

8th February, 1922

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES
(Official Report)

SECOND SESSION

OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1922



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 8th February, 1922.

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

ATTENDANCE OF MEMBERS AT THE PRESENTATION CEREMONY AND ROYAL DURBAR.

Mr. President: I wish to bring to the attention of the Assembly a matter which is not strictly the business of the Assembly, namely, certain arrangements which are being made on the occasion of the arrival of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. It is desirable for the authorities to know beforehand, if possible, how many Members of this Assembly intend to be present at the Public Arrival of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales at the Selimgarh Bastion on Tuesday, and, similarly, how many Members will be present at the Durbar in the Fort on Thursday. There will, therefore, be placed on the table of this House a notice list containing the names of Members of the Assembly, and they are requested to initial in each column whether they intend to be present or not. I think it will be desirable for them to put down the words 'no' or 'yes' under the respective items of the Presentation Ceremony at Selimgarh Bastion and the Durbar at the Fort. I may say that at the Arrival of His Royal Highness the two Chambers will be presented individually to His Royal Highness.

THE INDIAN LUNACY (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Honourable Sir William Vincent (Home Member): Sir, I move:

'That the Bill further to amend the Indian Lunacy Act, 1912, be taken into consideration.'

I explained the objects of this Bill the other day. I have received no notices of any amendments, so I conclude that it has not met with hostile criticism, but I should like to refer to two points which have been mentioned to us by Local Governments in this connection. One Local Government asks us to provide in the Bill for recoveries from Indian States of the cost of maintenance of their lunatics maintained in asylums in British India. It is quite obvious that we could not provide for that under any law in British India, but we have no doubt whatever that we shall be able to effect what is desired by friendly arrangement with the States.

Another Local Government desires that the provisions of the Bill should be so framed as to enable the cost of maintenance of a lunatic to be charged to the province to which he belongs, if they can prove that he has not resided in the province in which the maintenance order was made for five years. Well, all I can say is that the arrangements which we have proposed in the Bill, and which I explained to the Assembly the other day seem to us to be more satisfactory. I do not think there is anything in the Bill to which any Member of this Assembly will take exception, and I will not delay the House further over this motion.

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: Sir, I move that the Bill be passed.

The motion was adopted.

RESOLUTION RE: COMMITTEE ON NEW ARMS RULES, 1920.

Baba Ujagar Singh Bedi (Punjab: Landholders): The Resolution which I am to move to-day, runs as follows:

'This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he may be pleased to appoint a Committee with a non-official majority to examine the New Arms Rules, 1920, and to submit their report before the next Session, making specific recommendations, with a view to further amend them.'

The Resolution which I have just read out, I think the Honourable Members will agree with me, is of sufficient importance to call for a close examination. The Honourable Members might have observed that every now and then some amendments or Resolutions are brought forward, with a view to remove some of the more glaring defects of some of the provisions in the present Arms Rules. This is satisfactory so far as it goes, but I might take the liberty to point out that a mere piecemeal solution of the problem or mere tinkering with it, will not serve the purpose. Therefore it is that I have thought it advisable to move this Resolution, which, in my humble judgment, seems comprehensive enough to cover all the points raised in this House and elsewhere. I recognise that some efforts have been made by the authorities to meet the popular demand in this matter, and the Arms Rules, 1920, are the evidence of the Government's solicitude—but I am afraid that even the revised provisions, as they stand, do not seem successful in satisfying the public.

Let us examine the question from the financial standpoint. According to the old Law, a person who desired to secure a licence for a weapon, had to pay annas 8 only per annum per weapon. But the existing Rules of 1920 demand Rs. 5 for each gun and Rs. 10 for each revolver. Now, Sir, I beg leave to ask on what principle this enhancement is based? Is it with the object of restricting the number of persons who will take up licences; or is it with the object of raising an appreciable amount of revenue from fees? If the former is the case, then, Sir, may I take the liberty to ask, how many persons have applied for the grant of a licence, how many have been refused and, why? And if the latter is the case, then, Sir, is it not a very serious hardship that the fee has been raised twenty times all at once?

Again, Honourable Members are, of course, aware, that dacoities in villages or towns are of frequent occurrence and that the dacoits, being armed, are able to molest and loot the people, without let or hindrance. The people are without the means to challenge their activities and to drive them away. To support my argument, may I point out that in localities where the people are allowed to possess arms, we seldom hear of dacoities, and if perchance they do take place, the people successfully meet the situation. In the interest of the people, as well as the Government, it seems necessary that there should be some sort of provision in the present Arms Rules, which may afford adequate facilities to the villagers who are the victims of such aggressions.

Examining the Law itself, may I draw the attention of the House to Schedule I, clauses (b), (c) and (d) of paragraph 6 of the Arms Rules, 1920:

'The following persons and their retainers shall be exempted :

- (b) The first class Sardars of the Deccan and Southern Maratha Country States; the first class Sardars of Gujrat; and such members of the Talpur family and Jagirdars and Zamindars in Sind as the Government of Bombay may designate;
- (c) The great Zamindars of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and Assam;
- (d) The great Sardars and Jagirdars of the Punjab and North-Western Frontier Province.'

Now, Sir, may I ask whether there is any definition or line of division which would enable us to differentiate between the relative rank and status of these Sardars ?

I would go a little further and read out paragraph 11 of Schedule I, which grants the privilege of exemption from procuring licence for arms. Clauses (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f) and (g) read :

'11. All individual members of the undermentioned classes who were as such exempted under the Indian Arms Rules, 1909, immediately before the coming into force of these rules :

- (a) members of the Order of Knighthood;
- (b) persons holding the Kaisar-i-Hind Medal;
- (c) persons holding titles conferred or recognised by the Governor General in Council;
- (d) persons holding swords or other arms received as gifts from the Governor General in Council or a Local Government;
- (e) persons holding certificates received on the occasion of the assumption of the title of Empress of India by Her late Majesty Queen Victoria;
- (f) retired officers (other than subordinate, warrant, petty and non-commissioned officers) within the meaning of the Indian Army Act, 1911, in receipt as such, of a pension; and
- (g) landholders and members of the Municipal Board or a Committee designated for exemption in any lists issued in this behalf by a Local Government.'

Now, if I am right in my interpretation of what I have read out just now, those persons or classes of persons who were honoured before 1920 are regarded as exempted from procuring a licence for arms, but those who have been honoured after 1920 are deprived of this concession. And the words of paragraph 11-A, *viz.* :

'All persons who, before the first day of January, 1920, had been admitted as members of the Distinguished Service Order, the Imperial Service Order, the Indian Order of Merit or the Order of British India or had been awarded the Victoria Cross, the Military Cross, the Volunteer Decoration, the King's Police Medal, the Volunteer Long Service Medal, or the Indian Distinguished Service Medal'

strengthen my argument still more. I submit, Sir, that one fails to understand why any precedence or preference should be given to those who were honoured before 1920 and step-motherly treatment should be the lot of those honoured after that year.

In the last Session at Simla, I asked a few questions regarding the present Arms Rules. One of those questions was whether the persons who had been awarded a Sword of Honour were considered exempted only in regard to the awarded sword or whether the exemption extended to all sorts of arms for their personal use.

In answer to my question, the Honourable the Home Member was pleased to reply that such persons as were awarded a Sword of Honour,

[Baba Ujagar Singh Bedi.]

were exempted for all sorts of arms for their personal use for their lifetime (*vide* Legislative Assembly Debates, Question No. 69, No. 3, Volume II, pages 159-60). In view of this Answer, I am quite surprised to see paragraph 13 of the Indian Arms Manual, 4th edition, which I shall read now :

'Persons holding swords or other arms received by them as gifts from the Governor General in Council or a Local Government' are exempted from taking out licenses for 'such swords or other arms as have been so received, together with ammunition for any fire-arms so received.'

Now, here I would draw the attention of the House to the discrepancy which presses itself on our notice, namely, that while the Honourable the Home Member, in his reply to my question, exempts such persons as have been awarded a Sword of Honour from procuring a licence for all sorts of arms, and does not point out any differential treatment between those who were honoured before 1920 and those honoured after that year, as is the case in clause (d), paragraph 11, pages 26 and 27 of the Indian Arms Rules, yet the Indian Arms Act Manual tells a somewhat different story by inserting an altogether new provision, I mean paragraph 13, which is not to be found in the Law itself. Taking the Manual itself as our guide, we note still more puzzling disparities. While clause (d), paragraph 11, page 110, exempts :

'persons holding swords or other weapons received as gifts from the Governor General in Council, or a Local Government,'

from taking out licences, paragraph 13 of the same Manual (page 111) strikes a different note and says that :

'such persons as holding swords or other arms' are exempted only for 'the original sword or arm awarded to them'.

Now, Sir, is it not reasonable to say that, seeing that a licence for a sword is not needed in certain parts of India, it is really no concession to the owner of a Sword of Honour, to exempt him from taking a licence for his Sword of Honour.

Under the previous Law, a person who was awarded a Sword of Honour was exempted from obtaining a licence for all sorts of arms for his personal use, but, Sir, in the existing Law, the word 'honour' has been entirely omitted. The object of amending such Laws as the Arms Act, is to afford facilities to the public and not to impose fresh restrictions upon them. I venture to submit that the revised Arms Act has deprived the people of some of the privileges they enjoyed previously. Again, Sir, it seems hardly fair that the military officers, who retired before 1920, should be exempted and that the civil officers, who have been and are serving the Government equally well, should be deprived of this privilege.

There remains another point which might throw further light on the importance of the subject. The magistrates, who are empowered to grant licences to the public or who are empowered to recommend any person for exemption, are themselves not exempted under the existing Law. And what will the other gazetted officers think and what do they think on finding that they were exempt under the old Act, but that the existing Law has taken away from them all their privileges. And what do the Honourable Members of the Council of State, Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Councils, think of their position, when they find themselves deprived of this concession, although they are part and parcel of the Government.

There are some other points upon which I will not touch, in order not to overtax the indulgence of the House, but which all the more support

my plea for the appointment of a Committee for closely examining and overhauling the existing Arms Rules. Quite a limited minority enjoys the privilege of exemption, while of those who formerly were exempt, there are many, who, for no apparent reason, have been deprived of their privilege. These feel their deprivation very bitterly. Here is a question which requires prompt consideration. I am not very keen about exemptions. Let there be no exemptions at all. But what I mean to say is that, if there are any exemptions, or facilities are afforded to certain persons, there seems no justification why others should be deprived of the same.

India has entered upon a new era. New hopes, high ideals and lofty aspirations are awakening the people. We are aspiring towards a better, higher and nobler status. Under the suzerainty of Pax Britannica and the guidance of her time-honoured institutions, we are sure of a great and bright future. India has amply proved her loyalty in many a field. Should we not then, at least our advanced, cultured and educated classes, be trusted? Have we got no claims upon the British Government? I cannot believe for a single moment that the English Government, known for its great sense of justice and equity, should fail to appreciate our services. I fervently hope, therefore, that the Government will have no objection to accede to my Resolution. It is not my contention or object to delete or substitute any new provision in the existing Rules. Nor do I propose, in any way, that arms may be freely distributed, without any distinction, so that there may be two different armies in the country. But my submission simply is, and it is, in my humble judgment, very modest, that a Committee be appointed to consider some of the glaring defects which I have just pointed out. If the Committee think them expedient, they may place them before the House. I hope Honourable Members will agree with me that the present Arms Rules are of such a nature that they deserve reconsideration. It is with this view that I have moved this Resolution for the appointment of a Committee to reconsider these Rules. The reason why I have suggested a specific time before the Committee should meet and submit their report, is that the importance of the subject deserves and demands close and immediate attention. It has been noticed more than once that there has been great delay in the submission of reports by Committees. Thus the grievance to be redressed is postponed, most painfully to the parties concerned, to a distant future.

I have dilated upon the *pros* and *cons* of the question at some length, and I leave it now to the judgment of the House.

With these few words, I beg leave to introduce my Resolution. And, Sir, if my Resolution is accepted, as it stands, then, I would suggest the following Members to serve on the Committee

The Honourable Sir William Vincent (Home Member): I rise to a point of order. Apart from other objections, this is not in the motion before the House.

Mr. President: The question is:

'That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he may be pleased to appoint a Committee with a non-official majority to examine the New Arms Rules, 1920, and to submit their Report before the next Session, making specific recommendations, with a view to further amend them.'

Beohar Raghurib Sinha (Central Provinces: Landholders): Sir, I rise to support very heartily the Resolution moved by my Honourable friend,

[Beohar Raghur Singh.]

