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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

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WEDNESDAY, 20th JANUARY, 1926

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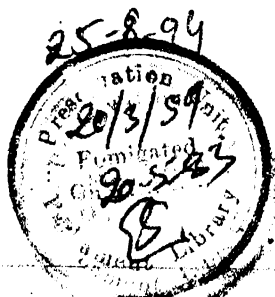
## OFFICIAL REPORT



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Legislative Assembly.



DELHI  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS  
1926

THE  
**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES**

**(Official Report)**

**VOLUME VII**

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**FOURTH SESSION**

**OF THE**

**SECOND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1926**



DELHI  
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1926

THE  
**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES**

(OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE  
SECOND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY)

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**VOLUME VII**

FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1926.

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.**

*Wednesday, 20th January, 1926.*

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The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber at Eleven of the Clock, being the first day of the Fourth Session of the Second Legislative Assembly, pursuant to Section 63D(2) of the Government of India Act.

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**INAUGURATION OF THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE SECOND  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.**

His Excellency the Viceroy with the President of the Legislative Assembly having arrived in procession, His Excellency took his seat on the dais.

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**His Excellency the Viceroy:** Mr. President and Gentlemen, let me welcome the Members of the Legislative Assembly to the labours of another Session. My usual practice at the beginning of a Session, as you are aware, is to address the Indian Legislature as a whole; but on this occasion the state of business does not warrant the summoning of the Council of State before the end of the first week in February; and in consequence I decided that I would not wait until then, but would arrange to meet the Members of the Assembly on the opening day of their Session and address them. I hope to address the Legislature as a whole later in the Session.

This is the first occasion on which I have addressed you since the election and appointment of your new President; and I take this opportunity of congratulating him on the very important office which he now occupies. He has my best wishes in the exercise of his functions and responsibilities. Let me also observe that he has my understanding sympathy. It may appear to some a light task to discharge these duties with an easy grace;

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but I realise, as I am sure the Hon'ble President has long since become aware, that no task presents more difficulty than to treat all Members sympathetically while displaying partiality to none.

Before passing to other questions I may observe that, anticipating the feelings of this Chamber, and, I believe, the feelings of all sections of the people in India, I sent a message to His Majesty the King-Emperor on hearing of Queen Alexandra's death offering him on behalf of India the deepest sympathy in his loss. Though the people of India were never privileged to see the late Queen Alexandra, I know that precious memories are treasured in India of her gracious actions as Queen-Empress and of her life of active sympathy with suffering humanity in later years. From the many messages which reached me from all quarters in India, I perceived that the news of her death was received with widespread sorrow by the Princes and people of India, and that universal sympathy went out to His Majesty in his bereavement.

I am glad to be able to inform you that friendly relations are being maintained with the Kingdoms of Afghanistan and Nepal and with our other neighbours upon our borders. Nothing has occurred to mar the general tranquillity of the situation with tribes upon our North-West Frontier and steady progress is taking place towards pacification in Waziristan.

I invite the attention of the Members of the Assembly to the interim report of the Indian delegation to the sixth Session of the Assembly of the League of Nations. The report appears to me to be of very special interest not only because of the business transacted at the last meeting of the Assembly of the League but also because the report strives to make clear the special interests of India in the League and the attitude which in the view of our delegates is best calculated to advance those interests and to give India a prominent position in the League. I think Members will welcome the statement in the report regarding the allocation of expenses and of appointments in the Secretariat of the League. A number of the suggestions made will require examination before decisions can be reached in regard to them; but the report is a valuable document, well worthy of study.

As regards internal conditions in India, on the 14th of December last at the meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, I passed in review at some length the general course of trade in the present year and made some observations on trade and industries and the general revenue conditions during the past five years. I need not traverse this ground again; since the war trade and industry, it is true, are suffering in every part of the world; but let me again express my conviction, based on a very careful scrutiny of conditions and I believe free from any undue optimism, that the change for the better in the past five years in India has been radical, the new tendencies appear to me to be salutary and conditions in my view are settling down to a stable situation favourable to slow but sure general progress in the course of trade and industry. In a vast country of the size of India and Burma, it is only rarely that seasonal conditions can be uniformly favourable to the operations of agriculture in every Province; and in the past season they have not been favourable everywhere; but there is no cause at present for general anxiety, though any conditions affecting agriculture prejudicially must always command very close attention, as it is the staple industry of the country.

