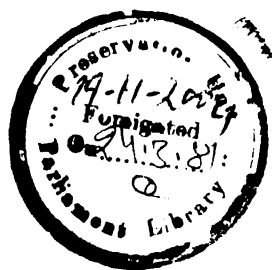


Wednesday, 15th February, 1928

THE
COUNCIL OF STATE DEBATES
(OFFICIAL REPORT)
VOLUME I, 1928

(1st February 1928 to 22nd March 1928)

FOURTH SESSION
OF THE
SECOND COUNCIL OF STATE, 1928



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COUNCIL OF STATE.

Wednesday, 15th February, 1928.

The Council met in the Council Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, the Honourable the President in the Chair.

RESOLUTION *re* UNEMPLOYMENT OF THE EDUCATED AND OTHER MIDDLE CLASSES.

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. C. DESIKĀ CHARI (Burma : General) : Sir, I move the Resolution which stands in my name and which runs as follows :

“ This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council to appoint a Committee to make the necessary inquiries and devise ways and means for relieving unemployment of the educated and other middle classes.”

Sir, I should like to preface my remarks by explaining what I mean by the middle classes of India. It is a term which is used in a much broader sense in India than in other parts of the world. I include in that expression all those people belonging to classes who have been engaged for ages in literary or quasi-literary or intellectual pursuits, and also those classes who have been engaged in some kind of work or other which is not actual physical manual labour. Sir, this problem of the educated middle classes is a very acute one. It is more acute in provinces like Madras and Bengal, but all the same this is a serious problem all over India in general.

Sir, I do not want to take up much time of the House, and I propose to be brief, because I find this question was discussed at great length in the other place. The reason for my bringing forward this motion again before this Council, is, I am sorry to say, that the Government, though they recognised the gravity of the situation, have not done anything to relieve the unemployment of this class. I think it is not necessary for me to prove that this unemployment is general throughout the country, and that it is very grave. I think I can state without fear of being challenged from any quarter of this House that the problem is assuming serious proportions, and unless you tackle it properly here and now, there is a grave political danger. The problem is one primarily economic, but it is threatening to assume a political aspect. It is this way. You find there are large classes of unemployed educated and other middle classes of people who have absolutely no means of subsistence. I wanted to preface my remarks by explaining what I mean by middle classes, because it may be misunderstood. What I mean by middle classes is a respectable class of people who may have or may not have some means of subsistence. It is well known that though this class has not got much property, it is regarded in India as a highly respectable class, and the people belonging to it have got a high degree of self-respect and honour, and they are not likely to take to the work of the labouring classes, whatever may be the circumstances they may be placed in. So we have to face this problem and tackle it and see if it is not possible to find out other avenues of employment for these people. If you let things stand as they are, the political situation will grow worse. It is this way. These people belonging to the educated and other middle classes command such a high degree of respect among the masses that it is bound to react upon the condition of the masses. If these people get more and more disaffected and discontented, the unrest that will be created among the masses will have serious and tremendous political possibilities.

[Mr. P. C. Desika Chari.]

Sir, I do not want to deal with this aspect of the question any longer, but I will only impress upon the House the fact that the problem is a very grave one, and all of us, officials as well as non-officials, must take interest and deal with the problem in a real spirit of earnestness. It will be quite clear to the gentlemen on the Treasury Benches how serious this problem is. In their every day routine work, I believe every one of the official Members sitting here will be impressed by the hosts of applications that are received, and that most of these applicants have got to go away disappointed because they cannot be provided with any job. I can illustrate the point. Recently some appointments were made in the Calcutta Municipal Corporation. There were 23 subordinate posts and applications were invited, and there were more than 4,500 applications, and all of the applicants were very well qualified for the posts. This is only an instance of what takes place whenever there is a vacancy, however small it may be, in the public services.

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. C. MCWATTERS (Industries and Labour Secretary): Is that in Calcutta?

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. C. DESIKA CHARI: That is in the Municipal Corporation of Calcutta. It happened there only recently just before the commencement of this Council. That is only a typical instance as to how many people are without employment and how anxious they are to get hold of a job if they can get one. I can say from my own humble experience that, although I have no patronage myself and have so far approached no officials and have no influence with them, I am very often besieged by my people who are highly qualified in various respects. So, it is not necessary for me to labour this point and to make any further submissions to show that the problem is a very acute one.

That being so, what have we got to do? Sir, it will serve no useful purpose to go to the root cause of this trouble so far as this Resolution is concerned, nor is it desirable to apportion the blame to anybody for bringing about this condition of affairs. Suffice it to say that the system of education in vogue in this country for a pretty long time has been a delusion and a snare and very many of these middle class families have lost all they had in educating their children. These young men having lost their patrimony are left at large and without any chance of relief or any hope of employment in the near future. Under these circumstances it was thought recently that if you could deflect these young men from the universities to technical, engineering, medical and other scientific courses, they might be able to find employment. Even there they failed, because these professions in course of time became overcrowded, and it is absolutely impossible for many people to get any sort of employment in these directions. Afterwards there was a tendency on the part of some people to send some of our young men abroad and get them trained in special industries or in some technical courses. Even these men, when they return after spending a lot of money and after wasting a good deal of their time, find that they cannot fully employ themselves. People who are highly trained in various walks of life do not know how to start their work here, because they have not got the facilities, and therefore their position is very much worse than that of those people who had not gone abroad for training in special industries. So far, the Central Government has not done anything effectively to tackle this problem. I find, Sir, that some of the Local Governments and also the public bodies in some of the provinces have been engaging themselves in trying to do something to relieve the unemployment of these

classes. In Madras, Bengal and the United Provinces Committees have been set up to find ways and means for the relief of the educated middle classes. Of course, the question is very acute in the Madras Presidency. I believe that in some of these provinces the Committees have reported to the Local Governments, but I should like the Honourable Member in charge of this Resolution on behalf of Government to tell us what progress has so far been made. At any rate, so far as we are concerned, we do not see signs of any progress in that direction even after the submission of those reports by the various Committees.

Sir, there have also been some attempts on the part of non-official bodies to tackle this problem. Honourable Members must be aware of the attempts made by Deshabandhu Das in this connection. He submitted a scheme to the Government of Bengal by means of which these unemployed middle class people could be usefully employed, but for reasons best known to themselves the Local Government turned down this scheme. They did not bring forward any alternative scheme. I also know, Sir, that Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee and some other non-official gentlemen had been directing their attention to this matter, but for one reason or other nothing has resulted from their activities. It therefore behoves the Central Government, which alone is in a position to tackle this problem effectively, to come forward and do what lies in their power to relieve this unemployment. Sir, it has often been said on behalf of Government that they have got a national outlook and that they are doing every thing which a national Government is expected to do. If that is so, then I ask them to act up to their professions and do something tangible to relieve this unemployment of the middle classes which is, to say the least, nothing short of a serious danger.