Baba Ujagar Singh Bedi. I am thankful to the Government that they made an attempt to meet the popular demand to recast and amend the Arms Act of old, which was so badly criticized, being wholly imperfect and conservative, and brought forth the New Arms Act as it stands now. Though there has been a decided improvement in some of the provisions in the old Act, the New Act has not succeeded in satisfying the public as would appear from the strong criticism with which the New Act was met by even the moderate section of the Indian Press. Several Honourable Members of the then Imperial Council, at the time of the introduction of the Bill, such as the Honourable Major Malik Sir Umar Hayat Khan, the Honourable Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha, the Honourable Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, who complained, and rightly complained, of the curtailment of the exemption list. The Honourable Pandit Malaviya remarked :

'I find that the Bill and the Resolution taken together are not liberalizing measures. I, therefore, object to the introduction of the Bill and, I submit, Government ought to adopt a measure of really liberal character.'

The rules framed under the Act have still crippled some of the salient features of some of the provisions of the Act. Provisions and rules still go to disclose a good deal of distrust towards the people of India—even towards such classes of people as zamindars and landholders, whose loyalty cannot be questioned, and who form a strong bulwark in strengthening the British Empire, and whose interests are so much inter-linked with good government, law and order.

As regards the exemptions, the Honourable Sir William Vincent remarked, during the discussions on the Bill in 1919 :

'I am quite prepared to admit, however, that there may be some ground for complaints in regard to the point the Honourable Major Malik Umar Hayat Khan has raised. The Government of India are quite open to re-examine any points of that kind. I am glad, he has brought it to my notice and I will have it re-examined.'

Now, Sir, I respectfully put to the Honourable the Home Member whether that question was satisfactorily re-examined in consultation with any non-official Members. In other words, was any Committee appointed for discussing that point? I do not know. In view of the changed political outlook, in view of the national consciousness having been aroused, and after the participation of the Indians in the world war and the services rendered by them, it is but meet that the policy of the Government in this direction must be completely changed and the Arms Act and Rules be totally recast and liberalized in conformity with the aspirations of the people. The appointment of a Committee, as advocated under the Resolution, is perfectly justified in view of the many glaring defects and discrepancies, some of which have just been mentioned by the Honourable Mover, and last, but not least, in view of the Honourable Sir William Vincent's promise to re-examine the question of exemptions, which was left open. I am sure, the Resolution will be accepted by the House unanimously.

Rai Bahadur S. P. Bajpai (Lucknow Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I rise to give my whole-hearted support to the Resolution moved by my Honourable friend, Baba Ujagar Singh Bedi. The New Arms Rules were amended with a view to satisfy public opinion in India. Now, we have to see whether the New Rules have satisfied public opinion. So far as my information goes, they have failed to satisfy officials and non-officials, Europeans and Indians, landowning classes and the educated

classes. We are perfectly dissatisfied with the present arrangement and will remain so as long as the Government choose to have certain classes of people exempted from the operations of the Arms Rules. There seems absolutely no justification why other classes of people (who are on the same level with the classes of people exempted under the New Arms Rules) should not also enjoy the privilege of exemption. I should like to illustrate my point by giving a concrete instance. In the Province of Oudh, the taluqdars, as such, have been exempted from the operation of the Arms Rules. Some of the taluqdars do not pay more than Rs. 500 as land revenue, while very big zamindars, paying as much as twenty-five thousand rupees, have to take out licences. Then, again, while the taluqdars are exempted, those who pay income-tax on incomes ranging as high as fifty thousand rupees are not exempt.

Sir, again, though the taluqdars have been exempted, Members of the Indian Legislature and the Provincial Legislatures are not exempt. I fail to see how the taluqdars are superior in any respect to the Members of the Indian and Provincial Legislatures. If it is argued that the taluqdars have great stakes in the country, it should not be forgotten that the Members of the Indian and Provincial Legislatures represent India.

Then, Sir, Rai Sahibs and Khan Sahibs, who received those titles before 1919, are exempt from the operation of the Arms Rules, while people who have received the titles of C.S.I. and C.I.E. after 1920 are not exempt.

The Honourable the Home Member assured the Members of the Indian Legislative Assembly that persons who have got swords of honour or fire-arms from the Government are exempt, but, as has been pointed out by the Honourable the Mover of the Resolution, they are exempt only from those arms which they have got from the Government, not from all the arms. I think a person who gets fire-arms from the Government should at least be considered a very reliable man and should be exempted from all the fire-arms which he keeps for his personal use.

Sir, during the course of the last few months, a Circular was issued by the Government of India laying down that exempted persons cannot keep more than a fixed number of fire-arms, say five. I don't think this restriction is reasonable or desirable.

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: How many do you want?

Rai Bahadur S. P. Bajpai: We may not want more, but why don't you trust us? Then, Sir, a man whose income is Rs. 3,000 a year is entitled to take out a licence to keep fire-arms

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: That is not correct.

Rai Bahadur S. P. Bajpai: I think there is a Circular to that effect; at least this is my impression. (Laughter.) Sir, I believe, I am correct, though I leave this point because, unfortunately I have not got a copy of the Circular in my possession at present. Sir, Indians, if they happen to go abroad, can enjoy the privilege of keeping any number of fire-arms, while they cannot do so in India. Again, people in Native States can keep any number of fire-arms, but surely more dacoities are not committed in Native States than in British India. I again say, if Government want certain classes of people to be exempted, all those who are on the same level with them should also be exempted. Sir, the best way to discuss this matter is

[Rai Bahadur S. P. Bajpai.]

to refer it to a Committee with a non-official majority. I insist upon a non-official majority, because I am sure their recommendations will carry much more weight with my countrymen. With these few remarks, I beg heartily to support this Resolution.

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: Sir, I think I can shorten this debate very considerably by rising now. I should like to take the opportunity of explaining what the underlying policy of the Government, in regard to this question of arms, is, but the first point I want to make clear is that there is no question of amending the Arms Act, nor have the provisions of the Arms Act anything to do with the question now before the Assembly. The position is shortly this. For many years, the administration of the Act was attacked by the Indian public, chiefly because it was said and fairly said that there was a distinction between Europeans and Indians in that Europeans were exempted from taking out licences for fire-arms, while Indians, outside certain privileged classes, had not got this right. Well, the Government of India had prolonged correspondence with the Local Governments as to what amendments in the Rules were necessary to remove the difficulties that then arose, and two main principles emerged out of that discussion:

- (1) that there should be no racial distinctions, and
- (2) that the Government must retain the power to impose restrictions to prevent arms, and particularly fire-arms, from falling into the hands of lawless people. That is a restriction which, I am sure, will commend itself to every Member of this House.

While details were under discussion, a Resolution was moved in the Legislative Council urging the appointment of a Committee of officials and non-officials to consider the amendment of the Rules, and a Committee was appointed. At that time, certain gentlemen, now officials, were non-officials, and a Committee was appointed, including my Honourable colleagues, Dr. Sapru, Mr. Sarma, Sir Surendranath Banerjee, Sardar Sundar Singh Majithia and Mr. Ironside. There were others, but I have not got a record of them here. I think it may fairly be said that that was a strong Committee. The conclusions arrived at by Government on the report of that Committee were published in 1919 and detailed effect was given to them, after taking the further advice of the Local Governments, in the Indian Arms Rules, 1920. Immediately the Rules were issued, they were subjected to a great deal of criticism; much of it was perfectly justified; some, I think, was not justified. The criticisms were directed partly against the policy and partly against the administration. As regards the administration, I think neither the authorities nor the applicants were familiar with the new procedure which the Rules proposed. Since then, we have been in communication with the various Local Governments, indeed with every Local Government, on points of detail, and, whenever any defect in the Rules has been brought to our notice, we have endeavoured at once to remedy it. I do not, however, claim that the Rules are perfect in any way now, but I think they are a great improvement on the Rules as originally issued, and I myself do not believe that there is much substantial ground for complaint. At any rate I may say this that, subject always to the two main principles which I have explained to the House, we have endeavoured to meet criticisms and to mitigate any inconvenience of which complaint has been made to us.

Sir, it has been suggested to-day that the Rules might be so modified as to make the Act work on a purely financial basis. Now, I do not think, that is a safe proposition in this country at present. If fire-arms were very generally distributed to every one who paid a small fee even amongst the lawless classes, I think we should be exposed to much greater dangers even than we are at present. I anticipate also that we should have had far greater loss of life in recent disorders and very much more expenditure would have to be incurred in arming and equipping our police, and also in increasing their strength. I do not think I need press this point further. Everyone knows the dangers of fire-arms being used in faction fights, in religious disputes, and land riots, everyone will admit that in our recent troubles, things would have been much worse if a large number of the men, say those who, in Oudh, rose against the landlords and the Government, had been armed with fire-arms.

And here may I pause to advert for just a moment to the incitements offered by certain Muhammadan extremists to their co-religionists to undertake war against the Government. One of the reasons why that has not been undertaken, according to some, is admittedly the fact that they are not in possession of fire-arms. Whether that is true or not, it is to some extent illustrative of the danger which a general distribution of fire-arms would involve.

I now turn to the question of exemptions. Sir, when we amended the Rules, we originally contemplated the complete abolition of exemptions. That was our first idea, but we were then met by objections from everybody. It was asked: 'Why should not this loyal subject, this important person, be exempted as he has always been' and so on. Finally, we adopted the policy of restricting these exemptions as much as possible. It is true, this has led to anomalies, for instance, I am asked why holders of certain titles and honours conferred prior to 1919 are exempted, while those, on whom a similar honour has been conferred later, are not exempted. The reason for that was simply this, that it was put to us very strongly by a large number of men that they had enjoyed the privilege of exemption for many years and it would be a great hardship if Government withdrew from them that privilege. We accepted this view, but we thought that it was by no means necessary to continue an unnecessary and undesirable system of exemptions to new holders of the same title. That was the only reason why this particular class of exemptions was limited to that extent.

At the same time, the Government of India are, as I think I have indicated on a previous occasion, quite prepared to have this matter examined by a Committee, subject to the two really vital principles which I have already explained to the House, namely:

- (1) that there shall be no racial distinctions, and
- (2) that power must be retained to prevent arms from falling into undesirable hands.

I think that the House will admit that both these are legitimate principles for any Government to adopt.

The Honourable the Mover cited another instance of an anomaly in the Rules in regard to persons holding Swords of Honour. Well, I have not got the Rules by me, . . .

Baba Ujagar Singh Bedi: They are here with me if you would like to see them.

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: I do not know whether the Honourable Member's copy is corrected up to date, but, in any case, if it was a question of single anomaly of that kind, I think the House would agree with me that it would not be necessary to appoint a Committee to inquire into it, and it could have been put right if he or any other Honourable Member of this House had approached the Home Department and had pointed out the fact. However, Sir, the Government do not object to the appointment of a Committee for other reasons when, however, the Honourable Mover suggests that the Committee must report by next Session and put forward as his reason for that proposal a statement that Committees of this Assembly have always delayed their work, then, I am entitled, so far as the Home Department at least is concerned, to join issue with him. There are many Members here who have sat with me on Committees during last year and I challenge them to say—I know they will not attempt to do so—that Government has been negligent in this matter. We have had reports, from all of the Committees with which I have been connected, submitted at the earliest possible moment. So many Members of the Assembly have sat with me on these Committees that it really is not necessary for me to emphasize this point, I mention this to show that the Honourable Member's charge against the Government is in no way justified. All the same as I have no doubt that the Committee will be able to submit some kind of report by next Session—I doubt whether it will be able to submit a final report by then—I have no possible objection to accepting the Resolution in the form that he has proposed, although I cannot say that I accept all the reasons that he has given. Another point raised by the Honourable the Mover was that it is necessary to arm villagers for their protection. Well, that is a proposition that seems, on the face of it, not only plausible but sound. Unfortunately, our experience shows that that is not the effect of a free distribution of arms. In Malabar, for instance, in the most recent case we have had, arms had to be taken away from the villagers, not because they were using them too freely, but because the Moplahs at once took them away from the owners and used them against the Crown. I myself saw the house of a big Nayyar from which five weapons had been taken in this way. Then, I remember a district in the United Provinces where a number of licences were issued to all villagers for purposes of protection, and I regret to say that the result was a large increase in the number of armed dacoities. Similarly, in Bengal, weapons were very largely distributed at one time for protection against dacoities, but it often happened that they merely formed a sort of bait for dacoits, as was the case in Ireland. The truth is that villagers often fail to use the arms to repel dacoits but surrender them at once for fear of further depredations by their enemies.