When I last addressed you, I made some observations regarding agriculture, the research work conducted by the Central Government and the activities of the Provincial Governments and the need for co-ordination of all efforts connected with this great all-India interest. Since then Government of India have been in communication with the Secretary of State who has always shown the greatest interest in agricultural problems in India and the Provincial Governments upon this important question; and after discussion with the Provincial administrations, I and my Government have made concrete proposals to the Secretary of State which His Majesty's Government have been pleased to accept and which I will now announce.

In our examination of the problem it appeared clear that striking progress had been made in recent years in promoting the science of agriculture and introducing improvements, and that both the central institutions in charge of the Government of India and the Departments in the Provinces under the charge of Local Governments and their Ministers had every reason to be proud of the results of their activities and the sum total of their achievements. Nevertheless it seemed to be beyond dispute that in view of the great importance of the industry to India and of the large numbers of the population engaged in it, there was room for even greater and more extensive co-ordination of effort towards agricultural improvement. It would be clearly wrong to leave any possible step untried in making available to those concerned in the industry the fruits of the latest scientific and practical knowledge. Nothing which held out any promise of amelioration in conditions should obviously be left unexplored. It cannot be gainsaid that the average standard of production and the general level of rural welfare in India is lower than that prevailing in other countries where for some time past there has been marked concentration on agricultural problems. Agricultural practice also in many parts of India is admittedly still backward and primitive and the bulk of the agricultural population is generally unversed in methods of improvement found successful elsewhere. The situation evidently called for a remedy of a comprehensive nature; and measures for strengthening and expanding activities by co-ordination and for examining methods of applying the results of experience in other countries to the solution of our agricultural problems in India were patently required. We arrived at the provisional conclusion that it was unlikely that a Central Board of Agriculture in India could carry out the precise objects which must fall within the scope of such an inquiry; the latter to be successful must embrace a review of all the activities of the Central and Local Governments in connection with agriculture and scrutinise conditions from a new angle of view. It appeared to me and my Government that the requirements of the situation could only be met by the appointment of a Royal Commission, so constituted as to include members from outside India possessing knowledge and experience of agriculture in other countries together with members from India with local knowledge of agriculture and rural economy and in full sympathy with the Indian agricultural population.

The Secretary of State expressed sympathy with our provisional views and authorised us to consult Local Governments regarding the appointment of a Royal Commission and seek their advice regarding terms of reference. As regards the latter, the scope of the inquiry was a question of considerable importance. There was no intention to interfere with the control of the Local Governments over the subject of agriculture which in most of its aspects is both provincial and transferred. The object in view was to supplement, not to curtail, provincial activities. Draft terms of reference were accordingly circulated for

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discussion which kept those essential points in view, while enabling a Commission to make recommendations which would be of value to the Ministers responsible for the administration of agriculture in the Local Governments as well to the Central agencies connected with agricultural research under the Government of India. Another class of subjects also entered into our consideration, during the examination of suggested terms of reference, in which Local Governments were primarily and directly interested and which had in a sense a definite connection with rural conditions. These subjects included questions connected with land-ownership and tenure, rates of land-revenue assessments and irrigation charges. It appeared undesirable and unnecessary to invite a Commission, primarily devoted to examination and report regarding agricultural improvement, to burden their inquiry by exploration into these subjects for the purpose of making recommendations regarding them.

The Local Governments' replies showed substantial agreement on the question of the necessity for the appointment of a Royal Commission and on the scope of the inquiry and the questions to be included in the terms of reference. In addressing the Secretary of State we also advised that the Commission be instructed to place themselves in communication with the Local Governments in their visit to a Province and to carry on their investigations and to take evidence in close consultation with the Ministers responsible for agriculture, the co-operative movement and the other subjects coming under their consideration, and we made in addition some subsidiary explanations of the questions which in our view fell within the purview of the terms of reference we suggested. His Majesty the King-Emperor on the advice of his Secretary of State has now approved the appointment of a Royal Commission the purpose of which has to-day been announced in the following terms:

## “ Generally—

to examine and report on the present conditions of agriculture and rural economy in British India and to make recommendations for the improvement of agriculture and the promotion of the welfare and prosperity of the rural population;

and in particular, to investigate—

- (a) the measures now being taken for the promotion of agriculture and veterinary research, experiment, demonstration and education, for the compilation of agricultural statistics, for the introduction of new or better crops and for improvement in agricultural practice, dairy farming and the breeding of stock;
- (b) the existing methods of transport and marketing of agricultural produce and stock;
- (c) the method by which agricultural operations are financed and credit afforded to agriculturists;
- (d) the main factors affecting rural prosperity and the welfare of the agricultural population and to make recommendations.

