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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 11th March, 1926.

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President in the Chair.

THE GENERAL BUDGET—LIST OF DEMANDS—*contd.*

SECOND STAGE—*contd.*

Expenditure from Revenue—contd.

DEMAND NO. 25—INTEREST ON DEBT AND REDUCTION OR AVOIDANCE OF DEBT—*contd.*

Mr. President: The motion before the House is:

"That the Demand under the head 'Interest on Debt and Reduction or Avoidance of Debt' be reduced by Rs. 88,06,000."

Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar (Madura and Ramnad *cum* Tinnevely: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I was just speaking yesterday, on that motion of mine that the Demand under the head "Interest on Debt and Reduction or Avoidance of Debt" be reduced by Rs. 88,06,000. I will explain how the amount is made up. If a reference is made to page 16 of the Explanatory Memorandum of the Finance Secretary it will show that the total amount provided is Rs. 498·63 lakhs of which it has been put down there that Rs. 486·57 lakhs is obligatory, but Rs. 16 lakhs out of that is mentioned as reparations payment. The Honourable the Finance Member proposes to place before this House a Resolution in respect of that, but, pending that, I take it as a portion votable by this House, and I want an extra provision over and above the amount that includes Rs. 72·06 lakhs and Rs. 16 lakhs here making a total Rs. 88·06 lakhs. I think it is unnecessary for me to deal at length with the subject because we had more than one debate in this House on this matter last year. As I said yesterday, it was by a chance, by a difference among the leading parties in this House that the reduction that was proposed, which was in one case Rs. 188 lakhs, and in the other Rs. 77 lakhs, could not be carried last year, and that was availed of by the Honourable the Finance Member to introduce in his Budget this year a sentence that it was the wise decision of the Assembly that enabled him to make the necessary provision. He did not claim credit for his side, nor did he claim credit for the other sides. I do not want to refer to the question in detail, for the principles on which the thing has to be worked out have been discussed by you and others at great length, and the Honourable Sir Basil Blackett has tried to place his view before us in the best form possible, so that we may take it now that this side of the House is almost agreed that there should be no more

[Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar.]

provision made than the amount that was referred to by the Honourable Member in his speech delivered on the 29th February, 1924, in which he said that the sums actually required during the next five years in which he takes note of all the circumstances would be:

					Rs.
1924-25	...	...	...	...	3.66 crores.
1925-26	...	...	...	...	3.84 "
1926-27	...	...	...	...	4.04 "
1927-28	...	...	...	...	4.24 "
1928-29	...	...	...	...	4.45 "

But now owing to subsequent events it happens that the obligatory payment comes in his view to Rs. 410 lakhs instead of 404 lakhs that was referred to in his speech. I do not want to raise the question again of any portion of this amount being votable or non-votable, nor do I want to allow the Honourable Member to refer to the raid on sinking funds. For the present purposes we need not go into that controversy, though I want to say that that controversy cannot be taken to have come to an end. The circumstances that will have to be taken into account in making a real provision for reduction or avoidance of debt will have to be gone into and decided upon later. A Committee which was almost agreed to last year was not appointed owing to the nearness of the presentation of the Budget and we expected this year that the Honourable the Finance Member would have appointed one before he introduced his Budget this month. He might have taken into his confidence the leaders of the parties and had a discussion to decide upon the course of action to be taken. He has not chosen to do so. On the other hand, he took advantage of the difference between the parties last year to use that Resolution for his purposes. It may be possible even this year for him to do so in the way he did it last year, but I want to make it clear that this matter must not be deemed to have come to an end. If not to-day another time will come when this question will have to be gone into in detail.

The first point in this matter is to refer to the debt position that was dealt with by the Honourable Member in his budget speech. He seems to have been extraordinarily merry over his capacity to make the financial position of India much better than it was a few years back. But one point that you note in his speech is that whatever looked gloomy in the horizon of the Indian financial sky has disappeared. His speech shows that his attempt at converting loans was successful and that all the other circumstances that are required for placing the Indian financial position on a considerably safe level have been achieved and he has discussed the whole position in a way to make one see that he feels that the Indian financial situation is much better than that of the British finances at the present time. That being so, we can only judge of this question of provision of sinking funds in a calm atmosphere, and I suppose that the Honourable Sir Basil Blakett will deal with it in that fashion. One important argument which he has advanced in the course of his speech is that he was one of those financiers who will not make posterity pay. Of course, if that meant that he is one of those who will compel the present generation to pay extra, I agree with him. But if he meant that he will hold his scales even between the present and the future generation I submit that I must join issue with him, and I am sure he will fail to

convince any impartially minded man that he has not been unfair to the present generation. The question requires full and detailed treatment. For my present purposes it is unnecessary to go into it in detail. But I will ask him to judge of the situation more calmly because he is not now troubled with all those questions which troubled him last year. He had to find lots of money in the course of the last few years and the chances of success of his schemes were brought forward before the Assembly as reasons that compelled him not to accept the views of the Assembly. Now he is in a different position. His budget speech shows it and I therefore ask him to consider what he has been doing these 2 or 3 years. I say, Sir, that in 1923-24 the usual debt provision for avoidance of debt had been increased a little. But what we found was that at the end of the year we had a surplus of 6 and odd crores caused by various reasons which I do not want to go into now. This 6 and odd crores was taken towards reduction and avoidance of debt besides 4 and odd crores provided in that year. So that the result is that in 1923-24 by the actual amounts we have been able to pay more than 10 crores of that debt and again in 1924-25 we made a provision of more than 4 crores and at the end there was a surplus, more than the revised estimate, in all of about 5 and odd crores. One of the arguments used by the Finance Member is that reduction of so many crores of debt relieves revenue which is available for purposes of the present generation. A little thought over that position will convince the Honourable Member that it is the greatest injustice to the present generation to ask them to clear off debts from the interest payable. I mean it will be a sad commentary to say that I will wipe off say 20 crores of debts and will have one crore saved for purposes of our improvements in the circumstances. That position cannot be supported if a calm view is taken of the situation. Therefore, while we need not necessarily interfere with the scheme that has been propounded by the Honourable the Finance Member, I ask him to agree with this side of the House, if there is anything more than that available each year either by way of accrued surpluses or by way of extra income, let that not be taken by him for purposes of paying debts. Let that be available for revenues, to relieve taxation wherever possible or for relief to the provinces and the country. That is what I want him to agree to. I say that the question probably will be raised by the Honourable Member that accrued surpluses should go towards redemption of debt. At the close of the year you have to adjust these debts and it is a matter merely of book adjustment, because, as has been explained by the Honourable Member in his speech, it is a question of our reducing as much as possible the unproductive debt by adjustment. Though we borrow for productive debt, the real effect of this debt reduction is that the unproductive debt is to that extent redeemed. The actual effect therefore will be, according to my scheme, like this. If by the Budget being rather pessimistic, or if by the expenditure not being carried out to the full extent, there are accrued surpluses, we shall agree that the accrued surpluses shall also go towards this payment of 4 crores, so that any amount over and above that, either in the shape of accrued surpluses or the provision for the reduction or avoidance of debt may be treated as surpluses available for distribution in subsequent years because, if you make a provision of five crores and you add more crores subsequently, that will be an unfair treatment of the interests of the present generation. I ask the Finance Member to look into it in a calm mood. Of course there are very many things that might be said about it. A miserly person hoarding his wealth when he has to

[Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar.]

leave it may not find himself very happy nor would a spendthrift who is asked to adopt prudence. Extra prudence in matters of State will not give any special credit to the member. Man will not be served, nor will God. The real duty will be to adjust matters as much as possible so that the present generation does not pay a pie more than it ought to. I have not discussed the various principles of distribution of this burden because the matter has been discussed at length but I have taken it at the lowest figure put by the Honourable Member. I want him to stick to the position that he will not take from the revenues of this country more than 4 crores till he is able to wipe off the extra taxation altogether and surpluses must be treated as available for future years. You may put it this way or that. Take out of these surpluses and the debt redemption fund five crores or keep the surpluses to the credit of the next year, so that the whole non-recurring expenditure in the case of non-recurring and recurring expenditure in the case of recurring may be provided for the subsequent years from the balances that would accrue. Stick to the position that 4 crores shall be the full amount that will go to the reduction of debt. If the Finance Member insists that over and above the four crores for some years till reduction of taxation is effected there must be a provision of one-eightieth of the extra debt, that also may be agreed to. There may not be any difficulty about it but you ought not to take away more money from any surpluses accruing because it is purely the hand of the Finance Member that decides these questions as to what these surpluses will be. This Assembly has no voice in estimating the receipts and in forcing its opinion on the Finance Member. Nor have we been able to do anything substantially with the provision for expenditure either. In these circumstances, if surpluses come, it is purely by the methods adopted by the Department and, if as a fact he is entitled to take it away for reduction of debt, it means that the present generation pays not only the amount that would be scientifically necessary for reduction or avoidance of debt as propounded by him in these three years but the extra money which ought to go to benefit this generation is also taken away for reduction and avoidance of debt, which means that this generation bears the burden which it should not justifiably be called upon to bear. That is the position that arises out of the whole discussion and I daresay the Honourable Sir Basil Blackett will this year calmly think over the position and agree that more than 4 crores either in one shape or another need not be taken. The present demand concerns itself only with an extra 88 lakhs and I therefore move that this 88 lakhs may be cut out so that it may be available for reduction of taxation. Of course I do not raise the other question of reduction of rates on postcards. The Honourable the Finance Member's speech yesterday seems to indicate that his views are very strong about it. If it is so we must certainly respect him as far as it is possible; but anyhow further reduction of taxation in some form or other must be made and I do not think it will be right on the part of the Honourable the Finance Member to insist on the whole thing being taken away. He need not insist on more than 4 crores, and I request him therefore to accept this cut of 88 lakhs.

One word more about the reparation payments that I referred to at the commencement of my speech. The income from reparations is expected to accrue for some years to come. That has been paid for by the country and by arrangement between England and the other nations we are getting

next year about 16 lakhs, and it may be more, and that will come in for some years more. I really do not see why that should not be taken away from this reduction of debt towards which it is sought to be paid; because if you have a scientific basis of debt reduction you should not add to the sums devoted for that purpose, just as you like, from other sources. If you have a scientific principle stick to it, and if additional funds are available they should be used for the benefit of the country and the poor taxpayer.

Sardar V. N. Mutalik (Gujarat and Deccan Sardars and Inamdars: Landholders): Sir, after the speeches generally of Mr. Rama Aiyangar very little needs to be added, and I rise only to make a few remarks on this question. Sir, the Honourable the Finance Member in his budget speech says that this House, the non-official side of this House, has recognized the wisdom of his scheme of debt redemption. Sir, if there is any credit in the scheme I think it would be advisable if the Honourable Finance Member took the whole credit to himself. If posterity judges that this scheme was a sound scheme let the whole credit go to him. I do not think that after the discussion on this point last year he has any justification for saying that this House has recognized the wisdom of the scheme. If anything, this House has definitely stated that this scheme is not a sound financial scheme. So let us not take that credit to ourselves. We shall offer the whole credit to the Honourable the Finance Member. And what does the Honourable Finance Member propose to do in this case? He wants to keep up the taxation at the same high level at which it was levied as a war measure. Sir, during the war we willingly submitted ourselves to taxation, but to keep up that level of taxation at this time is not, I think, a sound system of finance. I will summarise the results during the last three or four years. From the surpluses we have paid 18 crores and 60 lakhs; by the debt redemption scheme we have paid more than 13 crores. We have therefore paid in all more than 26 crores for debt redemption. It is said that this debt redemption redounds to the credit of India and we are able to show that our finances are sound. I do not think, Sir, that debt redemption is the only cause of our interest rate getting lower and lower. Various other factors have contributed to this lowering of the interest rates. I will only state in this connection, Sir, that the Finance Department of Great Britain has never tried to reduce their debt. I will only state the figures as they stand. In August 1914, the total liabilities were £711 millions. In 1919 they amounted to about £8,979 millions. Then in 1922 the figure went down to £7,721 millions and in January 1926, it stood at £7,800 millions. So practically there has been no reduction of the debt. The reduction in one year was due to the sale of surplus stores and recoveries from other sources.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett (Finance Member): The Honourable Member has, I think, entirely left out of account the effects of conversion. The nominal total of the debt may have been increased but there has been, as is commonly known, a very large reduction of debt in the United Kingdom.

Sardar V. N. Mutalik: Well, Sir, if reduction by conversion of loans is to be taken into account, you are doing the same thing here; and if you are doing the same thing I am quite sure the credit is yours. You ought to convert your high interest debt into debt at a lower rate of interest. If the Finance Department take that step the House will very gladly support the Finance Member in that. The system of debt conversion is a very

[Sardar V. N. Mutalik.]

sound one, but what you are doing is this: you are providing for debt redemption under the debt redemption scheme and are also taking all the surpluses for debt reduction. You are taking a double advantage. If you want to make provision only for debt reduction I think the best course will be not to touch the surpluses for that purpose. That ought to be applied to relief for the provinces or at least to the relief of the general tax-payer. In India you ought to relieve the general tax-payer and should not lay the heavy burden you are now laying on him under your present scheme. I do not want to take up the time of the House at this juncture as the House is rather impatient to reach another item of more importance. But I do say this, that we are not going to take the credit—whether it is credit or discredit future generations and financiers will judge. I do not think this House has accepted this policy. Sir, when the question was debated last time the Finance Member consented to speak across the table. A representative Committee was called. That Committee met, but it could not do much because the Honourable the Finance Member had no time to take it into his confidence and there was no opportunity then to consult all the Honourable Members on this side of the House. A year has gone, and the same Committee, which met the Honourable Finance Member on this point, should have been taken into his confidence and some definite understanding should have been arrived at. The scheme of the Finance Department was not evolved after consultation with this House, and I do not think that this House should be entangled, or that colour should be given to this scheme as if this House approved of the policy of the Finance Department in respect of loading the present generation with heavy taxation.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Sir, I am very much disappointed. I did think that the clear evidence of the benefits of the policy which this House and the Government of India pursued in the last two years would have convinced Sardar Mutalik—not perhaps Mr. Rama Aiyangar—of the rightness of the course we have taken. May I just begin by pointing out to Mr. Rama Aiyangar that I think his actual motion is slightly misconceived? He wants to make a reduction of 88 lakhs. He has included in that the 16 lakhs in respect of reparation receipts. It is unnecessary for him to do that. That is a non-voted sum, or rather will become non-voted if the Finance Bill is passed as it stands. If the Finance Bill is not passed in the present form, that sum will not be applied to the reduction of debt; it will not be included; so that this is not the place at which to discuss those 16 lakhs. The only reason why it is included in the non-voted sum in the estimates is on the assumption that the Finance Bill will be passed in the form in which it at present stands. If the Finance Bill is not passed in that form, automatically that 16 lakhs cease to be applied to the reduction of debt. So I think the Honourable Member's motion should have been, on his own showing, for a cut of 72, not 88, lakhs. Mr. Rama Aiyangar made a good deal of the point or tried to make a good deal of the point that the amount that was included in the current year is something different from what was suggested by me in the year 1924. It is not. It is exactly the same. The Honourable Member quoted the figures relating to the debt actually in existence on the 31st March 1923. What I said in 1924 was that:

“We may therefore conclude that the figure of 4 crores per annum would be an adequate provision to include in our Budget expenditure for the next five years for dealing with our existing debt”.

and I went on to say :

"I must remind the House that this figure makes no provision for the further debt which will be incurred during 1924-25 and thereafter. The criteria which I have suggested evidently require that an addition should be made each year for all new debt incurred."

I therefore proposed that we should add a figure of one-eightieth of the net addition to our debt each year. The figures that we are discussing now are the provision of 4 crores for the debt up to the end of the 31st March, 1923, plus one-eightieth for debt incurred since then, so that so far from there being any change from the present system, it is exactly a continuation. Mr. Rama Aiyangar said that he was quite content to accept the position laid down in 1924. He should therefore withdraw his motion.

Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar: In case you agree to the surplus.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: He should agree so far as this is concerned. This has nothing to do with the surplus.

The next point that he made was that we were treating the present generation very hardly at the expense of the next. What has the present generation done? In the years 1918-19 to 1922-23, it has added 98 crores to the unproductive debt of the country. It failed to pay its way by 98 crores.

Sardar V. N. Mutalik: Was not that the result of the war?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: That was nearly all of it after the war. It failed to pay its way. The present generation failed to pay its way.

Sardar V. N. Mutalik: As an effect of the war.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Very likely as an effect of the war. Is that a good reason why we should not now use the surplus to reduce debt, when we use deficits to increase it? I say that the surplus, if there is any realized at the end of the year, should at any rate go to make up to the tax-payer of the future generation some of the charges which we are putting upon him as the result of incurring deficits of practically a hundred crores in five years. The Honourable Member wants it both ways. He adds 100 crores by deficits in five years, and then because we begin to try and pay that off, he says that we are treating the present generation hardly at the expense of the next. The present generation has put a burden of 100 crores of deficits on the future generation.

Sardar V. N. Mutalik: We are already making provision for that.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: That is exactly what we should do. I am entirely in agreement with the Honourable Member, but he wants to alter the scheme.

Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar: We do not want to give you more than 5 crores according to your own scheme.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: My own scheme was 4 crores up to the 31st March, 1923, one-eightieth for any future debt plus any amount that might be realized if we have a surplus. That is the scheme. The Honourable Member is trying to make out that he does not differ from me. If so, I hope he will withdraw his motion.

[Sir Basil Blackett.]

Now the next point that he made was that because we are in a better position this year than we were last year or the year before, the fact, that, among other things, our debt redemption arrangements have had a particularly good result on our credit, justifies our going back on that. But we are only in the first stage. I pointed out to this House in February, 1925, that we had a new capital programme for new money to be spent on productive purposes year by year amounting to something like 40 crores a year for the next five or ten years. In addition we had maturing debt amounting I think at that stage to 150 crores. Last year we were able to convert 30 crores of that 150. We have still got the other 120 to complete. Does the Honourable Member want to pay an extra half per cent. interest on converting that? But that is the possible effect. If you insist on cutting the debt redemption provision and thereby do anything to destroy the immense confidence in our credit which has been created in the last few years, the net result is that you pay something extra for all the money which you borrow whether for new capital expenditure or for maturing debt. Now an addition of a half per cent. on 100 crores is a very large sum. There is no one so blind as one who will not see (Hear, hear). I am quoting Mr. Jinnah. I am glad to think that Mr. Jinnah sees even more clearly than he confesses. If we were to halt on our way at this stage, we should undoubtedly have to pay more for all the money that we have to raise in the next few years, and still more, for all the conversions that we have to effect in the next few years, for the sake of saving 50 lakhs of sinking fund this year. The Honourable Member is going to increase our interest charge by 50 lakhs two years from now. Our debt will be higher and our interest charge will be the same as it is at present just because the Honourable Member has been so short-sighted as to try and save 50 lakhs out of this year's revenue in order to apply it to some other purpose.

Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar: About 5 lakhs, I say.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I have no objection at all if the Honourable Member will vote the total sum provided in this year's figures which is just about 5 lakhs. We have this year reduced the amount to some extent by omitting the special provision for customs duties. As against that, the proposal is that reparation receipts should be included. I will not deal with the reparation receipts now, because they do not come into the picture.

Sardar Mutalik made some points which I did not quite follow about the British Government not having paid off their debt. The British Government has paid off a very large amount of debt since the war. Since the war year by year it has had considerable surpluses. This will be the first year in which there is not a surplus. All the surpluses have gone to debt. There is also an annual provision at the present moment amounting to 50 millions for sinking fund. The Honourable Member will no doubt quote figures showing what the total debt was at the end of each year. But it must be remembered that a very large amount of conversion is taking place. You had 5 per cent. bonds maturing and paid off at par and money raised by conversion loan at 75 with which to pay them off. The net result has been a reduction in interest but an increase by 38½ per cent. in the nominal total debt.

Sardar V. N. Mutalik: May I know from the Honourable Member, Sir, what amount exactly from the revenues have been paid for debt redemption, apart from the amounts set aside under the redemption scheme.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: The position is straightforward. At the present time there is an annual provision of £50 millions for debt redemption in the British Budget.

Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar: For £8,000 millions of debt.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: That would be 5 millions for 800 millions. We have got 5 crores for over 900. We have got rather a smaller proportion than the United Kingdom.

Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar: Our position is much better.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Very likely. The Honourable Member cannot use his argument both ways. In addition to the £50 millions a year which is set aside, all surpluses automatically go to reduction of debt. There was a surplus one year of over £200 millions; in another year over £100 millions. All that has gone automatically to reduction of debt, so that I am sure the Honourable Member will find that if he were to apply the British parallel strictly, it will be necessary to increase our total, not to decrease it. I do not say that this is an argument for doing so. I only ask him not to use the argument that the British analogy would justify reducing our figure. I will give another illustration. I was reading in the *Times* recently:

"The Swiss Federal Government has recently approved the proposals made by the Chief of the Finance Department . . . with the object of preparing for the progressive redemption of the Swiss public debt—a total of nearly 1,500 million francs. . . . Mr. Musy has set up a redemption plan which is burdening the taxpayer as little as possible, and which has still to be sanctioned by Parliament. The Finance Department proposes to devote to that debt redemption, in the first place the 35 million francs . . . which are to remain on the annual yield of the Extraordinary War Tax . . . in the second place, the sum which will be saved every year on the interest of the debt in consequence of the progressive redemption of the latter. This plan seems to be sound, and if it works out well and no unforeseen circumstances occur, these 1,500 million francs may be fully redeemed by the end of 1964."

That is the plan is for redemption of the total debt in 40 years. I assure Honourable Members of this House that they would be making a great mistake if they go on year by year cavilling at this provision in a short-sighted policy to reduce the actual total of the expenditure of the year under discussion without reference to the effect it is going to have on the next year and the year after. In every country where public finances are soundly managed, there is a large provision for reduction of debt. In India it is true that our productive debt is a large proportion of our total. On the other hand, we have very large commitments for new capital expenditure and for maturing debt. I regard the financing of our new capital expenditure as one of the most important features in the finances of this country. We want to spend money profitably in order that we may benefit the next generation by that expenditure or that we may develop the country and get a return on our productive expenditure. We are going to find it very much easier to get money and we are going to get it very much cheaper if we make full provision for redemption and amortization of debt. If we, simply out of a desire to do something at the moment, cavil at that procedure year by year, taking every opportunity we can to reduce it, we damage our

[Sir Basil Blackett.]

own credit and we damage the tax-payer not merely of the future but the tax-payer of the year after next. I do ask the House to weigh these words and not to press this motion.

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar (Madras City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): I do not wish to take the line adopted by my friends Mr. Rama Aiyangar and Sardar Mutalik, but I do fail to see where the House at all quarrels with the scheme. We accept the scheme as I have already stated more than once. We have accepted the scheme. The only complaint we make is whether we are not erring on the side of over-prudence in this matter, whether, having regard to the necessities which we are put to, we should not see our way to take away something out of this. We fully approve of the scheme. For instance, it was brought out that in reconverting the sterling debt into rupee debt for the purpose of providing for repayment or avoidance—we find the same thing repeated also this year—you reconvert at Rs. 15 per £ whereas for payments we make provision at 18d. to the rupee. If we recalculate—and I think it will be very safe to do that—converting our sterling debt into rupees at 18d. to the rupee, as was calculated last year, there will be a saving from the current revenues to the extent of over 30 to 35 lakhs.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: About 7 lakhs.

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar: Even 7 lakhs is not a small sum.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: It is part of the original scheme that gain by exchange had been included.

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar: After all the Finance Member will remember that this is a temporary scheme or a transitory scheme which he hopes to work for 5 years in order to see what results we are able to achieve. I must congratulate the Honourable Member on the excellent results achieved so far by the scheme which he has provided. Our finances have reached a sound basis and we command the confidence of the world. It is a matter for congratulation; but at the same time I do not know whether the Finance Member has any fear that the exchange is going to change in the next two years. We have done 3 years at 18d. to the rupee and more. Is that not correct? We have got only 2 years more left. Why should we not recalculate our sterling debt and convert it into rupees at 18d. or even more to the rupee and save 7 or 8 lakhs; that will be so much available for expenses on necessities. I do not know why it should not be done and I do press that aspect of it.

Mr. President: The question is:

“That the Demand under the head ‘Interest on Debt and Reduction or Avoidance of Debt’ be reduced by Rs. 88,06,000.”

The motion was negatived.

Mr. President: If no Honourable Member wishes to move any amendment, I will put the original question.

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar: They have all been covered.

Mr. President: The question is :

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 94,40,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1927, in respect of 'Interest on Debt and Reduction or Avoidance of Debt'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND NO. 26.—INTEREST ON MISCELLANEOUS OBLIGATIONS.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Sir, I beg to move:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 23,76,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1927, in respect of 'Interest on Miscellaneous Obligations'."

Rate of Interest on Post Office Cash Certificates.

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar: Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Demand under head 'Interest on Miscellaneous Obligations' be reduced by Rs. 5."

The question which I wish to raise under this head is that the Honourable the Finance Member's proposal, which, I take it, has been thrown out for criticism in this House, to reduce the rate of interest on post office cash certificates is not a good suggestion at all. These post office cash certificates have now become very popular with the people. In fact, the small investors are now seeking post office cash certificates for investing their savings. I see that the Honourable the Finance Member, taking advantage of the financial market and the rate of interest in banks, etc., wants to reduce the rate of interest. I think it is too soon to interfere with this form of investment. After all it is not much and I think it enables the small investors, especially Government employees and other private employees, to save a few rupees a month to invest in these attractive securities and it is too soon to tamper with it. Its popularity will diminish, and I do not think that the Government will gain much by reducing the rate of interest. I do suggest that this should not be attempted and we can well afford to incur a little more expenditure in this direction so as to ensure to small investors a safe means of investment. I therefore suggest to the Honourable the Finance Member not to take hasty action in this direction.

Sardar V. N. Mutalik: Sir, I rise to oppose this motion. As a financial arrangement it will be a very bad policy if we continue to pay a higher rate of interest when the rate of interest in the country is going down. Sir, there is a very strong feeling in the country that the high rate of interest given on post office cash certificates militates against the investments in banks and in Co-operative Credit Society Banks also. Those who are in touch with conditions in the mofussil will bear me out when I say that it is not the small investors who invest in these cash certificates. It is generally those men who would invest their money either in Postal Savings Banks or in Government securities, who invest their money in cash certificates.

Sir Hari Singh Gour (Central Provinces: Hindi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan): But the amount of cash certificates is limited to Rs. 10,000:

Sardar V. N. Mutalik: That does not matter. These certificates can be purchased in different ways. I can purchase them in my own name, in the name of my wife and in the name of my children and can get 6 per cent. compound interest. It is just the same to me in whose name the certificate stands. I do not think that it would be wise to accept this suggestion, and I therefore strongly oppose it. I suggest that the Finance Department should take steps to reduce the rate of interest on post office cash certificates.

Mr. H. G. Cocke (Bombay: European): Sir, I rise to support this cut of Rs. 5. Sir, I thoroughly approve of the idea of paying more than what I might call the Government borrowing rate of interest. I think I am right in saying that the interest only works out at 6 per cent. compound interest after the fifth year. No one who cashes his certificate from the first to the fourth year gets as much as 6 per cent. and there are a considerable number of holders who do realise their money during the currency of the certificates. It is only those holders who are thrifty enough to keep their money for the whole period of five years who get 6 per cent. compound interest. Sir, the rate of interest on post office cash certificates may be about 1 per cent. more than the current rate of interest at which Government can borrow, but I think it is very essential to encourage thrift. It is difficult to say whether the Sardar's ideas about the persons who invest their money in cash certificates are correct or not, whether they are mainly taken by people who are fairly wealthy and not by small clerks, and so on. I do not know whether any statistics are available. But I have always imagined that a considerable number of cash certificates are subscribed for by people with very small means. It must be remembered that the interest is income-tax free and therefore it does tend to encourage people with a certain amount of wealth to put in as much as possible in the name of various members of their family. I should like to suggest that each holder might be allowed to take up a definite amount every year. At present he can only invest Rs. 7,500 which becomes Rs. 10,000 after five years. I think it would be a good thing if each person is allowed to take cash certificates worth Rs. 2,000 or Rs. 3,000 every year and thus increase his wealth and at the same time help the State.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Sir, I am grateful to Mr. Rangachariar for raising this interesting discussion. I find myself in this matter in agreement with all parties. I entirely agree with Mr. Rangachariar and Mr. Cocke that we should, as far as possible, do nothing that will interfere with the popularity of these certificates. I do not think that in judging the rate of interest that you should pay on these certificates you must be guided too much by the question of the cost to the tax-payer in the shape of interest. That is not really the most important point. If you could, by giving a higher rate of interest, really stimulate investment among people who otherwise would not come in for investment, I think the State would be well repaid, provided the other consequences were not objectionable. The difficulty is that this rate must bear some kind of relation to the general rate at which Government are borrowing; otherwise you do not have the results that you aim at. Sardar Mutalik and his sisters, cousins and aunts all go and take out these certificates which are meant for his bearer and his sisters and cousins. These certificates are

meant for small investors and if you offer too high a rate of interest you do tend simply to be paying to the larger investors a higher rate of interest than they would get on other Government securities. Although there is a limit, as Mr. Cocke and Mr. Rangachariar have pointed out of Rs. 10,000 to the nominal value of these certificates, it can be extended or evaded in various ways either with our knowledge when it is done in the name of cousins and aunts, or without our knowledge, I am afraid, sometimes—I hope not very often. We, therefore, have come to the conclusion that it is not proper to go on leaving the rate to be earned on these certificates after 5 years as high as 6 per cent. Our view is that some reduction must be made. We do not want to reduce it at one step by a very large jump and we do not want to disturb the popularity of these certificates more than we can help. We have various proposals which I may now say are in the form of a Notification which will be issued, I believe, next week dealing with the rate at which these certificates can be purchased and making other arrangements by which the existing limit of 5 years can be extended in some circumstances. I will not attempt to give all the details; they will become public property very shortly. We waited until we could have a little time to see the effect of our announcement on this House and on the public. It is a matter on which you have got to act rather quickly because once you have announced the probability of reduction you tend to stimulate the demand in the interval from just the people whom you do not want the money from; so that we could not delay action for very long.

The other point raised by Mr. Cocke will be carefully considered. His suggestions have always been very valuable in this matter of
 12 Noon. cash certificates, but I am afraid that so far as keeping the present rate, much as I should like to, in order to stimulate investment in these certificates by really small investors, I am afraid that to leave it at that rate any longer would on the whole balance of advantage not be in the interests of the country or of the State.

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar: Sir, I desire to withdraw my motion.

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

Mr. President: The question is:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 23,76,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1927, in respect of ‘Interest on Miscellaneous Obligations.’”

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 27.—STAFF, HOUSEHOLD AND ALLOWANCES OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Sir, I beg to move:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 9,90,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1927, in respect of the ‘Staff, household and allowances of the Governor General.’”

Replacement of the European officers of the Governor General's Bodyguard by Indian officers.

Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan (Assam: Muhammadan): Sir, before I make my submission on the motion which stands in my name I wish it to be understood that I have not the least desire to impair the dignity of the exalted office of Governor General. Let me make that clear. I am as anxious as any Honourable Member of this House to see that the dignity of the office of Governor General is in no way diminished or impaired. If Honourable Members will turn to page 14 of the White Book on military services they will find that the Governor General's Bodyguard consists of 106 Indian soldiers and 2 officers of high commissioned rank. They will also find that the Bodyguards of the provincial Governors, the Governors of the major provinces of Madras, Bombay and Bengal, are also commanded by European officers of commissioned rank. The other day His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief told us in this very House that if due regard be had to the safety of the Empire he could not recommend a reduction in the number of European officers. I would suggest for the consideration of the House and of the Honourable Member in charge of the Army Department that here is an opportunity for effecting economy and at the same time Indianisation. We can easily replace those 6 or 8 officers of high commissioned rank by Indian officers. There is on the Bodyguard of the Governor General one officer of the rank of Major, and I believe on the Bodyguard of provincial Governors also there are officers of the rank of Major. My point is that you could easily, without in any way diminishing the dignity of the office of Governor General, replace these high commissioned officers by Indian officers of approved meritorious services. The posts should be reserved as prize posts to be filled by Ajab Khans and Hira Singhs who have served their King-Emperor and country well.

Sir, I move:

"That the Demand under the head 'Staff, household and allowances of the Governor General' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar: Sir, I am thankful to my Honourable friend for this motion, especially as the new Governor General is coming. I think we may put forward for his approval the suggestion as to why he should not have one of the two officers, Private Secretary and Assistant Private Secretary, an Indian. The time has come for the Governor General to be in touch with Indian opinion, not in those ceremonial functions alone where he meets Indians but in the daily functions which the Governor General has now to discharge. I think there should be a responsible officer to assist him in the discharge of his high duties. I think we have enough Indians in service who can be well trusted to discharge these duties. After all he is a new-comer to the land and comes in contact with his own countrymen, officials and non-officials, and very few Indians get the opportunity to have a heart to heart talk with the Governor General, and those who dare to do so will have to take the responsibility on their own shoulders. People seldom get an opportunity to discuss matters of importance even when they meet His Excellency, so that sometimes we have to volunteer our opinions in an informal way and do not know whether they are received willingly or unwillingly. I do

think, therefore, that the association of responsible Indians in the daily discharge of these exalted duties will be a wholesome departure. The time has come. We are crying for Indianisation everywhere, so why not in His Excellency's household where he has to deal with important matters. Why he should not be associated with Indians I fail to see. I make this suggestion and hope it will be accepted and acted upon.

Mr. H. Tonkinson (Home Department: Nominated Official): Sir, my Honourable friend the Deputy President has confined his remarks to the question of the Private and Assistant Private Secretary to His Excellency. The motion that has been made relates to the Bodyguard of the Governor General.

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar: I beg your pardon, the personal staff and Bodyguard.

Mr. H. Tonkinson: I did not imagine myself that under the head of personal Staff was included the Private Secretary and the Assistant Private Secretary. (*An Honourable Member*: "Why not?")

I assumed this term referred to Aide-de-Camps and so on.

I will turn to His Excellency's Bodyguard. (*An Honourable Member*: "You have no defence for the other".) I will return to that again later. The Bodyguard is a military body of a strength equal, I understand, to about one squadron of Indian cavalry. Its cost is included in the military estimates and there are two officers, as stated by my Honourable friend, Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan, holding King's Commissions. One of these is the Commandant, who is a Major, the other is the Adjutant who is a Captain. In regard to the question of the Indianisation of these appointments, I understand that there are no Indian officers in the cavalry at the present time holding King's Commissions who are of the rank of Major, but I see no reason why in their turn Indians should not be appointed to one or other of these appointments. Of course it is a matter for His Excellency, as the question of these appointments falls within his patronage. I can only say that the remarks of my Honourable friend will be laid before His Excellency, and the same will apply to the remarks of my Honourable friend, Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar.

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

Mr. President: The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 9,90,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1927, in respect of 'Staff, household and allowances of the Governor General'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 28—EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Sir, I move:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 62,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1927, in respect of 'Executive Council'."

Appointment of a Royal Commission on Reforms.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah (Bombay City : Muhammadan Urban) : Sir, I move
 " That the Demand under the head ' Executive Council ' be omitted."

