

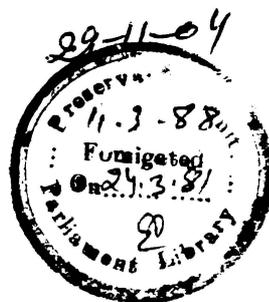
Wednesday, 25th February, 1931

THE
COUNCIL OF STATE DEBATES

VOLUME I, 1931

(10th February to 2nd April, 1931)

FIRST SESSION
OF THE
THIRD COUNCIL OF STATE, 1931



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COUNCIL OF STATE.

Wednesday, 25th February, 1931.

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

ELECTION OF FOUR MEMBERS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EMIGRATION.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : The result of the election held yesterday for the Standing Committee on Emigration is as follows :—

The Honourable Mr. A. Hamid.

The Honourable Mr. G. A. Natesan.

The Honourable Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das.

The Honourable Mr. Bijoy Kumar Basu.

RESOLUTION *RE* INDIANISATION OF THE INDIAN ARMY.

THE HONOURABLE MR. ABU ABDULLAH SAIYID HUSSAIN IMAM (Bihar and Orissa : Muhammadan) : Sir, I rise to move the Resolution which stands in my name, namely :

“That this Council recommends the Governor General in Council to form a committee of experts and members of the Central Legislature to frame a scheme for the Indianisation of the Indian Army.”

Before saying anything on the merits of my Resolution, Sir, I wish to state that by his reply to my question of yesterday His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief has completely disarmed me. I have lost most of the points that I was going to urge in favour of my Resolution. Like a seasoned soldier he has defeated me simply by his frankness. But there are still some things, which make it expedient that I should press this Resolution, and in doing that, I wish to bring to the notice of the Government as well as of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief certain facts which have not been considered in their true perspective. Firstly, we have been hearing for a long time of there being rival schemes in existence. The one has been suppressed, and the Skeen Committee has been in the public eye for the last four years and still Government have not found time to pass any considered resolution on its recommendations. As His Excellency's predecessor pointed out in the other place last year in the Budget discussions, some of the recommendations of this Committee were accepted in deed, not in words only ; but others were neither taken into consideration, nor has any opinion of the Government been given on those points. They were not unimportant points. They did concern certain aspects of the question which were very important in themselves, and were deserving of consideration. Sir, as His Excellency in reply to parts

[Mr. Abu Abdullah Saiyid Hussain Imam.]

(b) and (c) of my question of yesterday said, there has been no year in which all the vacancies, European and Indian, were filled. As regards the Europeans, we know that you have got a reserve in the English Army to draw upon. But as far as the Indian officers' ranks are concerned, there is no reserve to draw upon, and those places which are not filled in go by default. The result is that the pace of Indianisation of the officers' rank of the Army, although Government have decided to accelerate it, is retarded. Through whose fault? That is the question. His Excellency says that there are not a sufficient number of candidates available. The Skeen Committee in their report set out fully the drawbacks in the present system of recruitment. There are four efficiency bars to be passed before a man can go up to the examination. First of all he must go to the Deputy Commissioner or the District Magistrate of his district, who has got the discretion to reject him. Then the Commissioner and then the Local Government does it, and last of all the application comes to His Excellency the Viceroy. Those persons only who have been successful in all these tests are allowed to sit for the examination. As was ably pointed out in another place in the same report, there is no tradition amongst us as there is in England—family traditions—which will permit of a good supply. There is no doubt there is family tradition among the martial classes. But they have always been serving in the ranks. The result is that they have not a sufficient amount of capital at their disposal to send their boys to the officer's examination and course. There is an expense of Rs. 14,000 to be met by the parent for the education of the boy for military training. If he fails, the result is that he is good for nothing, the money is absolutely wasted; there is no opening for him. If he passes, well and good. If he fails, there is absolutely no other line open to him, whereas in England this is not the case. India being poor, the parents cannot afford to spend such an enormous amount. That is why it has always been said that an Indian Sandhurst should be established. This was the recommendation of the Committee as well. But Government have taken refuge in the fact that the Committee recommended its establishment in 1933. Quite correct. The Committee did not contemplate the formation of the military college before that time. But then you cannot by merely wishing to have a military college create it out of nothing. You have got to have a scheme ready. The Public Works Department must have their specifications. They must build the houses, build the hostels, and everything necessary. These things cannot be had in a day. If you think of it now, it cannot come out the next day. Some preliminary steps are necessary, and these have not been taken. In the Round Table Conference too, while this matter was being discussed, the promise was not only given but it was repeated that it will be done, and that it will not go into the limbo of the waste-paper basket. Even in the Round Table Conference there was a difference of opinion as to its desirability and as to whether Indianisation should be rapid or slow. Mr. Jinnah was the advocate of setting a pace that will be fast enough, while the others were cautious. Well, as regards that, when you are going to give India what has been called the substance, and not the shadow, of Dominion Status, then it is right and proper that the Indianisation of the officers' ranks should be accelerated. In the Montford Report there are also a few words about this. That report stated that with the change of the times an increasing number of commissions should be granted to Indians. That was in 1919. Well, the number was 10 formerly. Now His Excellency has very kindly increased it to 25. But still he complains that there are not applicants enough for those places. Now, Sir, what was thought to be good enough in the matter of