Mr. K. Muppil Nayar (West Coast and Nilgiris: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Most of the arms were taken from police stations.

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: As far as Malabar is concerned, it is true, there were occasions on which arms were taken from police stations; but, generally speaking, that is not the case, and we cannot consider Malabar conditions as normal. However, on the main question of the appointment of a Committee, I am only too glad to have the assistance of Honourable Members in examining this most difficult question and I have much pleasure in accepting the Honourable Member's Resolution.

Maulvi Miyan Asjad-ul-lah (Bhagalpore Division: Muhammadan):
(The Honourable Member spoke in the vernacular*.)

Mr. E. A. Spence: (Bombay: European): I move that the question be now put.

Mr. President: I presume that the Honourable Member who moved the Resolution, wishes to reply.

Baba Ujagar Singh Bedi: Sir, I would like to say a word or two. Sir, at the very outset, I would like to point out that I am very grateful to the Honourable the Home Member for his broad-minded policy in accepting my Resolution as it stands. I have already pointed out, Sir, that it is not my contention, nor do I want, that arms should be so freely distributed that there should be two different armies in the country. I have also pointed out that it is not my object that there should be exemptions at all, and that, if there are to be exemptions, they should not be limited to any persons or class of persons. There is at present no definition at all of great Sardars and Jagirdars, as given in these Rules. These were some of the anomalies that I wanted to bring to the notice of the House as deserving close examination at the hands of a Committee. Sir, I am grateful that my Resolution, as it stands, has been accepted by the Government.

Mr. President: The question is that the following Resolution be accepted:

'This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he be pleased to appoint a Committee with a non-official majority to examine the New Arms Rules, 1920, and to submit their report before the next Session, making specific recommendations, with a view to further amend them.'

The motion was adopted.

DISTURBANCES IN THE UNITED PROVINCES.

Sir Frank Carter (Bengal: European): Sir, with your permission, I should like to ask the Honourable the Home Member whether he has any information to give this House regarding the very serious disturbances which have occurred at Chauri Chaura and Bareilly in the United Provinces. The news in the papers this morning is most alarming.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member gave no notice before, that he wished to raise this question, but perhaps the Honourable the Home Member will be able to give a reply at the end of the business to-day.

The Honourable Sir William Vincent (Home Member): I think I may be able to give the information after the luncheon interval.

RESOLUTION RE: WITHDRAWAL OF MARTIAL LAW IN MALABAR.

Rao Bahadur C. S. Subrahmanayam (Madras ceded districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, the Resolution, which I have taken the responsibility to move, reads as follows:

'This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he may be pleased to withdraw the administration of Martial Law in Malabar in the Madras Presidency, and further to state what arrangements are intended to be made for the future administration of the Martial Law area of Malabar till normal conditions are restored.'

* The original speech together with a translation will be printed in a later issue of these Debates.

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Sir, it will be within the recollection of Honourable Members that, when we met at Simla at the end of August or the beginning of September, the outbreak of the Moplahs necessitated the Governor General promulgating an Ordinance proclaiming Martial Law in Malabar. This subject was discussed at the very first meeting of the Assembly, and the situation, as it stood then, was described by the Honourable the Home Member. In that discussion, I took part and I ventured to state that the Ordinance was framed with great care and circumspection, and the sting that usually attaches to Martial Law was not there. Nearly six months have passed during which the Ordinance has been worked and submitted to the test of practical application. I am glad to say, I have no reason to think that the working of the Ordinance has been otherwise than fair and equitable. That branch of the administration of Martial Law with which we lawyers in this Assembly are more intimately connected has, as Honourable Members must know, evoked no adverse criticism. The tribunal of three Judges have done their work with patience and with that detachment which we as lawyers value more than anything else. The presiding officer of that tribunal is a Judge of considerable experience and has worked for a good many years in the districts which I represent and with which I am intimately connected. He has a reputation for judicial calmness and impartiality. The success, as I can see, of the tribunal is not only due to its *personnel* but also to the terms and conditions of selection and administration laid down in the Ordinance. The persons tried by this tribunal have received a fairer consideration of their cases than they would have received from the ordinary Courts of the country, for, as we practising lawyers know, persons accused of offences against the public peace generally get short shrift from the ordinary Courts. Some of the records in these cases have come up before the High Court and they have been examined and these cases have received wide publicity. No error has been discovered in the trial of these cases. The next branch of the martial law administration, *viz.*, that which is concerned with the executive side, has not, as far as I can see, evoked any adverse comment of any considerable volume; but there have been grumbings here and there. That, of course, in the circumstances one could naturally expect. The ameliorative side of the work, relief to victims which was necessitated in that area, cannot be said to have been taken up by Government with such energy as one would desire. But such work as has been taken up and carried on was by public-spirited citizens in and outside the area, notably by our Bombay friends. (Hear, hear.) The Governor of Madras and Her Excellency Lady Willingdon had also been there, and as we all know Her Excellency takes a great deal of interest in works of this character. But one thing should not be forgotten. The Honourable the Home Member went down to Malabar and Madras to see things for himself and for the Government of India, and I have the authority of a Moplah to say that the Honourable the Home Member's visit to Madras and the conference and interviews he held there have effected—as I am told—a considerable change for good for the calm administration of affairs in the Presidency. It is a double-edged compliment that I am paying; that is, while what I say is a compliment to the Home Member, it is rather a hard thing for the Government of Madras. But, unfortunately, the reputation of the Government of Madras for sanity of judgment is at a very great discount.

All this kept the martial law administration free from attack. There was one untoward incident which led to very serious consequences,—the

Moplah Train Tragedy, as it is called. It was a culpable piece of negligence by someone or other which gave rise to a very great noise; it was no doubt exploited by those who wanted to attack Government; but it has to be judged in its true perspective. It has added to the pile of agony with which the Government of Madras was loaded, but, after all, the Government of Madras is very much to blame in these matters. We had recently a communiqué from the Government of Madras giving us an abstract of the findings of the Committee that sat to inquire into that train tragedy affair. Well, all that I can say is that the conclusions of that Committee appear to me to be lame and impotent. It is not going to give any satisfaction to the most moderate of people, and here I may say that Government has got into the habit of supporting and white-washing and screening every one of its officers, no matter whether they have erred grievously or not. That habit pervades every branch of the Government and that is at the root of so much adverse criticism from all quarters which is levelled against Government. While Government is ready to say harsh things against its critics, they have never, as far as I can see, in recent years, taken to task its incompetent, or erring subordinates. Unless Government changes its attitude in this matter, we, who wish to stand by Government, believe in Government and who have nothing but support to give to Government in all its correct actions, we also become a little bit diffident about the impartiality of Government.

Now, Sir, Honourable Members from Madras and others have been asking me in anxious tones and with bated breath whether I had given deep thought to the Resolution which I had tabled, whether I had thought of the consequences of the withdrawal of Martial Law, and so I simply told them 'yes' and 'no,' because deep thought is not very much in my line; thought, speech and action have to follow, in my line, as quick as possible; you cannot think over a thing long; and therefore I told them that I had given such thought to it as I could. Section 72 of the Government of India Act says:

'The Governor General may, in cases of emergency, make and promulgate ordinances for the peace and good government of British India or any part thereof, and any Ordinance so made shall, for the space of not more than six months from its promulgation, have the like force of law.'

And so on. So, the martial law ordinances that have been passed, must *inso facto* lapse at the end of this month, and, therefore, before they lapse and before Government takes any action, it is time to bring up the matter before the Assembly so that we may be in a position to know what the intentions of Government are. Therefore, my Honourable friends, who had certain misgivings about this Resolution, will now be satisfied that it was a very essential matter to have moved this Resolution, for otherwise it would have died a natural death and other steps would have been taken. The condition at present, as far as one can see, though very much less intense, cannot justify the reversion of the method of administration to its normal state. There ought to be some special measures taken to continue the administration of this disturbed area.

With regard to these disturbances, I venture to make a few remarks. Honourable Members in this House probably never heard the word 'Moplah' till these disturbances; and, as regards Malabar, they might have thought it was some part of India with which they had not much to do. This Moplah, it must be said, in normal times and in his normal mood, is a thrifty, hardworking and enterprising individual. He occupies himself in tilling the land, in retail trade, and, to a certain extent, in the coasting trade; and the more wealthy men in the wholesale trade as well. They

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 are a compact clannish body, fanatically religious. Now, Sir, what is their condition to-day after these disturbances? Thousands of them have died in a mad, hopeless endeavour to subvert the Government. Some thousands are now in jail, and I have no doubt that a very large number are runaways from justice in hiding and in exile, and a great many, I suppose, have died, and nothing is known about them. Their families have naturally become destitute, their farms are lying waste and their homes are in a dilapidated condition. Not only this, Sir, every Moplah, whether an inhabitant of the disturbed area or of outside, is suspected as one directly or indirectly guilty of murder, rapine or rape. No Malabar Hindu can think of the Moplah without detestation and hatred. Well, he has worked himself to such a state that everyone's hand must be against him. Now, the question well worth the consideration of this Assembly is: what actually contributed to drive the Moplachs to these murderous and outrageous attacks? That is the question with which the Assembly must concern itself. So far, Government has not helped us, they have not told us why it was that the Moplachs broke into rebellion. Every sane man in this country must know that it is impossible to overthrow the Government. Unless he is a lunatic, he will understand that, with all the resources which the whole of this country has at its disposal, it would be impossible to overthrow the Government. If that fact is ignored, there is no use in arguing or telling anything to such people. Now, knowing as we do the nature and temperament of these Moplachs, let us consider for a moment what made them rise against the Government and the people. The ordinary reply to that would be that the non-co-operators and the non-co-operation movement are responsible, that these had roused the Moplachs to commit such horrible and heart-rending deeds of murder and rapine. Now, that position I shall briefly examine. The non-co-operation movement, as I understand it, is said to be based on a tripod. There are first of all the Punjab wrongs. Now, I do not think that the Moplah knows anything about the Punjab wrongs, nor do I think, knowing his character as we do, he ever knew or would ever care to know the rights and wrongs of the Punjab. His habit is not to care for the welfare of others. He is self-sanguine. So the Punjab wrongs would not have in any manner excited him. Then, there is the Khilafat movement and Swarajya. As for Swarajya, I might say that the Moplah has not got any clear notions, and the only notion of Swarajya probably which appeals to him as it would appeal to baser minds, is the chance of getting money, power and other things for himself. It may have had some share, but the Khilafat teachings, so far as I think, must have had a great deal to do to excite the Moplachs. Being a fanatically religious man, the persistent teachings that his religion is in danger, that it has been practically trodden down, that his religious places abroad have been desecrated and destroyed, and all the other attendant lies and fabrications have very naturally excited him to resort to this mad endeavour. Well, till no other better and charitable suggestion comes, I can only think the dangerous teachings of the non-co-operators are primarily responsible for the rise of the Moplachs. Now, if I am right in thinking, and I believe it is the general opinion, that it was the religious fanaticism that made these ordinarily peace-loving and hardworking people rise in rebellion, then, it is a serious matter for every one to consider the consequences of this movement. Now, in one word, this Khilafat movement is an intensely religious agitation to connect the Moslem world of India with the Sultan of Turkey on a religious basis. It is to link the Moslem world of India with the Sultan of Turkey as the head of the Muhammadan religion. (A voice: 'No.')

This movement is to own the Sultan of Turkey as the religious head of the Mussalmans of India. (*Voices*: 'No, no' and 'louder please') The Khilafat movement is a movement to link the Moslem world of India with the Sultan of Turkey as the head of the Moslem religion. (*A Voice*: 'Certainly not'.) If it is something else, I should be very glad to know what this movement means. I say, if you only substitute the word 'political' for the word 'religious', you get the other side of the shield. I ask the Assembly to ponder over this matter seriously. Religion and politics are so blended in most countries that, if you only substitute the word 'political' for the word 'religious', you can see the other side of the picture. I simply leave the matter there for Honourable Members to consider. I shall not go further. Now, quite recently, we had speakers of the non-co-operation movement who incidentally referred to the Malabar outrages. Did any one condemn the action of the Moplahs in Malabar? Did any one directly or indirectly condemn the rebellion, the outrages and horrible murders that were committed in Malabar? Was it not said that they were dying as a brave race, that they were fighting for liberty and so on? What does it mean? Is it not time for us now to take note of such utterances, whoever may have said it, and come to a conclusion as to what the nature of this movement is and where it will lead us to if allowed to go on unchecked. It also shows that those gentlemen who have held up the Moplah to encomium, that he was fighting for the cause of liberty and so forth, do not know the value of the lives which have been lost, the property which has been destroyed and the misery which has been brought on large numbers of people in the disturbed areas. Every one connected with this agitation tells us: 'This Government is not for me; I have nothing to do with this Government; I am no member of this Government; I am no subject of this Government'. Can that agitation, from whomsoever it comes, lead to any good? That is with regard to this point.

