

COUNCIL OF STATE DEBATES

(Official Report)

VOL. III, PART II

(24th January, 1923 to 27th March, 1923)

THIRD SESSION

OF THE

COUNCIL OF STATE, 1923.



DELHI
GOVERNMENT CENTRAL PRESS,
1923

CONTENTS.

	Page
WEDNESDAY, 24TH JANUARY, 1923—	
Members Sworn	523
Death of the Honourable Maung Po. Bye	523—24
Grant of Honours to Members	524
Questions and Answers	525—14
Arrangement of Questions	545
Questions and Answers	545—48
Reports laid on the Table of Joint Committee on Bills	548
Governor General's Assent to Bills	548
Statement of Exchange Gains and Losses	548—60
Communications in Frontier Province	561
Muslims, Hindus, etc., in Government of India Secretariat	561—66
Policy of His Majesty's Government with reference to the Government of India Act	567—68
Emigration to the Straits Settlements and Malay States	568—69
Emigration to Ceylon	569—70
Business of the House	570
THURSDAY, 25TH JANUARY, 1923—	
Report of Joint Committee on the Workmen's Compensation Bill	571
The Hindu Ceremonial Emoluments Bill—Request for postponement	571—72
Resolution <i>re</i> Purchase of Stores in England	572—77
Appointment of Public Services Commission	577—78
Resolution regarding the Indian Civil and other Imperial Services	578—86
Resolution <i>re</i> Conditions of Service of future entrants to I. C. S.	586—87
MONDAY, 29TH JANUARY, 1923—	
Member Sworn	589
Questions and Answers	589—92
The Criminal Tribes (Amendment) Bill	592—612
Message from the Legislative Assembly	612
TUESDAY, 30TH JANUARY, 1923—	
Questions and Answers	613—18
The Indian Boilers Bill	618
Message from the Governor General	618—19
The Registration of Chelas Bill	619—28
Resolution <i>re</i> Promotion of Irrigation Projects	629—50
WEDNESDAY, 31ST JANUARY, 1923—	
Bills passed by the Legislative Assembly	651
Gift of Books by Sir William Geary	651
The Indian Cotton Cess Bill—Reference to Joint Committee	651—71
The Indian Cotton Cess Bill—Nomination to Joint Committee	671
Course of Business	671—72

WEDNESDAY, 31ST JANUARY, 1923—contd.

Resolution <i>re</i> Workmen's Compensation and Social Insurance in Agriculture	672—84
Resolution <i>re</i> Protection of Women and Children in Agriculture—Recommendations of International Labour Conference	684—89
Statement of Business	688

MONDAY, 12TH FEBRUARY, 1923—

Questions and Answers	689—99
Dates for Discussion of Budget	699—700
Governor General's Assent to Bills	700
Bills passed by the Legislative Assembly	700
Alteration of Date of <i>Shivraatri</i> and Course of Business	700
Resolutions of which notice is given but not moved in Council	701
Resolution <i>re</i> Repeal of Army Amalgamation Scheme of 1869	701—17
The Malabar (Completion of Trials) Supplementing Bill laid on the Table	717—18

WEDNESDAY, 14TH FEBRUARY, 1923—

Questions and Answers	719—32
The Cotton Transport Bill	733—39
The Cantonments (House-Accommodation) Bill	739—49
Statement of Business	749

THURSDAY, 15TH FEBRUARY, 1923—

Statement <i>re</i> Government of India Presses laid on the table	751—53
The Malabar (Completion of Trials) Supplementing Bill	754—55
The Indian Mines Bill	755—59
The Indian Boilers Bill	759—65
Resolution <i>re</i> Emigration of Unskilled Labourers to Ceylon	765—70
Resolution <i>re</i> Emigration of Unskilled Labourers to Straits Settlements and Malay States	770—72

FRIDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY, 1923—

Resolution <i>re</i> Inquiry into Industrial Finance and Industrial Banks	773—87
Resolution <i>re</i> the Adoption of a System of Compulsory National Military Training and Service	787—98
The Married Women's Property (Amendment) Bill laid on the Table	798
Resolution <i>re</i> the Adoption of a System of Compulsory National Military Training and Service	798—818
Resolution <i>re</i> Necessity of Census of Products of British India	818—19

MONDAY, 19TH FEBRUARY, 1923—

Questions and Answers	821—23
Resolution <i>re</i> Necessity of Census of Products of British India	828—26
Resolution <i>re</i> Opportunities to Indians for qualifying for Secretaryships, etc.	825—27
Resolution <i>re</i> Radio Communications	828
Resolution <i>re</i> Imposition of an Export Duty on Benzine and Petrol	828—34

TUESDAY, 20TH FEBRUARY, 1923—

Bills laid on the Table	885
The Prisoners (Amendment) Bill	885
The Indian Naval Armament Bill	886
The Workmen's Compensation Bill	887-78

WEDNESDAY, 21ST FEBRUARY, 1923—

Resolution <i>re</i> Administration of Ajmer-Merwara	879-88
Resolution <i>re</i> Cognizance by Legislature of Matters on which Government of India has undertaken legislation [Modification of Rule 23 (1) of the Rules of Business]	888-906
Resolution <i>re</i> Recommendations of the Committee on Indian Arms Rules	907

THURSDAY, 22ND FEBRUARY, 1923—

The Criminal Law Amendment Bill laid on the Table	909
Message from the Legislative Assembly	909
The Workmen's Compensation Bill	909-17
The Indian Factories (Amendment) Bill	917-20
The Hindu Ceremonial Emoluments Bill	929-31
Statement of Business	931

MONDAY, 26TH FEBRUARY, 1923—

Questions and Answers	933-33
Bills laid on the Table	938
Resolution <i>re</i> Recommendations of Committee on Indian Arms Rules	939-62
Resolution <i>re</i> Amendment of Standing Orders	962-64
Discussion on the Criminal Law Amendment Bill	964

TUESDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY, 1923—

Message from the Legislative Assembly	967
Bills laid on the Table	967
The Indian Paper Currency Bill	967-68
The Prisoners (Amendment) Bill	968
The Repealing and Amending Bill	969
The Hindu Ceremonial Emoluments Bill	969-95
Message from the Legislative Assembly	995

WEDNESDAY, 28TH FEBRUARY, 1923—

Bill laid on the Table	997
Conference <i>re</i> Regulations under the Electoral Rules	997
Resolution <i>re</i> Appointment of Indians to the Traffic Inspector Cadre	997-1020
Resolution <i>re</i> Appointment of Indians as Departmental Secretaries, Joint Secretaries, etc.	1020-50
Statement of Business	1050

THURSDAY, 1ST MARCH, 1923—

Member Sworn	1051
The Budget	1051-59
The Criminal Law Amendment Bill	1060-83

MONDAY, 5TH MARCH, 1923—

Questions and Answers	1085
Statement laid on the Table	1085
Resolution <i>re</i> Imposition of an Export Duty on Benzine and Petroli	1085—1101
Resolution <i>re</i> Rights and Status of Indians in Kenya	1102—21
The Married Women's Property (Amendment) Bill	1122—23

TUESDAY, 6TH MARCH, 1923—

Member Sworn	1127
Questions and Answers	1127—29
The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill	1129—31
Bills assented to by the Governor General	1131—32

WEDNESDAY, 7TH MARCH, 1923—

The Budget	1133—81
----------------------	---------

THURSDAY, 8TH MARCH, 1923—

Absence from House at question time of Members who have given notice of Questions	1183
Questions and Answers	1183—90
Draft Notification <i>re</i> Emigration of Unskilled Labour to Mauritius	1190—91
The Indian Cotton Cess Bill	1191—1203
The Indian Income-tax (Amendment) Bill	1203—04
The Government Savings Banks (Amendment) Bill	1204—05
The Official Secrets Bill	1205—15
Message from the Legislative Assembly	1216
Statement of Business	1216

MONDAY, 12TH MARCH, 1923—

Questions and Answers	1217—18
Message from the Legislative Assembly	1218
Bill laid on the Table	1218
Resolution <i>re</i> Amendment of Electoral Rules	1219—29
The Malkharoda and Gaontia Villages Laws Bill	1229—30

TUESDAY, 13TH MARCH, 1923—

Announcement of Summer Session in July, 1923	1231
The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill	1231—70

WEDNESDAY, 14TH MARCH, 1923—

Questions and Answers	1271
Resolution <i>re</i> Indian Stores Department	1271—85
Resolution <i>re</i> Eligibility of Political Prisoners for Election to Legislature	1285—1302

THURSDAY, 15TH MARCH, 1923—

The Malkharoda and Gaontia Villages Laws Bill	1303—04
The Indian Penal Code (Amendment) Bill	1304—24
Statement of Business	1324—25

	Pages.
WEDNESDAY, 21ST MARCH, 1923—	
Member Sworn	1327
Questions and Answers	1327—34
Bill laid on the Table	1334
The Indian Finance Bill	1335—36
The Mahendra Partab Singh Estates Bill	1336—38
Report of Select Committee on Amendments to Standing Orders	1338
Bills assented to by His Excellency the Governor General	1339
Resolution <i>re</i> Emigration of Unskilled Labour to Mauritius	1338—45
FRIDAY, 23RD MARCH, 1923—	
Messages from the Legislative Assembly	1347
Bills laid on the Table	1347—48
The Indian Finance Bill	1348—97
MONDAY, 26TH MARCH, 1923—	
Questions and Answers	1399—1401
The Mahendra Partab Singh Estates Bill	1401—07
The Legal Practitioners (Women) Bill	1407—08
The Indian Merchant Shipping Bill	1408—10
Statement of Business	1410
TUESDAY, 27TH MARCH, 1923—	
Message from the Legislative Assembly	1411
The Indian Finance Bill	1411—18
Adjournment of Council of State and attendance at meetings	1413

COUNCIL OF STATE.

Tuesday, the 30th January, 1923.

The Council assembled at Metcalfe House at Eleven of the Clock. The Honourable the President was in the Chair.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

IMPORTATION OF MOTOR CARS AND LORRIES.

76. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will the Government kindly state what was the number of (a) motor cars and (b) motor lorries and commercial vehicles imported into India in the years previous to the imposition of the recent import duty on them and in the period subsequent to such imposition?

The HONOURABLE MR. D. T. CHADWICK: The number of motor cars and motor wagons imported into India is as follows:—

	1919-20.	1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23. (April to November 1922.)
Motor cars	9,925	15,432	2,895	2,919
Motor wagons	1,229	2,885	580	835

GOODS CARRIED ON INDIAN RAILWAYS.

77. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will the Government kindly state what was the tonnage of goods carried by Indian Railways in each of the half-years ending 30th September 1920, 1921 and 1922? How far is the variation, if any, due to the recent increase in freight charges?