Constitutional advance generally in 1927-28 is not thought to be sufficient by Nationalist India to-day. As will be evident to the House and to the Government Benches, whatever was the demand of Indian Nationalists before the preparation of the Nehru Report, even that does not satisfy them now. They want more. Therefore it is necessary that the pace of Indianisation and the manner and the way of it should be changed. Therefore, Sir, it is necessary that something should be done. As regards the formation of the committee, at the Round Table Conference a promise was made that a committee would be appointed to consider the question of establishing an Indian Sandhurst and that was referred to by His Excellency in replying to my question. I have brought forward this Resolution so that in addition to the question of the formation of the college the other cognate and concurrent matters may also be considered by the committee, such, for instance, as the supply of recruits and the ways in which military service can be popularised and the people induced to go in for a military career. There is no difference of opinion between the Government and Nationalist India as to the necessity for Indianisation. There is no difference of opinion also in regard to the establishment of an Indian Sandhurst. The only difference arises in regard to the method. I would appeal to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief to consider the question in its broadest aspects and to accept my Resolution.

With these words, Sir, I move the Resolution.

THE HONOURABLE MAJOR NAWAB SIR MAHOMED AKBAR KHAN (North-West Frontier Province : Nominated Non-Official) : Sir, in the first place I would beg my Honourable friend to withdraw his Resolution, as it is rather early to frame a scheme for the Indianisation of the Army because the Round Table Conference is not finished and the recommendations of the Defence Sub-Committee have not been brought into practice. I do not know what form the recommendations may take and, as negotiations are being carried on at present, it would be better for my friend to bring in his Resolution when he is on more sure ground as to the facts of the case and the final decision of Parliament. But, Sir, as a soldier I would like to give him some advice. The Indianisation of the Army is a long cherished, earnestly desired and eagerly sought-for wish of us Indians, civilians as well as military people. The year 1917 saw the inception of the idea of King's Commissions for Indians. The Skeen Committee encouraged it and I now believe the Defence Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference has given it a definite shape and life. The Simon Commission, Sir, I am afraid treated the matter cavalierly and anything but encouraged it. The suggestion of the Skeen Committee for an Indian Sandhurst in 1933 was turned down by the Government and the Simon Commission in its settlement of the question evaded the point. The phrase of the Skeen Committee's report, "subject to the requirements of military efficiency", oft repeated by the Simon Report, was considered an obstacle to the rapid Indianisation of the Army. But Sir, the fact is that as more opportunities, better encouragement and more facilities are provided and the idea that the Army is something belonging wholly to India grows, efficiency is bound to increase. The findings of the Simon Commission that the Indian Army is primarily to defend the frontier of India, which is more or less an Imperial concern, and consequently should be under Imperial control until such time as there is no British element left in it and until the Indian Army is considered efficient enough to defend her frontier, are considerably modified by the Defence Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference. The Simon Report found it impossible to lessen the British element at present, whereas the Sub-Committee referred to say that the British element should

[Sir Mahomed Akbar Khan.]