There is one other aspect of the question. The Moplah had done grievous wrong. He had committed the worst offences. But there is a duty of the Government which is above all ordinary considerations of retaliation. 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth' policy is not one which I would recommend to Government. The Moplah had violated the law. Let the law vindicate itself and let him also know that the strong arm of the Government is long enough to reach him and others similarly behaving. But there is another aspect. If a whole lot of people have for some reason or other behaved in this outrageous manner, they are not going to be deported. They are the residents of that area. They have to live there and live in the midst of a large Hindu population. Should not statesmanship take such steps as would make them repentant and penitent and bring them back to the fold of peace and orderly life? That is the matter which the Government should seriously take in hand. What to do with these Moplahs in future years? Those in jail would come back. They would come back probably much worse, with hatred and revenge in their hearts. What is the Government going to do with these Moplahs in order to bring them back to the normal conditions of law-abiding and peaceful people? If that problem is not going to be tackled by Government in a statesmanlike way, I think, this frequent assertion of the maintenance of law and order alone will not solve the case, because that is the problem which the Government ought to tackle, and I have no doubt that the Government would, sooner or later, indicate a policy of reformation of these people. Now, Sir, while I have said so much about the Moplah, what about the Hindu? People do not know the peculiar characteristics of the

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Hindus of Malabar. They are simple-minded persons. They are people of olden times, believing in devils, goblins, magic and all sorts of things. The Hindu of Malabar will believe anything that you may tell him. That is one of his characteristics. I mean the rural people. I do not mean the people living in towns. The rural people are simple. Their lives and their habits are very simple. They are also a very hard-working people. People may have strange notions of Malabar. The Hindus of Malabar have their own peculiar laws of marriage and inheritance. People in other provinces might think that they are somewhat different in effect from the laws of marriage which govern them. I may tell you, and I beg you to take it from me, that their laws of marriage and their social conventions enjoin them to be as moral as any section of the Hindu community. People living far away from Malabar and not acquainted with their habits and modes of life may have peculiar views about them, but I tell you from my knowledge of the people of Malabar and the friends with whom I have come in contact that they are as moral as—more moral than—any section of the community in this country, Hindu or Muhammadan or Christian. The homes of such people have been devastated, they have been most cruelly wronged, their women have been ill-treated, their children have been mangled, and the men have been made to flee from their homes. No wonder then that the Hindu in Malabar, Nair, or Brahman, or Nambudri, or Thiya, has got nothing but detestation against the Moplah. No wonder that it is so, and his hand will be against the Moplah for years and years to come unless the Moplah reforms himself. There is one peculiarity about this rebellion,—and I would ask, with all respect, the Honourable the Home Member to find out, whatever the expense may be, the class, the status, the occupation, the means of living, of the men who have risen in rebellion,—I have some information that the better class of men, men who own property, are not in it, at any rate to our eyes. It may be that they are behind. I wish to draw particular attention to the fact that the men who are now in jail, the men who have died, the men who have been arrested, the men in exile, are men with little property. If what I am told is correct, there is a great deal of significance in it. Men of property, men of position, men who have got a stake in the country are not in the rebellion and have not come under the clutches of the law, if that is a fact.

Well, Sir, the Government of Madras and the people of Madras were impatient a few weeks after the tribunal of judges started work. They were impatient that the tribunal was too slow, and so another tribunal was appointed by an Ordinance. I am not aware of the working of that tribunal. Whether it functioned well, whether it functioned fully or not, I cannot say. That shows that the control of the Government of India was from the beginning necessary because those in Madras were inclined to adopt a policy of greater vigour, as it is said.

With regard to these Hindus, what is the compensation that they could get for all the wrongs they have suffered? There is no good telling them that they can get their compensation from the Moplah. He is unable to give any compensation. As far as one can understand, it will be impossible to get out of the Moplah anything in the way of compensating the Hindus. I think the Government must take the matter in hand and see that every one of these people who have lost their homes, who have lost their property, are properly and fittingly compensated. It is no good leaving them alone and saying, 'I maintain law and order, and there my duty

ends.' If the duty of Government begins and ends with law and order, the same trouble may take place, and neither the Hindu nor the Moplah will have a loving word for the Government. We have heard often that the Oriental imagination must be attracted and something must be done to strike the Oriental imagination. I do not believe that the imagination of the Oriental is different from that of the Occidental. Both want Government. Both want the good things of the world. Both want the Government to do good for them, and, therefore, in this instance, you will strike the imagination of the Hindu in Malabar and elsewhere if you give up your ordinary rules and routine and strike a new departure and compensate in full every Hindu who has lost and suffered by this rebellion. On an occasion like this, Government should not be tied down by rules and red tape. They must take their courage in both hands and find money to put these people back in their original places. It is only then that the Hindus there and elsewhere will say that the British Raj is as good as the Raj of Sri Ramchandra. Very recently a great man in the journalistic world did India within a fortnight and he said many things which have been published all over the world, though I do not think that there is any unanimity of opinion in this country as to all that he has said. One matter is worth referring to at this moment, because it is relevant to the matter in issue at present:

'He was shocked at the change in the demeanour and acts towards Whites by the Hindus and especially the Muhammadans who were formerly most friendly.'

He says that there is a complete change in the demeanour of the population in India towards the European. Is it a fact or is it not? I say, it is a fact. The old glamour that surrounded the European has gone and very probably may not return. The European has to cast his conduct on different lines if he wants to retain or regain the respect of the Indian. Whatever may be the cause, this has been going on during the last fifteen years and no longer, even in the outlying villages, you will find

The Honourable Sir William Vincent (Home Member): I rise to a point of order. The Honourable Member has, I think, strayed very far from the motion before the House:

(At this state Mr. R. A. Spence rose.)

Mr. President: Order, order.

Rao Bahadur C. S. Subrahmanayam: Therefore, unless the Government takes effective steps to see that the causes are removed, any amount of maintenance of law and order will not help you to bring peace to this country.

Mr. President: I will draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that he has already exceeded his time.

Rao Bahadur C. S. Subrahmanayam: Now, Sir, there is only one word more and I have done. While we are ready to compliment Government when it does things in the right fashion, we reserve to ourselves the liberty of criticising the Government when we feel and feel strongly that it has gone wrong. I am not one of those who think that Government is wrong always and that we should always adversely criticise the Government, and I do not think that any Honourable Members of this Assembly are of that mind. We want to stand by Government when we think it necessary and essential that we should do so (*Mr. N. M. Samarth:* 'Desir-

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able)—desirable that we should do so. When we feel that the Government is going wrong, it is our bounden duty to tell it that it is doing so.

Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur (West Coast and Nilgiris: Muhammadan): Sir, from the different and conflicting statements made by the Honourable Member, I am able to gather some facts. First, I agree with him in saying that the Martial Law Ordinances were worded carefully in order to avoid any mishap that might have occurred on former occasions, but that the administration of Martial Law was properly conducted or conducted in a way without any cause for murmur, I cannot admit. About a fortnight ago, I went to Malabar and visited the villages in the Martial Law area. One feature of Martial Law administration in Malabar was the burning of thousands of Moplah houses by the police and the military. In one village alone, I could count more than 100 houses burnt by the road side only. Some were strong, well-built and storied houses. Some houses and shops were simply broken into and looted. Now, to begin at the beginning, this rioting or rebellion was started as a joint concern by some Moplahs, Nayars, and others of the non-co-operation party, and, in the beginning, all were arrested and punished indiscriminately. Of course, as the Honourable Mover has said, the Moplahs in the Martial Law area are really poor, ignorant and illiterate. They do not know anything about the Punjab happenings, even about the Swaraj movement, nor anything about the Khilafat. Even their religion they did not know properly. It was these non-co-operators that set them up, and it was these Nayars and others that told them, 'Your religion is in danger. Your Khalif is gone. The British Government is an enemy of Islam.' So, these fellows duped these fools.

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: It is unnecessary for the Honourable Member to look at me so fiercely. I am not one of those who misled these unfortunate people.

Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur: Latterly, however, a change came on. These Nayars and others were somehow or other made to feel that the safer course for them would be to desert the Moplahs and show themselves as their foes. Therefore, as soon as Martial Law was proclaimed and the military came to the place, these people, instead of advising the Moplahs that it was madness to oppose the Government, just as they advised them in the beginning to regard the British people as the enemies of their religion, went along with the police and military and joined them in looting Moplah houses and outraging their women. When these Moplahs saw their co-workers turning against them, they considered it a treachery. Therefore, when the military retired in the evenings, these took their revenge upon them by killing them or confiscating their properties. Many have also escaped their punishments by offering to become converts. This is the story of conversion, looting and murder by the Moplahs. If they were actuated by the desire of proselytizing for the sake of religion, then, why did they allow many others to remain amidst them without molesting them in the least? Why did they loot and murder Moplahs also? Those that did not trouble them they also did not trouble. All the Patter Brahmins were living in their midst quite peacefully.

I do not mean to say that everything went on in this systematized way. Some rowdies, taking advantage of the situation, must have done wanton mischief by murdering, looting or converting.

My object in rising to speak on this occasion is not to defend the guilty Moplahs. I do not say they were all innocent lambs. First of all, they are guilty of rising against the Government, whatever the provocation, whatever the preaching and persuasion of their friends might have been. They cannot now come and say: 'We were duped.' That is no excuse. They ought to be brought under the clutches of the law. All that I want to impress upon you is that we have been hearing through the papers only one side of the question. The reason is that Mr. Thomas had committed the initial blunder of retreating from Tirurangadi hastily before an unarmed mob, although he had machine gun, military and police with him. In order to justify his action, he wanted the help of the vociferous section of the people. So he made common cause with the Nayars and left the dumb Moplah, who could neither speak nor write, to himself. Thereafter, the press and the public have been heaping all the blame upon the Moplahs. This may sound strange to you as you are accustomed to hear only one side of the story. Did you hear before this that not one educated or well-to-do Moplah took part in this rising, whereas the non-Moplahs that took part were rich and educated people? Some of them were even graduates and B.A.; B.Ls.

Now, to return to the horrors of Martial Law administration, the Moplahs in the Martial Law area used to be regarded only as wild beasts. Once one Moidin Kutti Haji and another were taken by some sepoy from Parapanangady to Tirurangadi. From there they were allowed to return. While returning, some other sepoy who were also going in the same direction shot them and left them dying on the road and went away.

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: Where was this?

Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur: Tirurangadi.

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: When?

Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur: Three months ago. I have got several such instances. Some time back, there was an idea of exterminating the Moplahs, as could be gathered from several articles and letters in the papers. The train tragedy, the refusal of relief to the Moplah sufferers and the burning of houses, even in villages where there were no disturbances at all, are all acts done in pursuance of the policy of extermination. As these people killed some Europeans in the beginning, Mr. Thomas and the Madras Government under his advice were regarding the whole race in a worse light than the Germans were regarded during the war.

When I read in the papers about the burning of Armenian houses by the Turks, I could not believe that, but now; when I find even the most enlightened Government did not feel ashamed to do worse things against a people who were, unlike the Armenians, strictly unarmed under the Arms Act, I do not see why I should not believe the story against the Turks. Was not the brutal way of carrying Moplah prisoners another instance of the wilful negligence of the Madras Government? Otherwise, would they appoint such a farce of a Committee to inquire into the train tragedy? Who are the members of the Committee? They are all from the Martial Law area and hence men with their mouths locked. What is their object in making Mr. Knapp, who is responsible for the administration of Martial Law in Malabar, the President of this Committee? Why was Mohamed Abdur Rahman arrested and sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment for simply saying there were Moplah sufferers requiring relief. When.

[Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur.]

I visited Calicut last, there were 5 or 6 thousand people at Calicut receiving relief from the District Relief Committee. But there was not a single Moplah among them, although in the Congress Camp I found about 80 Moplah refugees, mostly women and children. Some of these women had their ears torn and their ear ornaments removed. One young boy had his hands cut, neck wounded, while a small woman had several wounds on her body said to have been inflicted by the police and the military.