Sir, I am not in a position to suggest any cut and dried scheme, but it is quite possible to find remedies, remembering always the peculiar position of Indians. Sir, we are not in the happy position of people belonging to England and other European countries, who have got their own Colonies and Dependencies where they can find careers if they do not find employment at home. For our people there is practically no place in the Army, in the Navy and in the Mercantile Marine. No doubt there are some exceptions to this and my Honourable friend Sir Umar Hayat Khan may point his finger to himself. I am prepared to admit that there are one or two men who are fortunate enough to get some of these prize posts. But that is not the point. The fact remains that the Army and the Navy are absolutely blocked to Indians as such. Honourable Members are no doubt aware that some attempts have been made to find a place for the Indian element also in the Army and the Navy. We know the recommendations of the Skeen Committee and also how an attempt was made to arrive at a compromise. Sir, even the unanimous recommendations of the Skeen Committee have not met with the approval of the Government of India. I find, Sir, that in the spheres of commercial and industrial concerns and also in joint stock companies, our people have a very limited scope. Besides, these concerns are on a very small scale and therefore cannot absorb a large number of our people. I am however thankful to some of those English and European firms who have been employing a fairly large number of our educated youths. All these things, however, are not enough to solve the problem or even to touch the fringe of it.

Sir, I want a comprehensive inquiry to devise ways and means to tackle this problem effectively. Various remedies can be suggested. For instance you can take steps to encourage small new industries which require small capital.

[Mr. P. C. Desika Chari.]

You can improve cottage industries and make it worth while for many to take up. You can establish employment bureaus. You can absorb a good number of them in a scheme of colonization or by free grants of land in some of those areas where irrigation facilities have been created. I do not mean to say that you can absorb all of them, but I believe it will take a fairly good number of them, and you can provide other facilities and find out other avenues of employment. I cannot suggest any comprehensive scheme, because it requires very deep study of the methods employed in other countries, and there is no good of presenting a scheme with incomplete knowledge. It requires the assistance of experts, official as well as non-official, and, when a Committee is constituted, we will have plenty of material to be culled from the Government archives. On this account I do not wish to put forward a definite scheme, but will content myself with having a Committee where officials and non-officials can put their heads together and devise some scheme. I do not think it impossible. I know what attitude the Government took up in the other place. There was plenty of lip sympathy, and I believe there will be plenty of it here too, but what I found from the trend of the discussions there, was that the officials seemed to be perfectly satisfied with what they have done already, and they seemed to be quite contented with some sort of philosophical consolation. It is no good to tell us that you have got absolute sympathy, or to tell us, "Well, the function of Government does not extend so far." I do not want the Treasury Benches to tell us that the Government cannot provide for us in our necessities as they arise, and that the Government can do no positive good, in the words of Burke or some other great thinker. I want them to tackle this problem seriously, to feel, as we Indians feel, because it is a common danger threatening the entire body politic, and on the solution of this problem depends the solution of our various political problems.

With these words I place the Resolution before the House for its acceptance.

THE HONOURABLE MR. ALMA LATIFI (Punjab Nominated Official): Sir, I do not rise to oppose this Resolution as belonging to that class of officials whom the Honourable Mover described as being perfectly satisfied with the existing state of affairs. The problem of unemployment among educated people is one that confronts every man in this country, who counts educated young Indians among his friends. It also leaps to the eye of every Government servant who has some kind of patronage at his disposal. I oppose this Resolution simply and solely on the ground that the question raised is one that could more appropriately be dealt with not by the Central Government but by the Provincial Governments.

There are several reasons for this position

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. C. DESIKA CHARI: What about funds?

THE HONOURABLE MR. ALMA LATIFI: I will come to that if the Honourable Member will do me the honour of listening to what I have to say.

There are several reasons why this problem should be dealt with by Local Governments. In the first place, the questions it raises are intimately local. We have above all to deal with the racial characteristics of the population of India which vary from province to province. Then the provinces also differ from each other in the resources they can command.

But my main objection to this proposal, Sir, is that under our existing constitutional arrangements the various departments that would have to

attack this problem are not only provincial but also transferred, and depend on the votes of the local Councils. Take, for example, the Department of Industries. The Honourable Mover referred to the desirability of starting cottage industries suitable for young men. This is a matter to be taken up by the local Departments of Industries which are a transferred subject which could not under existing conditions be controlled by the Government of India.

Then again there is the question of coaxing educated men to the land. I do not mean to imply that agriculture—and more particularly its development—is not a subject to be dealt with by the Central Government. Indeed a Royal Commission is even now dealing with the problem of improving agriculture. But the improvement of agriculture generally is a very different matter from the problem of leading educated young men to the land as a means of livelihood. Here we are face to face with something that could be satisfactorily taken up only by Local Governments understanding local habits, local resources and local circumstances. In the Punjab, for example, we have our very special land laws, and they present peculiar difficulties in the way of advance in this direction, difficulties which do not exist in other provinces, as for example, Bombay.

Now both these lines of inquiry, the question of leading educated men to the workshop or to the land, converge on the problem of education. The Honourable Mover has been the reverse of complimentary to our present system of education, and I am inclined to agree with a good many of his strictures. Thoughtful inquirers might well ask whether our educational system at present is not too literary, and whether it does not, instead of training the rising generation in profitable directions, lead them astray and ruin a great many of them. Take for example, the case of the educated men who consider it beneath them to work with their hands, about whom the Honourable Mover has told us. One of the main objectives of our schools ought to be to develop in our people a sense of the dignity of labour. So far is it from doing this, that our present system of education is killing the industrial instinct even among the classes who have so far been the backbone of our industrial system. The carpenter's son, or the shoemaker's son who passes the Entrance Examination not only loses his hereditary occupation but also fails as a rule to get even the clerkship in the Collector's office which he covets.

The Honourable Mover has referred, in somewhat grudging terms, I am afraid to the work done by Local Governments in this regard. He has mentioned Madras, the United Provinces and Bengal. May I inform him, Sir, that the Punjab Government also is fully alive to the gravity of the problem and early in the last year appointed a committee to investigate it. This Committee includes distinguished officials and non-officials and having completed its labours will publish its report in a few weeks' time. I do not think that when Local Governments have already shown so much interest in the problem of educated unemployment, we need be in a hurry to take up the matter at our end. I am sure the only object the Honourable Mover had in view was to draw public attention to this problem, and I trust that he will be satisfied with having done so, and will not press his Resolution.

I am afraid, Sir, the appointment of a Committee of the sort he suggests would not find employment for anybody except for its own members.

THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA (Bombay: Non-Muhamadan): Sir, the Honourable Mr. Chari may have done well in drawing the attention of this House and through this House of the general public in regard to the state of unemployment amongst what he calls the educated and other middle classes. But for the reasons advanced by the Honourable Mr. Latifi,

[Sir Phiroze Sethna.]

I am not in favour of the Central Government appointing a Committee as the Honourable Mover has suggested. This is a purely provincial subject ; and in addition to the reasons advanced by the Honourable Mr. Latifi, I would like to point out that if there is unemployment, it exists to a larger degree in some provinces than in others ; and that is so because the people of those provinces are not sufficiently advanced to engage themselves in trade, commerce and industry. I believe that out of the different provinces in this country, unemployment does not perhaps prevail to the same extent in Bombay or the Punjab as in other provinces, because the inhabitants of these provinces take more kindly to technical and industrial pursuits. That is the reason why there is less unemployment there. If there is more of unemployment in Bengal, to which the Honourable Mover referred in particular, it may be because the well-to-do classes in Bengal are quite content to purchase government paper or buy land and not invest in industries, etc. Capital fights shy in that province and therefore in that fact is the answer to the instance which he quoted and which, if I heard him aright, was this : that the Calcutta Corporation had 27 vacancies for which there were 4,500 applications. I do not wonder at that. More than that, for another answer I may refer him to a speech delivered just the other day either by His Excellency Sir Stanley Jackson or by the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University at the Convocation Address, where he gave the numbers of graduates as 30,000 in Bengal proper, leaving out Eastern Bengal. If they go on manufacturing graduates at that rate, is it any wonder that there is unemployment amongst what my friend, Mr. Chari, calls the educated and other middle classes ? There is bound to be unemployment. My Honourable friend then cited the case of Indian students who go to Europe and America even for the purpose of prosecuting their studies further in technical lines and then when they return they do not find any employment. He did not say that he expected Government to employ them. Why should we always ask Government for help for that purpose ? God helps those who help themselves. Our people do not care to help themselves and if they do so, there will be enough employment in India not only for our literary classes but also for those who are engaged in technical and other studies. The people in the provinces must themselves attend to these matters rather than depend on Government. I may only give you one instance. In Bengal, as we know, there is a very large Anglo-Indian community. When there was the big slump in trade after the boom years 1920 and 1921, there was very considerable unemployment amongst them. What did they do ? They put their heads together and they sought the help of their European friends. Their European friends came to their rescue and much has been done. In fact so much has been done and unemployment has been so much reduced that the Committee has ceased to operate any further. Those ought to be the lines on which we should work, and we should not ask Government to appoint a Committee in the manner suggested by my Honourable friend.