be reduced to the lowest figure. That, Sir, gives in brief the advance that the idea has made in the short interval between the Simon Report and the Round Table Conference. Of course, Sir, what the Indian Delegates said at the Round Table Conference about the defence of India and the Indianisation of the Army is not due to sudden impulse. It is the result of long and deliberate study of the problem. Complete Indianisation of the Army is not the work of a day or a year or even of a decade. But if urgent attention is given to the Resolution of the Defence Sub-Committee the great desire of Indians may find a way to realisation. As for the establishment of an Indian Sandhurst, Sir, I can see absolutely no difficulties. We had a similar institution in 1902-03 in the form of the Imperial Cadet Corps. There were two British officers, a Major and a Captain, a British Sergeant-Major and an Indian Adjutant to train cadets, and the cadets were quite efficiently trained by that staff at Dehra Dun till 1909. About promotion and other kindred matters, I would say that as the rules stand it takes a life-time to rise to a Lieutenant Colonelcy. I do not suggest that the years of training should be curtailed, but commensurate with the standard of efficiency more opportunities should be provided for rising to the higher ranks. As for recruitment, Sir, I think in the first place that there should be a sufficient number of Indians on the Selection Committee, because they would know the people better and their advice would be more useful. Secondly, Sir, I think that whatever percentage of King's Commissions is given to Indians, it should be divided into two categories, (a) one-half of the posts should be reserved for candidates of the martial races and the children of officers of the Indian Army, and (b) the remaining vacancies should be filled up by other suitable candidates. Of course both categories will be subject to strict military examination.

Lastly, Sir, I would like to say something about the British element in the Army. The matter is of great importance. Sir, I think the presence of this element is most essential. The presence of the British element, apart from necessity or policy or other motives must necessarily impart the ideas of discipline, impartiality and efficiency. I do not know, Sir, what is going to be the percentage of British officers in a regiment in future, but an immoderate reduction is bound to impair the efficiency of the regiment. Moreover, in case of an Imperial need, when Indian troops are ordered abroad to work under the War Office, the presence of British officers in the Army would facilitate movement and co-operation; as in the Great War the Colonial troops had to borrow a good number of regular officers in order to bring them to a high pitch of efficiency before putting them into action. As regards the second line of troops, the Territorial, the Auxiliary and the Indian Army Reserve, if they are wanted on active service abroad, they too will require a fairly large number of British instructors to bring them into the proper form with a view to make them co-operate with the regulars in action.

As regards the point raised by my Honourable friend that there are no signs of the Indian Sandhurst, I can refer him to the fact that there are several military schools and colleges in the Punjab. Particularly I would mention one for his consideration. There is the Prince of Wales College in Dehra Dun. It has got all the facilities. Whenever the Government intend to start an Indian Sandhurst, that building could be utilised. There are other buildings. I do not think that you will find that the scheme has to wait for any period of time on account of the building. I think that before this Committee is appointed the whole thing will be thrashed out. Buildings will not be of much consequence. The institution could be started when something definite is settled.

THE HONOURABLE SARDAR BAHADUR SHIVDEV SINGH UBEROI (Punjab : Sikh) : Sir, I readily and most heartily lend my support to the spirit of the Resolution just moved by my Honourable friend on my left. It has given us the chance of discussing this very very important point. It is to the good luck of India that many of the clouds which were hanging very long over the scheme of Indianisation of the Indian Army—that is all urging this plea that India cannot attain a representative sort of Government or Dominion Government as long as she is not able to defend herself—are removed by the proceedings which recently took place at the Round Table Conference by a Sub-Committee in London. Some time ago it was said that Indians possessed the martial qualities of a soldier in great abundance and it was said also by a responsible officer of the Crown that an Indian cannot become an efficient arm of a military unit unless he is educated but the difficulty was advanced that an educated Indian becomes effeminate. It is good luck that all these clouds have been removed.

Let me, Sir, read to Honourable Members of the House the proceedings of the Sub-Committee No. 7 which was appointed at the Round Table Conference in London. This was the most influential and highly representative Sub-Committee. There were eight Princes on this Sub-Committee, Sir—six Princes and two representatives of the Princes ; there were 17 Indians of very high abilities and holding a very high position in India ; and there were five Europeans. This Committee was presided over by Mr. J. H. Thomas. After discussions and deliberations this Committee arrived at the following conclusions :

“Subject to the above the Sub-Committee arrived at the following definite resolutions ;—

- (1) The Sub-Committee consider that with the development of the new political structure in India, the Defence of India must to an increasing extent be the concern of the Indian people, and not of the British Government alone.
- (2) In order to give practical effect to this principle, they recommend—
 - (a) That immediate steps be taken to increase substantially the rate of Indianisation in the Indian Army to make it commensurate with the main object in view, having regard to all relevant considerations, such as the maintenance of the requisite standard of efficiency. (Mr. Jinnah dissented and desired a clear indication of the pace of Indianisation.)
 - (b) That in order to give effect to (a) a training college in India be established at the earliest possible moment, in order to train candidates for commissions in all arms of the Indian defence services. This college would also train prospective officers of the Indian State Forces. Indian cadets should, however, continue to be eligible for admission as at present to Sandhurst, Woolwich and Cranwell.
 - (c) That in order to avoid delay the Government of India be instructed to set up a Committee of Experts, both British and Indian (including representatives of Indian States) to work out the details of the establishment of such a college.”

