the same. They will have to be equalised. Then the question about pension, provident fund etc., will come up. Then again, accommodation will have to be provided for. All this will mean additional burden on the flimsy finances of the municipalities. I am sure the labour unions will get ample field to reap a rich harvest by organising strikes. I am therefore of the opinion that the whole issue should be kept open. The option of merging or not merging should be decided by the cantonment boards and the municipalities concerned.

Coming to category 3, I think if the Government is not willing to give up their rule on those boards, at least twenty or more boards can be shifted from category 3 to category 2, as suggested by Mr. Sidhwa in his note of dissent. I think the policy of the Government should be to abolish these boards as early as possible. They are antiquated. They are legacies of the British Government and are not in keeping with the democratic traditions which we are trying to build up. Let this Bill be a step in that direction. I support the motion for Select Committee.

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU : Sir, just one question for clarification. Sir, in the Local Self-Government Ministers conference.....

SHRI S. C. KARAYALAR (Travancore-Cochin) : Sir, on a point of order, the hon. Minister is not in possession of the House. No question can be put to him at this stage.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : You can speak.

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU : Resolution No. 2 was with regard to the excision of civil areas from cantonments, and consequent delimitation of the boundaries thereof. Sir, the Central Committee on Cantonments went through the whole thing and submitted a report recommending the J excision of certain Civil areas from cantonment and the consequent delimitation of the boundaries thereof. That J has been reported Sir, on pages 6—7 1 of the Report of the Central Committee. As I said, Sir, having regard to all these factors, they have decided that I the cantonment should be divided into 3 categories. Category I includes the cantonments in which large areas redundant to the requirements of the army can be excised and formed into separate local bodies. Regarding the other two categories my hon. friend has just now mentioned, and has explained why this ! Bill has been now brought before this House. I refer to only Part I of the 1 recommendations of the Central Committee. This Bill does not refer to anything with regard to the recommendations of the Central Committee in Part j I. May I ask Sir, what has Government done with regard to the recommendations in Part I of the Central Committee's Report? Secondly, I find that—it is my own opinion—the whole Act can be re-opened and amended because, there are several items, very important things, that have been recommended by the Central Committee, and according to the Bill before us, we want that it should be referred to a Select Committee. The whole Act may be referred to the Select Committee as has been pointed out by two honourable Members a little while ago.

SARDAR S. S. MAJITHIA : Sir, I am very grateful to the hon. Members who have taken part in today's discussion. As I said in my opening remarks, I still feel that there is a certain amount of distrust in the minds of Members about our officials, both civil and military. I beg to submit Sir,

[Sardar S. S. Majithia.] that this is not a fact. As I said earlier, we have changed and now they are—if you will permit me, to put it, so—the most dutiful servants of this Government which represents the people of this country.

Coming to some of the points Dr. Gour referred, to the presiding officer, who is a military official, and has no knowledge of civil requirements. If he had said that about twenty years ago, I possibly would have accepted his arguments. But today, your military men are all Indians, fully national and patriotic, and to say that these Indians cannot understand the requirements of the civil population, is very far from the truth. They live amongst them, they come from amongst them, and then to dub them as being ignorant of the conditions from which they come, is just to shut your eyes to the facts. I need not dilate on that very much.

The other point which he raised was about democratising the bodies. As I said Sir, there are certain difficulties regarding them, and I am very grateful to my friend Shri Govinda Reddy, for clarifying the situation to a great extent, and therefore, I need not waste the time of this House on that point. I will only say that these cantonments are the result. They have sprung up because we need them. By 'we', I mean the country. It is not that they have a haphazard growth. They come up because we want our troops to be stationed at a particular spot. Along with the cantonments, you have got the civilian population coming and settling there and helping the military personnel, and therefore this point should not be lost sight of that it is to the military personnel first that we should give primary consideration in cantonments.

Next, coming to my hon. friend Shri Saksena, I can assure him that there is no difference between himself and me. If I may refresh his memory, the military personnel always think themselves to be the servants of the country and by "the country", the people are also

included. There is no question of differentiation and they have come to the aid of the civilian population not once, but so many times. They could come effectively to their aid.

As regards my friend opposite, Shri Rath from Orissa, I can say that he was harping on the same old distress of the military officers which I have already replied to. Apart from that, he mentioned certain points which are also relevant and I may add that with regard to the accession of the areas, Government has already considered that and very soon will come to a decision on that point.

That leads me to my friend who spoke last, I think, Shri Deogirikar. He mentioned about certain areas. The main point he referred to was the difference in taxation between Poona and Kirkee. There are various aspects to be considered between Poona and Kirkee. It is entirely a different matter and has to be looked into. There are various things which come up while settling these differences and it is not such a simple matter as that. Besides these points, I find there is nothing else which I should refer to now.

SHRI B. RATH : Sir, what about widening the scope of the Committee to consider the whole Act itself ?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : The question is :

That the Bill further to amend the Cantonments Act, 1924, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of—

Shri Bodh Ram Dube,
Dr. Shrimati Seeta Parmanand,
Shri Somnath P. Deva,
Shri T.S. Pattabiraman,
Shri Braja Kishore Prasad Sinha»
Shri M.H.S. Nihal Singh,
Shri Shyam Dhar Misra,
Shri Braj Bihari Sharma,
Shri Col. Peer Mohammad,
Shri Mohammed Valiulla,
Shri S. Chattanatha Karayallar.
Shri Ram Kirpal Singh,
Shri Bhupesh Gupta,