It is not, Sir, as if unemployment was confined to India alone. It is the same everywhere. Even in Great Britain it is the same. I have not got with me this morning's *Pioneer*, but I believe I saw in it a telegram which gave the percentage of men turned down who applied to enter the Army in England, and the reason given for the percentage being much larger than before was that because of unemployment the youth of Great Britain to-day are not physically as strong as they might have been perhaps some years ago. Therefore there is unemployment everywhere, and it rests more with ourselves than with Government to improve the condition of affairs. I am glad at least that my friend, Mr. Chari, has not suggested the grant of a dole to the unemployed in this country as

is done in Great Britain, which is rightly condemned by many as one of the biggest mistakes that has been made in recent years in Great Britain. For these reasons, Sir, I do not think Government will be justified in appointing a Committee as the Honourable Mover has asked for.

THE HONOURABLE MR. H. A. B. VERNON (Madras : Nominated Official) : Sir, the two previous speakers who have opposed this Resolution have explained why it is a matter which is not a suitable one for a Committee of the Central Legislature. I entirely agree with those opinions and will deal no further with that point, except to say that a Committee appointed by the Central Legislature would either be so large as to be unwieldy or too small to be effective. Allusion has been made to the work on this question which has been done by Local Governments, and I believe that one of the few Local Governments which has published the report of its Committee on this question is Madras. It may interest you to have one or two points laid before you as to the conclusions arrived at by that Committee. Taking the bare figures of supply and demand, the Committee in Madras computed that the outturn every year from schools and colleges of persons suitable for employment, that is clerical employment, in the various Government offices was 14,000, and that the number of vacancies available in any one year was 7,000. That means that for every one appointment in each year there are two applicants, and the number of disappointed applicants must increase year by year and has been increasing. This was still further illustrated by an experiment which the Madras Committee carried out and which, with your permission, Sir, I will read :

“ The Committee asked the Superintending Engineer, Mettur Project, to insert a test advertisement in the newspapers for a clerk's post carrying a salary of Rs. 35 per mensem, and the result was that 666 applications were received ; of these, 30 were from graduates, 61 from intermediates, 194 from S. S. L. C.'s and 381 from those not declared eligible for a University course. A similar advertisement for a clerk's post in a commercial firm in Madras on the same day brought in 787 applications.”

It is fairly certain that there is a great deal of unemployment, but what we want to find out is the real cause, and I think the Madras Committee have come to a fairly correct conclusion in saying that the cause of this unemployment is a complete misconception not only in the minds of the parents but of the pupils as to the real object of education. Education in their idea is merely a means to enter Government service, and the result is that many of the classes who have hitherto employed themselves in hereditary professions as artisans, carpenters and so forth have crowded into the clerical professions, with the result that there are far more candidates than there are places to offer them. This movement from the classes engaged in hereditary occupations to force themselves into the precincts hitherto reserved for the higher classes is due solely to social causes. These lower classes, if I may call them so, desire social advantages. They realise that Government service is a social advancement ; they realise that a Government servant commands a better price as a bridegroom. They realise that if they are low down in the social scale, they can raise themselves higher in that scale by entering Government service ; and as long as the social system in this country is what it is, I do not think that one should be surprised that the lower classes are trying to raise themselves by all means in their power. Moreover, while lower classes are pressing upwards into the precincts reserved for the higher classes, the higher classes themselves, whose hereditary occupation is clerical work, are rigid and do not give way ; they display an entire lack of fluidity and do not move into the other avenues of employment and so give relief. That again is entirely the result of social prejudice. The higher classes have a distinct dislike to any manual labour ; they consider it *infra dig*. Early marriages and the joint family system

[Mr. H. A. B. Vernon.]

also to a large extent tend to aggravate the situation. The most serious effect of the idea that manual labour is degrading is that it cuts off the best brains and best energies of this country from that occupation by which 70 per cent. of India's people live, and that is agriculture. But before dealing with that aspect of the matter, I think it might interest this House to know in what direction the Madras Committee discovered some glimmerings of hope for the future. They found that the engineering profession had become very much more popular, and I think I might read to the House a small extract from their report. The Committee said :

"On the whole the engineering profession which suffered on account of the retrenchment policy adopted by Government a few years ago is recovering lost ground by the relaxation of this retrenchment policy and the starting of large irrigation and hydro-electric schemes and railway extensions. In these circumstances the Committee is inclined to believe that the engineering profession will be able to absorb a greater number of qualified persons for some time to come."

That is one good point. Then in the domain of handicrafts ; it has only lately been realised in England how the practice of handicrafts is an extraordinarily valuable part of education, and I will read to the House another extract which illustrates the view which is now taken of adopting training in handicrafts as a part of the educational system in England. This speech or lecture was made at a conference of Educational Associations held in London in the last week of December 1927, and the statement is that of the Inspector of Handicrafts to the City of Birmingham Educational Association :

"Mr. A. F. Collins said that crafts were valuable educative factors. He did not want to turn out potential craftsmen for the market, but to give boys experience of one aspect of human life which had been rather neglected in education. The handicrafts satisfied one of the basic instincts of mankind—the constructive instinct—and represented an imperishable type of human activity. Art and craftsmanship should not be regarded as trivial extras, but should be given a place of honour in every school as in every other community, and should be recognised as definite instruments of intellectual and spiritual training."

That view is a comparatively recent view, and if the value of handicrafts has not been realised before in England, it is not surprising perhaps that India has lagged behind. But the Committee found that there is a distinct bent towards work in handicrafts by the educated classes, and I might mention an experience of my own in that connection. When I was going over the Textile Institute in Madras, they showed me a large number of warps prepared by the workmen in the Institute which were then sold to Brahmins and other educated boys who took them home and wove them in their own homes. This I was told was becoming very common. A large amount of interest is being taken now by educated boys in weaving in their own homes:

Another encouraging feature which the Committee have not alluded to is the growth of motor traffic and the motor trade, which in Madras is absorbing quite a large number of educated people not only as drivers but sons of well-to-do men are taking up the motor trade and are making very good incomes out of it. I might give the House figures for one district within my experience, just to show the extent of the growth of motor bus traffic in South India. In the district of which I was in charge in 1923, there were 40 motor buses ; in 1924 there were 70, and now there are something like 150. A great many fairly intelligent men are being employed in this industry and it is a great field for employment which the educated Indians should not disregard. For some obscure reason it is not regarded as derogatory to handle the oily parts of a motor car while it is degrading to till the clean soil.