These are, Sir, the conclusions of the Sub-Committee which was appointed at the Round Table Conference for considering the question of defence. Three points are quite clear from the conclusions this Sub-Committee arrived at ; one, that the defence of India is more the concern of Indian people and not of the British Government alone. It means that the responsibility of defending India should be thrown more on the shoulders of Indians than on the shoulders of the British people ; in other words, it means that the Indianisation of the Indian Army should be accelerated. The other recommendation, Sir, is this, that steps should be taken to start a college for training cadets in the military line on the lines of Sandhurst in India ; and the third recommendation is that

[Sardar Bahadur Shiv Dev Singh Uberoi.]

the speed of Indianisation should be accelerated. As regards the establishment of a college, I was very glad to hear from His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief yesterday that he was thinking seriously over this point and possibly a committee of experts should be constituted in the near future, having the members of the States also on that, in order that the recommendation of the Sub-Committee might materialise. We wish early steps to be taken and I submit to His Excellency's consideration at this place that early steps should be taken to form such a Committee. At this stage I certainly recommend that that committee of experts should contain some representatives of the Central Legislature also besides the representatives of the Indian States, because the people of British India should have the chance also of giving the benefit of their experience to this committee.

As regards the other point, Sir, namely, that steps should be taken to increase substantially the rate of Indianisation of the Indian Army, I beg to submit for the consideration of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief that the number of Indian candidates should be doubled in the next examination which is taking place some time in June next. At present, as His Excellency explained yesterday in reply to a question, 20 candidates are taken annually by open examination which is held twice a year, i.e., 10 candidates are taken every six months and 5 nominations are made by His Excellency the Viceroy from the ranks of those officers who hold the Viceroy's Commission at present in the Army. What I beg to suggest at this moment for His Excellency's favourable consideration is to give effect to the conclusion of the Sub-Committee formed at the Round Table Conference that the number of Indian candidates to be taken by competition should be doubled. No time should be lost in considering much over this point and the number of candidates to be taken at the next examination should be 20 instead of 10 by open examination.

As regards the appointment of a committee as suggested by my Honourable friend, I do not feel that I am on very sure ground in supporting him in that respect, because he himself explained that there was the Skeen Committee, the report of which was published in 1926; he also explained to the House that the Government has passed no Resolution as regards the recommendations embodied in that report. I very well remember that the illustrious predecessor of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief explained on the floor of this House that many of the recommendations of the Skeen Committee are given effect to. One of the recommendations of the Committee is for the establishment of a Sandhurst College here in 1933. It is only 1931 now and there is not a long range of years between 1931 and 1933. So I do not think there is any great utility in having another committee to go into the matter of Indianisation, but I would certainly urge very strongly on the Government of India and His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief to accelerate the speed of Indianisation, or at least to accede to my humble suggestion of doubling the number of Indian candidates.

I would like to urge one more point because that is a long vexed question, and that is about the 8-unit scheme. According to this scheme the Indian cadets who are given His Majesty's Commission are allowed only to enlist themselves in these 8 units, of which six are infantry, if I am not wrong, and two are cavalry. In any case I am sure that there are more infantry than cavalry regiments. One of the recommendations of the Skeen Committee which had its unanimous verdict is that that scheme should be entirely abandoned. They have given very cogent reasons which I need not repeat here

because I am sure Honourable Members would have studied that report. One of the common sense reasons which I venture to advance in regard to this matter is that while an Indian cadet who gets the King's Commission should be bound down to enlist in one of those 8 units and may not be given the chance of enlisting in any of the other units, it is quite possible that the father or the grand-father or the great grand-father of that Indian cadet might have been associated with a certain regiment which does not fall within the category of those 8 units. One of the reasons which was given at the time when the 8-unit scheme was constituted and was fixed up was to try the efficiency of Indian officers in those units. I do not think that a trial is necessary in this respect. Indians have proved their fitness in every theatre of war and recently in the theatre of the last Great War. I do not wish to attack very much the reasons for starting the scheme, but if this was the reason I do not think it holds good to-day, because it has been amply proved that Indians are fit to hold their own in the military line even in the officers' cadre. How the test could come off I am not sure unless another war breaks out which we do not wish. No country is prepared to go to war. I beg to refer to the present decision of the Sub-Committee that it is no longer necessary to test the efficiency of an Indian in the position of an officer in the military. That reason which His Excellency Lord Rawlinson advanced in his speech for making that 8-unit scheme does not hold good now and does not exist now. I beg His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief to give his sympathetic consideration to this very important recommendation of the Skeen Committee.