The HONOURABLE MR. D. T. CHADWICK: The information asked for by the Honourable Member is not readily available either for all railways or for the periods referred to. The information readily available however shows that the tonnage of goods carried on 9 important railways from 1st April 1921 to 30th December 1921, and from 1st April 1922 to 30th December 1922, were 48,912,000 and 49,640,000 respectively.

CARRIAGE OF PASSENGERS BY RAILWAYS.

78. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will the Government kindly state what was the number of passengers carried by Indian Railways in each of the half years ending 30th September 1920, 1921 and 1922? How far is the variation, if any, due to the recent increase in Railway fares?

The HONOURABLE MR. D. T. CHADWICK: The information asked for by the Honourable Member is not readily available either for all railways

or for the periods referred to. The Government are, however, able to state that the number of passengers carried by 9 important railways from 1st April 1921 to 30th December 1921 and from 1st April 1922 to 30th December 1922 were 260,318,000 and 253,833,000 respectively. The decrease is probably due in part to the fact that people have not yet adjusted themselves to the new rates.

EXPORT OF PETROL AND EXCISE DUTY.

79. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: (a) Will the Government kindly state what was the amount of petrol exported to foreign countries from (a) Burma, and (b) other Indian provinces, in each of the years 1917-18, 1918-19, 1919-20, 1920-21 and 1921-22, and in the half year ending 30th September 1922?

(b) Will they also state what was the total amount of petrol manufactured in (a) Burma and (b) other Indian provinces, and what was the amount of excise duty levied on it in each of the above-mentioned years and periods?

The HONOURABLE MR. D. T. CHADWICK: (a) The export of benzine and petrol from Burma and other Indian provinces to foreign countries from 1917 up to 30th September 1922 was as follows:

	From Burma.	From other Provinces.
	Gallons.	Gallons.
1917-18	18,934,711	Nil.
1918-19	22,400,932	90 (P'engal).
1919-20	36,222,584	Nil.
1920-21	18,856,638	2 (Bombay).
1921-22	20,156,323	Nil.
1922-23 (April to September 1922)	8,722,875	Nil.

(b) No figures are readily available as to the quantity of petrol produced in Burma and other Indian provinces during the intervals specified by the Honourable Member. It is, however, understood that the production of petrol in Burma is about 32 million gallons, annually.

The amount of excise duty levied on petrol is as follows in thousands of rupees:—

1917-18	35,39
1918-19	34,86
1919-20	41,42
1920-21	54,26
1921-22	69,32
1922-23 (April to September 1922)	39,38

IMPORT OF MACHINERY

80. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will the Government kindly state what was the value of machinery imported into India in each of the half years ending 30th September 1920, 1921 and 1922? How far is the variation, if any, due to the recent increase made in the import duty on these goods?

The HONOURABLE MR. D. T. CHADWICK: The imports of machinery and millwork in each of the half years ending 30th September 1920, 1921 and 1922 were valued at Rs. 7,86 lakhs, Rs. 17,81 lakhs, and Rs. 11,44 lakhs, respectively. There has been no increase in the rate of duty on machinery since 1916.

STATE ADMINISTRATION OF E. I. AND G. I. P. RAILWAYS.

81. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: (a) Will the Government kindly state what action has been taken on the recommendation of the Railway Central Advisory Council in connection with the taking over by the State of administration of East Indian Railway and Great Indian Peninsula Railway?

(b) Will they also state whether it is the intention of Government to accept the recommendation of the Railway Central Advisory Council? When is effect likely to be given to their recommendation?

The HONOURABLE MR. D. T. CHADWICK: The Government are unable to make any statement on the subject. The whole question is at present under consideration and will be debated shortly in another place.

BANK RATE OF INTEREST.

82. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Is the Government aware that there is a great difference in the rates of Bank interest in England and India? Is Government taking any steps to lower the rate of Bank interest in this country? If so, the nature of action taken may kindly be explained.

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: Yes, Government are aware that at present the Bank of England rate is 3 per cent. as against the Imperial Bank of India's rate of 8 per cent. There is nothing extraordinary in this difference between the two rates; a similar difference has often occurred in the past. A bank rate depends on the money conditions in the country concerned, and in India, where the demand for money is much more seasonal than in most other countries, it is not surprising that there should be a comparatively high bank rate in the busy season and a comparatively low one in the slack season. Government see nothing in the present conditions of the money markets in India to call for their active intervention.

INDIGENOUS SHIPPING INDUSTRY.

83. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will the Government kindly state whether it is their policy to encourage the growth of indigenous Indian shipping? If so, will they kindly state the nature of steps they have taken or they intend to take in this matter?

The HONOURABLE MR. D. T. CHADWICK: A Committee will sit almost immediately to consider what measures can usefully be taken to further the objects of the Resolution moved by Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer on January 12th, 1922, in another place.

REPORT OF INCCAPE COMMITTEE.

84. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will the Government kindly state as to whether Lord Inchcape's Committee have submitted their report to Government? When is this report likely to be laid on the table of this Council?

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: Government have not yet received the report and, until they do so, they are unable to make any statement as to its publication.

The HONOURABLE SAIYID RAZA ALI: With a view to save unnecessary expenditure, has the question of the amalgamation of Ajmer-Merwara with any major Province been taken into consideration by Lord Inchoape's Committee?

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: I am unable to say what precise subjects the Inchcape Committee have taken into consideration. Until we receive their report, we cannot tell.

The HONOURABLE SAIYID RAZA ALI: Am I to understand the Government of India do not know what subjects are being considered by the Inchcape Committee?

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: Every subject in the whole field of administration is under their consideration, so far as the Central Government's expenditure is concerned. There are no limitations in their terms of reference.

The HONOURABLE SAIYID RAZA ALI: Am I to understand that this is one of the subjects under the consideration of the Inchcape Committee?

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The Honourable Member has had his answer.

REPORT OF FRONTIER COMMITTEE.

85. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will the Government kindly state when they are going to publish the report of the Frontier Committee, and when is this report likely to be placed on the table of this Council?

The HONOURABLE MR. J. P. THOMPSON: As the Report has only recently reached the Government of India in its complete form and is still under consideration, I regret to say that I am unable to give the Honourable Member the information he asks for.

TRAFFIC INSPECTORS AND STATION MASTERS.

86. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will the Government kindly state what is the number of Indians, Anglo-Indians and Europeans among (a) Traffic Inspectors, administrative branch, (b) Traffic Inspectors, commercial branch, and (c) Station Masters drawing more than Rs. 150 per month on (i) State Railways and (ii) Guaranteed and Company Railways of India?

The HONOURABLE MR. D. T. CHADWICK: Government do not consider that the information would fulfil any sufficiently useful purpose to justify the labour and expense involved in compiling it, and they therefore regret that they cannot undertake to obtain the numbers in question.

LICENSE FOR SALE OF SALT.

87. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will the Government kindly state what has been decided on the question of abolishing Government license for the monopolised sale of salt in the different provinces? Will they kindly explain their present policy in this matter?

The HONOURABLE MR. D. T. CHADWICK: The policy of the Government of India with regard to the agency system of selling salt was explained to this House by the Honourable Mr. Innes on the 18th September 1922. In the case of Didwana and Kalabagh permission to indent is already freely given. As regards the other sources Government are considering the question of the abolition of the agency system.

CARRIAGE OF POSTAL ARTICLES.

88. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will the Government kindly state what was the number of postal articles carried by the Post Office Department in each of the half years ending on 30th September 1920, 1921 and 1922? How far is the variation, if any, due to increase in postal rates?

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA: The necessary information, so far as it can be obtained, will be supplied to the Honourable Member as soon as it is available.

SALARIES OF RAILWAY STAFF.

89. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will the Government kindly state what has been the increase in 1922-23 as compared with 1913-14 in the salaries of (a) Indians, (b) Anglo-Indians and (c) Europeans, employed on (i) State Railways and (ii) Guaranteed and Company Railways?

The HONOURABLE MR. D. T. CHADWICK: Increases in the salaries of staff employed on the several railways have not been given with reference to communities, neither have they as a rule been calculated as percentages. It is not possible, therefore, to furnish the information asked for in the form desired.

But taking the case of one railway, the North-Western Railway, the percentage increase over the pre-war rates of pay drawn by the subordinate establishments, works out as follows:

<i>Pre-war rates of pay.</i>		<i>Increase per cent. of present rates over pre-war rates.</i>	
	<i>Rs.</i>		<i>Rs.</i>
Menials (varying rates)			75 to 167
Pay below	50		51 to 78
Pay	50		58 to 91
"	75		94 to 52
"	100		16 to 83
"	150		17 to 110
"	200		12.5 to 134
"	225		53 to 108
"	250		20 to 117.2
"	275		15 to 61
"	300		16.7 to 100
"	325		31 to 56
"	350		21.4 to 55
"	375		13 to 86.7
"	400		12.5 to 75
"	450		11 to 55
"	500		12 to 40

Again, taking the Superior Staff of one department, the Engineering Department of the State Railways, the percentage of increase over pre-war rates of pay is approximately as follows:—

Executive and Assistant Engineers.	Executive	{ 20 per cent.	Europe recruited.
		{ 37 „	India do.
Superintending Engineers		{ 14 „	Europe do.
Chief Engineers		{ 47 „	India do.
		9 „	Irrespective of country of recruitment.

These figures will, I think, give the Honourable Member a fair idea of the approximate average percentage increases of pay granted to the railway staff serving in the Punjab.

TRADE COMMISSIONER IN EAST AFRICA.

90. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Is the Government aware that the Indian community in East Africa has recently demanded the appointment of an Indian for the post of Indian Trade Commissioner in that country? What action does the Government propose to take in this matter?

The HONOURABLE MR. D. T. CHADWICK: Such a request has recently been received from one Indian Chamber in Kenya. There is no question of recalling Mr. Leftwich whose efforts on behalf of Indian trade have been appreciated in East Africa.

The general question of the retrenchment of the post will be considered when the Inchcape Committee report.

THE INDIAN BOILERS BILL.

The SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL: Sir, in accordance with Rule 25 of the Indian Legislative Rules, I lay on the table a copy of the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to steam-boilers, which was passed by the Legislative Assembly at its meeting held on the 29th January, 1923.

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR GENERAL.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Message from His Excellency the Governor General:

“ In pursuance of the provisions of sub-section (3) of section 67A of the Government of India Act, I hereby direct that the heads of expenditure specified in that sub-section shall be open to discussion by the Council of State when the Financial Statement is under consideration.

READING,
Governor General.”

To make the meaning of this message clear to Honourable Members I will ask the Secretary to read the relevant provisions from the Act in question.

The SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL: The heads of expenditure referred to in the message are as follows:

- (i) interest and sinking fund charges on loans; and
- (ii) expenditure of which the amount is prescribed by or under any law; and
- (iii) salaries and pensions of persons appointed by or with the approval of His Majesty or by the Secretary of State in Council; and
- (iv) salaries of Chief Commissioners and Judicial Commissioners; and
- (v) expenditure classified by the order of the Governor General in Council as—
 - (a) ecclesiastical;
 - (b) political;
 - (c) defence.