The fourth direction in which the Committee found that there was some likelihood of the educated men being employed was found in the proposal of the Madras Government to encourage the creation of a class of country doctors. At present most of the medical students prefer to stay in the towns and practise there. The Madras Government, however, have a scheme for subsidizing medical practitioners on the condition that they work in the villages. This in course of time ought to create a regular service of country doctors who would absorb a good number of educated men. As regards the co-operative movement, I do not think it needs any words of mine to show that it is a very fine movement and is gaining strength in all parts of India and will ultimately tend to provide employment for the educated classes. But allowing these bright features such as they are, they do not really help us very much. They absorb an infinitesimal number of people compared with those who are unemployed. The dismal fact remains that the one profession which demands the best brains and best energy of India's young men does not get them; and that profession is agriculture. The Committee remarked that 70 per cent. of the people are dependent on agriculture and will be for many years to come, and therefore it is clear that the brains of the people should be attracted there. That is a perfectly sound conclusion and it is no good coming to Government and asking them to effect what is really a social reform. Government cannot supply a remedy for the disinclination of the educated classes to do any manual labour. Public opinion and propaganda by the people amongst the people is the only remedy which can be efficacious. People should be made to realise that manual labour is honourable and that the practice of agriculture is essential, and that the man who works on the land is morally, mentally and physically superior to a clerk who may sit in an office calculating the assessment of income-tax or finding out the value of stamps to be affixed to legal documents. They should be made to realise that to create a thing of beauty or even a thing of utility by the work of one's own hand and the exercise of one's intelligence is far better than to stand up in a court of law and try to make the worst cause appear the better. But the average man will not understand this point of view unless it is brought home to him by the precept and example of the leaders of his community. I do not think that the intellectual leaders of India can be held altogether free from blame for their failure to give this teaching to the people.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Order, order. I regret to have to interrupt the Honourable Member in his first speech in this Council, but I must remind him that there is a time limit which he has already considerably exceeded.

THE HONOURABLE MR. H. A. B. VERNON: Thank you, Sir. I will soon bring my remarks to a close. These leaders have with singular unanimity avoided the strait gate and the narrow way which leads to social reform and have passed on through the wide gate and broad path which leads to political agitation. But it is not too late for them to retrace their steps, and I suggest that these superfluous politicians, who, I understand, have for a while withdrawn themselves from the Parliamentary limelight, should retire still further to their own homes and villages and teach the people where their true interests lie. By adopting this course they will cease for a while, it is true, to make history, but they will be helping to build on sure foundation a nation fit to deal with its own social problems, amongst which this problem of unemployment is not the least.

THE HONOURABLE COLONEL NAWAB SIR UMAR HAYAT KHAN (Punjab : Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I am very thankful that I have caught the eye

[Sir Umar Hayat Khan.]

of the Chair as I particularly wanted to speak on this subject. The first thing I wish to do is to thank the Mover for bringing this question before this House. I am not at all with those who think that this question of unemployment is a provincial one. Sir, this is a question which is threatening the very basis of India because the root cause of all the trouble that there is in India is the unemployment of these educated classes. We have to see who is responsible for it. Before I go into that question, I would like to say that the two official Members who have delivered their maiden speeches to-day on this subject have shown how little they know about this question. I am sorry to say so, but I cannot help it. The fact of the matter is that, unless we find employment for these people who leave their homes because of the bait of education that is offered to them and who, after receiving this education, become quite unfit for their own professions, we must court trouble. May I ask, Sir, whom should they approach for employment when they have qualified themselves by receiving the necessary education? Another thing that I would like to bring to the notice of the Honourable Members is that the method of instruction imparted to our young men is the worst and it is a pity, indeed, that the very department which is responsible for the imparting of the so-called education does not know where the defect lies. England is a cold country and a man can work hard all day long and is fit for all sorts of work. In fact, he is capable of doing any kind of work to which he may be put. But that is not the case in India. India is a very hot country and you must educate the boys in such a way that they should be able to stand the heat of the country, otherwise they will not be fit enough to work in their own country. Now, Sir, educated people used to take to the army but they have now absolutely discarded it, for the simple reason that in the Army a man is expected with all his kit to walk 26 miles in any part of the day. But our educated men have been effeminated and demoralised and cannot do this hard work. So, they are neither capable of earning their livelihood by entering into civil avocations nor by defending their own country. My definition of education is not this that we should be able to read books, but that we should be able to look after ourselves in every walk of life. Sir, I live amidst the masses and I know people who have read up to the middle or primary standard and then they have left their homes. I have invariably asked them to follow the profession of their forefathers but they do not like it, because they have been in the habit of living in beautiful and comfortable rooms and sitting on benches under the fans in the hottest months of the year. So, naturally when they are asked to go to the field and plough it or sit in a little shop about six feet by six feet, they refuse to do it. My suggestion therefore is that Government ought either to train these boys in the profession of their forefathers or create some other suitable work for them. Now take the railways for instance. I am not attacking the Railways, but

12 Noon. look at the proportion of Christians in them, how they get the appointments; I want Christians in the army, as they will always stick to the Government, but they should really be given appointments according to their numbers on the Railways. In the Railways they get a predominance of Anglo-Indians, and other educated people do not get a chance. Even the teachers whom you employ for educating the present generation, they are unfit to go and work in the hottest time of the year with their students, and naturally these students do not find chances of making themselves hardy enough to stand the climate. This to a European would not appear anything at all, because their country is not so. They have got their own ways of thinking. They have educated themselves in a different way. They want us simply to be educated as they are. But there is one thing they do forget and that is

the climate. If a man who is educated is neither fit for his own work nor fit for the army nor for anything physically, I think those authorities who do demoralize them ought to find them a place, or to educate them so that all these sons of India should be able to stand their own climate. A boy ought to really go about in the hot sun doing his hard work. If you put him on a bench and have a fan over him in the hottest time, if from his childhood he is not acclimatised, how is he going to work? That is where you are going to spoil him.

Then, of course, if you try and ask the Department to teach him better agriculture and at the same time keep his physique right, he will go to his father's walk of life. It is the same with the trader. The reason why I have taken so long to put this matter before the House is because it has not hitherto been done, and people who live in cities do not know what hard work is. People who sit in the offices, as my two friends who have spoken, do not realise it, but we people who work hard in the sun we do realise it and, I think, that by taking part in this debate it may be of some use.

With these few remarks I will not take up further the time of the Council any more. I could have spoken on this point a little further, but I hope in the points I have put forward I have done a little good.

THE HONOURABLE MR. G. A. NATESAN (Madras: Nominated Non-Official): Sir, this question of unemployment is by no means confined to India. It is a world question, nor is it a new question. I recollect years ago when a college student reading one of Froude's works. I cannot recall to my memory the exact passage dealing with the matter, but he deplored how university men thirty years ago were clamouring for employment, and one particular idea which was put in a short sentence was that to him it was sad to see nearly a thousand applications for a place in the police somewhere in South Africa, and how sorry he was to see a graduate of an English university breaking stones in Australian roads.

I happened to get only last week a book by Sir Alfred Mond on Industries and Politics of which two chapters are devoted to the problem of unemployment. The people in England also seem to be trying to find a solution for this problem of unemployment.