It will not be within the scope of the Commission's duties to examine the existing system of land-ownership and tenancy, or of the assessment of land-revenue and irrigation charges, or the existing division of functions between the Government of India and the Local Governments. But the

Commission shall be at liberty to suggest means whereby the activities of the Government of India may best be co-ordinated and to indicate directions in which the Government of India may usefully supplement the activities of Local Governments."

The *personnel* is receiving the attention of the Secretary of State and will be announced later.

In my view this decision embodies a measure of cardinal importance in the interests of the premier industry of India and of its people, the great majority of whom live directly by agricultural operations or by occupations connected with the disposal of agriculture produce. The purpose it has in view, I feel sure, will commend itself to every class and creed and to all shades of opinion in this country. Its mission is wholly beneficent. It can bring nothing but advantage to the country as a whole and to those classes of the people whose interests must always be of supreme importance to both the Central and Provincial Governments. If it results, as I trust it may, in bringing to many thousands of homes a somewhat greater share in the wealth of this world, a higher degree of comfort and self-respect and a better basis for self-improvement and progress, I and my Government will be amply rewarded for our part in bringing it into existence.

Let me now turn to a question which I know is uppermost in the minds of the Members of the Legislature and which is causing me and my Government most anxious thought. I need not recapitulate the whole situation as regards the position of Indians in South Africa, but I may observe that out of the total number of the Indian community in South Africa, about one-third, approximately 102,000, are South African born and are the descendants of indentured labourers in Natal who were permitted to settle in the country on the expiration of their indentures. These people have made South Africa their home. I need not refer at length to the disabilities which have been imposed upon Indians in South Africa and are already in existence. They are of a serious and varied nature and embrace galling social disabilities, restrictions on the acquisition of political and municipal franchise except in the Cape, regulations regarding inter-provincial movements, licensing laws and restrictions on the acquisition of land. There has been continuous progress in legislation in South Africa prejudicial to the position of Indians and tending to make it increasingly difficult for them to prosper or even to exist in the Dominion. Against this legislation, my Government has made repeated representations with varying degrees of success. In reply to an address recently presented to me by a deputation from South Africa I have dwelt on the representations made by my Government regarding past legislation in some detail and I need not traverse this part of the history again.

In addition to these disabilities, further anti-Asiatic legislation has been recently introduced and is now pending before the Union Parliament. The purpose of this legislation is to empower urban authorities compulsorily to segregate Indians and to confine their rights of trading and of acquiring property to the limits of the areas assigned to them. The Bill also contains further restrictive provisions regarding the acquiring or leasing of land outside the coastal belt in Natal, immigration, importation of wives and families and inter-provincial movements. The principle of segregation is not new. It was recognised by a Transvaal Act of 1885, but it was not rigidly applied. Such locations as arose as a result of that Bill led the Asiatic Committee to condemn the compulsory principle. Indian sentiment has always been strenuously opposed to compulsory segregation as inflicting a racial stigma.

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It is felt to be a breach of the Smuts-Gandhi agreement and a repudiation of a policy believed to have been established consequent on the recommendations of the Asiatic Enquiry Committee. The principle has been denounced by the Government of India; and in Kenya, His Majesty's Government have decided that it is not to be applied in townships. The Bill therefore contains what appears to my Government to be a radically objectionable principle; and the existing aversion to this policy has been intensified by the statement of Dr. Malan in introducing the Bill in the Union Assembly last July when he said that the measure was based on the general proposition that the Indian was an alien element in the population of the Union, and that no solution of the question would be acceptable unless it resulted in a very considerable reduction of the Indian population.

I and my Government have kept His Majesty's Government in continuous and close touch with our general views regarding the position of Indians in the Union and this Bill in particular and with the strength of the feeling which the general disabilities imposed on Indians in South Africa and this measure in particular have evoked; we have also made it clear that we fully sympathise with the sentiment which all classes in India have expressed on these questions.