Yesterday His Excellency said, as my friend has already remarked, that there has been no year in which all the vacancies were filled. This, in other words, as I understand, Sir, means that in some years the vacancies were not filled; that is to say, Indian candidates did not pass in such numbers as were required. With regard to that point my friend referred to the question of efficiency bars. I do not think that that term is appropriate. He spoke of submitting the application to the Deputy Commissioner, then to the Commissioner and then to the Local Government. I think these are bars which have been kept for some political reasons and show that a candidate, even otherwise very fit, can be stabbed in the dark by a confidential report from any of these officers of Government. I know of one particular case which I should like to mention for the information of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief. It is that of a son of a Risaldar-Major of an Indian cavalry regiment belonging to the Sialkot district; he was a young man of good education—I think he passed first in Arts. His grand-father was also Risaldar-Major in the Army. Field-Marshal General Birdwood was very familiar with that family. I happened to recommend that boy to be taken for the examination in Sandhurst, but for political reasons his name was not sent up. In these times, Sir, such considerations and such bars should be entirely removed. If a man is found physically fit by the medical authorities there should not be any bar to his being permitted to appear for the examination.

There is one other point which I want to urge on His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief with all respect.....

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The Honourable Member has, as usual, reached his time limit.

THE HONOURABLE SARDAR BAHADUR SHIVDEV SINGH UBEROI: I hope you will permit me to continue for a minute more, Sir. The Board for interviewing the candidates.....

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : I can only allow the Honourable Member to go on if he speaks on the Resolution. The Resolution recommends the constitution of a committee. So far, in 15 minutes, the Honourable Member has not referred to a committee.

THE HONOURABLE SARDAR BAHADUR SHIVDEV SINGH UBEROI : Then I have nothing more to say, as I have spoken about the committee.

THE HONOURABLE MR. G. A. NATESAN (Madras : Nominated Non-Official) : Sir, the Resolution of my Honourable friend, Saiyid Hussain Imam, wants the Governor General in Council to form a committee of experts and members of the Central Legislature to frame a scheme for the Indianisation of the Indian Army. In so far as he has focussed discussion upon this important question of the demand of the Indian people for the rapid Indianisation of the Army, my Honourable friend deserves thanks. But, Sir, I am somewhat surprised that in the debate that has ensued, considerable stress should have been laid on the recommendations of the Skeen Committee when it is publicly known that during the time of Lord Reading's Viceroyalty an expert committee was appointed and a report was made that it was quite possible to have complete Indianisation of the Indian Army within a period of 28 years. For reasons best known to the authorities that report—the Shea Report—was kept as a secret document and until reference to it was made during the proceedings of the Defence Committee in London in connection with the Round Table Conference nobody knew anything of it. When that fact was cabled to India very naturally there was a great deal of surprise that a scheme for the Indianisation of the Army—complete Indianisation which could, if I may say so, without loss of efficiency and to the best interests of India and England be completed within 28 years—was shelved and kept as a secret. It was due to the patriotism and the public spirit of one of our Indian members, and also to the candour and frank honesty of Mr. Thomas, the President of that Committee, that the contents of that document were made available to the members of the Defence Committee. It has been my privilege to follow very closely the proceedings of the Round Table Conference and to acquaint myself with the details as far as I can gather from reports and from talks with men who have played an important part. That cut and dried scheme was made available but for some reason or other it has not been published. Now, Sir, with this fact in view that the recommendation of the Defence Committee itself is that there should be a committee of experts formed to consider the whole question, I think we are really, if I may say so, not using our time to profit in discussing the Resolution of my friend Saiyid Hussain Imam or some of the details mentioned by my Honourable friend who preceded me. The only question which should now arrest the attention of every responsible statesman, Indian or British, is how to effect a rapid Indianisation of the Army in consonance with the spirit of the demand of the Indian people for Dominion Status. That is the only question which ought to engage our attention. I am perfectly content to leave this question at this stage for the decision of the committee of experts which I have no doubt His Excellency the Viceroy, who has been taking a great deal of keen interest in seeing that the recommendations of the Round Table Conference are brought to fruition soon, will not neglect. I am anxious that we should not bother ourselves about the 8-unit scheme or the Skeen Committee because, if this committee is appointed, as has been suggested by the Defence Committee, in which His Excellency the Viceroy is taking a keen interest, as has been evidenced both publicly and privately, our object will be served. We should not bother ourselves with