I thought this discussion was getting fruitful of some ideas, but at a later stage I found it getting somewhat cynical, and several half truths have been uttered. I do not agree with my friend, Mr. Chari, that the Central Government should put themselves to the trouble of having a roving Committee to enquire into the question of unemployment. Even if Government were inclined to look at this question sympathetically, after all employment in various directions ought to be found only by the Local Governments, and the Central Government as such cannot tackle that problem. The proper authority is, therefore, the Local Government. I do not therefore sympathise with the Mover who asks the Government to appoint a Committee, but I should like to point out to those who have talked somewhat glibly of this problem that while I acknowledge very gratefully the observations made and taken in good spirit, that much of our suffering is due to ourselves. I would say that the fault is not exclusively ours, nor is it the fault of the universities. Having been connected with the work of universities for twenty years, I must point out that one of the problems which has been engaging the attention of the universities has been to see how best to effect a sort of gradual transfer from the exclusively literary education to the adoption of modern conditions, and how to make our education more practical and suitable to such conditions. That is the problem which has been engaging the attention of universities in all provinces. It is:

[Mr. G. A. Natesan.]

not fair to attack Indian parents or Indian boys for clamouring to get posts. That is a desire which all parents have. I have known of English boys who have come from England to seek employment in this country. A European friend of mine thought it desirable to find a berth for his son in some of the commercial houses here, because it was difficult to get employment for him in England.

It seems to me, Sir, that having pointed out that the fault has been due purely to our literary education, every effort should now be made, as far as possible, to turn this education to a more practical account. I do believe that not only the Local but the Central Government is attempting to solve the problem in a sound way. One of the easiest means of solving the problem is the financing of vocation schools, but I must say from my own experience of university work, even European educationists who have taken a leading part in the advancement of education have very often expressed a disinclination to make the universities take any share in the department of commercial instruction.

I recollect very well a distinguished educationist almost looking aghast at a proposition that I brought forward in the Madras University about 17 years ago that the University should institute degrees in Commerce and Agriculture. I am very glad that I have lived to see the University of Madras institute a degree in Agriculture, and we are now trying our best to have Commerce degrees also. In this respect the Bombay University has made a greater advance.

I think this is a problem purely for Local Governments, but I do not mean to say by that that the Central Government has no responsibility. One want that I, in common with many others, have been feeling is the absence of a big central technological institute in India. Reference was made to this years ago and if I am not mistaken, our late countryman, Mr. Gokhale, one of the most distinguished sons India has produced, realised what the value of education was and that the first thing that should be done was to establish a technological institute ; and we cannot forget the fact that his plea for the establishment of such an institute was brushed aside by the Government of India. I am willing to concede that latterly the question has been attended to more sympathetically ; but I remember that even five years ago, when a suggestion was made in this very House that, something should be done for the creation of a technological institute, the problem was not taken up as sympathetically as it should have been.

It seems to me that though this body cannot perhaps help usefully in the appointment of a Committee, the object of the Resolution could be served by asking the Member in charge to see that this debate is forwarded to the various Local Governments, and those Governments which have already dealt with this problem might be asked to formulate definite schemes for relieving unemployment. But I would not be satisfied unless something is done. The Local Governments have a certain amount of responsibility ; they cannot possibly start a technological institute owing to financial and other considerations, but I do think that one way of solving this problem is to divert our exclusively literary education to one more real and more suited to the requirements of the country, and this can be done by starting a great central technological institute equipped with a first class laboratory. I do hope that after the very interesting debate we have had my Honourable friend will not press the matter further and will be satisfied that this discussion has not been unfruitful and that something will be done in the direction I have indicated.

One word more, Sir, and I have finished. I also deplore very deeply the absence of grit and enterprise on the part of our educated men. Some careers are open in the Federated Malay States and other places, but there is a desire in most of the parents that their boys should be near them, and our young men are not enterprising enough to go out. (*The Honourable Mr. P. C. Desika Chari*: "Question"?) My Honourable friend says "question"; but I speak from practical experience. I do not wish to waste the time of the House further, but I too have been requested by several young men for help and I have told them that if they only cared to step out of Madras there were careers as clerks, etc., open to them in commercial offices and the like. It may be that the Bar in Rangoon does not afford them facilities, but I am not thinking of that; I am thinking that a considerable number of our young men could find places in the Federated Malay States, Singapore and other places.

I have said that on the one hand Government has some measure of responsibility in this matter. But I should like to make this confession; I do wish that many of our rich men, particularly our *mirasidars*, who have educated sons would try and put at least one of their sons on the land after sending them up for agricultural degrees. There are many who make mints of money in their various professions, and I do wish that those people would send at least one of their sons to look after their lands, which they now ask somebody to look after on lease and from which naturally therefore they do not get as good results as they would otherwise get.

I do not wish to sit down, Sir, with a pessimistic note upon this question. I am very glad to note that recently in the agricultural Institute at Coimbatore are to be found the sons of well-known men, particularly members of the Bar who have acquired properties and who have sent their young men to this College. The outlook is not so dismal as some would have it, and if this problem is tackled by our own people it could be solved satisfactorily to a great extent; but I believe that Government also has its responsibility in the direction which I have indicated.

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. C. McWATTERS: Sir, in view of the general trend of the speeches to which we have listened, and in particular in view of the speeches made by the two official representatives from the Punjab and Madras who, if the Honourable and gallant Member will excuse me, by their long and experienced career have intimate knowledge of this subject—Mr. Vernon himself was Labour Commissioner in Madras—in view of these facts, it is only necessary for me to detain the House for a very short time in explaining the attitude of Government towards this Resolution. The subject is exceedingly complex and difficult but the issue before the House is a simple one. The issue is, whether it is desirable and necessary at the present time to superimpose a central Committee to co-ordinate the activities of Local Governments in this matter. No one will wish to deny that this evil exists and that it is a very serious evil. No one, least of all Government, will desire to minimise its importance. The fact that this is the third occasion in four years in which this subject has been debated in the Central Legislature is a proof of its importance, and I have no quarrel with my Honourable friend for having brought forward this subject again because it is a subject on which we need more light. If I differ from him at all, it is only as regards the choice of means towards the end.

I may take the House back to the debate of March 1926 in the Legislative Assembly. That debate covered somewhat wider grounds as it dealt with unemployment generally; but it is evident from a perusal of that debate that the subject which was uppermost in the minds of most Members was middle class

[Mr. A. C. McWatters.]

unemployment. As a result of that debate the Central Government undertook to address Provincial Governments on this question and they did so in May 1926. The Government of India's letter, which I have here, did not naturally attempt in the compass of a letter to analyse all the causes of, or suggest remedies for, the situation. They did mention certain temporary factors such as trade depression, but they pointed out that the real causes lay far deeper and were far more complex :

"The educational system, the state of industrial development, the changes that are being slowly wrought in the structure such as the gradual disintegration of the caste system, which at one time operated to prevent middle class unemployment by restricting admissions to the clerical professions, and at the bottom psychological factors inherent in the habits and customs of the people are all contributory causes to a state of affairs for which from the nature of the case no Government can find a panacea. The people alone can produce a change, and the change must necessarily take time to accomplish."

They went on to say further :

"These considerations, however, must not stand in the way of the adoption of any measures which would tend to alleviate the situation, and the opposition of the Government of India to the Resolution in the Assembly was based not on these considerations, but on their conviction that the problem is one which must be tackled in the first instance by Local Governments and Local Bodies. It is not merely the case that the problem differs both in nature and extent in different parts of India, but it seems to the Government of India that such remedies as may be found practicable are remedies which only Local Governments and more particularly the Transferred sides of Local Governments, can apply... They can only for the present ask that the problem, the gravity of which they fully recognise, should receive the most careful consideration of the Local Governments."