Sir, I think the House will probably understand more than it is possible for me to describe the circumstances under which I rise to address it on this question. I am sure Honourable Member will agree with me that there is a very heavy cloud hanging over us and I shall say no more. Sir, this motion is intended to raise a debate on the general policy of the Government, and in particular to raise the constitutional issue, and we shall do our very best, on this side of the House, to persuade the House to pass an unequivocal vote of censure on the policy of the Government with regard to the constitutional issue about which there is no doubt now. Sir Basil Blackett, the Finance Member, seems to be very happy and thinks that he has performed a remarkable feat in producing his Budget this year which shows a small surplus. What is wonderful about this Budget? We had a fairly good monsoon, we had increased rates and fares on the Railways, and we have a fairly big surplus so far as the Railway Budget is concerned; we had very favourable exchange and we have maintained the high level of taxation intended for war conditions, and we have got the Budget presented this year with a surplus. Sir, what is there to congratulate the Finance Member or anybody else? Therefore, so far as this Budget is concerned, it is really of very little interest. I shall however watch the skill, ingenuity and the abilities of the Finance Member when he comes to deal with the Taxation Committee's Report, and when he brings before this House and the country something original, something which will be of lasting benefit to the people; I hope he will then give us the opportunity to appreciate what he is capable of doing for India. But at present, Sir, the Budget, as far as I can see, has very little interest in it. Apart from that, the question—the question of vital and paramount interest—is that of the constitutional issue which I shall deal with. I do not wish to take the House into a long and weary history of this issue. I think it will be admitted that, when the Act of 1919 was passed, a large body of politically-minded people in this country, and I believe almost all important political organisations, held that these Reforms were not satisfactory and were disappointing. The Indian National Congress, one of the leading political organisations in the country at the time, met at Amritsar in December, 1919, and after a great deal of discussion and careful deliberation, decided to work the Reforms as far as they went, at the same time recording the opinion that they were not satisfactory and were disappointing. Now, Sir, I felt from that moment that we had put our case before the highest tribunal, the Joint Parliamentary Committee. We fought step by step and we got a decision and the Act was passed, and as practical men we felt that the only course open to us was to work the Reforms and show by working them what inherent and serious defects and difficulties existed in the working of those Reforms. But then came other events into which I do not wish to go. We had the upheaval with regard to the Punjab, the Jalianwallah Bagh, and the Khilafat trouble and a large body of our countrymen refused to use these Reforms. At the same time I think the Honourable Members on the Treasury Benches will admit that there was a fairly large section that did not agree with that policy and that programme and they came into the various Legislatures and worked the Reforms. Then what do you find to be the

attitude of the Government in 1921? It is described in the words of the Right Honourable Mr. Sastri, who I think the House, and even the Government will admit, is a fair and impartial politician. He says this in an article on Lord Reading's speech of 20th January, 1926:

"In the domestic politics of India one can only remember, on the one hand, the unexampled outburst of brotherliness and comradeship between Britishers and Indians when the non-co-operation cloud darkened the sky. Racial distinctions were abolished, repressive laws were repealed. We had a vision of Sandhurst and Woolwich, and official and non-official Europeans joined in a recommendation that our constitution should be revised before 1929. How near we then were to the millenium. As soon as the political sky began to clear and the too trustful Liberals were flung overboard, the Sandhurst and kindred promises were repudiated. Lord Peel cast back the Assembly's request for constitutional advance in its teeth, and the Rowlett Act, with all its accursed provisions, came back to life in the Bengal Ordinance."

Now, I ask the Honourable the Home Member who represents the Government, is this not a true picture of your policy and your attitude? Sir, to get back nearer. In 1924, when this Assembly met at the very outset during the first Session, a Resolution was passed in this Assembly in February 1924, to which we got a reply from the Government which certainly was not satisfactory. In the first instance we were told that a departmental Committee would be appointed to inquire into the defects and the difficulties in the working of this constitution. That made not only the Assembly restive but the country outside was disappointed and at that time Lord Olivier, the Secretary of State for India, and the then Prime Minister, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, both in their pronouncements, in order to allay the public opinion,—conveyed the idea that the Government had every desire to come into closer consultation with the real representatives of public opinion and they impressed upon us in the clearest language that they were going to adopt methods and means of so doing and that this Committee which was announced was not a device or a design for delaying the solution of this question. Then, Sir, we had the Muddiman Committee. The Muddiman Committee, as you all know, as Honourable Members here all know, had its hands tied by the peculiar terms of reference, but nevertheless there was a minority report signed by men like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, my friend the Honourable Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer, and Dr. Paranjpye, who command the confidence of the Government, who have worked inside the Government and who have worked outside the Government. And what did they say? They made their recommendation. And what was their recommendation? Can anyone make a mistake about it? Is there any doubt about it, as to what their recommendation was? Their recommendation was, Sir, if I may read those few lines, this. After going through an elaborate inquiry and after taking the evidence of a number of witnesses, both officials and non-officials, they came to this conclusion. This is the passage that I wish to read to the House. They said:

"The present system has failed and in our opinion it is incapable of yielding better results in the future."

And then they point out the various defects, principal, fundamental, inherent defects, and having pointed that out they further say:

"We were precluded by the terms of our reference from examining those various proposals which were of a fundamental character and which required the overhauling of the constitution."

[Mr. M. A. Jinnah.]

And therefore the minority report concludes by saying this :

"We do not think that the suggested amendments if effected will afford valuable training towards responsible government or will provide any solution of the difficulties which we have discussed in our chapter on Political Conditions or that they will strengthen the position of the Provincial Governments in relation to their legislatures or of the Central Government in relation to the Assembly. The majority of our colleagues say that no alternative transitional system has been placed before us. We think that no such alternative transitional system can be devised which can satisfactorily solve the administrative or political difficulties that have been brought to our notice. To our mind the proper question to ask is not whether any alternative transitional system can be devised but whether the constitution should not be put on a permanent basis with provisions for automatic progress in the future so as to secure stability of the Government and willing co-operation of the people. We can only express the hope that a serious attempt may be made at an early date to solve the question. This attempt should be made,—whether by the appointment of a Royal Commission with freer terms of reference and a larger scope of inquiry than ours or any other agency is a question which we earnestly commend to the notice of the Government."

Sir, this we earnestly commended to the notice of the Government on the 3rd December 1924. Since then we had the pronouncement of Lord Birkenhead in consultation with His Excellency the Viceroy who was summoned for this purpose among others. We had the statement of Lord Birkenhead and to get to the immediate issue what does he say? He says that a Royal Commission can be accelerated. The one precise condition was that we should show a spirit of co-operation. Now that statement was made last year, and to use his own words—and I should like to draw the attention of the House to his own words—this is what he said :

"But I do not hesitate to make clear my own view that it was not the intention of the Legislature to attempt to shackle succeeding Governments, if a spirit of cheerful and loyal co-operation was generally exhibited, on the one hand, or if on the other, grave and glaring defects disclosed themselves. It would indeed have been an assumption of omniscience alien to the Anglo-Saxon tradition for Parliament to assume so high and prophetic a gift as to declare that in no circumstances should the date of the Commission be accelerated. In fact the door was never closed. It is on the contrary open to-day."

I do not see the door open at all. As far as I can see it is almost shut, nay, banged. But the condition is there clear and precise. "There can be no consideration until we see everywhere among the responsible leaders of Indian thought evidence of a sincere and genuine desire to co-operate with us in making the best of the existing constitution." Now, Sir, this is the formula which has been repeated by the Government *ad nauseam* on every occasion whenever a debate on this question is raised. It was repeated by the Viceroy when he returned. It was repeated by the Home Member when the debate took place in September last year, and it has been repeated again by His Excellency the Viceroy in addressing the Legislature on the 20th of January last. And what does he say? In the speech which he made on the 20th of January, he says this :

"I had hoped that the leaders of Indian political thought might seize the opportunity afforded to them by the attitude of the Government, that they might elect to comply with the request made and might thus pave the way for an earlier appointment of the Statutory Commission and for the inception of a new era in political relations between India and Government."

Then, Sir, he concluded his speech by saying this :

"I cannot find the desired encouragement to those who, like myself, were seeking evidence of greater co-operation and good-will. There is, however, yet time for a more satisfactory response. In the ensuing Session as the proceedings of this Assembly

develop, I trust there may be found a clear manifestation of an attitude as generous and as well-intentioned as I verily believe was that which prompted the appeal. I shall continue to watch events here and throughout the country with deep interest, and it is my earnest prayer that the hopes, to which I still cling, may not be disappointed, and that a new era may dawn on Indian progress—an era of more sympathetic understanding, more widespread trust and more universal good-will."

Now, Sir, I will only weary the House with one more quotation, and then I shall proceed to answer the position taken up by Government. On the 18th of February 1926, we had the pronouncement on behalf of the Government of India made by the Home Member in the Council of State, and this is the answer he gave:

"And as to the advancement of the date of the Statutory Commission I never suggested, I have not suggested, and it has never been suggested, that there was any legal difficulty in the way. The method of acceleration has been clearly stated on many occasions."

I would only add that it has been repeated *ad nauseam*. He then proceeds:

"I again restate it. It is co-operation",
—and I dare say the Honourable the Home Member will again restate it to-day—

"It is co-operation. Now, I quite understand this House feeling that to repeat this word in a parrot-like way is to give no real answer. But co-operation is not a word."

—I agree with him there, it is not a word—

"It is a continued and steady course of conduct"

—"Hear, hear"—I would have said to him if I had been there—

"If every Member of this House and in every Legislature in India stood on his legs and shouted 'We co-operate', that would have no effect on my mind at all. It is by a steady course of conduct that facts are established. It has been said that co-operation has been received to a considerable extent. I will not deny that in certain quarters it has been received. I acknowledge thankfully on the part of Government the co-operation that has consistently and steadily been extended to the Government by the first Council of State, and which I am perfectly sure will continue to be extended by the present House."

He was trying to ingratiate himself with the other House:

"There are other instances undoubtedly; and the atmosphere is getting better. I hope so and I hope it may continue. I look to my Honourable friend to produce that result by his own efforts and by the efforts of those who think with him. I will not enter into the difficult intricacies of some parties with which I am not fully acquainted lest I tread on delicate ground. I trust soon that all parties may have at any rate one view, and that is they will work the existing constitution for all it is worth; and when that time comes about, then my Honourable friend will move his Resolution in a happier time. I regret therefore I am unable to accept the Resolution moved by my Honourable friend."

Now, Sir, I ask the Government and the Home Member who represents the Government here to-day, what does he want? Does he want that a certain section, a certain body of politicians who have committed themselves to a particular course of action, should give up their course of action according to your wish? And because they will not make a declaration that they are willing to give up that course of conduct, whatever may be the opinion of the whole country or the rest of the country, until those particular men eat their words, will you continue saying there is no co-operation or that it is better, but not sufficient? Is that the position the Government take up? I ask the Government to consider this. Is there a single political organization, is there a single political body in the country that has not

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pressed the Government at least for a Royal Commission to be appointed forthwith? Are you going to treat the rest of the opinion in this country with contempt, because you have a certain section that you consider is impossible or irreconcilable or will not yield to you in the exact manner in which you desire? Is that your answer to the whole of India? You ask me to get what? Every party to agree. I ask you, do you honestly mean that that is possible, that it will ever be possible in India or in any other country in the world that all parties must agree, and till then the Government will not move? You ask what has happened? Now, let us see what has happened. I know the Honourable Member over there will tell me, that they have not worked the Reforms in the Central Provinces, they have not worked the Reforms in Bengal. I ask the Honourable Member here, can he really and honestly tell me this or not, that in Bengal, if the things had been handled better, the Ministry would have been formed, and the Reforms would have been worked. I maintain that you have bungled the whole business in Bengal.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman (Home Member): Is that in Bengal or in the Central Provinces?

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: Bengal.

Sir Hari Singh Gour: It equally applies to the Central Provinces.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: But I will assume for the moment that I am wrong, and that you are right, that there was a clear majority both in Bengal and in the Central Provinces that stoutly refused to work the Reforms. I will assume that. I ask you again, can you not realise this? Do you remember under what circumstances the elections took place? Do you remember what was the position when the last Assembly was dissolved? Do you remember what you did with your own friends who stood by you in the first Assembly? Do you know how you treated them? Did you listen even to the advice of the most moderate men in important matters? You ask, "What can be done now? A certain number of men have come in, in Bengal and the Central Provinces Councils and have made the Reforms impossible of being worked." But, Sir, is Bengal and the Central Provinces the last word on the subject? Is there no other part of India in existence? What about the other Provinces? And above all, what about this Assembly? The Honourable Member is looking at the empty Benches.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated: Labour Interests): That is the Assembly for him.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: Well, if he thinks that it is going to advance his case, he is very much mistaken. Did they or did they not, for all purposes, offer co-operation in this House? What is the testimony of Sir Frederick Whyte? What is the testimony of Sir Charles Innes, a bureaucrat of bureaucrats, on his own admission? (Laughter.)

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes (Member for Commerce and Railways): May I ask the Honourable Member what the response to that admission was the very next day?

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar: Still the admission remains.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: I was not discussing the response the next day. I will answer that in a minute. I was only stating the admission which the Honourable Sir Charles Innes made on the floor of this House. And what was the reply which the Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman, speaking in the Council of State on the 18th February, gave? He said it was better but not sufficient. Which is true—what the Honourable Sir Charles Innes said here or what the Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman said in the Council of State?

To get back to my point. The impression that you have created is that you are trying to make an excuse, that you do not mean honestly to announce the appointment of a Royal Commission. That is the case made against you. Now, Sir, I was dealing with this Assembly. Will the Honourable Member tell me what important measure which the Government desired to get through this House was refused? During the three years 1924, 1925 and the present year—we are almost at the end of this Session—will you point out to me a single important measure brought before the House where you did not get co-operation as defined in the words of the Honourable the Home Member.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: What about the Finance Bill of 1924?

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: That Finance Bill stands on a very different footing and I shall come to that in a minute, if you will allow me. Let me tell you as a matter of history that the rejection of the Finance Bill in 1924 was not moved by those gentlemen whom you call non-co-operators in this House or in the Legislatures but was moved by the greatest of co-operators and supported by him. Therefore, do not please try to draw a red herring across my path. You do not say that you find fault with the Independent Party. You do not say that the Independent Party has not co-operated. You do not say that the Liberals have not co-operated. You do not say that a large body of the 350 millions of people in this country are not co-operating with you. You have got only one section in your mind, and that is the Indian National Congress. At the most there are 7,000 members in that Congress. And because they have taken up a particular attitude, you say that the entire country is to be penalised for it. I say that is a position not worthy of any Government, unless you wish to make an excuse. This is the impression that you have created. I will again refer to what even the Right Honourable Mr. Srinivasa Sastri says. He says:

"In these circumstances am I too pessimistic to warn our countrymen against simple-minded trust in British generosity or is *The Bengalee* too optimistic in trying to persuade us that there is only a bright side to the story of British doings in India? It is easy enough to blame the Swarajists for all our ills."

That is what you are doing:

"Poor chaps! It is true enough their policy is unwise and their strategy utterly futile. But let us not be deceived. There is overwhelming evidence that for the time being the old Imperialism with some at least of its sinister consequences has reasserted itself in Great Britain and that till the people of India learn to unite and put full constitutional pressure on British policy they must be prepared to be used again and betrayed again."

Now, is there any justification for this charge or not? If it is not true, why have you not made up your mind to announce a Royal Commission

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forthwith? Why do you say you are ready to announce the Royal Commission and in the next breath say "Bring me the irreconcilable men, bring me the irreconcilable party. Not merely should they act and do their best, to work the constitution, but they should make a confession and a declaration of that confession that they are beaten and they want now humbly to co-operate with us." That is what you want. Sir, when we raised a debate this time last year, I said that the only issue was whether you are going to appoint a Royal Commission at once or not. In the September Session of 1925 I put it to my Honourable friend the Home Member in concluding my speech in the following terms and with the indulgence of the House I will quote from it. I said to him this:

"Sir, therefore, to sum up the situation within the next two minutes or three minutes that are at my disposal, I submit to this House that the question stands thus: First, are Government prepared to appoint a Royal Commission at an early date to examine the entire constitution? Second, do you honestly, sincerely desire us to submit to you the fundamental principles upon which a constitution ought to be built? Lord Birkenhead in his speech has said that he would earnestly consider proposals. There is the amendment. Consider it."

In the House of Lords Lord Olivier speaking on this very question after Lord Birkenhead had made his speech said:

"I should like to make one final observation. I think that the noble Earl may have a little under-estimated, as many people do, the strength of what may be called national feeling and national pride in India and the national disposition to claim that Indians shall have a great deal to say with regard to the framing of their own Constitution. It is not enough to say, as the noble Earl has said and as has been said repeatedly, that you have two great communities in India, that you have many religions, many languages and so on, and that therefore it is idle to speak of India as a nation. That is very much less true to-day than it was even ten years ago. Whereas ten years ago you might have said that the masses of India cared very little about national religion or about politics, it is, I am perfectly convinced from all that I have been able to learn in the last two or three years, equally unquestionable that this era has passed away, that there is a strong and universal sentimentally nationalist feeling in India upon which the leaders who speak in the name of Indian nationality can count."

I should like to quote in that connection a passage from the last Report of Mr. Rushbrook Williams on the Material and Moral Progress of India—the Report for 1923-24—a very useful volume . . .

"While non-co-operation as a political campaign has suffered discredit through its manifest impossibilities, non-co-operation as an attitude of mind and as the vehicle of an awakened national sentiment, still survives. We shall fail to understand the political life of India to-day unless we realise that from the beginning Mr. Gandhi's campaign has not been so much the cause of India's unrest as a symptom of those deep discontents from which the unrest resulted."

So, although in times of peace you might have regarded the masses of India merely as a dry bed of sand, you must now regard them as a bed of sand into which certain infiltrations of feeling have passed, and must take care that you are not founding your policy upon a quicksand. It is on that account that I made my appeal to the noble Earl to take into consideration what I feel convinced is an accurate statement of the feelings of all Nationalist and Propagandist parties in India in support of the Minority Report, and whereas the noble Earl said, and said truly, that the question of what provincial autonomy means has not been explored, that is one of the very reasons why I want to see, and all who are interested in the development of India want to see, the question of what is to be in the future directly tackled. When such men as the late Governor of Madras tell us that some parts are ready for provincial autonomy, and others are not, I want to see these ideas explored in order to find out whether it is impossible to develop this idea of provincial autonomy. It is obvious, as indeed it was before I rose, that no Papers can be laid because the noble Earl has to correspond with the Government of India before any Papers can be laid, and therefore I beg leave to withdraw my Motion for Papers."

Now, Sir, that is the opinion of the *ex-Secretary* of State for India. Therefore this issue has now resolved itself into a very simple question. Do not let us be drawn away from the issue. Never mind what Resolution this Assembly passed in 1924. Never mind what Resolution this Assembly passed in September 1925. What is your position? What are you going to do? It is enough that you do make your counter-proposal. It is there. You cannot get away from it now and it was repeated by His Excellency the Viceroy on the 20th January 1926. Your counter-proposal is the *Statutory Commission*, but is that to be appointed when you are satisfied as to the evidence of co-operation? Now, *what* evidence do you want. The evidence is that you have failed to co-operate with us and you have driven away so many men from this House. If you had a genuine honest desire to put your intentions into practice, if you desire your declaration to take effect, you know perfectly well that a large body of public opinion in this country desires the appointment of a Royal Commission. You have only to announce it and co-operation is secured. I am sure you know this, but you are making an excuse. You are taking advantage of the mentality of a certain section of my countrymen. That is what you are doing. How long will you continue to do so? Therefore, it is quite clear what the issue is. The position of the Government is utterly indefensible.