THE REGISTRATION OF CHELAS BILL.

The HONOURABLE LALA SUKHBIR SINHA (United Provinces Northern: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I beg to move:

“That the Bill to control the possession of minor children by sadhus, fakirs, religious mendicants and certain other persons, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Main Sir Muhammad Shafi, the Honourable Mr. Crerar, the Honourable Maharaja Sir Manindra Chandra Nandy, the Honourable Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das, the Honourable Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas, the Honourable Mr. Rangaswamy Ayyangar, the Honourable Saiyid Raza Ali, the Honourable Raja Moti Chand, the Honourable Mr. Khaparde and the Mover.”

Sir, this Bill was introduced in this Council on the 1st March 1922. After that it was published in the *Gazette of India* and the Local Government Gazettes. About 80 opinions have been received from the Local Governments and I do not know how many persons were asked by the Local Governments to express their opinion. This must be known to the Home Department, but after all we have received about 80 opinions from different Provinces. This set of opinions shows that about half of them are in favour of the Bill and about half are opposed to it. Those whom I have taken to be in favour have given their unqualified support to the Bill, and those who are opposed to the Bill have opposed it on the ground of administrative difficulties. Those in favour are mostly judicial officers and members of public bodies and such like who have come in contact with the nuisance which the Bill is meant to remove. This nuisance of minor boys being in the possession of so-called Sadhus is generally prevalent in the Punjab, the United Provinces and some parts of Bengal. I find from the opinions that in Madras, Bombay and the Central Provinces this nuisance is not much experienced and therefore the people there did not take much interest in this measure. But the people from the Punjab, United Provinces and Bengal have given their strong support to this Bill; for instance, from the Punjab, the Financial Commissioners at page 10 say that it is undoubtedly an evil to be dealt with and then they go on about the details; but they say that the evil is there and it should be dealt with. Almost all the Judges of the High Court of the Punjab support the Bill; for instance, Sir Shadilal, Mr. Justice Broadway, Mr. Justice Abdul Raouf, Mr. Justice Harrison and Mr. Justice Abdul Quadir, all of them have supported the Bill in unqualified terms. The Hindu Sabha, Lahore, has supported the Bill very strongly. Some of the Judges in the districts of the

[Lala Sukhbir Saha.]

Punjab have also supported the Bill. The Government also support the principle of the Bill, but say that there will be some difficulties in working it, and that the time is not fit for such a measure; perhaps the Government there were under the impression that this Bill might interfere with any religion or religious sect of people, but I will show later on that the object of the Bill is not at all to interfere with any religion or religious body of people. As regards the United Provinces, the Chief Justice of Allahabad is in favour of the Bill and also some of the Judges in the districts; the Commissioner of Meerut and some of the Collectors are also in favour of it; Mr. Darling, Collector of Benares and Mr. Waugh, Collector of Etawah, are in favour of the Bill. Pundit Gokaran Nath Misra, the leading Hindu Member of the United Provinces Legislative Council, is in favour of the Bill. In Bengal, the Inspector-General of Police is in favour of the Bill; one Commissioner, some Judges, and Sir Hariram Goenka, the leading Marwari in Bengal, are also in favour of the Bill. One Mr. Muhammad Musa from Chittagong is also in favour of the Bill. Without going any further into detail, it will be seen from this analysis that there is a good deal of support from these three provinces at least for this Bill. Those who are opposed to the Bill are generally because of the difficulties which they say will be found in its working; but I would submit that if this Bill be referred to Select Committee it will be its object to see how those difficulties can be removed; and the Select Committee will be in a position to do this and to see how far the Bill can be improved. Then, Sir, some public bodies are also in favour of this Bill. The Devi Samaj, Lahore, is in favour of it; and there is the Serapanthi Jain community, of whom so many representatives are seated in the gallery above who have come from Calcutta and Bikanir to watch the proceedings; they are in favour of the Bill, of course with some amendments. Public meetings held at Bulandshahr and other places have also supported the Bill.

Now, leaving aside all these opinions of which I have given a short analysis, I want to explain to the Council that this Bill will be permissive. Every Local Government will have a right to extend it to its own province if it thinks it desirable or necessary. It may be said there is no such provision in the Bill now in those definite terms. But I would make a suggestion to the Select Committee, when the Bill goes to it, to make this provision somewhat in this form: that it shall extend to the whole of India, but shall not come into force in any area unless the Local Government by notification in that behalf in the local official Gazette so directs; that every such proposed notification under this section shall be laid in draft before the local Legislature of the province affected and no notification shall be issued unless that local Legislature has by Resolution approved with or without modification the terms of the draft. If the Committee to which I propose this Bill to be referred will insert such a provision in the Bill, then every Local Government will be in a position to extend this Act to that province or not as it likes, and in that case the Bombay, Madras and Central Provinces Governments may or may not have it. The Punjab, United Provinces and Bengal Governments may have it on modified terms, and it will be open to them to have the Act enforced in their provinces with such modifications as they may like or as they may find necessary.

I think I will do justice to the subject if I explain to this Council that its object is not at all to interfere or molest any real sadhu or fakir. We all respect them, and there is no intention on my part or on the part of

those who have supported the Bill to give any molestation or any harassment to any of them. In every country such missionaries and such priests are to be found and in India especially we have this class of fakirs and sadhus at a very high level. We respect them very much and we expect religious principles and doctrines from them; but what we find is that in the guise of sadhus and fakirs many people have adopted this profession of begging and going about in the streets and public places with minor boys. This nuisance has grown up so much in the Punjab and the United Provinces and Bengal that we find daily a large number of people in possession of such minors; they do not give them any education; they do not train them properly; they turn them into mendicants and beggars and criminals. I think there is hardly any person who will not support a measure like this to prevent this nuisance in society. This measure will not at all affect our religion; it will rather help it. Those sadhus and fakirs who are really sadhus and fakirs will get more help than those who are not sadhus and fakirs. This is a great social evil which I think everybody would like to be removed. If the number of sadhus and so-called sadhus and fakirs can be limited and cut down, it will be a great economic gain to the country. There are, if I may quote the last census figures, not less than fifty lakhs of such people who depend upon the alms and charities of others. Assuming that each of them gets four annas a day, the total annual expenditure on them comes to an enormous figure. If, however, some kind of work is provided for them so that they may earn, at least four annas per day, they will earn not less than 48 crores of rupees. So, in this poor country, can we have so large a number of people without any occupation, without any provision, dependent on our charity and alms? As I said before, I do not mean to include in this category those who are really sadhus and fakirs, who are respected all-round, but only those who are going about in the garb of sadhus and fakirs and depend upon our alms and charity and who have no right or claim upon the people to be fed. Yesterday we had a similar Bill on the Criminal Tribes Act. The object of that Bill was simply to improve the social customs of those criminal tribes. I think it is for the Government and all of us who may believe in society to turn them into good members of society. The Bill will hit only those persons who are not real sadhus and fakirs and who have no religious work to do. They simply go about and beg and turn these minor boys into fakirs and sadhus. The Bill is a very mild measure. It provides only for registration of those minors who are in the possession of such people. If any such person is found in any public street or public place in possession of such a minor, he will be called upon by a Magistrate or a police officer not below the rank of Sub-Inspector to show from what place and from what people he took the minor. If he gives such a certificate, then he will be allowed to go about, but if not, the boy will be taken from him and sent to some orphanage or given to a man of his own religion to be maintained and educated. If the Honourable Members will kindly go through the Bill carefully, they will find that it is a very mild measure. The registration will not be any harassment to any good sadhu or fakir. If he is a really good sadhu or fakir, he will not go about to public places begging; he will always remain at his home. He will have either a school or *pathshala* for such boys. They will not be harassed, but those people will be harassed who are caught in the public streets and public places, who have nothing to do with the child except to turn him into a criminal or a beggar. The Members whom I have proposed to put on the Committee represent all shades of opinion, legal as well as social and other aspects, and if they find any difficulty in the administration

[Lala Sukhbir Sinha.]

of the Act, I think they will be able to improve the Bill. Therefore I think I need not say anything further on the subject and I ask the Honourable Members of this Council to give me permission to refer this Bill to a Select Committee, of which I have given the names. If they wish they may propose any change in the list of Members. In the hope of its acceptance I put this motion before the House.

The HONOURABLE MAHARAJA SIR MANINDRA CHANDRA NANDY (West Bengal: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, from my personal experience of Northern India, from the Punjab to Bengal, I have seen that there are a very large number of akras, sadhus, fakirs and religious mendicants; and I have found that minor children are taken hold of by those akras, in the guise of sadhus, fakirs, and religious mendicants, and they are actually left without any education or training of any kind. These children are employed as servants, though they are in future to be sadhus, fakirs and mendicants. So, I heartily support the Bill which has been moved by the Honourable Lala Sukhbir Sinha to control the possession of minor children by sadhus, fakirs, and religious mendicants and certain other persons, and propose that it be referred to a Select Committee.

The HONOURABLE MR. J. CRERAR (Home Secretary): Sir, I feel certain that no one who listened to the earnest and moving appeal of the Honourable Lala Sukhbir Sinha can have failed to be impressed by the high motives, the sincerity of purpose, the zeal for progress and reform, the intense desire to eradicate a serious evil from our body politic, which have impelled him in the promotion of this measure and which have inspired his utterances here to-day. I was myself very deeply impressed by the Honourable Member's attitude and utterances and it is therefore a deeper source of regret to me that it is incumbent upon me to rise to oppose his motion. I have alluded, I admit in very inadequate terms, to the high motives and the zeal for progress and reform which have inspired my Honourable friend. Indeed my only complaint on that ground, if it can properly be called a complaint, is that my Honourable friend's enlightenment and his zeal for progress and reform are somewhat too much in advance of public opinion on the subject. Sir, we are a democratic Legislature, and one of the advantages of a democratic Legislature is that it can secure for the measures which it enacts the valuable and indeed the indispensable support of public opinion. There is also a limitation and it is that, while a democratic Legislature must indeed lead and be in the van of progressive thought it is perilous for it, for the measures it advocates and for the people over whom it is set in authority, if it precedes by too long an interval the march of public opinion. I can conceive, Sir, that in unreformed days, or in periods even more remote, a measure of this kind might have been placed upon the Statute Book. I imagine that great and enlightened monarchs like Asoka and Akbar might conceivably, with the enormous powers they had of imposing their policy throughout their dominions, have contemplated some such measure as this; but it is not in my reading of history that they ever did. And I think the Honourable Member would be well advised if he paused a little before himself advocating and before inviting the House to join with him in advocating a measure which I venture to suggest might very well be a measure propounded by a benevolent despotism, but which presents very serious difficulties and disadvantages from the point of view of a democratic Legislature. Now, Sir, I have said that one of the essentials of a measure of this kind, more particularly a measure which impinges so directly upon social and

religious prejudices, is that it should have behind it the very assured support of a very strong body of public opinion. My Honourable friend has adverted to the opinions which have been expressed upon this Bill. I understood him to say that of the replies received from Local Governments half were in favour and half were opposed to this measure. I am afraid, Sir, that my Honourable friend took a very sanguine view of those opinions. I have myself read them through with the utmost care, and I am bound to convey to the House that my conclusion is that every Local Government consulted on the subject—and each Local Government, I may say, made a very careful exploration of opinion, both official and non-official, in its own jurisdiction—has reported in opposition to the Bill; though at the same time, as I willingly admit, expressing in various terms its appreciation of the intentions of the promoter of the Bill. I will not weary the House by reading these opinions out in detail, but, as I understood my Honourable friend to refer in particular to the support which was obtained for this measure from the Governments of the United Provinces, the Central Provinces and the Punjab, I will read a very brief abstract of those opinions. The opinion of the Government of the Punjab which I understood my Honourable friend regarded as favourable to this measure is as follows

The HONOURABLE LALA SUKHBIR SINHA: I pointed out that that Government have supported the principle but not the details of the Bill. That is what I said.