That letter was sent in May 1926, and I do not say that it was merely as a result of that letter since some Local Governments had already taken action, but either shortly before or after that letter, Committees dealing with unemployment were set up in Bengal and in Madras, and their reports have been published. A statistical inquiry as to the extent and character of unemployment among the middle classes was undertaken in Bombay. The Punjab Government also set up a Committee, and as late as January last the United Provinces Government have appointed a Committee. I think, therefore, that the House will realise that the Local Governments are fully alive to the importance of this question and, so far as lies within their power, are taking the necessary action. It is very largely a matter which must rest with the Local Governments. As the Honourable Mr. Natesan pointed out, it is so far as Government action can help very largely a question of adaptation of education ; it is a question of the development of industries ; it is a question of the development of agriculture. I would have liked to deal at some length with the Madras Report, but my Honourable friend Mr. Vernon who had the advantage of being actually the President of that Committee when it was first appointed, has given the House a full account of it. I think however that he will agree with me when I say that the main value of the report, the credit shall I say for the report, rests largely with the late Sir George Paddison who succeeded him as Labour Commissioner and was Chairman of the Committee during the later stages of the inquiry. It was one of the last and not the least of the great services which the late Sir George Paddison has rendered to this country. (Applause). This Report quite rightly laid stress on various mistaken ideas regarding education, on the general prevalence of the idea that literary education is intended only for Government service or the Bar, and that agriculture cannot afford a career for an educated man. It also made many detailed suggestions for the improvement of education, particularly technical education. We have already learnt that the Local Government is taking those recommendations into early consideration. I feel very tempted, if you, Sir, will allow

me to do so, to read one short passage from the final summary of this report, because I think it condenses better than any other passage which I know of the salient facts of the situation. It runs as follows :

"In bringing its deliberations to a conclusion, the Committee would repeat that the problem of middle class unemployment is one not capable of immediate solution. It is fully conscious that it has suggested no drastic remedies. All it can hope is that the result of its labours will be that the people as a whole will realise the extent of the evil and the necessity for a change. The bringing about of that change lies in the hands of the public at large. Unemployment of whatever section of society is a complex evil which arises from many causes, social, economic, political and international. Being a widespread and deep-seated evil, which concerns not that section alone but the body politic as a whole—for the decay of any section of society will lead to the decline of national efficiency—its remedy will have to be comprehensive and all-embracing in scope, and will require a length of time to operate. If in any quarter the expectation was entertained that on the appointment of an Unemployment Committee posts would be provided for unemployed persons without effort or initiative or change of attitude on their own part, that expectation could not but meet with disappointment. But if there is a desire to alter the existing state of things so as to create more demand for the existing talent and greater supply of men who will assist in the development of the country, the Committee is confident that in its recommendations pointing to a change in the educational ideals, and a readjustment of educational programmes to meet practical ends, and to a reversion to the land as the chief producer of wealth, the public will find the way to a happier future in which middle class unemployment will be less acute, if it does not altogether disappear."

There is one further aspect of the question to which I am tempted to allude in view of the remark made by the Honourable the Mover of the Resolution that the Central Government had done nothing in the matter. The Central Government is of course the largest individual employer of labour in this country, and I think that we as an employer of labour have done a great deal, notably in the direction of the Indianization of the various services. We all know how far it has proceeded and quite rightly proceeded. To take one small instance, in the Meteorological Department, with which I am acquainted, apart from one specialist in solar physics, there remains one European only in the Department. I wish all success to the very able and talented young men who have joined that Department. It is the same in other departments ; there are thus rapidly increasing avenues of employment in Government service for educated Indians. But this can only touch the fringe of the problem. Government employment cannot provide a solution of the problem to any material degree. What the Central Government can do however is to direct their attention to the economic development of the country in its widest sense, and I maintain that for a period of years a good deal has been done in this direction. For instance, in the year 1918, before the Reforms, an Industrial Commission was appointed. It is true that almost immediately after that Commission reported, there was a change in the constitution, and most of the recommendations of the Industrial Commission are matters for consideration in the provinces, but that Report still remains on record for the guidance of the provinces. Then there was the Fiscal Committee, and following on that, the appointment of the Tariff Board and a policy of discriminating protection for Indian industries. Then I may refer to the development by the Government of India of their stores purchase policy regarding which I gave an answer to my Honourable friend Sir Phiroze Sethna on Monday, and regarding which I hope to make a further announcement shortly. From the beginning that policy was recognised as one of the objects of Government purchases the assistance to a reasonable extent of the industries and manufactures of this country. Then again there is the whole field of research. There is the Forest Institute ; there is the Institute at Pusa ; there is the new School of Mines opened at Dhanbad ; those are all departments in which the Government of India can help.

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Last, but not least, there is the appointment of the Royal Agricultural Commission from which we hope that not merely new appointments but new wealth will be created in the country. Speaking generally, the whole trend of our financial policy has been to encourage economic development. Take for instance the Railways. A large amount of capital has been sunk in Railways. The Government of India's financial policy has also been directed to the elimination of the provincial contributions, with the object of placing more money at the disposal of the Local Governments. It has been directed to the rehabilitation of our credit, enabling capital to be raised at reasonable rates so that the large irrigation schemes and other schemes of development which Local Governments have in hand may be carried on. These are the things which create wealth and which therefore will give employment. I should have been glad to add the development and improvement of the banking system. Sir, these are the ways in which the Central Government can help, and I maintain is, so far as is possible, helping in this question of unemployment. Our position then is that the detailed enquiry is in the first instance at any rate a problem for the Provincial Governments and we are satisfied that they are very much alive to it and are dealing with it. So, for the present we do not see any need for a central Committee. No Local Government has asked for a central Committee. If they do so, the matter would, of course, be considered, but for the moment we think that it is a matter which is primarily for the Provincial Governments to deal with. I think that the Honourable Mover has probably served his purpose by raising this discussion, and I hope that he will not find it necessary to press his Resolution.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS (Punjab : Non-Muhammadan) : Sir, though I cannot agree with all that the Honourable Mover of this Resolution has said, I cannot abstain from observing that ever since the inauguration of the Ministry of Education in the Central Government, our system of education has greatly deteriorated and which very badly needs revision now. Twenty-five years ago when I was a college student there were only three courses in science (Physics and Chemistry) for the Intermediate examination and now, I understand, there are about a dozen. In those days, Sir, there were very few students who used to wear glasses, whereas now the majority of students wear them. The physique of the students used to be much better in those days but now by the time they finish their college career they become very much deficient in vitality and eye-sight. I quite agree with the Honourable Mr. Latifi who says that the sons of artisans, agriculturists and the industrial classes instead of getting the training of their own parental professions go in for intellectual education and when they finish their school career many of them have to face unemployment. Instead of improving their own agricultural or industrial resources by getting education in their own particular lines, they become a burden to their parents. In this connection, my Honourable friend Sir Umar Hayat Khan has very rightly and whole-heartedly endorsed what has fallen from the lips of the Honourable Mr. Latifi. The boys of these artisans and agriculturists become accustomed to easy and sometimes luxurious life in their hostels while they live in big towns and cities. So, when they finish their school career and go back to their homes, they do not like their dwellings, surroundings and parental professions, and failing to get any employment they become bitterly discontented.