Now, Sir, it has been said, and I think it will be urged by the Honourable Member there, that "You are wanting us to certify if you throw out this Demand." He will say it again. He said it last year. He said it only a few days ago. Now let us examine it a little closely. What is this Demand to begin with? I will draw the attention of the House to what it is, if it will pardon me. First of all, we have got the pay of the Honourable Members which is not votable. Then we have the allowances and we have got the tour expenses. The allowances for 1926-27 are estimated at Rs. 2,000 and the tour expenses at Rs. 60,000. This makes a total of 62,000. Now, Sir, the Honourable Member was asking me the other day when I was moving that this Grant be taken up before the other grants, "Do you want us to certify it?" I said: "Yes, if you like, by all means. If you can do it." I know perfectly well the provision of the Government of India Act which runs as follows:

"The demand as voted by the Legislative Assembly shall be submitted to the Governor General in Council who shall, if he declares that he is satisfied that any demand which has been refused by the Legislative Assembly is essential to the discharge of his responsibility, act as if it had been assented to."

Whether it is essential to the discharge of his responsibility, it is for him to decide; but, Sir, the touring expenses which are given to the Honourable Members are of no use to us because by going all over India in special saloons they learn nothing. If they wish to go to Simla then they go at our expense and enjoy a very salubrious climate—the exodus which my learned friend praises and says is very desirable and very nice and in which he always joins as soon as the Assembly is prorogued. That is all that they want to do. Now the Honourable Members are fairly well paid, and I think they can afford to pay their fares up to Simla if they want to go there. I do not see at all why it is essential to the responsibility or the discharge of the duty of the Governor General to pay their touring expenses to take them up to Simla or elsewhere. But if the Governor General wishes to exercise

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arbitrarily his power under that section which is there, let him do so. Next the Honourable Member will say, but this means refusal of supplies. Now I am not frightened in that fashion. I know what refusal of supplies means and I claim to understand it quite as well as the Honourable Member. Sir, I will draw his attention again to the speech I made in 1924. I hope the House will pardon me if I seem to be quoting from my own speeches, but I want to make my position clear. I want this House to understand this question thoroughly and I do not want the real issue to be lost sight of. Now what happened? Well, in 1924, this House will remember four grants were rejected one after the other; and next day I, Sir, standing on the floor of this House said—and I want this House please to follow me, for I want to make it quite clear what my position and the position of the Party I represent is—I said:

“As a member of the Nationalist Party I entirely endorse what Pandit Motilal Nehru has said. I want to make it clear further that the Nationalist Party here in this House do not stand for any wrecking programme. I wish to make it further clear, especially with reference to what fell from my Honourable friend Mr. Chatterjee yesterday, that the Nationalist Party is a party which is formed to work in this Assembly and nothing more. And in this Assembly we stand to pursue a policy and a programme of a constitutional character. We shall pursue that policy and that programme until the last stages of constitutional struggle are exhausted. There is no idea in the mind of the Nationalist Party to resort to civil disobedience; there is no idea in the mind of the Nationalist Party that we want revolution; there is no idea in the mind of the Nationalist Party that we are going to carry on the campaign of non-payment of taxation. Sir, it is perfectly legitimate for us having regard to the ruling that you gave that we could use the general discussion for what we wanted to make clear, namely, that we condemn the Government of India; we condemn the Secretary of State for India. Why? Because you have not satisfied us in regard to the Resolution that we passed here by an overwhelming majority of 76, a Resolution which was a demand for reforms; and we wanted therefore to put in the clearest possible manner our protest, our condemnation, our disapproval, of the way in which you have met us.

We also recognize that there are difficulties but we feel that you have failed, entirely failed, to satisfy us.”

Now, Sir, that was the position in March 1924? That was the position which I took up in March 1925 and that is the position I take up in March 1926. I must therefore to-day again ask this House to vote for the omission of this grant. Now my Honourable friend will say to me, “Why don't you make a cut?” Sir, there is the list of business before this House. The Honourable Members will observe that there are over a hundred cuts proposed on the list of business regarding various grants. I want therefore to ask the Honourable Member, what is the constitutional impropriety if I wish to make it quite clear by rejecting this grant for I want to leave no doubt, I want this House to record its vote in an unequivocal manner. There should be no doubt that on this issue we wish to defeat the Government.

Mr. K. Ahmed (Rajshahi Division: Muhammadan Rural): You have not got a majority.

Mr. N. M. Dumasia: I want to ask one question of the Honourable Member. Do you want a Royal Commission, or do you desire that Government should take no steps towards constitutional advance without any inquiry by a Statutory Commission as laid down in section 84A of the Government of India Act?

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: Sir, I think I have made it quite clear, and I will repeat it if the Honourable Member does not understand it. I want the Government of India now to give me an assurance on the floor of this House that they are prepared to announce a Statutory Royal Commission within the meaning of section 84A and that the personnel of that Commission should be such as would satisfy the people. That is what I want done at once.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Satisfactory to whom?

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: To the people. I think you will also admit that it should not be satisfactory to you alone. I think this proposition cannot and will not be challenged. If you are going to appoint a Royal Commission, it is no use appointing it unless you have a Commission which will command the confidence and the respect of the people. Sir, that is therefore really my point. But I know the Honourable Member will say, "Oh, but what about your Resolution?" I know he is sure to bring that up—"What about your Resolution which you passed in September 1925?" As far as that Resolution of September 1925 is concerned, I stand on the floor of this House and I still maintain it, as we did maintain it then and it is not merely our opinion, but it is the opinion of the large body of witnesses that were examined before the Muddiman Committee. An overwhelming majority of both official and non-official witnesses put forward the same case and suggested those fundamental changes which are incorporated in the Resolution of September 1925. I still maintain that if any impartial body is appointed to examine the problem, I shall be able to establish the case that those fundamental changes should be made in the constitution of the Government of India; and further we passed that Resolution particularly because Lord Birkenhead in his speech actually invited us and said: "If you have any constitution or any scheme to suggest, do so", and it was really an answer to his speech; I will refer to that passage in the speech of Lord Birkenhead where he actually said: "If you have anything to suggest, by all means do so", this is what he said:

"We do not claim in Great Britain that we alone in the world are able to frame constitutions, though we are not altogether discontented with the humble constructive effort which we have made in this field of human ingenuity. But if our critics in India are of opinion that their greater knowledge of Indian conditions qualifies them to succeed, where they tell us that we have failed, let them produce a Constitution, which carries behind it a fair measure of general agreement among the great peoples of India. Such a contribution to our problems would nowhere be resented. It would, on the contrary, be most carefully examined by the Government of India, by myself, and I am sure, by the Commission, whenever that body may be assembled."

Therefore, Sir, I still hope and I trust that the Honourable the Home Member on behalf of the Government will be able to give us an assurance and a satisfactory reply to-day.

I have only one more word, to say in conclusion, and that is this. Sir, I cannot expect the votes of the Treasury Bench. They have no freedom. They are not supposed to have any judgment or any conscience so long as they occupy those Benches. They are merely 26 machines, automaton and they have to obey orders. Therefore, it is no use my appealing to them, because they have no freedom. The next class of Members of this House under the Government of India Act are the nominated Members and to the nominated Members, I say, vote according to your own conscience,

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according to your duty, and remember, the Constitution does not and the Government dare not say that you are fettered in your judgment or in your right of voting in any way you like. The responsibility is entirely yours, and on this occasion I appeal to every nominated Member to exercise his own independent judgment. I ask you, gentlemen, who are nominated Members here, are you conscientiously opposed to the appointment of a Royal Commission? Do you believe in the argument which will be advanced by the Government that "it is a very serious thing to vote down this grant; why, it means revolution; it means rebellion in this country if you do that". I say, it is camouflage, moonshine. Do not be misled by such arguments.

I hope I have made my position perfectly clear, that I do not stand for the doctrine of refusal of supplies, which means, if logically followed up, subversion of the Constitution and the Government by law established. I have made it quite clear that I have stood here on the floor of this House during the life of this Assembly and honestly and conscientiously co-operated with the Government from the moment I came here. I have stoutly refused to subscribe to any programme of obstruction. I may have my differences. I have differed from Government, but I have co-operated in a true spirit to work this Constitution, bad, defective and rotten as it is. Let me tell you, Sir, that had I joined the other section in this House, this Legislature would have been closed down in the very first Session. I stoutly refused; I said "No." I have supported you. I have not supported you to oblige you, but because I think it is the right course to adopt; it is no obligation on anyone. Do you want men who will come and who can do real, solid, good work? Do you want to help the wreckage? It is for you to decide. Next, I come to my European friends. They are in this House as much elected Members as we are. But I appeal to them, and I most earnestly appeal to them, to consider their position. I am hoping—not in vain—that I shall not fail to get their support. (Applause.)

Maulvi Muhammad Yakub (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): A word to Mr. K. Ahmed?

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: I am told we have not got a majority. Let me tell you, Sir, that even if we are defeated, we have a majority if you exclude the 26 machines that sit there. Whom do they represent?

Mr. K. Ahmed: Government.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: No, Sir. They come in as machines under the Government of India Act. I can make a present of these 26 votes to Government. The rest of the House, even if I am defeated, is in the majority with me. And, if we carry our motion against them in spite of these 26 machines, it will redound to the lasting shame and disgrace of the Government if they do not carry out our wishes and give effect to this vote. I, therefore, tell you that upon your vote depends this issue. If you allow this to be lost, the Government will not mention those 26 votes but will say that this House carried it.

Mr. K. Ahmed: I do not mind voting with you if you have a majority.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: Sir, I hope that my Honourable friends, the nominated Members, the European elected Members and the rest of the elected Members will realise the gravity of this issue and will not play on this occasion into the hands of the Government. Remember that Government tried their very best purposely and deliberately not to take up the Executive Council Demand on Monday last. Why? Because they knew perfectly well that with my Swarajist friends I would have routed them absolutely. Having resorted to that obstructive attitude, they hope now to defeat me. But I am sure that you will not allow me to be defeated. Let the Government learn that these tactics are not going to avail them and that they are not going to succeed by these tactics. Sir, I move that this Demand be omitted. (Loud and continued Applause.)

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar: Sir, the eminent surgeon of the House has performed the grand operation. He has exposed the iniquities of the Government of India in their plain blunt outlines. Sir, this is a vote of censure. There is no mistake about it. It is a vote of censure on the Executive Government of the country. It is a vote of censure because they have not shown that change of heart—if they have a heart,—that change of angle of vision—if they have vision—which was expected of them. The idea of partnership with which we began in August 1917 seems to be a mere dream with them if not a nightmare. They are frightened by that idea of partnership. They do not want to realise the real meaning of that word partnership and they still hanker after the old bureaucratic and autocratic ways which they have been accustomed to. Sir, during the last six years' experience I have realised one thing. These Britishers here—and under that term I include Englishmen, Scotchmen and Irishmen, with due respect to my friend Mr. Donovan—all of them, when they enter the Indian Civil Service have but one god whom they think they should serve and that god is (*Sir Denys Bray*: "India.") time. Sir, what is it we have found them doing in connection with this constitutional question? In September 1921—a very critical time it was for the Government of India—when this constitutional question came up for consideration in this House, what did my Honourable friend, Sir Alexander Muddiman's predecessor, another tactful Home Member, who is now adorning the Secretary of State's Council—I mean my friend Sir William Vincent do? He co-operated with this House. He was very, very anxious to help the House to frame a Resolution for the acceptance of the House. He actually took pencil in hand and said, "You friends have co-operated with me. We recognise that the experience gained in this House marks the necessity for an advance in the constitution" and he actually drafted the Resolution which was finally passed by this House without demur, without dissent. Sir, why did he do it? Time and circumstances were then in our favour and against him. Then the man directing the affairs of India from Home was Mr. Montagu. They feared his hands; they wanted to respect him—shall I put it so? Then they were anxious to oblige this House, they wanted to get rid of this non-co-operation bogey with the help of this House; so they wanted to oblige this House. Sir, there was a change of Government. They took courage and this House discussed the Resolution in 1922. Then there was a certain attempt to go back—if I may say so. Then when in 1924, early in 1924, we took up this question again, then the times were changed against them. The Labour Government was in office if not in power. Mr. Ramsay

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Macdonald was Prime Minister and Lord Olivier was Secretary of State. Then what did they do? They did not give that entire negative which they vouchsafed to us in 1922-23, but said, "We will examine the question." It was to be examined by a departmental committee. The departmental committee on account of pressure from home developed into the Muddiman Committee. Sir Malcolm Hailey first of all hedged it round with a number of restrictions. He gradually widened the field and finally came the Muddiman Committee. The Labour Government went out of office. Time again. They serve time. They take hold of circumstances. Time is their god, and circumstances change their attitude from time to time. Now comes a majority report and a minority report, and by that time they took courage. They came to provisional conclusions. On the floor of this House my Honourable friend, Sir Charles Innes, made that notable speech. He was quite out of his element, if I may say so. He made a speech which we do not know whether we all applauded or condemned. In our hearts we condemned it. He went out of his sphere. His domain is Commerce and Industries, and yet he went into politics and got into a quagmire, if I may say so. And again we are faced with the situation to-day. His Excellency Lord Reading went to England as we all know, had those famous conversations and consultations, and came back with that message about co-operation. They are inventors of phrases and words which are apt to mislead and which do mislead. They wanted evidence of co-operation. They have evidence of co-operation on all hands admittedly. Not only has my Honourable friend Sir Charles Innes admitted it, but the other day in the speech of the Honourable the Finance Member he referred to the co-operation of this Assembly. Both my Honourable friends were very partial, as I said the other day, to the second Assembly, in fact they gave credit to the second Assembly more than to the first Assembly, and with the help of the second Assembly they have achieved a lot. Sir, do we not count? Is it only the Council of State which counts in the eyes of my Honourable friend? Is it the Central Provinces Council which counts, or is it the Bengal Council which counts? May I put it to them honestly, do they really believe that the non-co-operators represent the bulk of the country, or that my Swarajist friends represent the bulk of the responsible opinion in this country?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: They have most of the seats.

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar: Yes, but that is not the question. The question for you is, is the country with you or not. On your own acknowledgment, on your own professions, the country is not with the Swarajists; they do not represent the solid bulk of responsible opinion in this country.

An Honourable Member: How did they get here?

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar: Do you acknowledge then that they represent the country? You cannot have it both ways. Either they represent the country or they do not represent the country. If they

represent the country, respect their views. And what have they done? Have they not offered you sincere, hearty co-operation on the floor of this House for the last two years? Did they not assist you time after time? Did they persist with the plan with which they came to this House? Where was the persistent obstruction with which they started? Sir, did not they come down in the month of March, 1924? Did they not come down in May, 1924, and in September, 1924? Did they not come down in 1925, serving on Committees, co-operating with you, giving you their valuable advice, and trying to shape your legislation, trying to make suggestions to you in the form of questions and Resolutions? What is it they did not do which we have been doing in the first Assembly or in this Assembly? They have been doing the very same things which the Liberals, the Radicals and the Independents have been doing in this House. What was the difference? Why then shy at them? You have driven them out by your heartless procedure; you have driven them out by your shilly shallying with this question. That is the truth of it. They would have remained here if you had really shown a change of heart, if you had shown a change in the angle of vision in this matter. The country has been crying for this. They say these Reforms are inadequate and unsatisfactory and cannot be worked. You admit it. I do not think there is any one here who does not admit it. They say it is an experiment which has to be tried. It has been tried in the provinces, no doubt under difficult circumstances, but all the same it has been found wanting. The minority condemned it, the majority, condemned it, only the majority was for tinkering with it here and there. The majority are not satisfied with the scheme of Reforms, but what they say is, "Try them for the full period". We say what is the use of trying them for the full period, we have tried them and have found them wanting. What is it we are doing here? Do you expect us, responsible people, to come here and waste our time and our energy and our intellect merely to pass pious Resolutions which you can discard? Is that responsible government? Is that the sense of responsibility that you are creating? As I have pointed out, and as Sir Alfred Mond pointed out in the House of Commons, this is what you are creating now; you are creating a sense of irresponsibility in us and we are creating a sense of irresponsibility in you. Knowing you are going to certify, we pass indiscriminate votes to cut down. We know that you are responsible to no one and, because we know you are irresponsible to us, we do things which we would not otherwise do. If we knew for instance that our votes would have any effect we would think twice before we pass votes. Therefore you are creating a sense of irresponsibility in us. That is not the method. What is the object of this machinery? The machinery is to educate us, to fit the people for responsible government. On the other hand this machinery is creating a sense of irresponsibility in the people. Oftentimes I have light-heartedly joined in votes which I would not otherwise do but for the fact that my position here is irksome, troublesome, annoying. That is the position you have driven us into by this constitution of yours. We have felt it time and again. We felt it in the first year. It is only by working it that we have found out the defects of this machinery. Now what is the good of telling us "You are not able to manage things". Where does Sir Muhammad Habibullah come from? Is he a discovery? Are there not hundreds of Habibullahs who can manage affairs of State as well as he can? I ask, are there not? Then why saddle him with

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responsibility to some one else thousands of miles away and not to his own countrymen here. I want men on those Treasury Benches who will be responsible to this side of the House, who will be guided by the votes of this side; and not men who will merely give pious expressions of good-will from time to time. "If Rangachariar behaves as we want him to do we will accept his advice, if not we will reject it". If that is the way the Executive Government is to be carried on, how long will it last? You are dealing with a civilised people, people who have got hearts, feelings, sense.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: Who have eyes and ears also.