The HONOURABLE MR. J. CRERAR: Well, as the Punjab is one of the provinces in which I understood my Honourable friend to urge that this measure is particularly necessary, I will, with your permission, Sir, give a brief abstract of their opinion. It is:

“In the opinion of the Governor in Council the action which the Magistracy, the police and the prosecuting agency would be required to take under the provisions of this Bill is likely to lend itself to allegations of interference with religious practices, and for this reason he considers it to be undesirable that this Bill should be passed into law. If it be passed, the resultant odium of its working will be an embarrassment to the administration.”

The Government of the United Provinces are of opinion that the introduction and discussion of the Bill is desirable, but the Governor in Council is in agreement with the majority of the officials consulted that the efficacy of the Bill is doubtful, while it is obvious that, if passed in its present form, it would place the District Magistrate in an invidious position by giving him powers of interference in a matter which is considered by many a purely religious one.

I do not think that I need continue the recital of these opinions and the House will accept from me that there is, on one ground or another, unanimous opposition from the Local Governments. I think the House will agree with me that, when we are considering a measure which lays a very heavy, I might almost say a very invidious, burden of responsibility upon the Local Governments and upon their officials, it is incumbent upon us to treat their opinions with a more than ordinary degree of sympathy and respect.

The Honourable Member has then adverted to some individual opinions. Now, Sir, I entirely accept the Honourable Member as a highly authoritative exponent of individual Hindu opinion on this subject. I need not, therefore, adduce any further instances of opinions given by Hindu gentlemen in support of this measure, but I do think it is only fair that I should indicate to the House that opinions by Hindu gentlemen of authority and knowledge in these matters have been given, and are in many instances

[Mr. J. Crerar.]

distinctly adverse. That, Sir, is a matter of considerable significance, because I think we may say that individual opinion in a matter of this kind would be roughly divided into two classes. You might have the opinion of the orthodox, possibly the obscurantist, section of the community which is affected, and I think it may generally be assumed in a measure of this kind that such opinion would be adverse. But we also have a large and important body of enlightened opinion, and it is from that direction that it could be most reasonably expected that the strongest volume of favourable opinion would be received. I would therefore merely indicate one or two opinions given by individual Hindu gentlemen. The Honourable Dewan Tek Chand, Commissioner of the Ambala Division, is, on the whole, against the Bill as he thinks it will be construed into an unnecessary interference with religious customs which are held in great esteem by the people. Lala Murari Lal of Shahpur considers the proposed legislation uncalled for and unnecessarily harassing. He thinks that the provisions of the Guardians and Wards Act on the civil side and of the Indian Penal Code on the criminal side are sufficient to protect minors or to assist guardians. Pandit Kanhaya Lal, Judicial Commissioner of Oudh, does not favour the Bill because he considers it impracticable. There are others in the same strain with which I will not further detain the House.

Besides these opinions, Sir, I have another very important opinion to lay before the House. This measure was submitted for consideration to the Standing Committee attached to the Home Department. Their names are, I think, familiar to the House which will, I am sure, agree that their opinion is a weighty one. It is as follows:

“The Committee then proceeded to consider the Registration of Chelas Bill which was introduced in the Council of State on the 1st March 1922 by the Honourable Mr. Sukhbir Sinha. The difficulties in ascertaining the age of children in India, the difficulties of requiring that the certificate of adoption shall be produced when demanded by a Magistrate or police officer not below the rank of Sub-Inspector, the difficulties which might ensue from the powers given to police officers to arrest and the burden which would be placed upon the executive authority of Government in administering the Bill, if enacted, were pointed out by Members during the discussion. It was considered that the subject matter of the Bill was one to be decided by a growth of public opinion and was not one to be settled by legislation. The Committee advised the Home Department that Government should oppose the Bill at its next stage.”

In view of that opinion and in view of the considerations I have adduced, I think the House will agree with me that Government have no other option but to act upon the advice of the Standing Committee and on the opinions of the Local Governments. As a matter of fact, I think it will be apparent from what the Honourable Member himself said that the conditions rendering special legislation of this kind desirable are to a large extent confined to three or possibly four provinces in India. The Honourable Member himself admits that it must be left to the provincial Governments to determine whether to adopt this measure, and that it must further be left to them to make such modifications in it as are necessary to adapt it to local conditions. I think all these considerations point in one direction, and that is that, if it is found practicable to introduce legislation of this kind, it should be left to the Legislatures of the Provincial Governments on whom will devolve the difficult, and in many cases the invidious task of putting it into operation. Sir, I have paid the best tribute in my humble power to the excellent intentions which animated my Honourable friend in promoting this Bill, but I feel it necessary to point out that for a good law it does not suffice that it should be good in intention. It must have a close

regard to the facts with which it proposes to deal. It would be well, it would be wise, to have regard to precedent, though I should be the last myself to argue that in any measures which contemplate social progress we should allow ourselves to be too much under the dead hand of precedent. But it is wise, it is prudent, in considering a measure of this kind to consider also what actually has been found practicable in this direction in the past and, if possible, to develop on those lines. Precedent I do not regard as a prohibition, but at least as a warning, a cautionary signpost on the right road. We must also, if our measures are to be really good measures, have regard to the prospect of their being put effectively into operation; and while opinions from very responsible sources highly applaud my Honourable friend's intention and have expressed the desire that legislation of some kind, in some form, should if possible be adopted, they, with almost one accord, point out the extreme impracticability of the measure in its present form. I will not go into the actual details of this Bill in so far as they affect the principles which I have endeavoured to suggest to the House; but the more I have considered it in its practical application with special reference to the question which I have raised, the more difficult I have found it to bring myself to believe either that it will commend itself to the great mass of public opinion in the communities which would be specially concerned, or that the Local Governments and their officers, with the best will in the world, would be able to put it effectively into operation. I must therefore conclude by opposing the motion, but I hope, although it is my painful task to do so, I shall not leave the House with the impression that I do not very deeply sympathise with, that I do not very heartily applaud the admirable intentions which have impelled my Honourable friend to lay this measure before the House.

The HONOURABLE KHAN BAHADUR NAWAB MOHAMED MUZAMMIL-ULLAH KHAN (United Provinces: Nominated Non-Official): While fully appreciating the noble aim and idea of the Honourable Mover, I wish to say a few words regarding this proposal. First of all, I want to say that we must leave something to be dealt with by the society itself to check the evils of the country. If things like that happen, and minors are taken away or stolen, it is the high duty of society to prevent them, and I think, as my Honourable friend the Home Secretary said, there are already sufficient laws to control these high-handed offences. It is only for society to take that in hand and prevent this sort of practices.

Secondly, I find there are only two words in the Resolution of the Honourable Mover, and those are Fakirs and Sadhus. But there are many other people who are likely to commit these crimes and who will prevent them from doing it? For instance, I will just bring to the notice of this Honourable House that only the other day—in fact about ten days ago—I received a report from one of my agents saying that he was sitting in my house in the village when a minor of about 7 or 8 years of age came and threw himself at the feet of my agent, and told him that he had been kidnapped by some Bunjaras. The boy prayed to be taken into refuge, and the agent took him into the house and put him up for the night. He said he had come from a village near Delhi, and that six other boys of a similar age had been stolen by these Bunjaras. The agent after keeping the boy with him all the night, in the morning went to see the Bunjaras, to find out whether there was any truth in the boy's story. At first those Bunjaras denied everything, but when it was found that some boys were hiding in the fields and, kurbis he took them away and I understand that the whole matter is in the hands

[Khan Bahadur Nawab Mohamed Muzammil-ullah Khan.]

of the District authorities, Aligarh. This is only a single instance which, fortunately or unfortunately, has come to my notice. How many other cases there must be like that. So you must have a law for the Bunjaras also. And supposing others commit the same offence, you would have to have another law for another section of the culprits and so on. As it is, we have already got too many Acts and laws. It has been well said, that "too much of everything is not good at all." If we pass a law every day and an Act at every Session of the Council, that will not contribute to the dignity of the House. Shall we pass a law for riding, a law for shaving, a law for dressing, and so on? I presume—I cannot say I have come across any instance, but as the novels say about the Gipsy's stories in old ages there have been many things like that in Europe; but now there might not be a single case of this drastic crime there because of the strength of public opinion. Society there prevents all these things; and I would urge upon my Honourable friend the Mover to make public opinion stronger and stronger so as to prevent these high-handed people from leading us by our nose and our ears.

Then, I don't think my Honourable friend Saiyid Raza Ali feels inclined to pass many laws. Isn't that so?

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The Honourable Member must address his remarks to the Chair.

The HONOURABLE KHAN BAHADUR NAWAB MOHAMED MUZAMMIL-ULLAH KHAN: I am afraid the pleaders would not like so many laws, ^{12 noon.} because it will be very difficult for them to pass their examinations. These are the only remarks which I wish to submit and with these remarks I may say that I am not inclined to support the Bill; rather I do not find any necessity for this Bill at all.

The HONOURABLE MAJOR NAWAB MOHAMED AKBAR KHAN (North-West Frontier Province: Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I think it would be quite impolitic to pass a law of this nature because in some of the backward provinces, especially in the North-West Frontier Province, it will be considered as an interference with religion; and if my Honourable friend Lala Sukhbir Sinha wants this Bill to be passed he would be well advised if he would put this Bill through some of his friends in his local council, because the state of affairs is not universal in all the provinces: in my own province especially I am certain it will be considered as an interference with religion, and in my opinion it will be quite impolitic if the Government of India was to pass the Bill in spite of the opposition that some of the Local Governments have already shown to this Bill. With these remarks, Sir, I oppose the Bill entirely.