The Punjab Government, Sir, is quite alive to this question of unemployment and did appoint a Committee to inquire into this question. To the best of my knowledge I will lay before this House the abstract of this Committee's

report. They say that there is no unemployment in the engineering profession. In fact, there is, if anything, a shortage in the teaching profession. There is no overcrowding in the engineering or agricultural graduates. There is an overcrowding among the matriculates and even perhaps among the Intermediates but graduates are still in demand. As for the legal profession in 1917 there were 1,698 legal practitioners enrolled and in 1928 there were 3,613. On the other hand, the number of cases in 1928 was, if anything, less than in 1916. The medical profession, too, is much overcrowded. Between 1922 and 1926 our Lahore Medical College has turned out 256 graduates. Of these 32 have been provided with Government posts as Assistant Surgeons and 57 have accepted the posts of Sub-Assistant Surgeons. There are now 219 men on the waiting list of the Inspector General of Civil Hospitals, Punjab. The output of English educated men has been doubled during the last 5 years. There is no definite inclination shown by the well educated men to turn their energies towards agriculture or handicrafts. The Honourable Mr. Chari has observed that the educated classes feel averse to mechanical jobs. In that connection, I would like to enlighten him that as far as the Punjab and Bombay provinces are concerned

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. C. DESIKA CHARI : I did not say that they were averse to the mechanical profession but that they cannot stand the physical strain.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS : I may inform the Honourable Member that in the Punjab all the students who take to the mechanical line do stand the strain all right and have given good account of themselves in the jobs on which they have been employed. I agree with my Honourable friend Sir Phiroze Sethna that certain provinces are backward in taking up industrial enterprise. If this was not the case in the United Provinces, and particularly in Bengal, it would go a great way to solve the problem of unemployment. As regards the sentiment that the sons of well-to-do people do not care to take up mechanical jobs, I think this House will be glad to know that our popular Commissioner of the Amballa Division, the Honourable Mr. Latifi, has put his son into the industrial school in preference to an academic school. This shows that there is a great change in mentality, and that both educated as well as well-to-do people now wish to realise the advantages of mechanical education.

The Punjab Government has also established a Development Board which is tackling the various questions in connection with the development of the province and thus helping to solve the question of unemployment. Several sub-committees have also been appointed to study the various village and other industries and I hope that in the very near future something very useful will have been done.

The Honourable Mr. McWatters has suggested to the Honourable Mover that he has now laid all his points before the House, and if the Honourable Member also gives a promise to the Council that he will draw the attention to the object underlying this Resolution of those Local Governments who have not yet done much in this direction, I think the Honourable Mover will be well advised to withdraw his Resolution.

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. C. DESIKA CHARI : Sir, I am glad that, though many of the Honourable Members do not support me in the idea of having a Central Committee, there seems to be a sort of unanimity of opinion that we must do something to relieve the unemployment of the educated middle classes. I should like however to deal with one or two points which

[Mr. P. C. Desika Chari.]

have come up in the course of the discussion. I can understand the difficulty of some of those Honourable Members who oppose this idea of a Central Committee, because the Local Governments would be in a better position to deal with the problem ; but I cannot understand the mentality of those gentlemen who want to find employment for the Devolution Rules and not for middle classes with a view to prevent the Resolution being discussed, or to stand in the way of the Central Legislature taking action. This is not the first time I have noticed such a tendency on the part of the Treasury Benches, and this time it is a new Member of the House who perhaps is not getting satiated with this idea of bringing in the Devolution Rules as an answer to the Resolution. I leave it at that.

There seems to be an idea that our educated middle classes are not conscious of the dignity of labour. No doubt they may not be quite as strong as other people. They are, however, not averse to physical or manual labour as such, but they expect a greater place for their intellectual ability, and they do not mind if there is some amount of physical labour.

In moving the Resolution I wanted to point out that the educated people do not like purely physical and manual labour, and if opportunities are available, where they have to exert themselves to the extent which their constitution can stand, they are prepared to take advantage of the opportunity.

A good deal has been said by Honourable Members like Mr. Vernon from Madras that it is a purely social question and it can be better tackled by the people themselves. The Honourable Member has not developed that argument, and I do not know what is at the back of his mind. Here various non-officials tried to tackle this problem. For instance, I have given you one instance of Deshabundu Das who evolved a system of village reconstruction to give employment to the middle classes. The scheme has to be put into effect, and can only be done with the willing co-operation of officials. He put it to the Government of Bengal, who turned it down and would not look at it. You may preach to these people who want bread and butter. You may say this is a social question, a moral question, or any other question. Those people are anxious to find some way out of the difficulty, to get some job or other to eke out a meagre subsistence, and I want you to face facts and not to preach sermons. It is all very well to say that the blame is on this side, the blame is on that side. I was anxious, as I pointed out in my opening speech, to find a solution. I do not want blame to be apportioned to anyone. Is it not the duty of officials and non-officials to evolve a scheme by which we can come to some solution ? It is a tremendous problem, and it is only the more necessary that officials and non-officials should unite in tackling a problem like that.

Sir, some people like my friend Mr. Natesan are simply under the impression that if only our people, the parents of some of these educated young men, think of sending their sons to the Federated Malay States, or some of these places, they can readily find employment. Rangoon though a part of British India is practically beyond the continent of India, and people do not make much difference between the Federated Malay States and Rangoon. As a matter of fact I have come in contact with a large number of people who have been to the Federated Malay States for employment and could not find any. They have come on to Rangoon and have found it impossible to get employment there, and then they have gone on to Calcutta which leads to Delhi. That is the way in which our people, these educated middle classes, are anxious to find some means of subsistence. The whole thing is due, to use an economic

phrase, to the pressure of population on the means of subsistence, and do you expect these Local Governments with their limited resources to be in a position to tackle the problem? I am not blaming the Local Governments. They have been doing what they can, but the resources at their disposal are limited, and some of these Local Governments have already taken the matter in hand and published their reports. Is it not the duty of the Central Government to have all these reports co-ordinated and to see what solution can be found? It is on this ground, and this ground alone, that I ask the Central Government to appoint a Committee. I am not anxious that non-officials should come in. If you so please they can have an official Committee to consider these things, an expert Committee or whatever you choose. I do not mind if it is a Committee of two, of course you must have two people at least to form a Committee. I only want that the various reports of the Local Governments should be co-ordinated and should be considered by the central body, so that the Central Government, which will be in a financial position to give effect to these recommendations, should solve the problem and not these Local Governments whose financial resources are very restricted.

Sir, I have been asked to withdraw my Resolution. I see no chance of my winning, but whether I withdraw or not—or even if I succeed on the Resolution it is merely a recommendation, merely an expression of opinion which does not carry any sanction behind it—whether I withdraw or not it does not matter, and as I do not see any magic in withdrawing the Resolution, I press it for the acceptance of the House.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The question is :

“ That the following Resolution be adopted :

‘ This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council to appoint a Committee to make the necessary enquiries and devise ways and means for relieving unemployment of the educated and other middle classes ’.”

The motion was negatived.

RESOLUTION *re* ELIGIBILITY OF HIGH COURT PLEADERS FOR THE OFFICE OF CHIEF JUSTICE OF A HIGH COURT.

THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA (Bombay : Non-Muhamadan) : Sir, I beg to move :

“ That this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council to take steps for such amendment of section 101 of the Government of India Act as would enable a High Court pleader to be appointed Chief Justice of a High Court.”