It may be said, there are no sufferers among the Moplahs. Is it imaginable? Moplahs, who are already very poor, had their houses burnt with all their possessions and had been forced to live under trees and in temporary sheds. Males in most families have been either killed or arrested. The others are not allowed to leave the villages to eke out their livelihood even by begging. What will be the condition of such people? Still Mr. Knapp is not willing to admit that there is distress among the Moplahs. If it is found there is distress, then the punishing of Mr. Abdur Rahman would not be justifiable. Now, some show of helping the Moplah sufferers is being made. A separate, though nominal Committee, has been appointed to find out and bring to the camp Moplah sufferers. Mr. Knapp himself admitted to me that the existing Committee was against helping the Moplahs and the so-called Moplah camp at Quilandy was an eye-wash.

Now, the Moplah has been crushed and humbled. A spirit of further retaliation, with the object of permanently suppressing him, is in the air. With this object, a meeting was held at Calicut some time back. Although the Government was not a party to this meeting, they think the Government is on their side and they can get the help of the Government in suppressing the Moplah.

The affected area includes Ernad and Walvanad Taluqs and portions of Ponnani and Calicut Taluqs in South Malabar. Now, there are Moplahs not only in the affected taluqs but also in North Malabar and South Kanara and the remaining taluqs of South Malabar and different other parts of the world. They number more than a million. More than one-third of the entire Muhammadan population of the Madras Presidency are Moplahs. Will all these Moplahs look on with folded arms, quite unaffected when these friends of Mr. Subrahmanayam are devising plans for permanently suppressing their brethren living in the Martial Law area? I ask the Government and my non-Moplah brethren of Malabar to check this spirit.

If this retaliative spirit is not nipped in the bud, there will be no end to this retaliation; it will go on revolving.

Now, normal conditions have been restored in Ernad, Walvanad, Pohoir, etc., except for the locally-recruited special police who are making a hell of heaven. They make their daily rounds of extortion, and if anybody dares to question, he is at once arrested under some charge or other. The horrors of the Martial Law administration of the Punjab dwindle into insignificance when compared with the present one, though I do not know, at least personally, the extent of the horrors in the Punjab.

Now, what is urgently needed is the immediate withdrawal of Martial Law and the special police and the opening of the ordinary Courts of law, and the cessation of further arrests as the jails are already said to be congested.

If the course adopted after four months of shameful warfare with a subject people, that is, of offering pardon on condition of their surrendering, had been adopted earlier, the rising could have been suppressed long,

long ago. When I had suggested a similar course to His Excellency the Viceroy and also to the Honourable Sir William Vincent in September last, they heard me patiently and promised to consider the matter sympathetically. But when I suggested the same course to the Madras Government, the case was quite different. Such impatience will not mend matters.

If we want to solve the question and restore permanent peace, we must enter the question without any prejudice and retaliative spirit.

The three things that are considered quite necessary for the improvement of the affected area are compulsory education, the introduction of a more liberal and up-to-date land tenure system, and the opening up of the country by railways. All these things can be settled, however, only on the report of an independent Commission which must be appointed by the Government of India. Such a course only will inspire confidence into the hearts of Moplahs and also the public at large. I propose, therefore, that soon after Martial Law is withdrawn, an independent Committee be appointed to inquire into the cause of the rising, and advise as to the means of restoring permanent peace.

Mr. K. Muppil Nayar (West Coast and Nilgiris: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Mr. President, I wish to speak only on the first portion of the Resolution. The question is, in my opinion, one for the local authorities, versed in the details of the situation, largely to advise us upon, for the dangers of any premature action are, it is hardly necessary to say, very great. No doubt, most of the leaders of the rebellion have been captured, but, in a movement of this sort, where the rank and file have tasted loot, there is much more than the mere ringleader. There are still out some gangs capable of considerable mischief, and, if what I heard before I left was true, all was not sound with the so-called surrendered. Further, the capture of a leader is no serious hindrance with these rebels, for their commanders have not, unlike ours, to spend years at Sandhurst or years in a regular army, but any ex-bandywallah or ex-teashopkeeper will easily satisfy their test of a leader. However much I may hope it may turn out otherwise, yet, if past history and present outlook tells me anything, it is that the task of dealing with the remaining lawless lot is going to take some months, if not years. Then, again, there are a great many prisoners, if I am not mistaken, who are still awaiting their trials before the tribunal for the horrible crimes with which they are charged. I say this, because the absence of big leaders or blood-boiling telegrams in our papers ought not to mislead us to think all is quiet in Malabar. If, however, there are any technical objections to the continuation of Martial Law, then our duty is clear, and I appeal to the Government for something effective to take the place of the temporary measure and I appeal to this Assembly for support.

But one thing I implore here and now, and that is, let us not by any hurry on our part have a relapse in Malabar, for she has already suffered much. I come from the spot, and I tell you, there is no horror to which people in my district have not been subjected; young and old, men and women, rich and poor, all have suffered, and such a suffering too!

The Honourable Mover in moving his Resolution has mentioned about the Moplah Train Tragedy. Sir, it was a very regrettable incident, no doubt. But there are some other stories, 10 times worse, 100 times worse, which have not received the notice of the Secretary of State or of any other Members of Government. Little babies, I am told, were chopped like bananas and thrown down into pits. Old women, old men, hacked to

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pieces! We heard very little of that! Some hard things were mentioned about the Madras Government by the Honourable Mover. I am not going to answer them, but I simply refute them, and leave it to the Member in charge to answer them.

The previous speaker spoke about no relief being given to Moplahs. I beg to refute that statement, and say that relief is being given. He also mentioned that not a single educated Moplah joined the rebellion. My information tells me that there are many educated Moplahs who are concerned.

Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur: No, but that there were graduate non-Moplahs among the rebels.

Mr. K. Muppil Nayar: The distress is so great that Malabar looks up with one pity-evoking glance to you and your Government to undo, as far as possible, what a satanic Government of the disciples of visionaries (rather missionaries of mischief) and preachers of the so-called non-violence have managed to do during their brief spell of Swaraj. But on this I do not propose to dilate now; my present purpose is to appeal to you to let the authorities choose their ways and do their task, unhampered by the dictates of such of us as are far away where we can hardly realise the gravity of the situation; and, when I emphasise that, I will be the last to support the unnecessary prolongation of a measure like Martial Law, for I am one of the district, I know I shall not have appealed in vain to my Honourable brethren.

Maulvi Abul Kasem (Dacca Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, the Resolution, as it stands and as it is worded, relates to a part of the country where I have never been, and it has no interest for me personally. But, unfortunately, Sir, the learned Mover of the Resolution has, I beg to be excused when I say, introduced into it matters which raise a controversy, which it is neither desirable nor wise to have. He has said, Sir, that the real mischief is due to the question of the Khilafat, as it is believed to be a religious question which excites the fanaticism of the Moslem world. Sir, I happen to be a Mussalman and I admit that I belong to a fanatical race, as I am not ashamed of it. (Hear, hear.) It is not the belief but the real truth that the Khilafat is a religious question. We feel it, and feel strongly and deeply, that the pledges given to us by His Majesty's Government, by responsible representatives of the Government, have not been carried out. (*A voice:* 'Shame.') If a large section of my Muhammadan friends, like myself, have already cut themselves off from the present Khilafat movement, it is not because we do not feel it as keenly and as sorely as they do (Hear, hear), but because we feel that their methods are neither practical nor wise, and, if I may go further, I will say that they are more dupes than human beings, because I know, from my own personal knowledge as well as from the published information, that the Government of India has done its very best, and is still doing its very best, to redress those grievances. (Hear, hear.) I feel and feel again that it will be neither a wise nor a practical policy to hamper the hands of the very advocates who are fighting our cause. I am not a lawyer, but as a client I have some experience of my lawyers. We have to please the lawyers and not to offend them if we want to win our case, and that is the ground which led me to make my choice. I can say—and I do so with a full sense of responsibility—that the Muhammadan grievances will neither be redressed

nor the Muhammadan feeling satisfied unless this question is settled according to their own demands and reasonable and just grievances are removed. Then, Sir, it has been said that Swaraj does not appeal to the uneducated and illiterate Moplahs of Malabar and that they do not understand anything about the Punjab grievances. I agree there, Sir, that the masses of the people do not understand what Swaraj is. I, for my part, do not understand what is the programme of Swaraj which has been placed before the country. What about the poor Moplahs? I believe the very propounders of that theory do not clearly understand it. But, where I join issue with Rao Bahadur Subrahmanayam is that these poor Moplahs, found to be fanatics, found to be keen on their religion, were utilised by designing persons as their dupes for breaking the law and for receiving the punishment which they got for breaking the law. (Hear, hear and Shame.) That is the real question. If the administration is to be carried on, you ought to get at the bottom of the thing and not to punish the mere innocent tools of these instigators. My Honourable friend, the other gentleman representing Malabar, has said that in spite of the fact that Martial Law has been enforced there for some time, still many a rebel and many an outlaw is at large and not yet captured. May I inquire from him and from this House, are these Moplahs the only rebels and the only outlaws that are out of jail in this country? Are there not other rebels and outlaws flourishing and succeeding in life who ought to be in jail. (Hear, hear.) But the real point is that my friend, Rao Bahadur Subrahmanayam, is nervous. He does not want Martial Law to be repealed, but he is nervous as to what will be the fate of that part of the country when Martial Law dies a natural death, and he wants the Government to lay down the policy and wants the House to discuss this policy about the administration of that part of the country. I will ask him to be a little wider in his view and to have a broader view of the whole situation at the present day. As he has taken the trouble of dilating upon it, I say what has happened in the Malabar territory is likely to happen in the whole of this country and the whole situation may be changed unless we realise the full sense of our responsibility and discharge our duty and advise the Government accordingly. It is not a question of dealing with the situation piecemeal but as a whole organisation; and the solution does not lie in taking advantage of the poor, ignorant, illiterate, but brave, thrifty and fanatical Moplahs of Malabar and hanging them for the sake of others.

Khan Bahadur Zahiruddin Ahmed (Dacca Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I support the Resolution whole-heartedly. In my opinion, Martial Law ought to have been abolished long ago. I think the killing of subject people and its continuance for such a period is unknown in history. I admit, such killing took place in this city when Nadir Shah invaded India. Some historians said that it lasted 6 or 7 hours, some said 6 or 7 days, but none mentioned any time over this. I think I am running a risk of comparing the deeds of a Mussalman monarch reigning a few centuries ago with that of the Christian Government of the present day. Such an idea will be repugnant to the Treasury Bench. I ask these Honourable Members to point out to this Honourable House any place in Indian history where the killing of an unarmed subject people went on for seven months. I will be taken to task again for calling them unarmed. Of course, they had some fire-arms, but to fire these arms was more dangerous to those firing them than to those whom the fire would have been aimed at. These, again, were possessed by one in a hundred. I feel sick of the treatment of the Moplahs, not because they are Mussalmans, but because they are human beings. I am a Mussalman, and we, Mussalmans, have no country to call our own,

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which is no doubt a crime in the eyes of the Western peoples, who are all Nationalists.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated: Labour Interests): India is not your country?

Khan Bahadur Zahiruddin Ahmed: I am coming to that. Hear me please first. What is our principle? We call ourselves citizens of the world. '*Moslem hain hum watan hai sarajahan hamara*,' which means 'I am a Mussalman, my country is every land on the face of the earth.' We take the whole world as one country and all the nations as one people. We believe and act on the principle of the universal brotherhood of mankind. In short, a Mussalman hates to be a Nationalist but loves to be a philanthropist. The Madras Government communique mentioned a lot of barbarous acts and attributed all of them to the Moplahs as aggressors and the Hindus as sufferers. At first, I believed in all of them, but when I came to the District of 24-Parganas and I questioned the Madrassis there, who are all Hindus, I began to have my own doubts. These men, in a large measure, denied them and said they were too much exaggerated. It reminded me of the story of a British Field Marshall who took to task a Colonel for leaving a large number of German dead bodies unburied. The Colonel replied: 'These Germans are not dead, but living, only slightly wounded.' The Field Marshall questioned the Colonel who told him that they were not dead? The Colonel timidly replied: 'They themselves.' Whereupon, the Field Marshall said: 'The war is not yet over and you begin to believe the Germans.' The Colonel took the hint and not a single German was left unburied. Unfortunately for the Madras Government, the Hindus have not taken the hint. They have not commenced to kill the Mussalmans as the Madras Government desired them to do. I must frankly confess that, when I heard of the news emanating from the Madras Government, I formed a firm conviction that all the Hindus in the Madras Presidency had been murdered, and I must say I felt a great relief when I saw the Honourable Rao Bahadur Rangachariar in this Assembly, I argued that at least one Hindu was left unkilld, and I respectfully submit that there may be a few more Hindus left unkilld yet. When I hear them talk even in this Assembly, how can I ever believe that they have been all murdered?