The HONOURABLE LALA SUKHBIR SINHA: Sir, I am very glad to find that the Home Secretary has been so much in sympathy with me on the principles and motives of the Bill; at the same time I am very sorry to find that he has been obliged to oppose this motion for reference to a Select Committee because as an official he has to support the Government views. (Honourable Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi: "What about the Standing Committee?") Sir, he has referred to the Standing Committee and he said that the Committee had resolved to oppose the Bill.

The HONOURABLE MR. J. CRERAR: May I explain, Sir? The Committee advised the Home Department to oppose this Bill.

The HONOURABLE LALA SUKHBIR SINHA: But, Sir, if we look at the constitution of that Committee we find that the members generally are those who come from Madras and Bombay and who have no experience of this subject. Chaudhuri Shahabuddin was the only member from the Punjab. I want to know from the Home Secretary whether Mr. Chaudhuri Shahabuddin was absent from the meetings of this Committee.

The HONOURABLE MR. J. CRERAR: Chaudhuri Shahabuddin was present at the deliberations of this Committee.

The HONOURABLE LALA SUKHBIR SINHA: He was the only member from the Punjab who has some knowledge of this subject, otherwise all the other members were from Madras and Bombay who have no experience of this subject. As I said in my opening speech, there are administrative difficulties; but it is for the Select Committee to remove those difficulties. The principle of the Bill is supported by a majority of the people who have been consulted; the difference is only about the details and that has to be dealt with by the Select Committee, and not by this Council now at this stage. Then my friend has referred to Dewan Tek Chand; he said that he is opposed to the Bill. I think it is quite natural because as an administrator he would have to face difficulties in the working of the Bill. But let me quote the opinions of the three Chief Justices of the Punjab, United Provinces and Bengal; they have all supported the measure; many High Court Judges and other Judges have supported it; many public bodies have supported it because they feel it is necessary to put a stop to this nuisance in order to improve society. Of course I admit there may be some slight difficulties in its administration and that those who have to deal with it in their administrative capacity will oppose it, as everybody in this world wants to have to do as little as possible and to avoid difficulties and troubles. On that ground, Sir, they oppose this Bill, though on principle they accept it.

Then, Sir, my friend Saiyid Raza Ali himself was a member of the Committee which drafted this Bill in the United Provinces Council. Khawja Gulam Mustakeem, who was a big Syed of Meerut, was a Member of the Committee and he gave his full support to this measure; there is no Muhammadan question in this Bill. Muhammadans and Hindus are agreed to have such legislation. On this Committee that, I propose we will have our revered friend Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi as Chairman, and Mr. Raza Ali will be one of the Members, and they will be able to see and protect the Muhammadan interests. Sir, when we non-officials want a thing to be done to improve our society I do not know why Government should stand in the way. It has nothing to do with religion; there will be no blame on the Government at all; if there will be any blame it will be on my shoulders. I am one of the Leaders of Hindu community; when I move this Bill before the Council it is my responsibility; Government will not be liable to any blame. If there be any blame it will be on my shoulders. The Home Secretary said that it would be better for the Local Governments to take such measures; but I would like to explain to this House that when I was a Member in the United Provinces Legislative Council I brought this motion there; a Bill was drafted, but what we found was this difficulty, that if we had this Bill in the United Provinces and the Punjab had no such Bill those who will come to the United Provinces from the Punjab could not be dealt with; those who would come from Bengal to the United Provinces could not be dealt with and therefore this difficulty could not be solved. Of course we provided something in the Bill, but the difficulty was there and we did not know how to get rid of it, and therefore

[Lala Sukhbir Sinha.]

if this Bill is passed by this Legislature as an all-India measure, then, of course, it will be an all-India Act; it will govern all the provinces; of course, it will be permissive for all the Governments to have it on such terms as they like. Therefore, Sir, I think it will be quite fit if the House were to give me permission to refer this Bill to Select Committee. The Committee will see what difficulties there are and how they can be removed.

Then, Sir, I may point out one more important matter and it is this; that if this Bill is passed by this House, it will have to go to the other House where there are so many lawyers, so many representatives of all the provinces; they will deal with the Bill again as we are dealing with it here and if they find it impracticable and unworkable they will throw it out; and so I think it is not advisable to throw it out at this stage, and I would therefore humbly and strongly appeal to the Honourable Members of this Council to give permission to this motion that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

THE HONOURABLE MR. J. CRERAR: Sir, I have very few words to say in reply to the remarks which have just fallen from my Honourable friend. If I apprehended him correctly, he made three points. He traversed the summary which I gave; to the best of my belief and to the best of my ability it was a fair and impartial summary of the opinions which have been received. Well, the opinions are before the House and they can arrive at their own estimate of their character and their weight. Therefore I will not detain the House any further on that point. The Honourable Member proceeded to say that I found myself in the unfortunate predicament of sympathising entirely with the Honourable Member's measure but being compelled by the exigencies of my official position to oppose it. I am not quite sure, Sir, that that was a very fair exposition of the attitude I endeavoured to explain. I did indeed make many and very sincere commendations of my Honourable friend's attitude, but I do not think I ever committed myself to any commendation whatsoever of my Honourable friend's measure. The third point the Honourable Member made I understood was as follows: He said firstly "let this measure be passed and I accept the responsibility." Well, Sir, I do not desire to derogate in the very slightest degree from my Honourable friend's capacity to bear responsibility, but I ask the House to consider this: if in some very backward, some very bigotted tract of country, a Mussalman sub-inspector of police were called upon to arrest without warrant a holy gentleman of the greatest local sanctity and veneration, and if in consequence of that there was a popular tumult, on whom, Sir, would the responsibility really devolve? The last point the Honourable Member made I took to be this, and I confess I was somewhat surprised to hear it. He invited this House to pass this measure. He said that presently it would go to another place where legal acumen is prolific and where any defects left after our deliberations would be speedily made good. Sir, I have a somewhat higher estimate of the legal abilities and of the capacity for deliberation of this House, and I should venture to say when a measure is brought before this House, it should exercise upon it its own unfettered and independent powers of judgment.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: (The Honourable Mr. G. S. Khaparde having risen to speak): The Honourable Member cannot now intervene in the Debate. I have called upon the Honourable Mover to reply and he has done so and the Member in charge has also replied and there is now no room for further deliberation.

The motion was negatived.

RESOLUTION RE PROMOTION OF IRRIGATION PROJECTS.

The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH (Punjab: Sikh): Sir, I rise to move:

"That this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that, as there are many irrigation projects waiting sanction, it will be an advantage if funds could be provided for them on the same scale as for railways and a proper expert board constituted at the headquarters to prevent delays in decision."

Sir, I sent in an amendment also. Have I your permission to move it along with the Resolution?

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: I have no amendment on my table. The amendment has now been put up to me. Does the Honourable Member desire to move the second Resolution or the first one?

The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH: There is only one Resolution and I want to move it and I propose to amend it.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: What I have before me is in effect a somewhat different Resolution. Does the Honourable Government Member in charge object?

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA (Revenue and Agriculture Member): I would suggest that the Honourable Member may withdraw the present Resolution and give notice of the Resolution which he intends to move because there is a radical difference in character between the two Resolutions and I should like to have notice.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: It is quite within the competence of the Honourable Member on behalf of Government to take that objection, and it is, of course, for the Honourable Member to say whether he withdraws his Resolution. The result is he must either move the Resolution as it appears on the paper, or not move it and give notice of a further Resolution.

The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH: I think I will move the Resolution and make my points in my speech.

It is a strange irony of things that a private Member should be moving a Resolution of this kind. When the Reformed Councils came into being we expected that the Government would have a constructive programme, particularly as regards Agriculture. We have been waiting practically for over two years and so far we have seen no signs of agricultural development, or any large programme, either in the Government of India or in the Provinces. The main thing which we agriculturists expected from the Reformed Councils, was that agricultural, industrial, material and moral development of the country would be speeded up. We are still waiting for the starting of the process of speeding up. The Reform prescription has failed and now we have the verdict of the great doctors at Whitehall that the prescription is not to be revised till the prescribed period expires. Therefore there is all the more reason in these Councils and elsewhere why we must bring home to the Government their responsibility to the people in these matters. The Government has certainly political policies, but I should like to challenge the Government of India here to put forward their programme dealing with the constructive and industrial development of the country. India is in touch with all the commercially organised countries of the world. India is like a poor man trading with rich people which is impossible. How is India going to trade

[Sardar Jogendra Singh.]

without an adequate industrial and agricultural development? I cannot help mentioning that agriculture is our primary industry and unless agriculture prospers India cannot prosper. Irrigation is one of the most urgent needs of agriculture. Irrigation is the life-blood of crops. The great Emperor Akbar, I think he was quoting from the Koran when he said: "God has said, everything springs from water." The need for rapid development of irrigation is extremely great. I can point out from the Irrigation Review and from the Report of the Irrigation Commission that was appointed in 1901 that some irrigation projects have waited for 50 years, some for 20 years, others for 30 years without receiving sanction. My Honourable friend (Honourable Mr. Sarma) is just looking at some papers, but I can tell him the irrigation projects that are waiting. I might mention the Sukkur Barrage, the Thal and Haveli projects in the Punjab. I need not mention the projects that are waiting in Madras and the Central Provinces. Besides these the Sutlej project was only sanctioned recently, after a very long delay. I should like to draw the attention of my English friends in this Council to the fact that the wage in Lancashire is affected by the poverty or the prosperity of the agriculturist in this country; and agriculture cannot progress without irrigation. And as I am on the point I should like to ask the Revenue Department to determine the agricultural wage. It has not so far been determined by the Government of India or the Provincial Governments. It remains absolutely undetermined. They say the people are prospering and suggest an increase in the water rate, without assessing the income on which a man pays his water rate, and in some cases the holdings are less than half an acre. A very interesting review of irrigation in India is now being published by the Government of India with photographs, diagrams, etc., and it shows, that, so far, the canals irrigate only 11 per cent. of the total area, the wells another 5 per cent. and other sources 6 per cent. Altogether about 22 per cent. is irrigated and there is still another 77 per cent. that could be brought under irrigation. The scope therefore for development of irrigation is immense. Then again, Sir, there is not only canal irrigation, there is well irrigation which deserves attention. Since the report of the Irrigation Commission, the question of well irrigation, so far as I am aware, has not at all been considered. I do not want to weary the Council with reading extracts, but I will just read out a few extracts from the report of the Irrigation Commission, which was appointed in 1901-02. Twenty years have passed and still parts of the programme that the Irrigation Commission outlined have not been carried out. The Irrigation Commission said:

"Out of a total of 13 million acres irrigated from wells in British territory, no less than 8½ millions are found in the two northern provinces; in the Central Provinces there is next to no well irrigation; south of this there are some 200 million acres of which roughly three-quarters are in Madras and one-fourth in Bombay."