these small demands for increasing the pace of Indianisation. Our attention should be focussed upon the fundamental thing, the rapid and complete Indianisation of the Army as has been proposed by the sub-committee formed at the time of Lord Reading which for some reason or other has been suppressed but which has now been brought out. Whatever scheme of Indianisation is brought into force, it must be one which will fit in completely with our demand for Dominion Status. I hope my Honourable friend Saiyid Hussain Imam will see the necessity for not pressing this Resolution.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF : Sir, before I reply to the main Resolution, I should like to correct two small mistakes, or rather mis-statements, that were made by the Honourable the Mover. Candidates for the Army do not have to go now before the Deputy Commissioner or the Local Government. Applications come direct to the Government of India. This change was made as the result of the Skeen Committee. The second error he fell into is on the question of expense. The Government of India give a grant-in-aid of £200 at least to each cadet—also since the Skeen Committee.

I must say, Sir, that the general tone of this debate rather surprised me. I am very glad that this Resolution has been moved because it gives me an opportunity of explaining what is the true situation in this matter. From the tone of most of the speakers one would imagine that they had not read the proceedings of the Round Table Conference. Most of the speeches were couched in a vein as if there was a definite opposition on the part of His Majesty's Government, on the part of the Indian Government, and on the part of me as Commander-in-Chief, to more rapid Indianisation or to the creation of an Indian Sandhurst. That is not the case. Surely if you have read the proceedings of that Conference and subsequent speeches, you should have realised that it is the declared intention of His Majesty's Government and the declared intention of the Indian Government to carry on the work of the Round Table Conference in India as soon as they possibly can, and the two Governments are almost in daily communication as to the ways and means of carrying out that policy. With regard to the recommendations of the Sub-Committee on Defence, we have had most of its resolutions read out during the debate, but nobody referred to the statement of the Prime Minister, who, you will remember, dealt with it in his speech which, I believe, has also been published as a White Paper. In that speech he said that if it were possible to put those recommendations into operation without the delay required for the building up of a full constitution, His Majesty's Government would immediately get into touch with the Indian Government and see if that were not possible, and he referred especially to the creation of an Indian Sandhurst. His Majesty's Government have very recently been in communication with the Government of India on that subject and suggested that we should set up that committee of experts as soon as we possibly can to examine the details of the establishment, as soon as possible, of an Indian military college. We referred back to His Majesty's Government to get from them what was their actual definition of an "expert". The expression usually means "professional experts", and would rather seem to have excluded non-officials altogether. His Majesty's Government have now replied to that communication and this is their definition :

"The term 'expert' would include a person, whether official or otherwise, who is qualified by special knowledge or experience to contribute to the solution of those particular problems, those particular problems being to work out details of the establishment of a college in India to train candidates for commissions in all arms of the Indian Defence services."

[His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief.]

That does not look, I think, as if there was any undue delay in the matter. As regards more rapid Indianisation, the situation is not what one would imagine from the speeches of several Honourable Members. To hear them talk one would have imagined that we were talking in the days before Lord Rawlinson or the Skeen Committee. We are not. His Majesty's Government have accepted the principle of more rapid Indianisation, the Indian Government have agreed, and I as Commander-in-Chief, with all the weight of responsibility on my shoulders for the defence of India, have also accepted it. I have been here now for nearly three years and I have naturally devoted very close and anxious thought to this question and I have now quite decided in my own mind what I am prepared to recommend to the Government of India. It is impossible naturally for me to say what that recommendation is, because it has not been put before the Government of India or before His Majesty's Government. But I think that when my intentions and hopes are made clear, those recommendations of mine will be found to represent, consistent with our being able to obtain sufficient candidates of the right stamp, a very substantial advance on any rate of Indianisation that has hitherto been attained. As regards the composition of the Committee, the Government of India have not yet decided on it. It is now under consideration and we have the further question at the moment of bringing in the States. You heard an Honourable Member read out the recommendation of the Sub-Committee that we should also open the new Indian Sandhurst to cadets of the Indian States, and we propose to take advantage of the meeting of the Chamber of Princes next month to obtain their views on that subject and how they should be represented on that committee, and we have every reason to hope that that committee will sit very soon after the Government of India gets to Simla. Meanwhile, the moment I came out here I at once set up an inquiry among my officers who are now hard at work on the collection of facts and figures and statistics, financial and otherwise, which it will be necessary to put before that committee when they commence their deliberations.