Since April last we have been in continuous correspondence with the Government of the Union regarding this legislation and communications are still passing; we have repeatedly pressed upon them the suggestion that the situation in our view calls for a Conference as regards their general policy towards Indians; in the alternative we invited them to make other suggestions likely to result in a permanent and satisfactory settlement. The Union Government have not found themselves able to agree to our proposals for a Conference, although they seemed inclined to agree to a Conference restricted to the consideration of a more effective repatriation scheme which in their words will result in "a considerable reduction of the Indian population in South Africa" and to proposals for the mitigation of economic competition between Indians and other classes in South Africa and they asked us to formulate concrete suggestions regarding the latter. We could not accept a Conference whose main object would be to reduce considerably the numbers of Indians in South Africa. We were however prepared to consider the possibility of smoothing any difficulties that may have been found in their existing scheme of purely voluntary repatriation and to make suggestions regarding vocational employment when we had sufficient data; but we asked for assent, before entering upon any discussion about voluntary repatriation or making suggestions regarding competition, to our sending a deputation to South Africa to collect information regarding the economic and general position of Indians in the Union. On November the 10th the Union Government acceded to this request and we forthwith despatched our deputation, the purpose of which has been announced and published. In sending the deputation, the immediate object we had in mind was the collection of information urgently required by us and we still kept in view the possibility of a Conference to which we attach the greatest weight. Some criticism was at first directed in India to the despatch of our deputation. This was chiefly based on the fact that news of the visit of a deputation of Indians from South Africa was received about the same time; but in fact our decision to send a deputation was reached long before the arrival of the first news



of the deputation from South Africa which only came to us in a Reuter's telegram on November 19th just before it sailed. It was obviously desirable for us to take immediate advantage of the assent of the Union Government to the visit of our deputation. We desired in the first place to lose no time in collecting information which would enable us to deal with the suggestions of the Union Government. We were faced besides with this critical situation that it was contemplated in South Africa to proceed at an early date in the new year with this Bill; it was therefore essential that we should at once take steps to put ourselves in possession of facts which would enable us to make effective representations before the Bill passed to the second reading stage and became accepted in principle. The interim reports received from the deputation have given us valuable information; and the deputation has collected facts which have been most useful to us in our representations and may assist in suggesting eventually a basis for fresh proposals. We still do not despair of persuading the Union Government that there is the strongest ground for a Conference or in the alternative for an inquiry before further Parliamentary steps are taken in regard to the pending legislation. The deputation had to be hurriedly despatched; this was inevitable in the circumstances; and I cannot too highly commend the expedition with which the members left India at very short notice and got to work on their task at a crisis when a delay of a few days even was a matter of very great moment. Dr. Abdur Rahman's deputation is engaged on a different task and is putting the cause of Indians in South Africa before the Government and the people of India on behalf of the section of public opinion in South Africa which it represents. Its purpose is not therefore identical with the object of ours. Moreover, the deputation from South Africa has been able to supply me and my Government with facts of considerable importance and to explain points which, in the absence of local information, may previously have been imperfectly appreciated or understood.

The whole question at the moment is at the stage of negotiation. Bear in mind that in our attitude towards the position of Indians in South Africa and to the principle of the latest legislation, I and my Government are at one with the general feelings in India. You may have confidence that we are striving our utmost to find a basis of discussion with the Union Government before the latter are committed to the principle of the Bill. The question has now to be dealt with in South Africa; and it must be remembered that the Government and the Ministry of the Union are responsible to their electorate; and that this legislation is regarded by them as domestic in its character. We have never doubted the right of South Africa to guide the course of their own domestic and economic legislation; but in our view there are far wider considerations involved in this legislation than local economic policy alone. In our opinion they have an important bearing upon the Empire as a whole. The proposed measures are not in our view in accordance with those principles which bind the Empire together in community of sentiment, and we hope that this aspect of the proposals may yet commend itself to South African opinion. Even on the narrower issue of economic necessity we believe, from the information now received by us, that the situation may be capable of adjustment in other ways. Our negotiations are still proceeding and we shall continue to press our views to the utmost of our ability. We cannot say whether we shall succeed in our endeavour; but I hope that a cause which, as it appears to us, has reason and equity on its side will ultimately prevail. Mean-

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while I rely on the Legislature to give me and my Government their confidence and support in a question upon which they are aware that our sentiments are agreed, and especially to remember, as I gratefully acknowledge they have hitherto borne in mind, that we are still in the course of negotiation with the Government of the Union in whose hands the initiative in conducting their own legislative programme lies. The principle of the Bill has not yet been finally accepted, and I hope that a basis of discussion with the Union Government may be arrived at which will give opportunity of stating and proving our case before any question arises of proceeding with that stage of the legislation.