Then the Irrigation Commission remarks that

"the irrigation from wells could be easily doubled."

Further on the Irrigation Commission says:

"By making borings, by helping agriculturists by tapping sub-artesian supply well irrigation can be extended."

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA: I do not want to interfere with my Honourable friend but I would point out that the subject with which he is dealing is entirely extraneous to the subject matter under consideration and is entirely provincial in character.

The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH: The Honourable Mr. Sarma remarked that the matter is provincial. Quite so, but the Honourable Member forgets that the financial control rests entirely with the Government of India and the provincial Governments are not in a position to raise any loan whatever on their own authority. The Government of India tells them "Go and balance your budgets before you come to us and ask for permission to raise a loan."

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK (Finance Secretary): No.

The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH: I stand corrected if that is not the case but I was only recently told that a proposal came up for raising a loan from the Punjab.

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: Was that a loan for a canal?

The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH: It was, I believe, for a hydro-electric scheme and also for irrigation. In any case I am glad to have the assurance of the Honourable the Finance Secretary that any proposal for raising a loan in the provinces would be entertained and that the provinces will have the power to raise loans. The Honourable Mr. Sarma points out that this is a provincial subject and does not come within the range of the Government of India. I have been much confused, since I came to this Council about this matter as to where the authority of the provincial Government starts and where the authority of the Government of India ends. It is an established fact that all proposals regarding land revenue and irrigation, so far as the Punjab is concerned, have to come to the Government of India for sanction. It is impossible for me to know where the province is autonomous and, until we know this, we are quite justified in raising these questions in this Council and pressing on the Government of India to let the provinces be entirely autonomous. As the provinces are not autonomous, we must press on the Government of India, that they should exercise authority, in enlarging the field of activities of the provincial Governments, in aiding them and assisting them and not hindering them in their sphere of expansion. The question of irrigation is really an all-India question and, so far, we have only been able to touch the fringe of it. We have done something in the matter of canal irrigation, but we have done nothing so far as well irrigation is concerned; we have done little so far as irrigation from the tanks is concerned. Twenty years have gone since the Irrigation Commission issued its report; science has advanced since, and the time is ripe for holding a fresh inquiry and seeing with the assistance of science if we cannot use well water and put it on the land. It is for the Government of India and not for the provincial Governments, so far as I can understand, to hold such an inquiry. Irrigation Engineers have done splendid work. But when we compare the irrigation programme with the railway programme, and when we compare the results obtained by irrigation and by the railways, when we compare the funds provided by the Government of India for the railway projects and the funds provided for irrigation projects, the differences are extremely striking. On the railways the Government lost about £51 millions and has yet to make up £7 millions, whereas in irrigation some of our canals have been paying from 44 to 50 per cent. profits, and yet irrigation projects have not received the financial support that they deserve.

I will just set out, Sir, the projects that are waiting on our side only and the work that can be done if funds were available. Perhaps the Finance Secretary will be able to tell us whether the provincial Government or the

[Sardar Jogendra Singh.]

Government of India will be able to provide funds for carrying them out, and if so, when.

Next comes the question of sanctions. If the provinces could finance and sanction their own projects, it would be better. I do not see why there should be any delay in the sanction to these projects. Perhaps the Honourable the Revenue Member, when he stands up to reply, will be able to tell us something about the two or three large projects that are still awaiting sanction. We have the Sukkur Barrage scheme, the Thal scheme, the Haveli scheme and the Bhakra scheme, while there are some other projects in Madras and the Central Provinces. If money were found for these, and sanction given to commence work, in another 10 or 15 years we could irrigate another 15 million acres, producing at least 17 million tons of food grains, and adding new wealth to the country. It is impossible to calculate the benefits to the community and the Government which must follow. We have, however, to wait on the Finance Department more than on any other department for money. If money can be found for these projects, we could push them forward. My main object in moving this Resolution is to waken the Finance Department on the one hand and the provincial Governments on the other to the need for speeding up progress, so far as irrigation is concerned. At present we somehow seem to be very much impressed with the need for cutting down expenses, but at the same time we should not sacrifice expansion which would bring in large and permanent profits. Any irrigation project, to my mind, would bring in 100 per cent. in ten years if you calculate all the sources from which income would flow in. If we postpone them until the provincial finances balance themselves, we might have to wait for ever. I move this Resolution in the hope that the Revenue Member will give me his whole-hearted support and that the result will be to speed up the progress of irrigation in India and lead to a larger use being made of well irrigation as well as of tank irrigation.

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA: Sir, I deeply sympathise with and appreciate the spirit in which my Honourable friend has brought forward this Resolution. When I was a non-official, I was myself one of those who pressed insistently upon the Government the desirability of extending irrigation projects. Nor have I forgotten, since I became an official Member, the need for irrigational activities in the various Provinces, whether such provinces are directly under the Government of India or are partially autonomous; but I must confess that I was somewhat surprised and disappointed when my Honourable friend said that nothing was being done by the Government of India or by the Provinces in the matter of irrigational activity or promoting the agricultural prosperity of the people. Well, I suppose we indulge in exaggeration in order that we may bring home to the people and to the Governments concerned the need for continuous attention being paid to this important branch of Governmental and public activity; and I may take the remarks of my Honourable friend in that spirit. The position of the Government of India has changed considerably since the Reforms, and I do not think anyone in this House, or my Honourable friend in particular, would grudge the autonomy which has been conferred upon Provincial Governments in the matter of developing their own agricultural institutions. Agriculture is an entirely provincial transferred subject with which the Government of India has absolutely nothing to do; and therefore I think it stands to reason that the

Government of India cannot have an agricultural programme in the sense in which my Honourable friend desires it. Agricultural research of a type is a central subject, and the Government of India have a programme in respect of what constitutes their immediate responsibilities. Nor do they forget altogether, if they can in any way promote the Provincial Governments' activities, their obligations to help the Provincial Governments when the Provincial Governments seek their assistance. But I must demur to any direct responsibility on the part of the Government of India in framing an agricultural programme for the various Provinces which are not under them. Irrigation also is a provincial subject, though it is a reserved subject. Here also it is the Governors' provinces that are mainly concerned. The Government of India does not finance these projects, is not responsible for their financing, can do nothing except by way of advice in promoting any particular project in any Province. Consequently I do not see how the Government of India can have an irrigation programme which they can dictate to the Provinces. The only powers in respect of irrigation projects which the Government of India have reserved to themselves, or to be more accurate, the Secretary of State has reserved to himself, are in respect of technical sanction to be granted to projects costing more than 50 lakhs of rupees, projects in which more than one Province are interested, and projects in which an Indian State or Province may be interested; and things of that kind. These projects come up to us only when they exceed these limitations or when other similar conditions have to be fulfilled. I may inform the House that at the present moment there is absolutely no project sent up by any Provincial Government which is under investigation by the Public Works Department.

THE HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH: What about the Sukkur Barrage?

THE HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA: The Sukkur Barrage scheme was sent up by the Government of India two years ago to the Secretary of State. It is awaiting the formal sanction of the Secretary of State and we are in continuous communication with him as regards some of the points which have arisen. The moment that sanction is obtained, it will be started. It has not been postponed, so far as I am aware, owing to the Bombay Government or the Government of India not being in a position to assist in the financing of the scheme, and consequently it cannot be said that that project is being held up, hung up or delayed owing to any remissness of duty or non-realisation of their responsibility by either the Provincial Government or the Government of India. Honourable Members can realise that these projects which cost crores of rupees and concern various Provinces have to be scrutinised very carefully by the responsible authorities in order that they may not be open to just criticism. I may say that this Sukkur Barrage project was not delayed in the Government of India at all, but was sent up within a few months after it was received in the Government of India Secretariat. My Honourable friend has tabled his Resolution in the following terms:

"This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that as there are many irrigation projects waiting sanction, it will be an advantage if funds could be provided for them on the same scale as for railways, and a proper expert board constituted at the headquarters to prevent delays in decision."

I may state that there are no irrigation projects in the Government of India awaiting sanction; and as to delays, I was congratulating myself that the Public Works Department, over which I have the honour to preside at the present moment, has been particularly speedy in the despatch of

[Mr. B. N. Sarma.]

the various projects which came up before them during the last two or three years. I may say that the average duration was about four months 25 days, in respect of projects, the total of which amounted to Rs. 44,830,000, which have been sent up by us to the Secretary of State for sanction during the last two years—that is, between 1920 and 1922; and every one of them has been sanctioned except this Sukkur Barrage project which, for particular reasons of which Honourable Members are aware, is being still considered by the Secretary of State. We cannot blame the Secretary of State either for considering it deeply after the agitation which has been raised in various quarters to the Sukkur Barrage project from several points of view. Therefore no charge of delay can be brought against the Government of India, and I do not think that any expert board would effect a speedier despatch of these projects. The charge therefore that the Government of India and the Provincial Governments have not during recent years displayed any irrigational activity, I think, will on re-consideration be admitted by the Honourable Sardar Jogendra Singh himself to rest on no foundation at all. During the last two years, as I have said, it has been my good fortune to be able to send up projects amounting to 42 crores of rupees and the Provinces which sent up these projects cannot be said to have been remiss in their duty.

The HONOURABLE MR. V. G. KALE (Bombay: Non-Muhammadan): How many of them have received sanction?