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar: Yes, we have eyes to see and ears to hear. How long will it last? I do put it to the Honourable the Home Member, it is no use playing with this question in the manner that he and his colleagues on the Treasury Benches are playing with it. My Honourable friends the Indian Members, I am sure, are doing their level best inside the Cabinet to convince their colleagues. I do not wish to accuse them of want of patriotism or want of sense. With the intimate knowledge they must possess of the conditions in this country, with all the experience that my Honourable friend Sir Muhammad Habibullah possesses of Madras, does he for a moment believe that Madras is not fit for provincial autonomy? Does he not agree with Lord Willingdon who proclaimed in the House of Lords that Madras is fit for provincial autonomy? Does he not agree with that and does he not advise the inner Cabinet to take the same view as Lord Willingdon? Cannot he convince the adamantine bureaucrats who sit on either side of him over there? Is his voice ever heard or are they deaf to his advice? Sir, it is no joking matter. It is not a light matter. The whole of the intelligentsia of the country feel very much on this subject. They have been feeling it for some time. Some of us perhaps lose our sense of proportion at times in this matter and adopt queer methods of agitation. Probably they are right. I do not know; it is not for me to decide. But I do not take that view; that is all I can say. But I am afraid the attitude of the Government of India is likely more and more to drive others into that fold. It has been doing so. That has been the mistaken policy that has been pursued by the Government of India in this matter. I blame the Executive Council for this more than anybody else. They are the persons who have got to advise His Majesty's Government at Home. His Majesty's Government at Home know nothing about these things. They are no doubt great statesmen, who have got the best knowledge of their own conditions, the circumstances in their own country; but how can they decide for a country like this? Most of them are quite unacquainted with this country. So the responsibility lies with the Executive Government of this country and my Honourable friends over there. They are the persons responsible for this state of things. Sir, I therefore say that they have failed in their duty. They have failed in their duty miserably in this matter. As I have stated already, they believe in time and circumstances. They think they can tide over difficulties by appointing Committees. I have noticed their usual trick when a question becomes very acute is to appoint a Committee. The Committee report and they go to sleep over the report. Again they are votaries at the shrine of tact. They think people will forget; and my

Honourable friend Sir Denys Bray—although all the people are waiting for the Government Resolution on a Report to be issued—he asks “Where is the agitation?” He wants agitation every day, every minute, the throwing of stones at windows and breaking of glass. Is that the sort of agitation you want? Sir, we have had faith in you, and you are, I am afraid, fast betraying that faith, if you have not already done so. People are losing faith in you, and I warn you betimes that unless you take prompt action in this matter,—you say you are not slaves to dates—the consequences will be very serious. Why do you deny an inquiry by a Royal Commission or by any other suitable agency? Why do you deny that? What is it you are afraid of? Let the matter be inquired into. What is it that you are losing? Why not satisfy the sentiments of the people? There is no grace in you. You always do things too late, and thereby you lose the full value of your performance. Take for instance the salt duty. We cried and cried and asked you to reduce that duty. You said “It is impossible to reduce it”. Sir Basil Blackett sitting on that Bench, I remember, distinctly thought that the heavens would fall if he did not have the salt duty at Rs. 2-8-0; but the very next minute it was reduced to Rs. 1-4-0, and you thereby created contentment and satisfaction among the people. But why do it in this graceless manner? Take again the cotton excise duty which we have condemned time and again. In September last when we were agitated over it, my friend Sir Charles Innes said “No, it is impossible for me to think of any such thing”. But, Sir, the very next month, or two months after that, you abolished it.

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: Because we did not know the Budget.

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar: I refuse to believe it if I may. The thing is that it is your tendency, your prestige which stands in your way. You do not want to appear to surrender to popular demand. I do not mean to say that my friends here are not open to that charge. They also do not want to climb down, they don't want to appear to lose their prestige by admitting their mistake, but perhaps it is much more so with the Treasury Benches. In fact, if I look back upon what you have done in response to popular criticism and popular advice, it is not a blank record. This Budget itself discloses evidence of your paying heed to criticisms from this side and acting upon those criticisms, and you changed to capital from revenue on account of the criticism in this House. My friend Sir Basil Blackett looked aghast when that criticism was made and he said it was unsound finance, and to-day he says “I am able to see the other side and therefore I have adopted it”. Now it is quite all right. I quite recognise it. That is why I am here, otherwise I should have walked out with my friends. I have still some faith in your being able to act, but you act so gracelessly, so out of time, that your performance loses its value. That is my point against you. Therefore, you are servers of time. Leave that path, and take the right, bold attitude. Now that His Excellency the Viceroy is giving up the reins of his Government, will it not be an act of crowning glory on his part if he announces the Royal Commission before he leaves these shores?

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Twenty Minutes to Three of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Twenty Minutes to Three of the Clock, Mr. President in the Chair.

Sir Darcy Lindsay (Bengal: European): Sir, I have listened with great attention to the speech made this morning by my Honourable friend Mr. Jinnah and I congratulate him in putting his case so ably and with such force. I appreciate the weight of the claim he makes upon Government to recognise the co-operation he and his Party have so frequently given them on important issues and I hope Government will admit this and give my Honourable friend better encouragement than the usual dry bone platitudes. It is true the Party have had their occasional lapses from the path of wisdom as I see it. I refer to the joining in with our absent friends in so-called gestures with the pious hope that Government would totter and fall before the onslaught.

Sir Hari Singh Gour: We never said so. We never tried to do that.

Sir Darcy Lindsay: Surely such gestures lose force when accompanied, as was the case of the Budget Demands last year, with the statement that the Government will have to certify. This is where the Independents have, in my opinion, made a tactical error and perhaps fallen between two stools, the result being that having shown themselves, shall I say, an uncertain quantity, friends—and in this I include the Government—who would like to have helped them have as a consequence stood aloof. There is an old saying that one cannot hunt with the hounds and run with the hare, and at times it has appeared to me that my Honourable friend has tried to make that attempt. But perhaps he was not always a free agent. I believe that between my group and the Independents there is much in common in the desire to promote the true interests of India and I know we would like to join hands with them when we consider the question at issue admits of our doing so. We, like my Honourable friend, have a duty to perform to our electorate and it is not always possible to see eye to eye with him, judging by the past. But recently I have seen possibilities of greater co-operation between his Party and ours. We recognise the wisdom of assisting the political and economic development of the country in which we live with due regard to the benefit and contentment of the various people, and personally I might like to respond to the appeal made to me by my Honourable friend to support his Party in the demand for the early appointment of a Royal Commission, for I appreciate their good work and the co-operation his Party have shown. But I cannot pledge my community to this in the face of the opinion that recent happenings have again put the clock back considerably and thereby the Statutory Commission would find other than normal conditions prevailing under the Act, that is militating against true conclusions, for if Parliament is to apply a system of Government to India which is to meet the peculiar requirements of the case, then Parliament and the Statutory Commission should be allowed to see the full effect, both of the degree of responsible government given under the Reforms and also the restrictions on responsible government which were deemed necessary in the earlier stages of development. It appears to me that the Commission would have even less to work upon than was the case last September when I expressed the view that if I were other than a good friend of India I would support the demand for the earlier appointment of the Commission. To my mind the risk is great and the results of the inquiry might prove far less satisfactory to Indian aspirations.

than an inquiry at a later stage,—not necessarily 1929—when by co-operation and mutual trust the country can prove that it is more ready to advance. If, however, the Government are with their fuller knowledge of the existing situation at any time prepared to advise the appointment of an earlier Commission and if there is reason to believe that the country supports Mr. Jinnah in his demand, I personally am prepared to reconsider the position, and I am sure my colleagues will do the same. At the same time I wish to make it clear that this is being induced in me by the Moderate Party who have co-operated in the work of the House which has been no part of the declared programme of the Party who have recently left us. I referred just now to co-operation and it seems to me that I cannot do better than quote from the speech delivered in Calcutta recently by Sir Hubert Carr. He says:

"It seems to us that the co-operation required by the Government of India Act as an essential factor in the advance of India to responsible government is very easy to conform to. It merely demands that all parties, Indian and British, shall practise collectively the good-will which exists so widely amongst individuals and; to use a colloquialism, play the game in relation to the constitution. Such co-operation is not a racial matter, nor does it demand that we shall all be on the same side in the field of politics and the Government of India have never so interpreted the demand. We quite realise that many Indians dislike the constitution at present in force; so do many Europeans. It was for this reason that we welcomed the Muddiman Report and its proposals for meeting certain criticisms and for improving the mechanism of the Government of India Act within the bounds of which it is possible for all to exercise true co-operation without sacrifice of individuality."

It is this measure of co-operation that the Secretary of State and the Government of India have sought from the leaders of the Swaraj Party and their response on vital matters has been absent. Among the rank and file of the Party there has been a desire to co-operate as shown in committees and but for the mandate issued by the Indian National Congress at Cawnpore and its consequences, which we all deplore, I believe a way would have been found to bring sections of the House and the Government together on honourable terms. It is a revelation to me to know that the Swaraj Party are merely the mouthpiece of the Indian National Congress and act on the dictates of that body regardless of the views of the constituencies the Members are supposed to represent. We have been told over and over again by the Members that they represent and voice the silent millions throughout the country, and now the bubble has burst and the Party stands declared as merely the servant of the Congress, not a very encouraging position from which to claim a radical change in the constitution. I regret, Sir, that for the reasons I have stated I am unable to go into the lobby with my Honourable friend to reject the Demand. He is wrong in stating that we play into the hands of Government by not voting with him. We vote according to our considered judgment in the best interests of the country and not by way of an appeal to our electorate.

Sir Hari Singh Gour: In rising to support the motion of my Honourable friend I wish to take my stand not upon the general grounds hitherto raised in the House but upon two short facts, the Preamble to the Government of India Act and the previous promises given by the Secretary of State and the Government of India themselves. And if I can make good my position that we on this side of the House stand on these two invulnerable grounds, I submit, I shall have made out an unanswerable case in favour of the motion. Honourable Members are aware that the Government of India Act of 1919 was intended to have a short life of ten years. Whatever the Government may say or do, the Statutory Commission must be appointed on the expiry of ten years as provided in that Act.

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Now, Sir, I ask any lawyer in this House, where in a transitory statute provision is made for its expansion and the life of the statute itself is limited to ten years, what would become of the provision for expansion if no effect is given to it before the period runs out? That was a question that was once put to Mr. Montagu and Mr. Montagu is reported to have said: "You want further Reforms. Look at the Government of India Act itself. It contains within itself provisions for further expansion without the necessity of amendment". I take my stand not upon what Mr. Montagu is reported to have said but on a State document penned by Lord Peel and sent to the Government of India and read to and incorporated as a part of the proceedings of this House, and, if I can point out that the Secretary of State stands committed to further advance within the Act of 1919, I shall ask the Honourable the Home Member what answer he can give and with what face he can meet the demand that is made on this side of the House for further advance irrespective or independently of the establishment of a Royal Commission. Sir, so far as the Preamble of the Government of India Act is concerned it might be read this way and that, but the fact remains that that Preamble laid down that the declared policy of the Government was the progressive realisation of responsible government, and, Sir, with a view to insure the progressive realisation of self-government, the provisions of the Act of 1919 were made sufficiently elastic to provide for the expansion of the constitution without the necessity of parliamentary intervention. It is in that light that we on the 29th September 1921 called upon the Government to give us further Reforms and it was on that day, Sir, that the Honourable Sir William Vincent drafted an amendment which was carried unanimously with the concurrence of the Treasury Benches that the time had come for the appointment of a Royal Commission before the date appointed in the Statute. Well, Sir, time passed and we drew the attention of the Government to that Resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly and complained that no further action was taken. Meanwhile on the 26th of January 1922 this House passed a Resolution for the elimination of the distinction between the votable and non-votable items of the Budget. On that memorable occasion I find from the proceedings of this House that almost all the European representatives then present in the House voted with the majority, and that majority, Sir, was no less than 51 against 27; and I am gratified to find that my friend Sir Darcy Lindsay gave us his support and the support of his colleagues.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: He has changed his mind since.

Sir Hari Singh Gour: I am afraid, Sir, he has since become an older and perhaps a wiser man. (Laughter.) Now I ask one short question, that if he was prepared to subscribe to the Resolution of this House that the distinction between the votable and non-votable parts of the Budget should be done away with, we shall have obtained a full measure of responsibility in the Central Legislature, because, Sir, the salaries of the Members of the Executive Council, and the occupants of the Treasury Benches would then be submitted to the vote of this House; and if my friend on that day was of that opinion, that their salaries should be placed on the estimates and submitted to the vote of this House, I really cannot understand this *volte face* on the part of my friend that he to-day is not able to support a much more moderate motion moved by my friend, the Honourable Mr. Jinnah. Sir, if I may say so, my Honourable friend

in 1922 was in favour of this Resolution because the Government themselves were sympathetic and the Government did not seriously contest the legality and the logicity of the position that we then advanced, that it is incongruous that you should cut up a Budget into two pieces and make certain portions of it non-votable without reference to which we are not able to study and vote upon the votable portion of the Budget. Well, Sir, let that pass. On the 10th of July 1923 this House again adopted by a strong majority a Resolution that the Government of India should amend section 87-D of the Government of India Act. The history of that measure is well known to my friend. And then, Sir, we questioned the Honourable the Home Member for the time being and asked him what response these repeated Resolutions of the Assembly were receiving from the Government of India and the Secretary of State. And after a long lapse of one year, during which we patiently waited, we were vouchsafed an official copy of the Secretary of State's despatch—no less a Secretary of State than Lord Peel, the Secretary of State of the Conservative Government. In the course of his despatch he really said:

“Why don't you look at the Government of India Act itself; you will find in it full scope for the gratification of your ambition.”

And then he went on to add:

“No such attempt was made and the arguments used in support of the motion consequently lose some of their cogency in my view, for these reasons. In the first place they assume that progress is impossible under the existing constitution and can be achieved only by further amendment of the Government of India Act. This assumption I believe to be fundamentally erroneous. The outstanding feature of the change made by the Act of 1919 was that it provides British India with a progressive constitution in place of an inelastic system of government, and that consequently there is room within the structure of that constitution for the Legislatures to develop and establish for themselves a position in conformity with the spirit of the Act.”

Now, Sir, that was the wholesome advice the Secretary of State gave, and we took it. On the 18th of July 1923 we moved a Resolution

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and asked the Secretary of State to make good his promise. He had said: “We cannot reform the Act, but within its structure there are possibilities for its expansion; explore those possibilities, and you will find there are ample materials for the gratification of your desire for further reforms.” And we, Sir, then asked the Government, as I have said, to make good this promise communicated to us from the Secretary of State. The Government opposed the motion, but nevertheless the motion was again carried by a strong majority. And what was the result, Sir? When we asked the Secretary of State to carry out the promise which was given in his despatch, he became mute and dumb. He was fairly cornered. We asked the Government of India, “What reply have they received from the Secretary of State to the Resolution of this House for the expansion of Reforms within the comprehension of the Government of India Act?” We were told that the Resolution of this Assembly had been duly communicated to the Secretary of State but that the Government of India had received no reply. Well, Sir, after a long lapse of time another question was put asking the Government of India to disclose if any reply had been received from the Secretary of State, and the answer given by the late Home Member was that no reply was received; and when further questioned as to how long it would take or did take to receive a reply from the Secretary of State, the Honourable the Home Member coughed

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and said, "Sir, it depends, it depends". Well, Sir, we waited for two years more, and we again questioned the present Home Member and asked him whether he had been the recipient of any reply from the Secretary of State, and his answer is, he has received no reply. Now, Sir, I ask a plain question. The Secretary of State says, "You want further reforms. Well, you can have them under the Government of India Act, but it is too early for us to amend the Government of India Act because Parliament would not listen to it". We said to the Government of India, "Give us those reforms possible under the existing constitution". A despatch was sent to the Secretary of State and we expected that the Secretary of State, who had in the words which I have quoted to this House promised to give us the reforms within the terms of the existing Government of India Act, would make good his promise. After two long years we find that the Government of India and ourselves are none the wiser. The Government of India say, "No reply has been received because in similar matters no reply is expected". So far as we are concerned, we have received no reply from the Government of India as to why they are unable to comply with the implied promise in the despatch of the Secretary of State. Therefore, I say, Sir, that I take my stand not upon the broad principle laid down by my friends on this side of the House, but I take my stand upon the narrower ground, namely, that it is enunciated as a principle of the Government of India Act, 1919, that certain measures of reform shall take place before that Act itself ceases to exist, and further that the Secretary of State stands committed to the grant of further Reforms as stated in the State document of Lord Peel's which was read out to this House. I further take my stand, Sir, upon the previous Resolutions of this House, a Resolution which was concurred in by the Government of India and a Resolution of this House which, though not concurred in by the Government of India, received the unanimous support of the non-officials, both Europeans and Indians.

Now, Sir, what answer have the Government got to give to this demand? They tell us that there is the non-co-operation movement, and His Excellency Lord Reading in his speech delivered in this Chamber said that it is in the interests of India itself that the Royal Commission should not be now appointed, because the verdict of that Commission might not be favourable to India. Now, I shall deal with both these objections in their order. Now, as regards the non-co-operation movement, let me recall the facts of recent history. When the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909 and 1910 were given to this country, what was the state of this country? We had the Bengal anarchical movement in full swing, and Lord Morley speaking in the House of Lords referred to the anarchical movement which was at that time, as I have said, in full swing. Did that arrest the progress of Reforms? It did not. In 1917 when the celebrated pronouncement on the future policy of the British Government in India was made in the House of Commons, what was the condition of this country? Had not the non-co-operation movement obtained its fullest momentum and did it not reach its apex in 1919, when the Statute known as the Government of India Act, 1919, was hurried through the two Houses of Parliament in England? Was anything then said by the Government of India or by their spokesman in the House of Commons or the House of Lords that the strength of the non-co-operation movement

being in its full swing, further Reforms towards the progressive realisation of self-government in India was impossible? In 1921, and again in 1923, as every schoolboy knows, the non-co-operation movement in this country was at its fullest height, and yet when we moved these Resolutions in this House, not one single word was said as to the existence of non-co-operation as retarding the political progress of this country. Then, again next year in 1922 when we moved our Resolution for the submission of the entire Budget to the vote of this House, was anything said about the existence of the non-co-operation movement? I submit not. For the first time in 1925 we are inducted to this new argument, the existence of the non-co-operation movement in this country, as if it were a new thing, as if it had not been in existence for nearly a decade, as if it were not then moribund, and I venture to submit, comparatively negligible. We were for the first time then told that this was an insuperable objection to the grant of further Reforms. Now, Sir, I should have expected that the Honourable the Home Member as a protagonist of the debate on the side of Government would be able to invent a better reason than that. It seems to me, if I may venture to say so, so flimsy a pretext for the refusal of our just demands that I need not detain you for a single moment.