If I argue that dead men cannot talk, and when they talk, they are not dead, I believe I will not be contradicted, even by the apologists of the Madras Government. As for the forcible conversions, I have some doubts. I believe there have been conversions, but whether forcible or not, I am not sure. I converted a number of these people from Madras when I was a Kazi and Mussalman Marriage Registrar. My experience was this. There are a few untouchable classes of Hindus in that Presidency, who were yesterday Hindus, to-day are Mussalmans, to-morrow Hindus again, and next day Christians. These people come to work in jute mills, and each male will bring at least five women along with him. The four of these will be married to mill workers, and their religions changed. At first the fifth woman is kept by the male as his wife, but, sometimes, it has been my experience that she is even given away in marriage to a Mussalman mill worker, if the man was ready to pay the price asked for her. So long as these women remain in the district of 24-Parganas they take to the religion of their husbands, who are mostly up-country Mussalmans. But when the male Madrassi goes back to his province, these women who come along with him go back with him too.

Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I rise to a point of order. Has this got anything to do with the Resolution?

Mr. President: I understand the Honourable Member is describing the process of conversion.

Khan Bahadur Zahiruddin Ahmed: I thank the Chair for the decision. I may, at the same time, point out to my Honourable friend calling me to order that he is a sensitive man. Sensitiveness is a brain disease, and I ask my Honourable friend to consult a brain specialist. I believe we have got such a specialist in the person of the Honourable Colonel Gidney in this Assembly, may I ask my friend to consult him? If my Honourable friend has not been introduced to the Colonel Saheb, I believe any Honourable Member of this House will be willing to introduce him. Failing this, I am prepared to introduce him myself.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member is irrelevant now.

Khan Bahadur Zahiruddin Ahmed: Before one Member calls another to order, the interrupter must be very certain that his own brain is not out of order. With these few words, I will resume my speech. They all become Hindus again. The apologists of the Madras Government can have it from me that all these so-called forcible converts have become Hindus again. By this I do not wish to minimise the atrocities committed by the Moplahs. I condemn them with as great force as any Hindu or a Government Member; and I say more, if these Moplahs have killed ten Hindus or ten Police Officers, kill ten times their number in exchange or say fifteen times or twenty times that number, but the whole people should not be wiped out or they should not be killed at sight.

Before I came here, I visited the camps of the extremists as well as the loyalists, with a view to learn their views on this Moplah affair. An influential extremist or non-co-operator said: 'Do not put a single question about the Moplahs in the Assembly. Let the Government go on digging the foundation of their empire by such massacre; let them go on digging their own graves, making their own coffins, and let them cover themselves with the shrouds of their own making. He finally said that the Government is simply making our task easy.' He went on to say that an Indian State had given an exhibition of a 'chita' hunt, and the Madras Government had given an exhibition of a Moplah hunt. These words tore my heart and made deep sores in it. I also went to the camp of the loyalists. A loyalist of loyalists put this question to me point blank: 'Do you, after this massacre and butchery, still contend that the British race still retains the right to govern the non-Christian and coloured people?' These were very painful words to me.

Both these experiences have made a great and deep impression on my mind. I mention this in this Honourable Assembly so that it should know how a large portion of my countrymen is thinking. I would have been a loyal hypocrite if I were to lull the Government into a false security. I know I may receive the retort that as a loyalist I ought not to have given vent to my feelings in this way. My humble reply will be: 'I am a loyal man and for that reason I am not a cruel man. I am a co-operator, and for that reason I am not a servitor. I am not a cringe and an abject flatterer of the Government as to say *Hazur Garib Purwar, Jahan Pana, jo kija hak hai* (Your Worship, Cherisher of the poor, Protector of the world, whatever you do is right)', when I know, when I feel sick at heart at what the

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Madras Government is doing in this respect. I know we have got such flatterers in this country—they may be in this Assembly as well—but I am not one of them, and I hate to be one of them.

May I ask if the maintaining of law and order requires the wiping out of a whole population? Will it be called restoring order? Or will the dictionary give some other name, some other word for it? I quote a Persian poet, who said:

'Ba ek gurdeshay charkh niloo farin

Na Nader baja mand na naderi.'

'The dazzling splendour of 'Nader' in vain,

The freaks of time are the culprits in main.'

(What became of Nadir Shah and his authority? The whole thing was short-lived and temporary.)

With these words, I beg to support the Resolution.

Munshi Iswar Saran (Cities of the United Provinces: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I must confess I have not been able to clearly understand the object which my Honourable friend had in moving this Resolution. (Hear, hear.) But, be that as it may, I must say, and say with great sorrow, that the speeches which have been made have displayed a mentality which must be distressing to every nationalist. Sir, I wish to assure the House that I do not wish to approach this question as a Hindu, but as an Indian. A Hindu or a Muhammadan or a Christian, as such, I submit, with great confidence, should have no place in this Assembly. We should be Indian first and everything else afterwards. A Member ought to come here as an Indian, he ought to approach public questions from the point of view of India, and not of this or that particular religion, sect or class. To me it is a matter of great sorrow that this grave question has been treated in this light-hearted fashion. The Honourable gentleman, who has just sat down, has tried in his usual way to amuse us by his description of conversions. Is he prepared to say that the stories of conversions that we have heard are unfounded? Have they not created a thrill of horror in every man, be he a Hindu, be he a Muhammadan, or be he a Christian? Men of 60 to have been subjected to a particular operation, which I shall not name in this Assembly! Is the Honourable gentleman prepared to justify that act of brutality and barbarism in this Year of Grace One Thousand Nine Hundred and Twenty-Two? (Hear, hear.) What is the good of talking in that fashion? I do not wish to condemn the Moplahs as Muhammadans, but I do wish to condemn them as human beings who have shown, if the accounts are true, that they are worse than beasts, worse than brutes. If the Honourable Member can contradict the accounts that have appeared in the Press, if he can contradict the communiqués of the Government of India and of the Government of Madras, let me assure the House in all sincerity that no man will be better pleased than I or others of my way of thinking shall be. I should like to have the assurance that all these stories have been exaggerated; that these stories are false; that Moplahs have not behaved in that heartless and inhuman fashion; because it pains me, it distresses me, that my own countrymen—Moplahs are after all my countrymen—should have behaved in a way which brings discredit—not on the Moplahs alone—but on all of us who are in this country.

Sir, attempts have been made—and I say not very straightforward or courageous—to insinuate, suggest, imply, that the Moplahs are so many misguided, unhappy, unfortunate fools, who have been really duped by Hindus. As I have said, I do not approach this question from the point of view of a Hindu. But I am nevertheless forced to ask, are the non-co-operators only Hindus? Are there not Muhammadans amongst them? What is the good of making that suggestion and really confusing the issue which you have got before you? My Honourable friend, Maulvi Abul Kasem, says: 'Moplahs are not the only outlaws in this country; there are others,' and some Members cheered him and I suppose he felt immensely satisfied with himself. Is that, Sir, an argument to be advanced in an Assembly like this? He in effect meant to imply: 'Do not deal with the Moplahs. There are other men worse than the Moplahs.' Are we to treat the Moplahs with consideration, are we to treat them with respect; are we to treat them with honour; because there are worse criminals in India? (Cries of 'No, no, he never meant that.') Well, will you repeat what he said, will you explain what he meant? When you have a chance, you can correct me. I submit, Sir, we have to take facts as we find them and Government have got to take facts as they find them. Yes, it will be necessary at a future date for Government to go into the causes of this Moplah outbreak, but at this movement Government find themselves face to face with a situation where a certain number of people, from all accounts that have reached us, have been guilty of the most unmentionable and horrible outrages. Government have got to deal with them and to deal with them with firmness, and I say, with mercy as well. An Honourable Member has said—I have no information of it myself—that hundreds of Moplah houses have been burned, that hundreds of Moplah houses have been looted. I do hope that Government will take early steps to see what foundation there is for the statement made, and, if there be any foundation for it, I have no doubt that the Honourable the Home Member will see that these people whose houses have been looted and burned in this lawless fashion are compensated for the wrongs inflicted upon them and the offenders are adequately punished. Sir, but what I submit is this. We are now face to face with this situation in Madras. It is no good blinking facts, it is no good shutting our eyes to hard, actual facts as we find them. My only object in intervening in this debate is to place the issue clearly before the House and to brush aside all this light-hearted talk and all this insinuation about Hindus being at the bottom of this trouble. Hindus may be anything, but they are not fools. Now I wish to ask my friends if they mean that Hindus duped the Moplahs so that the Moplahs should ruin Hindu homes, should convert Hindu men, should dishonour Hindu women, and should brutally ill-treat Hindu children. It is nothing but sheer folly to suggest that. We have got the trouble and, if any misdeeds have been committed, it is our bounden duty to bring them to the notice of Government, so that the perpetrators may be punished and their repetition in future may be avoided. Sir, I whole-heartedly join with my friends who have made an appeal to Government that no retaliatory measures should be adopted and I entirely agree with them that those men who have gone wrong, those men who have inflicted these hardships on their fellow-men ought to be punished but, punished with justice tempered with mercy. Retaliation is perfectly out of place, and I do venture to hope that, not only in this House but even outside it, there will be no responsible man who will ask that the Moplahs should be punished with undue severity; but punishment has to be meted out, be it to Moplahs or be it to anybody else who are guilty of such atrocities.

[Munshi Iswar Saran.]

Sir, before we come to a decision, I shall ask those Honourable Members who have taken part in this debate to approach the question from the correct standpoint and not to confuse the issue by irrelevant observations such as have been indulged in by some of the speakers who have taken part in this debate.

Lieut.-Col. H. A. J. Gidney (Nominated: Anglo-Indian): Sir, I do not rise in response to my Honourable friend, Mr. Zahiruddin Ahmed, as a professional man, to pronounce an opinion on the over-sensitiveness of Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas or to say whether he is thin-skinned or thick-skinned. I rise to take part in the more serious aspect of this Resolution. Sir, I have also listened with care and with great attention to my Honourable friend, Mr. Subrahmanayam, and I have read the Resolution before me two or three times, and I have yet to find in his speech the slightest evidence in support of his Resolution as to why Martial Law should be withdrawn from the Moplah country. He has indulged in a series of indictments, invectives and malignments against the Government. He has gone so far, judging from the speeches to which we have just listened as to create, unfortunately, a religious ill-feeling between the Muhammadans and Hindus in this House, which I think should not be encouraged. He has gone absolutely outside the mark in his speech. The result has been that the speakers who have followed him have done the same. Not one speaker so far has brought forward a single reason why Martial Law should be withdrawn from the Moplah country. The Mover of the Resolution first tried to make capital out of the train tragedy. He then accused Government of white-washing. I know that they do that for I have often done it myself when in Government employ. He then tried by a process of exclusion to bring forward what was the *raison d'être* of the trouble in the Moplah country. He asked: 'Was it due to the non-co-operation movement or the Khilafat movement? What was it?' Then he himself tried to white-wash the sins of the Moplahs by saying that they were misguided fools and deserved the pity of this House. He went further and definitely stated that the main cause of the trouble was the Khilafat propaganda. Finally, he requested Government to give ample compensation for those who were homeless and penniless. He even threatened Government that they must change their attitude towards Indians or they would lose the support even of the moderates in this Honourable House. Now, Sir, in these various points that he brought forward, I have yet to see one genuine reason which he has adduced for the withdrawal of Martial Law from the Moplah country.

My friend, Mr. Abul Kasem, then treated us to a speech which mainly opposed the religious charges brought forward by the Mover against the Muhammadans of Malabar, but he hit the nail on the head when he remarked that the leaders in India who were inciting the ignorant masses to civil disobedience were the chief culprits and were yet not in jail. Whereas one side said it was non-co-operation, the other side said it was the Khilafat movement and went so far as to connect it with the Sultan of Turkey. My friend, Mr. Abul Kasem, as I say, hit the nail on the head. He showed clearly—and I do not think there are many Members in this House who will deny it—that, no matter whether it was the Khilafat movement or the non-co-operation movement, the real conspirator is loose in India to-day. He is the man for whom these Moplahs have suffered; he is the man on account of whom we to-day read of the murders that have taken place at Chauri Chaura, Bareilly, and elsewhere.