To-day I shall refer to a few only of the many questions about to engage your attention during this Session.

The abolition of the cotton excise duty has always excited the lively interest of the Indian Legislature and naturally because all shades of opinion in India are agreed as to the necessity for the abolition of the duty. My Government have always stood by the pledge given by Lord Hardinge that the duty would be abolished when financial considerations rendered this action possible. When this Assembly again discussed this question last September and passed a Resolution in favour of the suspension of the duty with full cognisance that suspension would involve abolition, my Government were not prepared on the insufficient data regarding the financial situation available at that time to commit themselves to action which must be followed by the abolition of the duty in the ensuing budget. By the end of November, however, when the prospects of the year were more fully declared and more detailed estimates were available of financial probabilities, it appeared to my Government that no serious financial risk would be incurred by suspending the duty, and I took steps forthwith by the issue of an Ordinance, bearing in mind the desire expressed by the Chamber in their Resolution of September last, to suspend the levy and collection of the cotton excise duty with effect from the 1st of December; at the same time I announced that it was the intention of my Government, unless the financial position disclosed in the budget estimate for next year substantially failed to confirm anticipations, to place before the Legislature at the next Session proposals for the abolition of the duty. It has been asserted that my Government could not accept immediately the proposal of the Assembly in September because the Secretary of State was opposed to it. There is no foundation for this statement. The decision was that of my Government based upon financial considerations only. The proposal to suspend was not submitted to the Secretary of State until November when we had more reliable data upon which to base our conclusions. As regards the issue of the Ordinance suspending the duty, I may explain that I held myself entitled to pronounce that an emergency justifying its issue had occurred because of grave difficulties confronting the cotton industry at the time, because of the pledges given by my Government to do away with the duty at the earliest moment financial considerations permitted, and because of the views in favour of early action so clearly expressed in this Chamber in the September Session. It is a source of satisfaction to me to have been able to take the first step towards the elimination of an impost which public opinion in India has so universally condemned. It will rest with the Legislature to give sanction to its permanent disappearance. From the course of the September Debates,

I and my Government understand that the Assembly have approved of the principle that the abolition of the excise duty should take precedence over the remissions of Provincial contributions. I mention this point that there may be no misconception as regards the consequence of the action of the Assembly.

From my discussions on legal affairs while I have been in India, I have been greatly impressed with the very high regard and esteem in which the Judicial Committee of His Majesty's Privy Council are universally held in this country in connection with their Indian appellate work. Full credit for this public opinion is due in no small measure to the two distinguished Members of that Committee who have brought their experience and knowledge of Indian law to bear upon the problems submitted to them. I and my Government share the general opinion of the very valuable services rendered to India by these two Members of the final Court of Appeal; and we desire to ensure that India shall continue to benefit in the future from a system the advantages of which have been so unmistakably demonstrated. In order to perpetuate the benefits of the scheme it is desired in future appointments to secure persons from India of eminent qualifications as regards knowledge and experience of Indian law and practice. It is necessary to offer adequate emoluments in order to obtain men of this capacity: and it is suggested that in future appointments the emoluments of the two Members shall be fixed at £4,000 each per annum, half of which shall be a charge on Indian revenues. During the period that the salary is paid, any annual pension payable to these persons from Indian revenues shall lapse. Proposals which follow the lines I have mentioned will be put before you during the Session, and if they are approved, the future steps necessary to give effect to them will be taken without delay. I believe that the proposals will give India most valuable judicial facilities at a cost which is small in proportion to the admitted benefits to be enjoyed under it.

The Assembly have always taken a lively interest in our railway policy. In my recent review of the general conditions of Trade and Commerce in India I was able to show the very satisfactory results which have arisen from the re-organisation of the Railway Department and the separation of the Railway from general finance. I have previously expressed my appreciation of the same view taken by the Indian Legislature in regard to those changes which have been amply justified by the results. I am glad to be able to inform you that the Railways have been able satisfactorily to consolidate their financial position, and it has become possible to make a beginning in the direction of reducing rates and fares; concrete proposals are under consideration which it is hoped may shortly be put into effect. It is also now possible to take up another of the recommendations of the Acworth Committee and to establish some form of rates tribunal to adjudicate upon disputes between Railways and the public on questions of rates and fares levied. A Rates Advisory Committee will be set up for the purpose of investigating complaints of this nature and of reporting to Government upon them. The *personnel* of the Committee is now under consideration and it is hoped that the Committee will commence their duties at an early date.