Then, Sir, the second and the next objection of the Government is a very benevolent objection, because it is expected to be in the interests of the people of India. We are told—and Sir Darcy Lindsay has reiterated it in his speech a few minutes ago—that the immediate appointment of a Royal Commission would not be in the best interests of India. Now, Sir, is the Honourable the Home Member a judge of it, any more than we, who are the representatives of the people, who are asking for a Royal Commission? Was the Honourable the Home Member who promised us an early Royal Commission in 1921 not as able a judge of that fact as the Honourable and distinguished occupant of the Treasury Benches to-day? He never said that the Reforms had only been in existence for one year and, consequently, sufficient experience had not been gained and that, if the verdict was challenged, that verdict was not likely to be in favour of India. He never said so in 1921. He never said so in 1923. Even the Secretary of State did not say so in 1923. It is only for the first time to-day or rather it was for the first time last year that we were told that a Royal Commission, if appointed, might prejudice the advance of India. Now, Sir, I ask one question. If the Royal Commission is to prejudice the cause of India because it is appointed in the year 1926, how will it not prejudice the cause of India if it is appointed a few months later? But what does the Honourable the Home Member know about it. If he does not know, I hope the Honourable the Finance Member will correct him. What difference is there between 1926 and 1929?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Three years!

Sir Hari Singh Gour: Three years, we are told. But what, Sir, are three years in the life of a nation? And is there any guarantee that the lapse of three years will extinguish the non-co-operation movement? Is there any guarantee that, if a Royal Commission is appointed three years later, the verdict of that Commission will be in favour of India and if it is appointed now, its verdict would be unfavourable to India? I ask, Sir, my friend the Honourable the Finance Member, who has assisted the Home Member, to tell me what difference would it make. I say, Sir, it will make

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no difference at all in the long life of a nation. We live in a country where we have been counting our progress not in months and years but in æons and we live in a country where we have been asking the Government not last year or the year before last but ever since the birth of this Assembly to hasten the progress of further Reforms.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: May I ask the Honourable Member for how many years there are in an æon?

Sir Hari Singh Gour: That depends, Sir, upon the view my friends, the bureaucrats, take. It might mean three years, it might mean 30 years, it might mean 300 years. It is a matter entirely for the calculation of my friends on the other side of the House. Now, Sir, I therefore ask a plain question. You say that the non-co-operation movement stands as an impediment to further Reforms. You say that if the Royal Commission is now appointed it will prejudice the case for India. How do you justify it in view of the fact that the Commission must eventually be appointed in 1929, unless you have something up your sleeve, even to evade this statutory requirement of the Government of India Act? If you have that, please let us hear it now, and I ask, Sir, if the Government of India Act provides for the appointment of a Royal Commission in 1929 it stands to reason that Parliament must appoint this Commission, in order that it may function in 1929, at least twelve months earlier. Therefore, I submit that we are not asking for a very grand favour of the Honourable the Home Member. We are only asking him to hasten the formation of the Royal Commission by a few months, really two years, and I therefore feel that the Honourable the Home Member will accede to the request made by this side of the House and I once more appeal to my Honourable friend, Sir Darcy Lindsay, and his colleagues, who went with me into the division lobby on that memorable day when we decided to eliminate the distinction between votable and non-votable items, to once more follow us into the same lobby and advance the cause and progress of India.

Mr. N. M. Dumasia (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadian Urban): Sir, the motion that has been placed before this House by my Honourable friend, Mr. Jinnah, has given me a nightmare, but the ground has been cleared for me by the statement that he would be satisfied if Government announced the appointment of a Royal Commission and its personnel at once. We all wish that Government would do so, but we must recognise the difficulty that stands in the way of Government. I am sure that in view of the present political situation that has been created by the action—I will not say unjust action—of a powerful and highly organized political party, Government cannot do a greater disservice to India than by appointing immediately a Royal Commission, for which I pleaded in 1924 when I pointed out the inadequacy of the Reforms and the necessity for revising them. I still adhere to that opinion and think that the defects in the constitution should be at once revised and provincial autonomy be granted. I would not therefore do anything that would stand in the way of the consummation of that end. I admire the courage of Mr. Jinnah in view of the knowledge of the fact that he ploughs a lonely furrow. I take off my hat to him for the services and sacrifices which he has rendered in the interests of the country. I agree with his views but I disagree with the method adopted to show our disapproval of the policy of the Government.

There is an air of unreality about the whole situation. We have to look to the fact that our action will produce a bad impression on the outside public, we cannot escape from that. Already telegrams have gone forth to the world about the exodus of the Swarajists; and now the wires will be put in motion to inform the world about what will be termed Mr. Jinnah's attempt to paralyse and destroy the Government. (*An Honourable Member*: "Who wants to do that?") This Resolution of censure is tantamount to that. (*An Honourable Member*: "Certainly not.") (*Another Honourable Member*: "Those people must be fools if they think so.") We should not do anything to force them to believe that. If certification is bad, it is equally bad to coerce Government into using that power. I would be the last person to force the Government into using abnormal power for a normal purpose. The debate on the constitutional question could have been easily raised in a different manner. The government of the country must be carried on. Whatever it may be, it is our only Government. In England if you pass a vote of censure, the Government goes out, but there is another Government to take its place at once. In India, supposing we drive out this Government, what is there to take its place? You cannot destroy the stately fabric of a stable Government to please one section of the people. After all I do not love a Government that places a tax upon knowledge and upon education. I do not like a Government that taxes an excellent illustrated paper; but, Sir, I cannot withhold my sympathy from the Government which is to-day placed in an awkward position. Sir, our destiny is in the hands of the British nation. Before the Commission comes out we have to convince the British nation that we are ready to shoulder our responsibilities to-day. Have we done so? The exodus of the Swarajists will be tendered as evidence of their unwillingness to shoulder their responsibility. Sir, in a great speech which my master, His Highness the Aga Khan, delivered at Aligarh on the Morley-Minto Reforms he said we shall be judged by the use we make of these Reforms. Our deserts will be in proportion to the power we exercise. That holds good to-day. If we make use of these inadequate Reforms, then it is clear that the next stage will be better than the last one. But if we fail to shoulder those responsibilities, if we say we shall have nothing to do with the Reforms, what will the English people think? They will say, "You do not want the Reforms; very well, let us go on without them". That is the effect that our action will produce upon the British nation and on outsiders. If you want a Royal Commission to-day, you can have it, but it will have a prejudicial effect as regards the interests of the country

Sir Hari Singh Gour: We will chance it.

Mr. N. M. Dumasia: If you want an immediate Commission it will rest with the recommendation which the Government of India will make to the Home Government. What are we doing to strengthen the hands of the Government? Are we showing our good-will towards that Government by this vote of censure? I would not be a party to any action which would destroy them (*Hear, hear*). In spite of their faults, this is the only Government that has stood between India and anarchy. We have daily conflicts with the Government, but we do not know what conflicts we will have with our Swarajist rulers. If we could look into the dim distant future, we might be able to see what conflicts we might have with our

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Swarajist rulers in the future. (*Several Honourable Members*: "Order, order.") I am only saying that we have to consider what is hidden for us in the future. Sir, I am opposed to the power of certification and veto, and we shall be careful not to do anything which will give an excuse to the Government to retain that power. If you pass this vote of censure, the power of certification will never be abandoned. If you will read Lord Reading's speech of September last, you will get the right cue.

An Honourable Member: Honours.

Mr. N. M. Dumasia: Well, Sir, I do not crave honours and I strongly protest against such insinuations being made against me. I am performing my duty according to the dictates of my conscience. A gentleman came to me yesterday and said, "Vote against the Government, the elections are coming". Whether the elections are coming or not, I want to say what I think. Sir, if you will see in the Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, Volume VI, No. 1, at page 11, you will find the remarks of His Excellency Lord Reading where he says:

"The inquiry contemplated by the Act will be a genuine and an impartial inquiry. Nothing will be prejudged. It will proceed upon the facts of the situation as ascertained upon the evidence produced to the tribunal. And here I must remind you of the words of the Preamble to the Government of India Act, which have already been quoted by the Secretary of State: 'And whereas the action of Parliament in such matters must be guided by the co-operation received from those on whom new opportunities of service will be conferred, and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility.' If those are to be the principles to guide the Commission to its judgment, I cannot think, as a friend of India, that it should commence its inquiries immediately."

I ask my friend Mr. Jinnah, how are you going to get over that authoritative statement?

We must remember that after all Englishmen are great builders. They are a world power and they have built a great Empire. (*Dr. S. K. Datta*: "New Delhi"). Yes, New Delhi; and also the constitution which has got you here. Sir, our India has produced many patriots, many orators and many eloquent debaters. (*An Honourable Member*: "Like Mr. Dumasia!") Sir, we have to-day to show that we have our builders also, and that is what we have to prove here. It is easy to destroy, but difficult to build. (*Sir Hari Singh Gour*: "Who built the Taj?") Sir, if the Commission is wanted at an early date—and we all do want it—then first of all it is necessary to create a favourable atmosphere and replace the elements of bitterness and suspicion by the spirit of good-will. Unless we are in a position to prove that there is genuine co-operation on the part of the responsible Indian political leaders in working the Reforms, the early appointment of a Commission would not in my opinion accelerate but impede the political progress of India. There is no royal road to constitutional progress; there is no short cut to the path of political progress. Constitutional problems are not solved by votes of censure or by mere phrases, however heroic they may appear. They must be approached with a sympathetic understanding of the complexities and difficulties of Indian political problems which are of a peculiar nature and they must be tackled from the point of view of practical politics and wise statesmanship. The Reforms, however inadequate, gave us great powers and conferred upon us opportunities of service. What use have we made of these opportunities for service? That is a question which must be

answered before we get on to the next stage. We shall be judged by the use we make of the Reforms and by the way in which we try to serve our country. Sir, if we are to promote the best interests of our country, we have to work in harmony and in co-operation with the Government and in agreement with all parties. Sir, we should not forget that the Government established by law is after all a stately fabric of stable Government, and anyone who tries to destroy it, anyone who tries to paralyse it, is not a friend of the country. Such a demonstration may succeed in catching votes but it will do no good to the country. What the country wants is not words but work.

Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur (West Coast and Nilgiris: Muhammadan): Sir, the policy of the Government is not at all satisfactory. They deserve many of the remarks made by the Honourable Members this morning. There are many more things to be said. For all this the Executive Council is responsible as the advising and administrative machinery of the Government. We do not want to destroy the Government but we want that the Government should mend. One blot on the escutcheon of the Government which I wish to emphasise is the administration of the Andamans and their Andamans policy. As the House is already aware, the Jail Committee, composed as it was of eminent men of varied and world-wide experience and presided over by no less a person than Sir Alexander Cardew, Acting Governor of Madras, found those islands quite unhealthy and unfit for convict settlement, and therefore recommended their abandonment as such. They found the place malarial, devoid of reformatory influences and sunk in immorality. Now, also, Sir, the place is no better, if not worse. Besides the prevalence of unnatural vices, owing perhaps to the limited number of women available there, the proportion being only 1 to 10, no woman is safe there. She can go to anybody without any restriction of caste or religion. In 1921, therefore, the then Home Member, Sir William Vincent, on the floor of this House, announced that the Government of India had decided to close the Andamans as a penal settlement. Thereafter, further transfer of prisoners to the Andamans was stopped and a beginning was made gradually of retransferring the prisoners who were already there to the Indian jails as accommodation permitted

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Sir. I have not the least desire to stop the Honourable Member, but I would ask for a ruling that if he is discussing our policy about the Andamans on this head, he will not be able to do it again on his motion, of which he has given notice under another Demand.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member will not be entitled to raise the question of the Andamans later if he wishes to raise that question now on this Demand. Perhaps the Honourable Member wants to make out a case that all these things would be set right if a Royal Commission were announced and further Reforms were granted. That is what the Honourable Member is driving at if the Chair has understood him aright.

Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur: Yes, Sir, that is what I am saying. I am going to point out the maladministration that exists in the Andaman Islands

Sir Hari Singh Gour: Quite right.

Mr. B. Das (Orissa Division : Non-Muhammadan): Do you want to send the Government to the Andamans?

Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur: Now, Sir, following up this policy, several Government plantations which were being worked with convict labour were handed over to private individuals and European capitalists, the best and the most extensive plantations going to the share of Europeans, of course. Now the Government want to undo all this and go back upon their decision by sending prisoners again there. Several hundreds of Moplah prisoners have already been sent there. Why? It is said, for the convenience of the free-born population, but really for providing cheap labour to the European capitalists. In this connection I may mention that when in October last the Honourable the Home Member visited Port Blair, which is the place prepared for the convict settlement by clearing the thick jungles with which all the Islands are covered, some of the local born people were made to present a memorial by some interested officials and others to the Honourable the Home Member. In that Memorial one of the prayers was, I am told, that the Andamans should not be made a free settlement by throwing them open for unrestricted colonisation, but strangely enough that they should be kept as a penal settlement. Although the convicts were not allowed to approach

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Who was not allowed to approach?

Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur: Of course, the convicts were told not to approach the Honourable Member, and that they would be tied and whipped if they did so.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: All I can say is that a great many people did approach me.

Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur: Although the convicts were not allowed to approach the Honourable the Home Member and freely explain to him their grievances, yet it was fondly hoped that the visit of the Honourable Member would have some beneficial results and he would save these unhappy souls from this perdition. But the Resolution of the Government of India issued on the 27th of March last, about their future policy regarding these Islands is, against all expectations, quite disappointing. They say in paragraph 5 of that Resolution:

"There were many reasons why abandonment could not for a moment be contemplated. One important consideration was the existence of the local born population who have grown up in the settlement and know no other home. It would be a very serious hardship to them if Government abandoned the settlement altogether. Another consideration was that the islands occupy an important strategic position in the Bay of Bengal, have a fine harbour, and are a very distinct asset to India from the naval point of view. The meteorological and wireless stations are also of much value to shipping in the surrounding seas. Apart from these considerations there is the inherent wealth of the islands, agricultural and forest, and the possibility of developing them into a valuable asset."

Well, Sir, all these arguments and difficulties are really imaginary. Whatever there is will disappear altogether if the recommendations of the Jail Committee are carried out. It is not intended

Mr. President: Order, order. The question before the House is not whether the recommendations of the Jail Committee should be carried out. The question raised by the Honourable Mr. Jinnah is the question of the early announcement of a Royal Commission. It is a purely constitutional issue and the Honourable Member has not said one word about it yet.

Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur: What I say is that if Reforms are granted, these defects, real defects that now exist in the different administrations but are not apparent to the House will disappear. It is not intended that these islands should be abandoned altogether and allowed to be taken possession of by the Chinese or anybody else. All that is wanted is to close them as a penal settlement. How can these strategic or maritime considerations then arise at all? The islands can be and must be developed, agriculture and exploitation of the forests also must be attended to, but not by the highly objectionable system of forcing the convicts to work but by purely free labour from outside. In order to develop them fully and make them a really valuable asset you will have to remove all the restrictions that exist now. Free intercourse with the outside world should be allowed. It should be made a place of call for all steamers running to and from Rangoon. The expenditure in 1924-25 was Rs. 41½ lakhs.

Mr. President: Order, order. I am afraid I cannot allow the Honourable Member to go into all these details. I have allowed him sufficient latitude.

Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur: For these reasons, Sir, I wish to support the motion that has been moved.

Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer (Madras: Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I rise to support the Resolution which has been moved by the Honourable Mr. Jinnah. With great forbearance the Honourable Mr. Jinnah has confined himself to the purely constitutional issue. He might have drawn a wealth of illustrations from the whole range of administration of the Government. Sir, in the case of any Government which has been in office for a number of years, there will always be found ample material for an indictment of their policy. But in the case of a bureaucratic Government which has stood in office so long and which threatens to stand for many a long year to come there will be no difficulty whatever in finding plenty of material for an indictment.

Sir, I shall devote only a few brief remarks to this question of Constitutional Reforms upon which my Honourable friends who have preceded me have spoken at length. The Reforms which have been introduced under the name of dyarchy were not appreciated by anybody in India at the time they were introduced, not even by the members of the bureaucracy. They considered it a very curious, very anomalous, very queer institution and it was dissected mercilessly by no one more than by the responsible members of the Civil Service. And yet for some reason or other, once it has been introduced they have discovered great beauties and virtues in the system and they are so highly enamoured of this system of dyarchy that they do not wish to make any alteration of that system. The defects of the system of dyarchy have been admitted in the very Resolution by which the Committee on Constitutional Reforms was appointed. The Resolution contains an express reference to the inherent

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defects of dyarchy. Defects being inherent in the very system, the question is, how long this system is to continue. There can be only two solutions, either a move forward or a move backward. You cannot stand still and I submit that it is impossible you can move backwards. If you are bound to move forward, then why not take the step as early as possible and remove that feeling of distrust in the sincerity of your intentions which I venture to say is universal throughout this country and is widespread among all classes and communities. It is said that the Government of India Act laid down certain conditions one of which was that further progress would be dependent on the degree of co-operation received. Now, the lack of co-operation on the part of the people is often put forward as an excuse for not taking a step forward. I have asked before on the floor of this House and I ask it again, was there not co-operation on the part of the first Assembly? It may perhaps be said that there was no doubt co-operation on the part of one section of the people, but there has been no co-operation on the part of other sections. What is to be the extent of the co-operation which according to you constitutes the condition precedent to any further move? Is it co-operation on the part of every one of the 300 millions or is it co-operation on the part of all classes and communities of the people without any single exception at all? I submit that it cannot possibly have been the intention that there should be proof of universal co-operation on the part of all the people of this country. We have shown that there are politicians in this country who have been willing to co-operate and who did successfully co-operate with Government during the lifetime of the first Assembly. The plea of lack of co-operation on the part of the people is, I submit, only an excuse for not moving forward. If you consider again the question, what it is that has caused lack of co-operation on the part of other sections, it is simply this that they do not trust your declarations. They do not believe that at the end of the statutory period of ten years they are going to get these Reforms. What has been done by the Government so far has certainly not gone to dispel these suspicions as to their intentions. Now let us take a few instances by way of illustration with regard to the attitude of the Government. Sir, let us take the attitude of the Government with regard to the recommendations of the Muddiman Committee itself. There was a difference of opinion on certain points between the majority and the minority but there were other recommendations which were unanimous—in fact almost all the recommendations of the majority were concurred in by the minority and it is the majority that refused to go as far as the minority. Now, so far as the recommendations of the majority were concerned, what effect has been given by the Government to those recommendations?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: And how warmly were they pressed upon the Government by those who signed the minority report?

Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer: We agreed in all these recommendations. I would only refer to a few important ones, the joint deliberation of the two halves of the Government, the collective responsibility of the Ministers, and the entrusting of the financial portfolio to a Member who held charge of no other portfolios. There was also a recommendation about the transfer of the Forest Department. Has any action been taken upon these recommendations? Possibly a very considerable amount of noting may have been done in the Secretariat but in what stage these recommendations are, the outside public has no opportunity of knowing. We are

entitled legitimately to complain that notwithstanding the fact that the Report was published some time in the end of 1924 or the beginning of 1925 no action has yet been taken, and I believe the reply which has been given by the Honourable the Home Member to questions is that the subject is still under consideration. Upon a few small matters I know that action has been taken but upon all these 3 or 4 questions which I mentioned, the transfer of the Forest Department, the joint deliberation of Ministers, the collective responsibility of Ministers and the assigning of the financial portfolio to a Member who has charge of no other portfolio—upon all these points I am not aware that any action has yet been taken, at any rate none has been announced, and the House is entitled to complain of the inaction of the Government.

I pass on from this to another question. I complain that the attitude of the Government has throughout been one of stagnation and want of progressiveness. Procrastination is writ large on the doors of every one of the members of Government. Procrastination and unprogressiveness have been the leading characteristics of the Government. Viceroys may come and Viceroys may go but the bureaucracy rules for ever and goes on in its usual groove. Now let me refer to a few instances to illustrate my point. There is no question so hoary as the separation of judicial and executive functions. In the time of the first Assembly a Resolution was moved upon the subject and Sir William Vincent then said that it was a matter primarily for the Local Governments and if any Local Government wished to take action in regard to that matter, this Government would be willing to help it by undertaking the necessary legislation. Now, several Local Governments have expressed their wish to carry out this reform for which the public have been pressing for the last 40 years.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I do not want to interrupt the Honourable Member. I raise no objection to the course he has adopted but I do want to come to an understanding. If my Honourable friend raises these points now, they cannot be raised again on other motions.

Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer: I do not wish to raise them again. The House is not likely to get any other opportunity in this debate for raising these points. I refer to them merely by way of illustration.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member is making out a case for a Royal Commission.

Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer: Quite so. I say it is because the Government are so firmly entrenched and so unresponsive that they do not care to carry out the reforms for which we have been pressing. It is a fact which shows how the whole constitution of the Government requires a change. If the Government had been changed as the public have been pressing for, they would not have set quiet upon the demands of the public which have been pressed time and again during the last four years. The case that I have just mentioned is an excellent illustration of the stationary or vegetating attitude of Government and of their want of progressiveness. Then, Sir, I may refer to one or two other matters by way of further illustration of this want of responsiveness in the Government. In the very first Assembly there were a number of matters about which the House expressed itself in no uncertain terms. A number of Resolutions were passed in the first Session of the first Assembly on the Esher Committee's Report and in a few unimportant matters action has been taken; but upon really important questions, such as the admission of

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Indians to all branches of the Army, the throwing open of a larger number of King's Commissions, the establishment of a Military College, the throwing open of King's Commissions in the Territorial Force, and various other matters—in regard to all those matters that really do matter no action has been taken by the Government. Perhaps that statement of mine requires a little qualification

Mr. E. Burdon (Army Secretary): My Honourable friend says that nothing has been done regarding the throwing open of King's Commissions in the Territorial Force. I think my Honourable friend must have forgotten the facts.

Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer: I was going to make a complaint about it in the next breath. The Territorial Force Committee was appointed in the year 1924. Our Report was published in February 1925; and my complaint is that no action has yet been taken upon that Report, notwithstanding the fact that the recommendations were all unanimous. My complaint is not that action has not been taken upon all the recommendations, because it may conceivably be the case that some of the recommendations may require further consideration. My complaint is that even those recommendations which were of an entirely non-controversial character, as in the matter of the University Training Corps, have not been carried out. So far as I am aware no one has taken any exception to the necessity for expansion of the University Training Corps. And yet in the Budget of 1925-26 no provision was made for this and in this year's Budget also, 1926-27, no provision is made for the expansion of the University Training Corps. I know that if it lay in the hands of my friend Mr. Burdon, the matter would not rest where it is. I know he is full of the most excellent intentions in this behalf and I only wish that Mr. Burdon could move the Government to proceed much faster than they have. My complaint is want of progressiveness and stagnation and inactivity. That I submit is amply made out by the fact that a year's delay has taken place over non-controversial recommendations and effect has not been given to any of them yet. Before passing from this subject, there is one announcement by the Government for which I am bound to express my sense of thankfulness in the course of my general condemnation; and that is the announcement by the Viceroy about the Royal Indian Navy. I am grateful to the Government and to His Excellency the Viceroy for this announcement. But this subject of the admission of Indians to the Navy was mooted in 1921, and the Incheape Committee recommended the conversion of the Royal Indian Marine into a Royal Indian Navy in 1928. The conception of an Indian Navy has taken nearly five years. What further length of time the process of gestation may take, and when we shall see a beginning actually made, we do not know. We do not know how many further difficulties there may be to encounter between the announcement of the idea and its actual materialization. Of course there are a great many difficulties in the way which I do not ignore. After you get your training ships you have to find your men and they have to go through their course of training—difficulties which I for one am not in the least disposed to ignore. But what I say is that when we shall see the training ships, and when we shall see the classes started, are still matters of great uncertainty. In this picture of procrastination, I must however confess that there is one Commission upon whose recommendations I cannot accuse the Government of delay in action and that is the Lee Commission. (Laughter.)

Sir, there is only one other matter to which I wish to refer in support of my general charge of want of sympathy and want of progressiveness. The point that I am going to refer to illustrates not merely a want of sympathy but a want of breadth of political vision: I refer to the way in which the Burma Expulsion of Offenders legislation has been treated by His Excellency the Viceroy. That was a measure which contained in it the seeds of inter-provincial conflict and a narrow provincialism, and yet this measure was passed without any hesitation. I suppose the justification is that it was passed because the principle of provincial autonomy, of which we are all advocates, required it. But nobody has yet defined the exact limits of provincial autonomy, and when the day comes for an exact definition of provincial autonomy, I for one should be disposed to define it in such a manner as to restrict the liberty of Provincial Governments to act in such a way as to interfere with the just rights and freedom of citizens of another province within the same Indian Empire. That, I say, illustrates the narrowness of political vision of the Government. In various other directions, if the Government had been constituted on a popular basis, they would not have been so irresponsible to the needs of the hour. So far as this particular proposition is concerned, though I have spoken in support of it, I do not propose to support it with my vote (Laughter). My reason is that our great complaint against the Members of Government is that they are out of touch with the people, and I think it would be hard upon them that we should deprive them of some little chance of coming into touch with the people and of getting some glimpse of popular views and wishes. For that reason, and for the reason that I do not wish to be a party to any vote which is more than a vote of censure and which will compel the Viceroy to restore any grant, I am not going to support it with my vote. I shall be neutral, but I am quite at one with my friend, the Honourable Mr. Jinnah, in considering the conduct of Government, as it has been disclosed in various matters of policy to some of which a reference has been made by way of illustration, is such as to deserve the very severe censure of this House and such as would have been sufficient to turn out any popular Government from office.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Sir, if I have risen at this stage, it is partly because I feel if I do not rise soon I should be involved in a multiplicity of matters which it would indeed be difficult to answer. The indictment will be made very wide and will include every cut on the list of amendments. I feel that there are many Members who feel that if they do not get a dig in now they may not get a dig at me at all. Therefore, while the matter is within the compass of ordinary human memory, I will endeavour to deal with the position in so far as it has been brought forward; and if I do so in reverse order, it is because I wish to clear away those elements which have been imported into this debate which are not perhaps strictly relevant but have been brought up from a sense that the Executive Council travelling allowance vote is a very fair opportunity for commencing the hunt of the general hare.

First of all, let me congratulate my Honourable friend Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer on the statesmanlike conclusion of his speech. It is always a matter of very great pleasure to me to listen to my Honourable friend, for I know that after he has scolded me for a sufficient period, he will then say: "But he is not a very bad boy after all and I will not throw him out." He also made a real point when he said that if you cut away this allowance you

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will prevent those Honourable colleagues of mine who are not so familiar with the country side as I am from being more familiar with it. (*An Honourable Member*: "Special saloons.") Sir, I am only recently travelling in a special saloon. In my earlier days I travelled on an *ekka*, which my Honourable friend Mr. Jinnah has never done. (*An Honourable Member*: "That is what you should do now.") My Honourable friend Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer has brought general charges of stagnation and lack of enterprise on the part of Government. He has said "You have done nothing. For five years you have drawn your pay and nothing has been done." Is that a just charge? It is not a just charge. Many things have been done. I will recite a few of them for his benefit. What about my Honourable colleague's fiscal policy? What about discriminating protection? What about taking over the Company Railways under State management? What about the separation of railway finance from general finance? What about the Workmen's Compensation Act? What about the amendment of the Factory Act? What about the Trade Unions Act? What about the debt redemption scheme? What about the opium policy? What about the Royal Indian Navy? What about the Army? Have we done nothing? What about the Bills I have brought in and you have thrown out? (Laughter.) Sir, I am grieved that my Honourable friend who has had a career, a most useful career of service to his country, should reproach the Government with a record of stagnation. I myself, Sir, am surprised that a Government which have committed so many reforms should still exist. It was said that a popular Government would never have been able to withstand the effects of a stagnating policy. I may say this; that if any popular Government, with which I am acquainted, had ventured to thrust so many reforms on its own electorate or enact anything like the number of measures enacted by us it would certainly be defeated in the ensuing election by the vested interests which it would have offended. That, Sir, is my answer to Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer. He said that effect had not been given to all the recommendations of the majority report of the Reforms Inquiry Committee. Sir, I say quite frankly to this House that, if I had had the support of this House, effect might have been given by now to all these recommendations. But to say that nothing has been done on them is not correct. I think I have now dealt with most of the points raised by my Honourable friend.

My Honourable friend Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar also referred to the question of the separation of judicial and executive functions. Three Local Governments have reported and the Government of India have considered their reports. I have tried to find some common denominator, something that would link them together and would enable us to proceed. The Government of India, it is true, have not yet arrived at their decision in the matter. That decision has, I admit, been long delayed, but I do not think it has been delayed a day too long.

I now come to my Honourable friend Mr. Mahmood Schamnad who spoke about the Andamans. Now, Sir, I desire to speak to the House very earnestly on this matter because I have only recently returned from the Andamans.

Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: We thought you would never return.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: My Honourable friend may not be so fortunate if he goes there. But I visited those Islands with a very particular purpose. I visited them by virtue of the very grant which is now being attacked. I wish to say here and now that my visit was of great benefit and enabled many outstanding questions to be decided to the great benefit both of the free and of the convict inhabitants of those Islands. If I had known that my Honourable friend was going to raise the question of the Andamans on this Demand I would have brought down to this House certain photographs which I have got of the Andamans and would have placed them on the table. They would have been very instructive and interesting. Now, Sir, I should like to read to the House certain passages from a Resolution that has just been issued by the Government of India. One of the questions that was under discussion when I went there was: what should be done in the matter of making the holding of land easier?

Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur: Sir, on a point of order. I was not allowed to explain my case and I am afraid the Home Member will not be in order if he attempts to reply to points I have not been allowed to touch upon.

Mr. President: Order, order. The Honourable the Home Member is replying in so far as the matter has been dealt with by the Honourable Member.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: My Honourable friend is naturally anxious that I should not proceed further in the matter because he knows that, if I do so, I shall demolish his case. The point I have to make is that, when I went there, I found that the system of allowing convicts to take up land was producing most beneficial effects. I was also able to change the land law by which a convict who was given a holding will on release have permanent rights in it. I found there very considerable prosperity and I saw there many of my friend's countrymen and co-religionists both happy and contented. I believe there is a prospect of prosperity for the Islands. Sir, I shall follow your ruling and will not, therefore, go deeper into the matter. It would however give me very great pleasure to have had a debate on the Andamans because I think there are many matters that I can bring before the House from my personal knowledge. I have now disposed of, Sir, what I might call matters which are in some degree extraneous to this debate.

Sir, the debate was originally raised by my Honourable friend Mr. Jinnah. I always listen to my friend with great interest and I will meet him as far as I can in the same considered and calm way in which his speech was made. I will, in the first place, give vent to a feeling of regret, shall I say of disappointment, that he was not able to find anything but slight contempt for the Budget which my Honourable colleague has brought forward? Now, Sir, I regret that for after all you gain nothing by not acknowledging benefits received, and if there is one thing on which I am most clear it is that the people of India and the Government of India owe a great debt of gratitude to Sir Basil Blackett for his work in the Finance Department, and more especially for the present Budget which he has presented. (Applause.) In saying that I will add that he is one of the most difficult Finance Members to deal with when I want money that I have ever met. (Laughter.)

Sir, I pass from that to deal with another matter which my Honourable friend said cast a heavy cloud over this Assembly. I thought—possibly

[Sir Alexander Muddiman.]

wrongly—that the other day I was charged by the Honourable Pandit with dealing with levity with the matter. Nothing was further from my desire to deal with a serious subject with levity or lightness. If I occasionally venture to approach matters from that point of view, it is because sometimes one has either to laugh or to cry. Those who are anxious for the political advance of India—truly anxious—cannot view the set-back that has taken place within the last few days to their aspirations, without great regret. I am not here to carry matters one inch further. I am not going to indulge in any criticisms which might excite or exacerbate, and which might prevent a return which I should greatly deplore. I must however make myself quite clear that in my judgment a severe blow has been inflicted on the prospect of political advance. Those who are not so familiar with the actual facts, the actual exigencies as I am, will take an even more unfavourable view. Sir, I picked up my telegrams the other morning and I saw that Monsieur Briand on his departure for Geneva on the eve of a political crisis observed that “Ours is an awful profession”, a thought which must be in the minds of many Indian political leaders to-day.

Now, Sir, Mr. Jinnah, if I understood him rightly, is now pressing for a Royal Commission. That is the burden of his speech, if I understood it, that a Royal Commission is to be immediately appointed. I have not quite understood whether he means a Statutory Commission contemplated by section 84-A of the Government of India Act or not.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: I said I wanted a Royal Commission in accordance with section 84-A, and also that I wanted the personnel of that Commission arranged to the satisfaction of public opinion.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I am very glad to know that what my Honourable friend does want is the appointment of a Statutory Commission under section 84-A of the Government of India Act. I was asked in another place for a Commission which was not of the kind contemplated under section 84-A. In support of his argument Mr. Jinnah put forward various considerations. If I understood him rightly he asked for this Commission not because he wanted an inquiry only but because he is satisfied in his own mind that he has a case which, if he brought it before a Royal Commission, would help him in obtaining further advance. If that is not so I cannot myself understand why he wants a Royal Commission at this present moment. Unless you believe that you have a case sufficiently strong to convince the Commission that an advance is desirable, then I cannot understand why any Indian of Mr. Jinnah's way of thinking can desire it. What are the facts? These Reforms have been in operation five years. We have reached the half time of the period contemplated by the Act before the Royal Commission, the Statutory Commission, must be appointed.

Now in the first Assembly it is undeniable and undenied that a large proportion of those politically minded in India boycotted the Assembly and remained outside. That is undoubted; it is equally undoubted that when the second Assembly was constituted, a large body, I believe it may be correctly stated to be the largest single group, I will not call it a party, in this House came in with the avowed intention of rendering the working of the Reforms impossible.

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar: A mere intention which was never carried out.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I agree, Sir. I am obliged to my Honourable friend for saying that; it brings me to my next point. The intention, as often happens, was softened by association. It has been said that we, the representatives of the Government who sit on these Benches, are playing with the matter; are endeavouring to postpone; are endeavouring to put off the evil day; are endeavouring in fact to provoke a breakdown of the Reforms. Now can any one who has seen the method employed by the Government Benches seriously put that forward? Sir, I am not a man of patient character, I am not a man who makes a habit of exposing his cheek to the smiter, nor judging from my experience are my colleagues in that category; and yet they have exercised, I think the House will admit, great patience, and often under great provocation. (Applause.) I make no claim that in doing that we have been doing anything more than our duty. It is our duty in every way to carry out the avowed policy of the Parliament, as laid down in the Government of India Act, and in doing so, it is our bounden duty to subordinate those combative instincts which, after all, are only natural to all human beings. We have avoided doing that, and the effect I think has been considerable. There is no doubt that the Party that came to curse remained to bless even if only temporarily. That a good deal was done to bring the parties in this House together there is no doubt, and I extremely regret that at the end of the dying Session, a step should have been taken which must have the effect of breaking that harmony. It cannot be helped. I recognise that there are political exigencies which affect us all, but our elected friends most of all. My Honourable friend opposite said that we cannot stand alone, that one who leads men is in a sense affected by the feelings of those he leads. But he is the true leader who will lead men and induce them to follow his course and not to follow theirs. Now, Sir, that is the position. The progress of events seems to have been tending in a direction which would have gone on the lines of the co-operation that has been asked for. Sir, I do not, as I have said, attach any importance to words; it is to action that I attach importance and I myself, as I said the other day, am not as disappointed, as discouraged as I might otherwise have been. It is true that the darkest hour often comes before the dawn. We are too closely placed, too closely in touch with events to weigh them in the true balance, too close to appreciate the effect of a gesture that will be read—and that is the unfortunate part of it—will be read by those who have not even the information that we have, and will be read in a very different way.

Sir, I have been charged by my Honourable friend—I will not say charged for he did not charge me—I have been reproached with the fact that we have not expressed in public the obligations which we owe undoubtedly to those who, in days of obloquy, in days of trial, in days of severe temptation, stood by and endeavoured to work the existing constitution. I acknowledge those efforts with thankfulness. I acknowledge them openly; but it is not the Government but the country who should acknowledge the efforts of those who stayed the general shipwreck of the existing constitution and when those who did that go to the country they ought to reap their reward.

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar: Where are the fruits?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: The fruits? My Honourable friend is still sitting here. I do not like giving advice. I have found in my life if a man asks you for advice and you are foolish enough to give it, he refuses to take it and dislikes you ever after. That, Sir, may seem a cynical view.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: It is quite true!

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: But it is in time of trouble as well as in time of success that we should stand by our opinion; and I say to those who have stood by their opinion in the past "Do not be discouraged but stand by them till the end. Do not let it be said that we or you at any rate have not done all that could be done to maintain and work the existing Reforms."

Now I will assume for the moment that the Commission which has been desired by my Honourable friend came out to-morrow. What would be its function? It would be—would it not—to hold an impartial inquiry into the actual working of the Reforms and to make recommendations on that? It would be for those who contended that success had been achieved within the limits imposed by the present Act to put forward their proofs. It would be for us to show that we had left nothing undone to maintain the position. Is it not the fact that Indian opinion really desires a Royal Commission to come out not to hold an inquiry, not to examine but to register a decree which has already been formulated for a further advance to complete responsible government. Is that not a fact?