It is no use our disguising this fact and there is absolutely no use moving a Resolution here asking for Martial Law to be withdrawn when India is seething with discontent and when disaffection is being spread by the leaders of the non-co-operation movement, when the arch-conspirator and so-called Dictator of India roams about free to incite the masses of India to disorder and rebellion. Apply Martial Law to these leaders and, I assure you, that we shall hear less of ultimatums and manifestos coming from the head quarters of the non-co-operative camp. I submit that it would be suicidal to India for this Honourable House to pass this Resolution. Martial Law can only be withdrawn (although it is confined to six months by the Government of India Act, 1919) when the country is normal and quiet. Can any Honourable Member stand up here and truthfully say that the Moplah country as well as other parts of India to-day are quiet? If he does, let him go to these localities and see things for himself and he will, I feel sure, change his mind very soon. Let him read the daily papers and see what is still happening in the Moplah country and elsewhere to-day. I submit with all the emphasis possible that Martial Law is absolutely necessary—more necessary in India to-day than it has ever been and I warn this Honourable House to-day that the time is not far distant in fact has all but come, when it will have to be further applied and extended to other parts of India at once—otherwise its universal application will soon be necessary. (*An Honourable Member: 'All over India.'*)

Lieut.-Col. H. A. J. Gidney: I do not know what part of India the Honourable Member comes from or I would gladly answer his question. Sir, I for one do not at all approve of the Resolution. I condemn it most strongly. I consider that it is not only too premature, but it would be most dangerous to withdraw Martial Law from the Moplah country. Had the Honourable Member substituted for it a Resolution to the effect that Martial Law should be introduced in other parts of India, I for one would have most willingly and gladly supported him. But to ask for Martial Law to be withdrawn from a country from which Mr. Nayar comes and who describes it as being still pregnant with trouble and rioting, that my Honourable friend over there has himself so correctly described is to ask for further and more serious trouble. For the benefit of the Honourable Member I will relate to him a little story. There was a mother, whose daughter, with her (the latter's) husband, lived together in a cottage. The husband had to go away on some business for the week end. The mother, who was a somnambulist, one night in her sleep walked in the garden and fell into the well. The daughter, hearing her cries, wired to her husband to this effect: 'Mother fallen into well, please wire advice.' The husband replied as follows, and I would draw the Honourable Member's attention to his reply: 'Leave well alone.' My advice to the Honourable Member is, therefore, to withdraw his Resolution and to 'leave well alone'. With is, therefore, to withdraw his Resolution and to 'leave well alone'. With

Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas: Sir, I would go a step further than Colonel Gidney and say that not only has Mr. Subrahmanayam failed to adduce any evidence or argument in support of his Resolution, but that he has adduced arguments and evidence against his Resolution. When I got notice of this Resolution, I read it at home and rubbed my eyes in wonder. I said to myself, what does this mean—that Mr. Subrahmanayam, a Hindu and a Madras Hindu, a lawyer of great reputation, when another Madrassi, Mr. Rangachariar, also a Hindu, has been telling us of the horrors and atrocities committed by the Moplahs in Malabar, should come forward

[Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas.]

with this Resolution? The wonder that I then felt has been tenfold confirmed by the speech he has delivered.

Now, what is the sum and substance of his speech, that Martial Law has been very equitably administered—so much so that the Judges who are administering it do more justice than ordinary Judges? Is that a reason for the withdrawal of Martial Law? Then, again, he said that the Moplahs have committed such gross horrors. When they were described by Mr. Nayar, it brought tears to our eyes. Then, in my opinion, he diverted himself into an entirely wrong channel by stating that you should not be satisfied merely with having punished the Moplahs as you have done but you must go a bit further, because these men returning from jails will come out embittered and try retaliation upon you. That means you should have more severe Martial Law inflicted upon these people. Was there any reason advanced by him that we could say was not in favour of the perpetuation of Martial Law? I think the best advice we can give Rao Bahadur Subrahmanayam at the present moment, though I am not sure if he will follow it, is that he should withdraw his Resolution: Otherwise I prophesy that he will be defeated by an overwhelming majority in this House.

Now, Sir, you will permit me to make a few observations on the other speeches that we have heard to-day. I can tell you that I did not rise to retaliate in any way upon my friend, Mr. Zahir-ud-Din Ahmed, for the remark he made that I was suffering from sensitiveness, which is a disease of the brain; because the usual role he has assumed in this House is that of the standing Joker of the House, and, if we have the benefit and amusement of his jokes, we should also be willing to pay the price. (Laughter.) But I do strongly disapprove of the remarks which he made that the Government have been acting like Nadir Shah in perpetrating massacres of Moplahs. He went on in that vein for a great length of time. In fact, the whole of his speech was predominated by that particular idea—that he heartily supported the Resolution because the Government have been massacring the people of the Moplah country in the same way as Nadir Shah did. In fact he said that, while Nadir Shah only massacred for a few hours, the Government have been massacring for months and months. Then, characteristically enough, he went on to say: 'Oh, these Moplah conversions are quite harmless, because I myself have converted several people.' Well, if he has converted several people in the same way as the Moplahs, I think, he should be dealt with like the Moplahs. (Laughter.)

Sir, I also join with Munshi Iswar Saran and Colonel Gidney in pointing out to this Assembly that they will be doing a lot of harm to the interests of the public and the country by passing this Resolution. I am very sorry to find—it had not come to my notice before—that this Martial Law Ordinance is due to expire automatically at the end of this month. But, if that is so, I do not know what useful purpose Mr. Subrahmanayam's Resolution can be expected to serve. Perhaps he also is in a jesting mood, and what he really means by this Resolution is,—as sometimes used to be done last year in voting for Demands—that 'whilst I am moving this Resolution I really want to draw the attention of the House to conditions in Malabar not to withdraw Martial Law but to perpetuate it.' If that be so, I am certainly grateful to him.

The other issues raised in the course of this Debate, I think, are not pleasant to dwell upon. Certain Muhammadan gentlemen have tried to

throw mud upon Hindus. (Cries of 'No, no.')

No? Did not two or three gentlemen over there say it was the Hindus who had instigated the Moplahs? (*Honourable Members*: 'Only non-co-operators.') But there are Hindus who are non-co-operators. Thank goodness, we have got a partial admission at least. I say no Hindu, as has been pointed out by Munshi Iswar Saran, could have had any hand in this nefarious business. Is it possible that Hindus who know that the Moplahs are a most exciteable people and who had a bitter foretaste of these Moplah atrocities years and years ago—atrocities which were described last year, when the outbreak took place, by Mr. Rangachariar, who showed that, when the Moplahs get out of hand, their first victims, their first targets are Hindus. I say the Hindus who are neighbours of the Moplahs and know their nature—is it possible that they would instigate the Moplahs in order to have these horrors committed upon their own community? It is no use going into this question further. The point has been dealt with by previous speakers. All that I want to point out is that we should listen to the appeal of Mr. Nayar, who comes from the same district and who has given us such harrowing accounts of the doings of the Moplahs there—we should listen with greater consideration to him than to Mr. Subrahmanayam who does not come from that district. As Mr. Nayar said, people sitting in their arm chairs far away do not know what is happening on the spot; and I am surprised that a man in the position of Mr. Subrahmanayam does not respect the feelings of his countrymen and co-religionists coming from that part of the country, because he gave us an inkling that, before he came to move this Resolution, he was asked by Madrassis: 'What are you going to do? Have you thought over the subject?' But his reply was: 'I am not a deep thinker; I am a shallow thinker and therefore I have not given deep thought to it.' Sir, there is nothing more for me to say; but I appeal to Mr. Subrahmanayam that he should be consistent, and consistently with his speech he should withdraw his Resolution.

Khan Bahaqur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan (Tirhut Division: Muhammadan): Sir, I move that the question be put.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Half Past Two of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock. Mr. President was in the Chair.

Dr. H. S. Gour (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, the trend which the debate has taken in the course of the speeches of the Honourable Members has led to my earlier intervention on their behalf. I deeply regret that the main issue upon which the Honourable Mover of this Resolution spoke has more or less been transcended by the subsequent speakers and the general issue has been challenged on the question of the Moplah rising and on the propriety of Government action. Charges and counter-charges have been made and an amount of temper has been shown which I lament. I fear, Sir, that, if this debate is to continue, the courtesies of the debate are not likely to be preserved, and, in that view, as the author of the amendment to the Resolution moved by my Honourable friend, Rao Bahadur Subrahmanayam, I give an advice to him, an advice which I give to myself, that he and I should both withdraw our respective motions. As for my Muhammadan brethren in this House, I am authorised to say that, whatever may have been their expressions, they feel that they are Nationalists first and Muhammadans afterwards. (Hear, hear.) That their

[Dr. H. S. Gour.]

duty as Nationalists is much greater than the duty which they owe to their religion and to their race. We feel, Sir, that, when we stand in this House, we stand as representatives of no party, of no sect, of no creed, of no political association. We stand here to speak for the country at large, and, in that view, I feel, Sir, that I am voicing the sentiments of this House when I say that the question which the Honourable Mover of this Resolution has moved is at least premature. He wants us, first of all, to recommend to the Governor General in Council that he may be pleased to withdraw the administration of Martial Law in Malabar. On that point I have no doubt that the House will listen with interest to the speech of the Honourable the Leader of this House who will bring to bear upon the question the intimate personal knowledge which he possesses of the subject. As regards the latter portion of the Resolution as to what further steps are to be taken for the future administration of Martial Law, that is a question which is necessarily dependent upon the answer he is prepared to give to the first question. Sir, the administration of Martial Law is a matter of dire necessity. In all countries, civilised or semi-civilised, the resort to force for the purpose of suppressing disorder is well recognised. There is no country in the world subject to a well-regulated constitution, where a time and occasion does not arise for the enforcement of law and order by the proclamation of Martial Law. My friends in this House, who have been complaining of excesses, my friends on the other side, who have been levelling charges of maladministration of Martial Law, and of the abuse to which it is subjected, may pause and consider the situation with which we are at the present moment faced. Some of my friends speak of the extension of Martial Law to the country at large. I am sure, Sir, they do not believe in what they say. I feel that the question as to what steps the Government should take for the preservation of peace and order in the country at large is wholly irrelevant to the issue before the House. What we are concerned here with is the question of the Moplah rising in Malabar, and I hope that the discussion on that question will not be widened into the other issue as to what steps the Government should take with regard to the preservation of law and order in other parts of this Empire. Sir, when I tabled my amendment, I was under the impression that law and order in Malabar had been restored, but I have been disillusioned. My Honourable friend who spoke for the Moplahs has confided to me a tale of woe, and my friends who come from Malabar have depicted to us a different picture. I think, Sir, the situation at the present moment in that unfortunate country is still very grave, and, in that view, I do not think it would be right for any Member of this House to embarrass the Government by either insisting upon the immediate cancellation of Martial Law or demanding a judicial inquiry for the purpose of scrutinising the work that has been achieved by the Martial Law officers. In that view, Sir, I appeal to my Honourable friend, the Mover of this Resolution, to withdraw his Resolution, as I am prepared to, and do hereby, withdraw my amendment. If my Honourable friend does not wish to withdraw his Resolution, I can only say that he prefers a decent burial to self-immolation, because the fate of the Resolution, I submit, is a foregone conclusion.

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: Sir, I differ from many Members of this Assembly in the view they take of this Resolution. I believe myself that the Honourable Mover has performed a very useful duty in bringing this matter before the House. Not only has he been of assistance in enabling Government to explain their policy to the Assembly

and inviting discussion but I believe he has given this House an opportunity of looking into one of those questions which it is of vital importance they should not overlook. But, Sir, almost at once from this point, I have to part from my Honourable friend. He began his Resolution with an attack on the Government of Madras. There was also a suggestion in his speech that I went down to Malabar in order to alter the policy which had been followed by the local authorities, that my presence there was the signal for inaugurating changes in that policy and that I had influenced the Madras Government in this respect. Sir, I should be wrong if I allowed that impression to remain uncontradicted for one moment. There is no foundation for it whatever. I went down to Madras to perform what I believed to be the simple duty, to see for myself what was happening there, how martial law was being administered and also to ascertain whether I could be of any assistance to the local officers, though I doubt whether I was of much assistance to them.

At the same time, I must repudiate any suggestion whatever that the Madras Government have been apathetic in this matter or have been wanting in energy, sympathy or consideration. I maintain that they and the military and civil authorities on the spot have behaved throughout with the utmost propriety. The administration of martial law, save for one tragic affair, which we all lament and which is now *sub judice*, has moreover been singularly successful. (Hear, hear.) When I was down in Malabar, I heard indeed that martial law was being too leniently administered. I had Madras gentlemen like those who sit opposite me coming in a state of great excitement, demanding the adoption of more severe measures, and asking why this was not done to the Moplahs and why that punishment was not inflicted on the Moplahs; the greatest indignation was felt by all the residents of Malabar against the Moplah community at the time, and I had ample evidence of it. Now I mention this in answer to some of the speakers to-day to show that not only were there no complaints against the administration of martial law but that most people thought that the administration of martial law was too lenient rather than too severe.