Now, Sir, I think from what I have said I should be able to satisfy the Honourable Member that there is no question of burking either the question of further and more rapid Indianisation or the establishment of this committee. But before I close I would like to draw the attention of this Honourable House to the vast difference in the atmosphere in which this committee will sit and the atmosphere in which any previous committee has sat. There were three previous committees, the Military Requirements Committee of Lord Rawlinson, the so-called Shea Committee and the Skeen Committee. To my mind they all sat in an atmosphere of unreality. The principle of Indianisation was only very partially accepted and the principle of the establishment of an Indian Sandhurst was constantly turned down. The situation now is profoundly altered. The young plant of Indianisation has now had seven years' growth, and if it is still delicate and its constitution is not yet wholly satisfactory it has now the declared support of both Governments, the Government at home and here, while an Indian Sandhurst has been actually approved by both Governments and will be an accomplished fact before very long. The new committee will therefore deliberate not in an atmosphere of unreality but as practical men endeavouring to submit practical proposals on a declared policy. I do not minimise the difficulties, Sir, that will be before them. They will have to recommend how we shall be able to produce a body of young men capable of training the Army in peace and of leading it in war, men whom the magnificent soldiers of the Indian Army

will be content to follow when their lives are at stake. It is useless to compare our Indian defence problems here with those of the great Dominions of the British Empire. None of those Dominions has got 500 miles of frontier on which at any minute serious upheavals may occur, in which 500,000—half a million men—armed with modern rifles can be put against us and to deal with whom the highest standard of military efficiency is necessary. Nor has any other Dominion anything like our internal problem. It is useless to say that because you can Indianise the civil services rapidly you can Indianise the Army at the same rate. You may make political experiments, you may make administrative experiments. If they fail nothing very much of great harm happens. Young men of moderate efficiency in the civil services can be carried by their more efficient comrades until they have learnt their work. In war that is very different. A regiment is a very delicate thing, Sir. The psychological factor in a regiment counts far more than the practical one. In war the moral is as three to one of the material factor. If men who fight have not complete confidence in the men who lead them and the men who are on each side of them that delicate machine fails and failure in war is very much more serious than in political or administrative matters. Once the bullet has left the rifle no man can draw it back again, and the failure of one subaltern on a picket may not only imperil his own picket but may imperil the whole of a Brigade and with it perhaps the cause for which his country is fighting. I cannot impress upon you sufficiently, Sir, the immense importance of the deliberations of this committee that is about to be assembled. It largely depends on the advice they give Government whether the new Indianised army will be a success or not. (Applause.)

THE HONOURABLE MR. ABU ABDULLAH SAIYID HUSSAIN IMAM : Will His Excellency say something about the committee to which Mr. Natesan referred ?

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF : What does the Honourable Member wish me to say ?

THE HONOURABLE MR. ABU ABDULLAH SAIYID HUSSAIN IMAM : Was there ever such a committee ?

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF : I conclude, Sir, the Honourable Member refers to what is known as the Shea Committee, which was presided over by General Shea who was then Adjutant General and acting Chief of the General Staff. That Committee made certain recommendations which another Honourable Member is quite right in saying were not published and brought to notice until the summary of them was placed before the Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference. I have no comments to make on them. I consider myself that all of these committees are washed out. We start anew on a totally different basis, because a policy is now accepted, whereas those committees were endeavouring to recommend a policy to the Government. The new committee will now meet to advise the Government how best to implement a declared policy.

THE HONOURABLE MR. ABU ABDULLAH SAIYID HUSSAIN IMAM : In replying to the debate I am very glad that His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief has cleared the ground and removed much of the mistrust that was being felt by Nationalist India towards the Army Department. His announcement that the principle of Indianisation has been accepted as an accomplished fact by the Government and by the Commander-in-Chief and by the British Government is really something to be proud of, and it is a happy day for India that this thing should have happened. I have nothing further to add to what I said before except in regard to one or two minor points which I wish to stress. What I suggest is that in order to prepare the ground for

12 NOON. the training college that has been accepted by the Round Table Conference preliminary steps should be taken. I am glad that His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief has assured us that all the materials for this committee are being collected and that everything possible is being done to expedite the work of the committee. But the building question remains.