Gentlemen, you will doubtless remember that when I last addressed the Legislature I laid special stress upon the important pronouncement of Lord Birkenhead in the House of Lords, which followed the series of

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Conferences between him and me. I then dwelt upon the message of sympathetic encouragement the Secretary of State, speaking on behalf of His Majesty's Government, had sent to India. I endeavoured to convey to the Legislature the impressions I had formed during my visit to England, and to reproduce to them the sentiments of friendship and goodwill that prevailed among the British people generally, and among all political parties in the Imperial Parliament. I strove on my return from England to persuade the political leaders of India to grasp the hand of friendship and goodwill held out to them and to abandon the attitude of threat or menace. I sought to convince them that this was the surest and the quickest way for India to travel along the road to her ultimate aims and aspirations. I asserted my own emphatic opinion to this effect as the result of observation during my stay in London. I quoted the Secretary of State's words, and they are worth repetition. He said:

"We desire and request goodwill; nor shall we be niggardly bargainers if we meet with that generous friendship which is near and dear to our hearts."

In order to refresh your memories, let me quote one passage from my own speech in August last, when I was referring to the possibility of the appointment of a Commission earlier than 1929, and after I had shown that His Majesty's Government did not attach special sanctity to the year 1929. I then said:

"The re-examination of the Constitution may take place at any time not later than 1929,\* when the British Government are persuaded that there has been genuine co-operation of the responsible Indian political leaders in working the existing Constitution, and when sufficient experience of these new, and still largely untried, conditions has been gathered to form the basis of a considered judgment and to enable proposals for the future to be made with some confidence."

I had hoped that the leaders of Indian political thought might seize the opportunity afforded to them by the attitude of 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. Whilst I fully understood and acknowledged the exigencies of political parties and the difficulties confronting political leaders, I yet hoped that conclusion would be reached and that action would be taken which would change the political atmosphere and lead to better understanding between India and the British people. It appeared to me that this was the golden moment for various sections of political opinion of India to combine in furtherance of the common purpose of advancing the interests of India by laying a surer foundation for her future relations with the British Government and people. But to my great regret I must confess that the realisation has fallen short of the extent of my hopes. So far, the appeals made with the object of promoting harmony and concord have failed to evoke that clear and definite response from India which should have been unmistakable in its manifestations and have left no room  
 • for doubts or ambiguities. A more generous response would, I feel sure, have evoked generous action. The heart of Britain would have been won by immediate and sympathetic acceptance of the advances she had made and a new situation would have been created based upon mutual trust and goodwill. I shall refrain from discussing the various currents of Indian political thought that have found expression in diverse directions since

I last addressed you. I desire to avoid comment that might possibly accentuate differences between political parties and Government. Yet I must speak my personal opinion with frankness. A study of the various speeches and of numberless press articles has led me to regret the more that there should be such hesitation in plainly recognising and accepting the new situation to which Government's invitation pointed. As I have indicated, I had cherished the thought that the attitude of Government would have made more cogent appeal to the generous minds of India. But it would appear that the opportunity is not to be seized; it is to be allowed to lapse, and indeed, in some quarters, I gather, that the intention, as at present expressed, is to reject it. And yet I believe that there is already the beginning of the growth of better relations. I wish the evidence had been more marked; but nevertheless, I think I have discerned it, and I deem it fair to state, as I have already acknowledged on previous occasions, that there is some improvement in the general attitude, some change in the tone and temper of politicians towards Government. Here again, I wish it had been more definite and unmistakable and also more general. Although the Government in the last Session of the Assembly was opposed and defeated on various occasions, yet there was to my mind a greater disposition manifested to consider problems on their merits and to discard purely obstructive tactics. I have examined most carefully the debate of last September on the Government Resolution relating to the Muddiman Committee Report, and have studied the terms of the amendment passed by this Assembly. Whilst I willingly recognise that some individual opinions were expressed suggestive of a desire to meet Government's advance, the language of the Resolution seems to admit of no doubt as to the intentions of those who supported it by their vote. Possibly ingenious minds may discover here or there in the formula adopted some evidence of disposition to accept the invitation. But I must reluctantly confess that scrutinising these terms with the desire to regard them as favourably as possible, 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 in Indian progress—an era of more sympathetic understanding, more widespread trust and more universal good-will.