But, Sir, I should like to begin my speech in a different note from that adopted by the Mover. I should like to begin with a note of our great appreciation and gratitude for the services of those officers who have fought so well for the Government and so well for the protection of the people in Malabar,—General Burnett Stewart, Colonel Humphreys, Mr. Evans, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Hitchcock, and others who have worked, many in danger of their lives at times, and at all times under great difficulties. I think that this House will do well, instead of attacking our local officers, to pay a tribute to the great work they have done there. (Hear, hear.) Now, Sir, I want to get to the substance of the Resolution and to tear off some of the side issues that have encumbered it throughout this discussion. Martial law in Malabar will, as a matter of fact, cease under the Ordinance on the 26th February next. That is the date when six months expire from the date of the promulgation of the first Ordinance. The position is, that martial law will cease, and yet normal conditions have, by no means, been restored. I think every one with any knowledge of the place will admit that large numbers of these Moplahs have returned and are now free in their homes. It is by no means sure that some will not break out again: and there are a number of outlaws still about the country looting, burning and murdering when they get the chance. Then we have to consider the question of these unfortunate converts—forcible converts. It is no use any

[Sir William Vincent.]

Member of this Assembly telling me that men have not been forcibly converted, because it is not the fact. Every one knows it, and it has been abundantly proved. Indeed I am quite certain that if my Honourable friend, Zahiruddin Ahmed, had been to the West Coast himself, he would not have dared to make that assertion in this House. Well, these converts who have reverted to Hinduism are in peril of their lives. I am told that any one who once becomes a Muhammadan and then reverts and comes back to his Amsom is in great danger of being murdered by the Moplahs and that many many instances of such murders have occurred in the past. Special measures of protection are essential for them. If I am wrong, my friend, the Honourable Mr. Innes, who has great knowledge of the place, will correct me. Then, again, there are a number of these outlaws, as I said, still preying on the country side. You have only got to read the daily papers to learn this. Members will see that certain localities have been freed now sufficiently for refugees to return, but there are two or three notorious leaders of these Moplahs who are still out for mischief, out for murder, looting, converting people, for arson or for any other form of crime. In these circumstances, the Government of Madras feel that it is quite impossible to carry on the administration under the ordinary system of law until normal conditions are restored. At the same time, our information is that it is not necessary to continue martial law in its full operation. What we want to do is to instil confidence into the Hindu residents and those Moplah residents who have remained loyal, and induce the refugees to return to their homes, to withdraw the troops gradually and to do what is possible in the way of reconstruction. There are also a very large number of persons to be tried who have been arrested during the rising for the gravest crimes. Dacoity has been an every day occurrence there. Arson equally so, and I fear other grave crimes have been very common. It is therefore absolutely necessary that the Local Government or some authority, either the military authority or the civil authority, should have some power of protecting the unfortunate residents in Malabar, and that some means of trying this large number of pending cases should be devised. What we propose to do is to ask His Excellency to issue an Ordinance which will abrogate martial law in that part of the country but will give the Local Government power to make regulations which are necessary for the protection of these unfortunate residents and people who are returning to their homes, as also for the restoration and maintenance of law and order, breach of these regulations being punishable with imprisonment. For the trial of the cases that are pending and are now being tried by special tribunals and by courts-martial in some cases, we propose to substitute tribunals of different characters, one class being summary courts, another being courts of special magistrates and a third being courts of special judges. We shall also provide for adequate rights of appeal. That will, I am quite sure, satisfy any Member of this Assembly. We propose to create courts of special judges because we cannot afford to keep these special tribunals going on indefinitely.

And now, I want to turn to one or two allegations that have been made in regard to the past. I will refer particularly to the observations of my friend, Mr. Schamrad Sahib Bahadur, because, after all, he is a Moplah himself and his words may, therefore, carry some weight in this Assembly. I believe the Honourable Member comes from another district just to the north of Calicut—South Canara. It is a fact that he did come to see me in Simla when he made certain complaints to me regarding the conduct of officers down in the affected area, and I made inquiries as to the truth of

the charges made. All I can say is that these inquiries have proved the charges to be entirely groundless, and I want to know whether Mr. Schamnad during the time of these rising went down to the Malabar district inside the martial law area or to Calicut at all to verify his charges, and I am going to wait until he answers.

Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur: Yes, to Calicut.

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: During the disturbances?

Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur: Yes, I went to Calicut in September and spoke to Mr. Thomas and others also.

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: Did you attempt to get any further? That is not the area more directly affected by the Moplah rising. When I went down to Malabar, I was very anxious to meet Mr. Schamnad. I wanted to get hold of him to help me to ascertain the facts about these Moplahs. I thought that he would be there converting these Moplahs into a better frame of mind and helping to do something to induce them to abandon their lawless courses. I could not find any trace of him. Not a trace.

Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur: If I had known you wanted me, I would gladly have come.

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: I am afraid the Honourable Member never visited any of the affected areas outside Calicut town to which he paid a short visit. Well, Sir, he has attempted to push the whole responsibility for the rising on to local Nairs and make them responsible for the rebellion. That is what I understood: I do not want to be unfair. Other Members of this Assembly are in a position to confirm my statement.

Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas: Yes, he did.

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: Well, does the Honourable Member mean to tell me candidly that he believes that? Is it not a matter of notoriety that these risings were fostered by some local priests—they call them Thangals, I think—and not by these Nairs? I saw myself a number of men under trial in some cases. They were not Hindu Nairs or anything of that kind, but they included two of these Muhammadan leaders and they were the people who had led these unfortunate Moplahs in that case into trouble. I saw the prisoners myself and I felt and still feel a great deal of compassion for the Moplahs who have been misled into this rebellion, but that cannot prevent justice running its course where they have been guilty of grossest cruelties to Hindus and others. But they have been misled, but not, believe me, so much by Nairs or other Hindus as by their own priests, by their own Maulvies, and by the influence of those Khilafat agitators who are responsible for the whole rising, and in my judgment there is no gainsaying this plain fact. If any gentleman here thinks that I have been unjust in this matter, I will ask him to read for himself the speech of Hazrat Mohani at the Congress at Ahmedabad. I read it here the other day. What does he say? Can any one after reading that speech deny the fact? Is there not, in that speech, a clear admission that this was a Muhammadan revolt for the benefit of the Khilafat? But I do not say, and I carefully avoid saying, that there were not some non-co-operators also concerned. I think Mr. Iswar Saran went a little too far in his statement. At any rate I will say, if they were not in the affair, then one or two have been singularly unfortunate as they are under arrest and are

[Sir William Vincent.]

being charged with offences connected with the rising before a Court of Law. It is said that Hindus would never have instigated measures to convert Hindus, and I do not suppose they would, but this is not the first time that people have meddled with forces they cannot control or foretell. At the same time it is only fair to say that the real leaders of the movement were these religious leaders of whom I have spoken.

I now turn to Dr. Gour's amendment and I am glad that he has withdrawn it. It is obvious that for various reasons no such Committee could be held at present while matters are in the present state, but further than this, there is no ground for such a Committee at all on the information before Government. I have heard no specific complaints made nor any allegations that martial law has been misused or abused there, except for Mr. Schamnad. I am prepared to make any inquiries into any specific complaints that he makes, and I have always been prepared to do that. But if you start an inquiry into the conduct of officers in this way without any reason, how do you expect them to do their duty in times of difficulty? You have got nothing against them. Their conduct has met with well merited commendation. Mr. Nair, I think, who comes from Malabar, is one of those who have eulogized them. Then we have the fact that the Local Government is entirely against such an inquiry. We have the fact that not a single member in the Local Council has asked for such an inquiry. What basis is there then for an inquiry, which would at once be taken as a slur on those who have been attempting to do their duty in an extremely difficult situation? I do not want to develop the argument but in those circumstances, I can only say that I am glad that Dr. Gour has withdrawn the whole of his amendment on that point, the more so because the spirit of fanaticism is still abroad in Malabar and the conditions are not such that it would be wise or proper to hold any such inquiry there at present.

There is only one word more and I think I have done with this Resolution. That is, a suggestion has been made in the course of this debate that the Government of Madras and those charitable persons who have been spending their time and money, including members of the Servants of India Society of whom we have one example here before us, have neglected Moplah women and Moplah suffering in their efforts to relieve distress and have been content to alleviate the sufferings of Hindus only. This is a suggestion again for which there is no foundation. Has any one read what Mr. Devadhar has written on the subject? I have the papers here. They sufficiently disprove any such suggestion. I have also a letter from the Government of Madras which disproves it. It has been said, and listening to Mr. Schamnad some Members of the Assembly may have been led to believe, that the Moplahs and their women were treated with unreasonable harshness and severity. This is, I believe, entirely untrue. I can only say that when I motored and walked through a part of this martial law area, I saw many Moplah women and Moplah men in their houses living comfortable and unmolested lives, and I did not see anything which led me to believe that innocent Moplahs were in any way ill-treated. I saw one or two Moplahs in hospital too. I saw one in the hospital being treated alongside possibly one of his victims. (*Mr. Schamnad*: 'No houses burnt also?') I saw a great many houses burnt, but mostly burnt by the Moplahs. (*Laughter.*) I saw a very large number of houses burnt. I saw buildings ruined and destroyed, but I believe by the co-religionists of my Honourable

friend. I dare say, however, the military have burnt some Moplah houses, they may have had to do it in the course of military operations,—very often it may have been necessary. I do not think that Honourable Members quite realise what the position was in Malabar. There was a regular miniature war. When I was down there, no one could go out of the vicinity of a military camp without a military guard. Whenever a person got on to a lonely road there was a real danger of a Moplah springing out of a bush with his war-knife to attack him, and I understand the gentleman is very difficult to stop when he comes on like that. It was not a question of dealing with a quiet, harmless, innocent folk who had been out for a little disorder or rioting. It was a question of a regular civil war with a desperate and fanatical foe. Sir, I maintain from all I saw and from all I have heard and read, that the martial law has been administered with the utmost leniency and consideration and that the greatest fairness and consideration possible has been shown to the Moplahs as a whole. In conclusion, I trust that the House will rest satisfied with the explanation that I have given and that the Honourable Member, who has rendered a public service by bringing forward this Resolution, will withdraw it.

Rao Bahadur C. S. Subrahmanayam: I withdraw the Resolution.

The Resolution* was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

DISTURBANCES IN THE UNITED PROVINCES.

The Honourable Sir William Vincent (Home Member): I have been asked by Sir Frank Carter if I could give him any information as to the recent occurrence in the United Provinces. The Government of India have no information as regards the murders of the Police at Chauri Chaura or the riot at Bareilly beyond what has appeared in the press. Official communiqués were published in to-day's 'Pioneer,' and I should be happy to supply any one with copies who has not seen them. In a report, dated the 3rd February, the Local Government mentioned that the lower strata in the numerous cities and towns were under little discipline and there were grounds for apprehension regarding them. Volunteer demonstrations, during the second half of the last month, have been common and most of them have been what is technically called peaceful. (*An Honourable Member:* 'Non-violent.') But a number were sufficiently disorderly to demand dispersal by force. Hostile feeling was said to be strong in the towns. But, beyond these facts and the actual news which is before Honourable Members, we have no further information. In fact the news of this occurrence was entirely unexpected by us. I have wired for further information and shall get it as soon as possible.

Sir Frank Carter (Bengal: European): I thank the Honourable the Home Member. May I ask him whether he has heard of further disturbances in the United Provinces during the last few days?

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: I have not. Chauri Chaura and Bareilly are the only two places of which I have information. There is of course, as Honourable Members are aware, a railway strike at Tundla.

Sir Frank Carter: Apart from that?

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: I have no further information.

* Vide page 2255 ante.

Mr. R. A. Spence (Bombay : European): May I ask the Honourable the Home Member whether full protection is being given to the police in the United Provinces in carrying out the duties which lie before them?

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: The police are generally supposed to be able to protect themselves pretty well.

Mr. R. A. Spence: They were not able to do so in this particular case.

The Honourable Sir William Vincent: All possible precautions are being taken and we have asked Local Governments to enlist further bodies of armed police for the purpose of coping with the present disorders where the existing force is inadequate to deal with it.

Mr. President: Before adjourning, I may remind Honourable Members that a list of Members has now been placed on the table in accordance with the statement which I made at the beginning of to-day's business.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, the 9th February, 1922.