Now, the question remains about my Resolution. It was brought forward simply to clarify the situation and to get as much information on this point from the Government as possible. I think that object has been attained. Government are ready to form a committee and the definition of "expert" as given by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, does, I think, include some of the Members of the Central Legislature as well. We also have got some soldiers among us and I think they will represent our side in the future committee. Nothing more remains, and I beg leave of the House to withdraw this Resolution.

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

RESOLUTIONS *RE* RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, ETC.

THE HONOURABLE MR. H. M. MEHTA (Bombay : Non-Muhammadan) : Sir, I withdraw my Resolution.*

THE HONOURABLE MR. K. V. RANGASWAMY AYYANGAR (Madras : Non-Muhammadan) : Sir, my Resolution† is rather similar to what was withdrawn just now by Mr. Mehta.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : The Honourable Member is aware of the rule, I think, that if he is proposing to withdraw his Resolution, he has to confine himself to a bare statement to that effect ; he is not allowed to make a speech.

THE HONOURABLE MR. K. V. RANGASWAMY AYYANGAR : Sir, I do not want to complicate the delicate situation, and I withdraw my Resolution on account of the talks going on between His Excellency Lord Irwin and Mahatma Gandhi.

* " That this House recommends the Governor General in Council and the Viceroy in view of the sympathetic response to the Indian demand for Dominion Status at the Round Table Conference to set free all political prisoners in order to secure the sympathy and confidence of the Indian people and co-operation of all the sections of different political views, for the easy working of the new responsible form of Government."

† " This Council recommends the Governor General in Council to release all political prisoners and to invite the leaders of the Congress to a Conference to work out the details of the schemes, the broad outlines of which have been arrived at as a result of the Round Table Conference."

DATE FOR THE ELECTION OF SIX MEMBERS TO THE CENTRAL ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RAILWAYS.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : In connection with the election of six Members to serve on the Central Advisory Council for Railways the following 16 nominations have been received :

The Honourable Khan Bahadur Nawab Sir Muhammad Muzammil-ullah Khan.

The Honourable Mr. Syed Abdul Hafeez.

The Honourable Mr. Satyendra Chandra Ghose Moulik.

The Honourable Mr. Bijoy Kumar Basu.

The Honourable Raja Bijoy Sing Dudhoria.

The Honourable Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das.

The Honourable Mr. H. M. Mehta.

The Honourable Mr. Mahmood Suhrawardy.

The Honourable Sardar Charanjit Singh.

The Honourable Major Nawab Sir Mahomed Akbar Khan.

The Honourable Diwan Bahadur G. Narayanaswami Chetti.

The Honourable Khan Bahadur Chaudri Muhammad Din.

The Honourable Mr. Abu Abdullah Saiyid Hussain Imam.

The Honourable Rai Bahadur Lala Jagdish Prasad.

The Honourable Mr. P. H. Browne.

The Honourable Rai Bahadur Radha Krishna Jalan.

The election will take place to-morrow and it will be according to the principle of proportionate representation by means of the single transferable vote—the same form of election which the Council undertook yesterday.

I would remind Honourable Members of what I said yesterday that if any Honourable Member is thinking of withdrawing it is very desirable that he should make up his mind at the earliest possible moment. Ballot papers have to be printed by to-morrow morning and it is necessary for the Council Office to give orders to the press as soon as this meeting is over. The election will take place to-morrow.

STATEMENT OF BUSINESS.

THE HONOURABLE SIR BROJENDRA MITTER (Leader of the House) : Sir, during next week the Council will only sit on Saturday, the 7th March, on which date there will be the general discussion of the Budget.

During the week commencing the 8th March, the Council will be occupied on Monday, the 9th, and Wednesday, the 11th, with non-official business. The Council will deal with Government business on Tuesday, the 10th. So far as I can at present foresee, it is unlikely that there will be any Government business for the 12th March.

In order to distribute Government business more evenly, it is proposed to transfer to the paper for the 10th March the motions relating to the Indian

[Sir Brojendra Mitter.]

Ports Amendment Bill and the Vizagapatam Port Bill which are at present fixed for to-morrow. Motions will also be made on the 10th March for the consideration and passing of the Indian Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill.

I am unable at present to make any further prediction as to the course of Government business which will depend on events in another place. I shall take the first possible opportunity of making a statement on the subject.

The Council then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, the 26th February, 1931.