The object of my Resolution is to remove the bar which exists at present to the appointment of a qualified High Court pleader as Chief Justice of a High Court. The position at present is that a person who has been a pleader of a High Court for not less than ten years may be appointed a High Court Judge, but a High Court Judge appointed from among the ranks of qualified pleaders cannot be appointed Chief Justice of a High Court, much less can a High Court pleader of not less than ten years' standing be appointed Chief Justice at once. There is thus a bar against High Court pleaders that they can never hope to rise to the position of a Chief Justice. It is a statutory bar existing under the Government of India Act. The removal of the bar by the necessary amendment of the Act is the object which I have in view in moving this Resolution.

[Sir Phiroze Sethna.]

A Resolution with the same object was moved in the Legislative Assembly by Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar on the 19th February 1924. That Resolution also covered another matter besides this, viz., that the number of civilian Judges in a High Court should not be more than one-fourth of the total number of High Court Judges, with the eventual object that the Civil Service element should be entirely eliminated and the High Court Judges fully recruited from the bar. My Resolution is not so wide; it does not raise that other point; it is confined to the single issue that those High Court pleaders who can be appointed as High Court Judges may be eligible for appointment as Chief Justices either directly or in the course of time after having been first appointed as High Court Judges. In speaking on Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar's Resolution, and in dealing with this particular point, the Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey, who was then Home Member, on behalf of the Government agreed with the Mover of the Resolution and said :

" On one point, I am certainly at one with him, namely, that since the reading of the section (that is section 101 of the Government of India Act) does, as he says, appear to exclude the possibility of appointing a pleader as permanent Chief Justice of the High Court, that distinction ought to be removed, and the Act ought to be amended in order that it may be possible to appoint a pleader to the position of permanent Chief Justice of a High Court, just as it is possible for him under section 105 to be appointed as officiating Chief Justice."

Thus Government accepted the view that the Government of India Act must be amended in order to make High Court pleaders eligible for the office of permanent Chief Justice, and in view of this and of the general assurance given by Sir Malcolm Hailey that all the questions raised by Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar in his Resolution were receiving the consideration of the Government, he withdrew the Resolution.

Now, four years have passed since then, but the Act has not been amended and the position remains the same. High Court pleaders still labour under the disability that though they may become High Court Judges, though further they may rise to the position of an Acting Chief Justice, they can never hope to fill the office of the Chief Justice permanently.

In order to vividly realise the anomalous and unjust character of the existing arrangement, let me point out that under section 101 of the Government of India Act, a barrister from England or Ireland or a member of the Faculty of Advocates in Scotland, of not less than five years' standing, can become a Chief Justice, and in law he can become so, all at once, even without first becoming a High Court Judge, though I am not aware of cases of such men being at once appointed as Chief Justices. But a pleader High Court Judge, whatever may be his legal attainments, however competent he may be, though he may have been the Sir John Simon of the Bar, is for ever debarred from becoming permanent Chief Justice.

I have nothing whatever to say against English Barristers, or Scotch Advocates, nor do I suggest that such barristers or advocates, when appointed as High Court Judges or Chief Justices have not acquitted themselves well in the discharge of their duties. But one fails to understand why Indian High Court pleaders should be permanently branded with the inferiority complex and be considered disqualified for performing the duties of Chief Justices. The House knows very well that we have had, and we have, some very able and distinguished High Court pleaders and that their front ranks have furnished some of the best High Court Judges who have adorned the Bench. I need not mention their names as I do not think anybody will dispute what I have

said. I feel, however, that I must give at least one instance, the late Honourable Justice Sir Lallubhai Shah. He was a prominent pleader with a large practice, and was appointed a Judge of the Bombay High Court when the late Justice Sir Narayan Chandavarkar retired. He proved an extremely able judge ; it will be no exaggeration to say that he was an ideal Judge, possessing all those qualities intellectual and moral, and also of temperament which are pre-eminently calculated to make one an ideal Judge. His knowledge of law was extensive, deep and profound, he was extremely painstaking, he possessed judicial patience and a highly cultivated and balanced judgment. His administrative capacity also was of a high order. All these qualities, so rare in combination endeared him to the Bar and to his colleagues on the Bench and made him an exceptionally esteemed and successful Judge. And yet because he was a High Court pleader, the statutory bar came in his way and he could not be appointed permanent Chief Justice of the High Court, though he officiated as such more than once. A distinction that can lead to such striking injustice stands self-condemned and must be removed at once.

Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar's Resolution was moved as far back as four years in the other place. In this House, my Honourable colleague Mr. Ramadas Pantulu moved a similar Resolution to mine twelve months ago yesterday. Replying on behalf of Government the Honourable Mr. Haig then observed as follows :

" The Secretary of State is prepared to give favourable consideration to the recommendation but there is one caution which I must make. The proposal involves an amendment of the Government of India Act and it is clear that the Secretary of State cannot commit himself to any date for this. The exigencies of Parliamentary business preclude any such commitment."

We quite realise this but at the same time there is a limit to one's patience. What we want to impress upon Government is that already four years have elapsed and the Secretary of State must now do all he can to get the Act amended by Parliament as early as possible. I have therefore brought forward this motion in the hope that it will serve as a reminder, and that before this time next year this bar against High Court pleaders will be removed for certain and thereby a wrong to which we have had to draw Government's attention so frequently is redressed once for all.

THE HONOURABLE MR. H. G. HAIG (Home Secretary): Sir, as my Honourable friend Sir Phiroze Sethna has explained, a Resolution substantially in the same terms was moved in this Council this time last year.

1 P.M. I was able on that occasion to give an assurance that the Secretary of State was prepared to give favourable consideration to the recommendation that this anomaly should be removed from the law. On the merits of the question, Sir, I do not think that there is any difference of opinion between anybody. But the removal of this anomaly involves an amendment of the Government of India Act. As my Honourable friend has explained, his Resolution this morning is something in the nature of a proceeding with which we are very familiar in Government offices, namely, a reminder. There are various types of answers which are usually given to official reminders. One type is that the matter is under consideration. Another is that it is hoped that it will be expedited. A third, which is generally considered perhaps the most satisfactory, is that it is hoped that an answer will be given by a particular date. Well, Sir, I hope that my reply this morning will be found by the Council to be of the more satisfactory type. The Secretary of State has recently informed us that he hopes to introduce this Session a Bill to amend section 101 of the Government

[Mr. H. G. Haig.]

of India Act. Honourable Members must not of course conclude that the Bill will necessarily go through this Session. We hope it will, but Governments are not always entirely able to control their programme of legislative business. As Honourable Members are aware, from time to time incidents occur which unexpectedly upset their programmes. But subject to this caution, I trust that before very long the Council will no longer be faced with the necessity of sending reminders on this subject to Government and that they will be able to see this very desirable reform embodied in the Statute. The actual terms of my Honourable friend's Resolution are that the Governor General in Council should take steps for such amendment of section 101 of the Government of India Act. As he realises, this is a matter which is within the competence not of the Government of India but of the Secretary of State. He will also, I think, realise that the Government of India have done all that they can in the matter and that the Secretary of State is also doing all that he can in the matter. I would therefore suggest for my Honourable friend's consideration that he may not consider it necessary to press his Resolution.

THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA: Sir, in view of the assurance given by the Honourable the Home Secretary, I shall not press my Resolution, and I beg your leave to withdraw it.

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

The Council then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, the 16th February, 1928.