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar: We believe it will be so.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Sir, that is clearly the demand of one party and it appears to me it was the demand of the Member of the Council of State who moved his Resolution on the 18th February.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: Why then do not the Government say so and declare that therefore there is no question of accelerating the Royal Commission on that one condition, namely, if the Swarajists would co-operate?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I do not quite follow my Honourable friend but as I heard something about Swarajists co-operating I assume he was charging me with the usual parrot cry of co-operation. After all the Swarajist Members represent a large proportion of this House. We are unable to deny that. It is equally true that they have reduced the Reforms to impotency in my own province, one of the biggest provinces of India—Bengal, and that in the Central Provinces they are also not functioning. It is true, as I read in my papers the other day, that no later than the day before yesterday the grant for Ministers' salaries has again been refused in the Central Provinces. On these facts how are we going to the Government at Home and with any show of confidence to urge on them, even if we ourselves were convinced of the necessity of it, the appointment immediately of a Royal Commission? I have frequently addressed the House, till the House must be tired of hearing it, in the endeavour to inculcate the point that the test of life, political and otherwise, is results, that "by their works shall ye know

them." It is by works and not by words, "not only on our lips, but in our lives," that we have got to show co-operation? As my Honourable friend Sir Hari Singh Gour said, what are æons in the life of a nation? That, Sir, sounded even to my bureaucratic mind rather a long period, but when he defined an æon as anything between three years and three months, I thought that in this connection he takes a short view of æons. I must express my indebtedness to Sir Hari Singh Gour

Sir Hari Singh Gour: Sir, I am afraid the Honourable Member must have misunderstood me. I never said anything of the kind. What I said was what is three years in the life of a nation as compared to æons through which life passes.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Sir, I unhesitatingly accept my Honourable friend's statement. I was about to thank him for the valuable arguments he has supplied on my behalf.

Now, Sir, there are one or two outstanding points with which, with your permission, I should like to deal. It was suggested that in Bengal and in the Central Provinces the Constitution could have been maintained if more tact and discretion had been shown. Sir, I doubt that very much, but even if it was so, what does it prove?

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: What would happen to the Assembly if the elected Members in a body were to throw out everything that came before them? The Legislature could not go on.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I should be sorry to contemplate that event, but that brings me to another point, and it is this. My Honourable friend in his speech referred to three classes of Members, the elected Members, the nominated Members, and the official Members. Let me make it perfectly plain

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: And the elected European Members.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: That is a cross division. But let me point out to him very frankly and plainly that he and I sit in this House under the same identical authority. The authority of Parliament which makes me a Member of the Governor General's Council and a Member of this House is the same authority that makes my Honourable friend Mr. Jinnah an elected Member of this House, and it is only by that authority that the abolition of myself will be secured and that the replacement of me by an elected Member can take place

Sir Hari Singh Gour: It is the authority of the Statute that makes a Judge and it is the authority of the Statute that makes a criminal.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: My Honourable friend has more experience in the matter than I have. (Laughter.) Now, Sir, I do not wish to wind up on an unsympathetic note. On the other hand, I have not the least desire to win a cheap vote from the House by anything that might be brought against me in any way as overstating the case. The position, as I see it, is this. The door is still open. The last word has not been spoken. It is still open to you, it is still open to India, to secure that advancement of the date of the Royal Commission which you so ardently desire by compliance with the condition which has been previously laid down.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: It is an impossible condition.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Sir, the position of the Home Member to-day is like that of a watchman on a tower looking out at the night and the King sends him messengers who ask him: "Watchman, what of the night?" and the answer I have often to give is: "The night is very black." Sir, how long am I to continue to give that answer? When will the people of India enable me to say: "*Kirin utha*." "The dawn is breaking."

Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal (Calcutta: Non-Muhammadan Urban): I desire, Sir, to associate myself with all my mind and my strength with the motion that has been placed before this widowed House. (Laughter.) Yes, widowed House—I am referring to Parliamentary language. I remember the Leader of the Government, I think it was Mr. Balfour then, now Lord Balfour, when there was no Leader of the Opposition before him, in the House of Commons, declared that he found himself in a widowed position, and I feel sincerely that owing to the absence of the Swarajists, my friend opposite, the Home Member, must be feeling like Lord Balfour.

Mr. K. Ahmed: He is a bachelor.

Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal: I certainly object, Sir, to these interjections in regard to remarks which ought to wring the heart of every Member of this House. We regret, and I believe the Home Member and the Official Benches also regret it as much as we do, the absence of our Swarajist friends. We on these Benches regret it because their absence has made it impossible for us to carry votes which we might have carried without any effort. This day we have moved for the rejection of the grant under the head of "Executive Council". We would have had no trouble, my friend Mr. Jinnah would not have to go down on his knees almost to my friend Sir Darcy Lindsay begging for his votes. We could have carried the motion easily. There are two groups in this House constituting His Majesty's Opposition, the Official Opposition, the Swarajists and the Independents. The Swarajists were a much stronger group. Because of the absence of that stronger group the Opposition has become feeble and I cannot but put it to you, Sir, and to the Members of this House, whether Parliamentary Government can be legitimately and salutarily carried on with an Opposition that is so weak as the Opposition is to-day in this House.

Lieutenant-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney (Nominated: Anglo-Indians): Come over to this side.

Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal: We regret their absence. .

Sir Darcy Lindsay: Let them come back.

Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal: We certainly regret the unwisdom of that absence. And I cannot help raising my protest personally, and I take it the protest of the whole House, to a certain remark that the Leader of the Swaraj Party made in defence or in explanation of the policy which he was pursuing. He came and told this House that he and his following were going out because of the mandate of the Congress. Now, this House ought to raise a strong protest, a constitutional protest, against that statement. The Congress is not a legislative constituency. The Congress is a voluntary organisation. However honoured by the people it may be, it is not a legislative constituency and no Member of this House has a right to

come here without a mandate from his constituency and be driven here and there and everywhere according to the wishes of an outside, voluntary organisation.

Having said that much with regard to the Swarajists, I want to support, as I said, with all my strength the motion of my Honourable friend, Mr. Jinnah. We know that you will certify, though if the case is considered upon its own merits I do not see that there is any reasonable ground for certification of this grant if we are able to throw it out. I say, there is no reasonable justification for certification. The reduction of this grant does not affect the primary functions of Government. It does not affect the responsibilities of the Governor General for carrying on the King's Government. It will only affect the Simla exodus and I think European opinion at least in Calcutta has for the last half a century been strongly opposed to these hill exoduses. For that reason, if on no other ground, I was expecting the representatives of European opinion in Bengal to support this motion, because that was also a side issue, namely a protest against the waste of money, against the waste of public time, against interference with public business, against isolation of the rulers of the country from the healthy atmosphere of public opinion in the plains, involved in the Simla exodus. While the Honourable Sir Darcy Lindsay and others can live and work during the whole year in the plains, you have told us often and often that you see no reason why Government should go up to the hills and enjoy the salutary climate.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: On a matter of explanation. I should like to make it clear, as the Honourable Member does not seem to realise it, that only a very small portion of this expenditure is represented by the Simla exodus and that the greater part of it is for the tour expenses of going down to Calcutta, Bombay and that sort of thing.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: In reserved saloons.

An Honourable Member: Why not?

Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal: You may travel first class if you like; and draw 1 8/5ths as the Honourable Members of this House draw.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: How are they going to pay for it?

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: You get a very good salary if you want to go.

Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal: I do not think if I were, I am not fortunately, in the position of my Honourable friend opposite I would have said that if my travelling allowance was cut down the Government would stop, the carrying on of the King's Government would become impossible. There is no practical difficulty. We have not moved a motion for the reduction of any grant the acceptance of which motion would render administration impossible. That is one point. Our great complaint is that you have not paid heed to public opinion in this matter. We do not want much. We do not want you to give us the moon. We only want an examination with a view to the necessary amendment of the present Government of India Act. It has been completely made out that this Act, for certain purposes necessary for the advancement of the country, is unworkable. That has been made out completely by the Mudliman Report and what we want is an examination. That is, I understand, the plea of my Honourable friend and leader, Mr. Jinnah. We want an examination.

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only. No further. If after an examination you declare that the country is not ripe, that the circumstances are not favourable to a further advance, we shall have to accept that decision with whatever good grace we can. All that we want is an examination by a Statutory Commission or a Royal Commission under the terms of the Government of India Act. That is all that we want. Why do you oppose it. You say "Oh, we oppose it in your own interests". Well, well, we have a Bengali proverb and the Honourable the Leader of the House having been so long in Bengal might well have remembered it or heard it. The proverb translated into English means that the crocodile cries out of pity for the fish. You say "Oh, it will hurt you". How will it hurt us? If the country is really not fit for another advance, if the result of a fresh constitutional advance is likely to be anarchy, disorder, then the country will not be hurt by the refusal of an advance. But our contention is that the country will be hurt by your refusing this demand for an examination. How will it be hurt? You say that in Bengal the Reforms have failed. You say that in the Central Provinces the Reforms have failed. But you do not remember that in Madras, on your own confession or acknowledgment, the Reforms have succeeded wonderfully. What is the reason? The reason is Lord Willingdon. He entered fully into the spirit of the Act. And the thing which we demanded in Bengal, namely, joint responsibility, corporate responsibility of the Ministers, that was granted by Lord Willingdon in Madras but was refused in Bengal. In Madras they have three Ministers but the three Ministers form one Ministry, the Head Minister or Chief Minister nominating his own colleagues, with joint responsibility to the Governor and the Council for the administration of the transferred departments. Now, Sir, Mr. Chakravarti, the leader of the Party to which I have the honour to belong in Bengal, the Nationalist Party, when he was invited by Lord Lytton, offered the same terms. He asked for this concession, namely, this recognition of the joint responsibility of the Ministry and he wanted the Governor to allow him to nominate his colleagues. The Governor would not do so and the result was the refusal of Mr. Chakravarti to shoulder the responsibility for the administration of the transferred departments. And after that what did the Governor of Bengal do? I do not like to say one unkind word about him, because Lord Lytton personally is a perfect gentleman. He is an ideal *padre*, an ideal member of the Church, an ideal Christian; but unfortunately he has bungled, as Mr. Jinnah has said, in working the Reforms in Bengal.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: On a point of order. Is the Honourable Member entitled to cast reflections on the Governor of a Province? (*Some Honourable Members:* "He is paying him a compliment.")

Mr. President: The Honourable Member should not go far into that question. He has made a reference to it, and anything which might reflect on the conduct of the Governor or the Viceroy is not permissible.

Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal: I am not referring to his conduct. I do not think it is not a certificate or commendation to call a Governor a *padre*, a member of the Church of Christ. Now, Sir, that is the actual fact. If he had allowed the conditions that succeeded in Madras, if you had allowed the same conditions in Bengal, I have not the least doubt that the Reforms

would have succeeded in Bengal as well. (*Mr. J. T. Donovan*: "Question?") If I were to go into details, it would not be palatable to my friend from Ireland and Bengal. It would not be palatable, because they tried to divide us; they tried to secure one part of the House to support the Government against another part. But the other part, being the stronger part, the tactics of Government failed. That is the real truth about Bengal. But I will not enter into that. What I want to know is why do you refuse a Royal Commission? I have always felt, Sir, that our masters are lacking in one essential quality of real statesmanship; they lack imagination. I have always felt that if this Royal Commission had been announced a year ago it would have taken the wind out of the sails of those who want to wreck the Reforms. But you are in collusion, not consciously but unconsciously, with those who want to wreck the Reforms; and you are acting as if you want the Reforms to be wrecked. That is the whole truth. Now, Sir, with regard to these constitutional advances I may at once say that in politics I do not believe in generosity. In politics I do not believe in alms. I do not believe in eleemosynary politics. Politics is always a game of force, and if the people could gather sufficient force, as they did from time to time in the past, it would not have been possible for my Honourable friend the Home Member to sit there and smile and say: "All right; go on. Non-co-operate or co-operate; we don't mind; we shall keep to our places as long as we are not forced out." He could not have said that. Now, what is the history of political progress in India for the last 50 years? After the Mutiny we had the first Legislative Council in 1861. Did you consider then, whether the country was fit or unfit for that measure of Council Government? It was not much, but it was something. And you gave that something because you were anxious to conciliate public opinion, because you thought that unless public opinion was conciliated it would hurt your interests. After 1861 we had another instalment of reforms in 1891, and that followed the Congress agitation. There was the fear of the unknown behind the Congress agitation of the earlier years. You did not know what might be the upshot of that agitation. I still remember the newspaper controversy that raged over the activities of the Congress in Madras in 1887 between Mr. Hume and Sir Auckland Colvin; and the result of that controversy was that Lord Dufferin gave us a parting kick. He abused the Congress, he ridiculed the Congress in his St. Andrew's dinner speech in 1888; but he left a secret Minute recommending practically the fundamental demands of the Congress, and it was that Minute which secured us the next advance in Lord Cross's Indian Councils Act. Now that was not a gift, a generous gift. It was forced from you by pressure of circumstances that faced you then. The fear, the fear of the unknown, the fear of public opinion—that was what forced that Act from you. Then we come to the Minto-Morley Act. What was that due to? That was due to the fear of the possibilities of the Bengal unrest. That was the direct psychological factor—that unrest which forced the Minto-Morley Reforms. We had it from Lord Morley. Speaking to a deputation that waited upon him in England when I was there—speaking to that deputation of Indian representatives Lord Morley said, "I will give you concessions. Left-handed concessions and right-handed repressions will be my policy in regard to India." And we had that. Then after that we had this Act. What was it due to? It was due to circumstances; it was due to the pressure of Indian conditions; it was due, Sir, to "the gravity of the Indian situation."

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to quote Lord Islington, the gravity of the Indian situation during the war. And I have no doubt, Sir, that the announcement of 1917 was made during the war, absolutely to allay this gravity. If the war had continued, if there had not been the dramatic ending of the war in 1919, if the North-West menace to which Lord Chelmsford referred in his speech at the War Conference, had materialised, I have no doubt, Sir, that we would have got a much larger and a much more liberal measure of reform than what we have got in the present Government of India Act. These are the facts, and I appeal, on the basis of these facts, to you to take a long view. My friends, the Swarajists, have gone out. I do not know—I am not in their councils—what they are going to do. I do not know whether they will come back, or whether they will try, as they say, to appeal to the country. I do not understand what their appeal to the country will be; unless it be mass civil disobedience or some such thing. The policy with which they came to this House has failed on their own confession. Pandit Motilal said, "We have failed", and he cannot, by any stroke of magic, convert his failure of 1924—1926 into his success in 1927. The only logical position for the Swarajists will be to return to the non-co-operation camp. That is the meaning, the psychology, the logic of their walking out: and if they should, Sir, follow up this logic, and go back to the non-co-operation camp again, blessed by the holy hand of Mr. Gandhi, you may find yourselves in the same position in which you found yourselves in 1920-21—a position which compelled Lord Reading to think of giving us a round table conference in the winter of 1921. Now, Sir, that is the situation before you; and if you want to avoid trouble—I say it not as a threat, but I say it as a friendly warning—we do not want any trouble, we do not want any revival of the non-co-operation unrest in the country again. We do not want that. We want ordered, peaceful progress to our ideal of Dominion status or democratic responsible government. We want ordered progress. But if you will not have it, it will be on your head—the responsibility for whatever unrest you may have to face will be on your head. You may say: "Oh, we do not mind, we have our machine guns. Remember Jalianwalla Bagh, remember Lahore". But that will not do. These things pay only once, and not twice. And you did not try in Bengal what you tried in Jalianwalla Bagh. One word more, Sir. You talk of co-operation. But what kind of co-operation do you want? You want the co-operation of the slave with his master—not the co-operation of comrades. You want to decide your policy, and you want us to work out that policy. You want to be the brain, and you want us only to be your hand. That kind of co-operation no honourable man, no honest man, no self-respecting nation, can ever give to any Government. Consult us; take us into your confidence; and then upon the prosecution of any policy that may be decided upon by consultation between you and us, you will have our loyal co-operation to the fullest measure. But this is not the kind of co-operation that you want. And once more—you want co-operation but from whom? My friend, Mr. Jinnah, has already said, 'You want co-operation, only from the Swarajists who will not co-operate with you, but you will not look at others. Your eye is fixed on the attractive Swarajist faces. You are looking at them. You will not look at others who are ready, honestly and honourably, to co-operate with you, who have been giving you

co-operation all these years. But you say, they are the strongest party—the Swarajists. Certainly they are the strongest party in the House. They are apparently the strongest party outside also. But you are not worth your responsibility if you do not note the trend of public opinion in the country. Do you not recognise that the Swarajists are losing their hold on the country? Do you not recognise that there is a large body of vocal and more largely a body of unvocal opinion in the country which is silently raising its protest against the unreason and impolicy of the Swarajist obstruction? Do you not know that there is an increasing body of public opinion among the articulate section of the community which is raising a silent protest against the Swarajist policy of obstruction. That policy has failed and if you do not know, I will, with your permission, try to enlighten your ignorance by quoting, not an Indian paper, but a European organ:

“Bengal has been able to study the Swarajist influence in its strength. It can now see it writhing under a sense of impotence. There is no longer a C. R. Das in command; his capacity and wisdom are not found in the successor whom Mr. Gandhi selected. The Swarajist leader has been discomfited in the Council Chamber and in the streets.

The same story may be illustrated from other quarters. The Swarajists have not the following they had in the exciting days two years ago, when they swept out of their seats well tried men who had done good service to the public. . . . The country no longer believes in them. A study of what goes on in local politics is informative; there is a growing resentment at Swarajist attempts to secure control. Barisal is a case in point.”

and so on and so forth. It is from an editorial in the *Statesman*. It adds:

“In Barisal when the votes were counted at the latest municipal election, only three Swarajists were elected out of a total number of 10 commissioners, and one candidate, who had the prestige of thirty years of good work as a commissioner behind him, but now chose to fight under the Swarajist banner, was decisively rejected.”

Now, that is a straw, but a straw that shows which way the wind is blowing and in view of it are you going to help the Swarajists by refusing this demand of ours, because if you do, the Swarajists will be justified; they will cry out from the housetop:

“No co-operation is possible with people who refuse even such reasonable, such moderate demands as were put forward by the Independents.”

And then perhaps if there is another non-co-operation upheaval, then perhaps with the fear of the unknown before you, you will climb down. But it will be too late, too late; and too late is a word that damns statesmanship and politics in every part of the world.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, the 12th March, 1926.