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA: Every one of them except this Sukkur Barrage project, and the Sukkur Barrage also has received technical sanction and with regard to finances also we do not anticipate any very great difficulty but there are some points on which there is discussion and I think there will be an early termination of that discussion. We are as keen about irrigational activities as my Honourable friend. We know that if proper investigation is made and money can be found—and I dare say the money will be found—we can bring under irrigation another 15 or 20 million acres; and some of these are covered by the projects which have been sent up. But the other projects have not yet been thoroughly investigated, have not been put forward by the Local Governments themselves and therefore there is nothing to be done here. My Honourable friend has alluded to certain projects with which his province is particularly concerned; there is nothing that we can do here in the Government of India because those projects are not before us. The Thal project, the Bhakra Dam project, the Haveli project and the Woolar Lake Barrage project in which my Honourable friend is particularly interested are all before the Punjab Government and none of them is before us. There are two projects in which Madras is interested, the Cauveri Reservoir project and the Kistna Dam project. The Cauveri Reservoir project is hung up on account of a dispute between Madras and Mysore; we hope that there will be an early settlement, but nothing can be done here until it comes up here for sanction. The Kistna Dam project has not been fully investigated yet by the Madras Government; it has not come up before us again after we sent it back several years ago, and I do not think it can be speeded up either, because we shall have to take up certain questions with the Hyderabad Durbar when that project comes up before us. I do not see that there is any very early prospect of the Kistna Dam project, which is likely to irrigate a very considerable area, being sanctioned. Then there are certain projects in the Central Provinces which are being investigated and which have not yet come

before us. I may say therefore that there is not a single project in which the Government of India would find any difficulty when those come up for sanction, even to find finances if a modest sum is required—but I think the Honourable Mr. Cook will be able to throw greater light upon that question than I can—but I may state this, that the Government of India as far as I am aware has hitherto never delayed the progress of any scheme on account of any obstacles which it has thrown in the way of provincial Governments borrowing money for their projects or in the way of their assisting the provincial Governments when there was any application for such help. The Honourable Sardar Jogendra Singh has complained that the railways are shown preference to irrigation. This is a charge which is levelled against the Government by the public at large generally. Now, railways are a central subject; here is a definite sum of money which can be spent without any failure whatever from year to year. The question has been thoroughly investigated and the money is being found; but the position is entirely different in the case of irrigation projects. Irrigation projects, as I have said, are entirely the concern of provincial Governments. The revenue derived from these projects is entirely provincial revenue. But apart from that consideration the provincial Governments have no new definite continuous programme and cannot lay before us any definite new programme owing to the difficulties which have already been alluded to, on which they can ask the Government of India for a regular loan from year to year of a definite amount. Therefore, there is no use of levelling a charge against the Government of India when the provinces themselves have got no definite programme and we cannot urge upon the provincial Governments the laying out of a programme which is dependent upon so many circumstances. I have already alluded to some of the difficulties under which the Local Governments labour. Therefore it is for Honourable Members, it is for the public at large to take more interest in provincial subjects, to agitate for them and to make the people realise the benefits of irrigation. The recent action of the Madras Legislature in throwing out the Irrigation Bill does not seem to encourage any very great hope that the Madras Government would be in a position to put forward for sanction any projects on a large scale. Therefore obstacles of that description in the first place have to be obviated by the action of the provincial councils themselves and that will be possible only if the people who are going to be benefited thereby can concentrate their attention upon the subject and can induce their Legislatures to pass the requisite measures. I therefore hope that some of the energy, some of the enthusiasm, some of the keenness and alertness which is being displayed by the Honourable Sardar Bahadur and his colleagues outside would be utilised in educating the electorate, in telling them what they want, in pressing upon their Governments and upon their Legislatures the need for greater irrigational activity, and then if they came up before us for financial sanction or for administrative sanction and if there are delays here in one department or another, then it would be time enough for him to ask for a board. But I think that boards would only add to delays and would hamper business and would not achieve the object which my Honourable friend has at heart. As regards well irrigation, I shall not deal with it at all here, because I think it is a purely and wholly provincial subject and the Government of India cannot be asked to assist it in any manner whatsoever. I will not pause to state anything about the equity or inequity of the water rates or as to whether greater water rates have to be raised in order to finance new projects; but I may warn the House that it would be impossible for any Government to undertake large

[Mr. B. N. Sarma.]

projects unless the people affected thereby rise to the occasion and realise that their prosperity is involved in their agreeing to a higher water rate if that be the only way in which they can make the work productive. There is no use of being conservative; there is no use of being continuously critical about the attitude of the Government, as to whether they are raising four rupees or five rupees as water rate; as a matter of fact with the increased cost of material and labour and various other difficulties which the provincial Governments have to confront, it would be idle for any of us to entertain the hope that unless the electorate, the people concerned, are prepared to pay a higher water rate, irrigational activity may not have that prosperous career which it is the hope of all of us to bring about. Sir, I hope I have shown, therefore, that while I sympathise with the Honourable Sardar Bahadur in his desire to improve irrigation in India there is nothing that we can at the present moment do which we are not doing; that there are no delays whatsoever; that there is no want of sympathy, not merely lip sympathy, but practical sympathy in every shape and form, and that nothing can be gained by his pressing this Resolution to a vote. We have done what we could, and we shall always have the irrigational activity of the country at heart because upon the prosperity of the people rest the peace, happiness and contentment of the whole country and the peaceful progress of Governmental activities.

The HONOURABLE MR. V. G. KALE: We are very thankful to the Honourable Mr. Sarma for the information he has given us regarding what the Government of India have been doing in expediting various irrigation schemes and projects which have been sent up to them by Provincial Governments, but I am afraid my Honourable friend has not quite grasped the spirit of the Resolution which has been moved by the Honourable Sardar Jogendra Singh. What he aimed at was asking the Central Government in this country to take up the question of economic reconstruction and agricultural improvement as a whole. We all admit that Agriculture and Irrigation are Provincial subjects, and agriculture in particular is a transferred subject. No one would wish that the Government of India should interfere with what provincial autonomy has been conferred under the Reforms Act, but I think the Government of India can take a large and comprehensive view of the economic progress of the country. Technically it is quite right to say that the railways are a central subject and therefore can be looked after by the Government of India, and that irrigation and agriculture, being provincial subjects, have to be left to be cared for by provincial Legislatures and by Provincial Governments. But does not railway prosperity itself depend to a very large extent upon agricultural prosperity? What are the railways going to transport from the interior to the ports if our agriculture is not improved a great deal more than it has up to the present time? Irrigation projects can be promoted by the Government of India by taking counsel with the Provincial Governments. Provincial autonomy will not certainly be detracted from if the Government of India call together the representatives of the Provincial Governments and discuss with them the need of speedy economic expansion. My Honourable friend referred to the controversy which has taken place for several years regarding the railway policy of the Government of India. It has certainly been complained that the Government have shown greater favour to the railways than to irrigation. We have just now been told that during the last two or three years very large irrigation projects have

been sanctioned. We are indeed very glad to hear that, but the object of the Resolution, if I understand it correctly, is that, as the policy concerning railways is being chalked out in anticipation for five years, let the irrigation policy for the country as a whole receive a little attention. Let every effort be made by the Government of India, in consultation with the Local Governments, to see that the schemes are properly financed and are not delayed but are properly developed. I do want that provincial autonomy should be maintained intact, and that the Government of India should not trench upon provincial autonomy, but the Government of India have a special responsibility in this respect. You cannot leave these problems to be dealt with piecemeal. They have to be looked at as problems for the country as a whole, and it is, I think, but due to the people that the Government of India should take up this problem of irrigation in this spirit and there will then be no difficulty in the way of the Government of India taking action in the matter. For instance, the question of the improvement of cotton cultivation is being taken up by the Central Government and the central Legislature. It is a question which relates to agriculture and to a transferred subject which has been made Provincial, and yet because it is a large national question and is also inter-provincial in scope and character, the Central Government has taken up the question of the improvement of cotton. This is an instance which may be quoted to show that, where large national interests are concerned, it is the Central Government that can expedite the solution of the problems. The Central Government has therefore to take up this subject in right earnest and to push on the irrigation projects as it has been pushing on the projects concerning railways. The fate of railways and of irrigation projects is linked together. The one depends upon the other. Railways can transport food grains and other raw materials in the country and outside the country, but we want larger crops, larger quantities of agricultural produce, so that they may be carried by the railways. It will be a short-sighted policy therefore only to make provision for the railways and not at the same time to make provision for the financing of irrigation projects. Therefore while approving of what my Honourable friend has said with regard to provincial autonomy and the necessity of the people in the provinces taking up this question, I think it is up to the Government of India to do everything in their power to expedite the progress of irrigation works. It is no use throwing the responsibility upon the people of the provinces. I ask, did the Government of India wait before they financed the expansion of railways, for public opinion to be expressed? Can my Honourable friend show me when and where the public has been after the Government of India asking them to expand railways? If I understand public opinion aright, during the last two generations the public has expressed itself strongly against the undue haste, the feverish haste, with which the railways were expanding, and against the fact that irrigation schemes were not being properly financed and looked after. This was the expression of public opinion, and yet, without waiting for favourable opinion being expressed in the Councils, the Government of India has gone on extending the railways. Why should not the same spirit be shown by the Government of India in the matter of irrigation? Not only provincial prosperity but the national prosperity of this country as a whole depends on it. I will, therefore, ask the Government of India to take this matter very seriously into consideration and do all they can in order to push on the progress of irrigation projects.

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK (Finance Secretary): Sir, I think it would not be desirable for this discussion to come to an end without a few words from the representative of the Finance Department, if only by way of assurance to my Honourable friend and his supporters that in the Finance Department of the Government of India there is not and never will be any reluctance to find funds, to the utmost extent of our borrowing capacity, for any well-considered scheme of development, and more particularly a scheme of irrigation. This attitude of sympathy towards such schemes is based not only on general grounds, but also on more narrow financial grounds. At a time when almost every Provincial Government is faced with a considerable deficit, when the Central Government has been faced with a very large deficit, when additional taxation has already been imposed to a considerable extent, surely all our thoughts must turn in the direction of how far we can increase the tax-paying capacity of the people; in other words, how we can increase their prosperity. The only way of doing that is by doing all we can to finance schemes of productive expenditure, whether they be railways or irrigation, or some other form of development.

Having expressed, however, this sympathy with my Honourable friend's object, I feel I must take some exception not only to the terms of the Resolution itself but also to the general tenor of the observations he made in support of it. If I am not misrepresenting my Honourable friend, there ran throughout the whole of his speech sundry implications that irrigation was not getting the necessary finance, implications that it is no good giving the provinces autonomy when you interfere with them financially and put difficulties in the way of their raising the necessary funds. Sir, I can assure the Council that the whole fabric of my Honourable friend's speech was based on an assumption which, if he will allow me to say so, is absolutely incorrect. No province has ever applied to the Central Government for a loan where-with to finance an irrigation project and has been refused. On the contrary, there are sundry projects now in course of execution. Take, for example, the Sutlej Valley project; it is being financed by money lent by us, found by us not without difficulty, to the Punjab Government, and, if there is any other scheme likely to come up in the near future, any well considered scheme, regarding which the engineering difficulties have been overcome and about which there is no reasonable doubt as to its success, that scheme will receive similar treatment. Those are the real facts, Sir, and I hope I have dispelled some of the apprehensions which my Honourable friend may have entertained as to the attitude of the financial authorities in this matter. The Honourable the Revenue Member has explained how every endeavour is made in the Central Government to expedite the consideration of these schemes. That being so, I would ask my Honourable friend to consider whether it is really worth while his pressing the matter any further.

The HONOURABLE LALA SUKHBIR SINHA (United Provinces Northern: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I stand up to say a few words in connection with this Resolution and give my hearty support to it. I know full well that irrigation is a provincial reserved subject, but there is no reason why the Government of India should overlook these provincial irrigation questions. As my Honourable friend Mr. Kale has said, it is for the Government of India as a whole to see that agricultural development takes place in this country. This country is, after all, an agricultural country and 80 per cent. of the population depend upon agriculture. Sir, from

facts and figures I find that the production in the country per acre is about one-fourth of what it should be or what it is in other countries. When there are so many natural sources to draw upon, why are we so very backward? I think it is desirable for the Government of India to appoint a Central Board to advise Local Governments to take up irrigation projects and how to finance them. There is already the Central Research Institute at Pusa for Agriculture which is financed by the Government of India, and there is no reason why this Board should not be financed in the same way. The Government of India should look after these Imperial things and irrigation is one of them. No agricultural development can take place without irrigation, whether it is from canals or from wells. As my Honourable friend Sardar Jogendra Singh has pointed out, only 11 per cent. of the culturable land is irrigated from canals and 5 per cent. from wells. There is, thus, a great deal of scope for irrigation from wells, rivers and canals, but very little attempt has been made by the Government of India or the Provincial Governments to tackle this question. I quite agree with my Honourable friend Mr. Sarma that Government has done what it could, but still much remains to be done, and I will strongly appeal to the Government of India to appoint a Central Board to advise on these irrigation questions and to finance these works, as far as may be, possibly from borrowed money or from some other source.

The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS (Punjab: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, the real question for consideration is whether Local Governments have applied for funds to start their irrigation works, and how far this request has been met by the Government of India. Has the Punjab Government applied for loans for the Bhakra and for the Havelian projects and what has the Government of India done in the matter?

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: Which projects did the Honourable Member mention?

The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: The Havelian and Bhakra projects.

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: No.

The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Railways are of as much importance as irrigation schemes are, so they should go hand in hand, as the development of our country depends upon both these schemes. As the Honourable Mr. Cook has assured this House that funds will be found by the Government of India for all well-considered irrigation schemes, I hope the Honourable Member will now see his way to withdraw this Resolution.

The HONOURABLE SIR ARTHUR FROM (Bombay Chamber of Commerce): Sir, I listened with considerable interest to the various opinions expressed by the Members of this Council with regard to irrigation, and I may at once say that I entirely agree with those opinions, as I look upon irrigation as one of the most important matters in this country. In the interests of agriculture I think that the Government of India should not merely look upon irrigation as the concern of the various Local Governments; the needs of the country would be better served if the Government of India looked upon irrigation as a whole and, as suggested by one Honourable Member, would consult the various Provincial Governments and

[Sir Arthur Froom.]

not just say "It is the concern of the Provincial Governments and no concern of ours."

With these few remarks in support of this question of irrigation, I should like to refer to one other matter and that is to the comment on railways made by my Honourable friend Mr. Kale. I understood Mr. Kale to say that Government had spent money on railways without the people asking them to spend money on railways. I was very astonished to hear that. Every commercial body in India has always pressed Government to develop its railways and Government now are doing their very best to rehabilitate them. The Honourable Mr. Kale must have known that for some years past the province from which he comes has suffered very greatly from the backwardness of the Indian railways, and on many occasions we have nearly had a coal famine. Bombay lifted up its voice very loudly and criticised the Government of India for being so backward with their railways that we could not get coal into Bombay for our industries.

It was an unfair charge to bring against Government that they have been squandering money on railways without consulting the wishes of the people. Every commercial body that I have known in this country has always pressed for the development of railways. It is just as important, in my opinion, as irrigation, and the two should go hand in hand together.

The HONOURABLE SAYID RAZA ALI (United Provinces East: Muhammadan): Sir, I do not think that the Honourable Mr. Sarma was quite fair in making the legal exposition of this problem when he said that, being a provincial subject, it was for the provinces to take action in the matter of irrigation and that the Government of India were so remotely connected with the subject that they could not justly be taken to task in this Chamber. Sir, we know that irrigation is a provincial subject, but as the Honourable Member himself admits, it is at the same time a reserved subject also.

Now having regard to Chapter II relating to the financial control of the Secretary of State, and Chapter V which relates to the control of the Government of India over all reserved departments and subjects, I do not think this is a plea of which advantage can be taken under the Government of India Act by the Honourable Member. We know only too well that when there is a question affecting law and order, a mandate is issued by the Government of India and is obeyed by the Provinces concerned. I entirely fail to see, if this subject deserves the importance which is attached to it by the non-official and some official Members of this Council—I entirely fail to see why in place of a mandate some suggestion should not be made by the Government of India to the Provinces. That would be perfectly within the letter of the law.

Now, coming to the subject as a whole, at this late hour I do not propose to make any lengthy observations. I will confine myself to bringing the main facts to the notice of this House. What, Sir, are the facts? Railways no doubt are a very important department and very necessary for the development of this country. I do not think that the Honourable Sir Arthur Froom quite followed the speech of the Honourable Mr. Kale. Nobody ever denied the importance of railways. The question really is this—on one side, we have railways,

On the other, we have irrigation. Both are necessary for the future development of this country. Railways have been treated in a generous manner by the Government of India; but, Sir, the Reforms are only two years old. Before that period irrigation was treated in a step-motherly fashion both by the Government of India and, I am afraid, by the Provincial Governments where the representatives of the people were not in the majority. They were not in a majority, I repeat. Therefore, Sir, the question is whether we should not now determine the relative importance of these two branches of our future development and give to each what is due to it.

Now we know, Sir, that there are something like 40,000 miles of railway in this country. We also know that more than 250 million pounds have been spent on railways. May I ask the Honourable Member in charge how much money has been spent on irrigation? May I ask him how many miles of canals have been opened in this country, so that we may be in a position to compare the efforts of the Government of India in the two directions? Sir, there is not the least doubt that the attention which the Governments, both Central and Provincial, ought to have paid to the development of irrigation has not been paid by them. As has been pointed out, it was high time that the Government of India bestirred themselves and introduced the system of inter-Provincial Conferences where various projects sent up from Provinces could be considered and the schemes sanctioned in consultation with the Provinces in order of their importance.

The Honourable Mr. Cook who showed great sympathy with this question—as in fact has been the order of the day on the Government side since early this morning—pointed out, Sir, that there was no scheme sent up from the Provinces which had been refused by the Government of India. Now this, I believe, applies to what has been done by the Government of India during the past two years. I do not think the Honourable Mr. Cook's remarks referred to any period prior to these two years. May we know in turn whether at any time the Government of India has made any offer to any of the Provinces that if any of them found themselves interested in opening new canals and making works of irrigation the Government of India were in a position to offer monetary help to them?

Again, the Honourable Mr. Cook went on to say, if I listened to him correctly, that there was absolutely no proposal that had come up to the Government of India in which the Government of India had not promised its support. May I point out, Sir, that on the Sukkur Barrage project there was a full dress debate in the other Chamber, when the Honourable the Finance Member pleaded that the Government of India was totally unable to give any financial assistance or hold out any hope of financial help for completing this project.

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: May I rise to explain, Sir? The Sukkur Barrage project is not being held up at the present moment through lack of finance. Nor did the discussion in the other Chamber turn on the grant of a loan to finance the scheme. It turned on something else.

The HONOURABLE SAIYID RAZA ALI: I do not want to take up the time of the Council unnecessarily; but replying to a question in the other House

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: When was that reply given, in what session?

The HONOURABLE SAIYID RAZA ALI: On the 31st January 1922. That is not a year old. The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey, replying to a question put by Professor Shahani in the other Chamber, in the course of his reply said—"I made it quite clear that the money could not be provided from the resources of the Central Government." Then he went on to say that the Bombay Government were still considering the financial position and the possibility of going on with the project. This was the reply given.

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: It did not refer to a capital loan, Sir.

The HONOURABLE SAIYID RAZA ALI: That, Sir, is the long and short of it. I do not propose to make any comment—I will leave it to the Council to Judge. So the position is that this subject, in spite of the very strong sympathy given by the two Honourable Official Members who have spoken to the motion, has been treated after all, according to us, in a rather step-motherly fashion by the Government of India, as also on occasions by the provincial Governments. Of course the pleading on behalf of provincial Governments would be that they had no money to launch these schemes and that is the reason why they had to act in this step-motherly fashion. Surely, Sir, the time has come when the Government of India should entirely readjust their policy. Nobody desires the expenditure on railways to be cut down considerably, but having regard to the needs that are peculiar to this country it is surely time that more money and more energy should be spent on opening canals and other irrigation works than has been done till now.

The HONOURABLE MR. C. M. BAKER (Bombay: Nominated Official): Sir, as I am more personally interested in this question than any other Member of the House I think my silence might perhaps be misunderstood. I may explain that I employ such leisure as this House leaves me in doing special duty on the Sukkur Barrage Project, which is by far the most important project with which we are concerned to-day. With this project I have been intimately connected for a great many years; and any delay in this hurts me very deeply.

The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH: How many years altogether has the project been under consideration?

The HONOURABLE MR. C. M. BAKER: For about thirteen years.

Any one who caused such delay I should regard as my enemy, and if that enemy were the Government of India itself I should certainly not hesitate to say so. But it is not so, Sir. The trouble is not in Delhi but in London. Against the Government of India, either in the Revenue Department or in the Finance Department, we have no grievance.

What this Resolution means exactly I have been unable to understand. Apparently the suggestion is that the same amount shall be provided every year for irrigation as is provided for railways. But the amount provided for irrigation must depend on the amount which is required, that is to say, the amount for which the provincial Governments apply; and it is no good fixing a lump sum for every year. That the Government of India has ever refused financial assistance to any important irrigation project or that they are ever likely to do so, there is in my opinion no proof whatsoever.

The other part of the Resolution suggests the appointment of an expert board to consider these questions. As far as my experience goes I think the constitution of a board would not tend to avoid delay but rather to increase delay and I should much prefer to leave matters in the very competent hands of the Inspector General of Irrigation.

The HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS (Bombay: Non-Muhammadan): May I move an amendment to drop the words "and a proper expert board constituted at the headquarters to prevent delays in decision."

The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH: I admit that the Resolution was really very indefinite and I wanted to amend it; only I could not do it.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: It is not usual for the Mover of a Resolution to move an amendment to it himself. What are the words which the Honourable Mr. Samaldas suggests should be omitted?

The HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: My amendment is to delete all the words after the word 'railways' in the Resolution. Sir, I was in the same difficulty as my Honourable friend Mr. Baker, because I could not quite make out what my Honourable friend Sardar Jogendra Singh wanted. The words, as he himself admitted, were so loose that it was very difficult to find out what was really at the back of his mind. We have heard here some differences of opinion, some Members saying that precedence should be given to irrigation, others that precedence should be given to railways, others that both should be treated equally. There is no doubt that there has been a feeling in the country, which my Honourable friend Sir Dinshaw Wacha, if he were present here, could have expressed much more strongly than I could, that the Government of India has not been treating

The HONOURABLE LALA SUKHBIR SINHA: What is the amendment, I want to know.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: When the Honourable Member has concluded his speech the amendment will as usual be read out from the Chair.

The HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: . . . that the Government of India has not been treating the Irrigation Department in the same manner as it has been treating railways. Various reasons have been given, were given at that time; one of which was, as my Honourable friend Sir Arthur Froom said, that they, the commercial community, could make themselves much more easily heard than the agricultural community. My Honourable friend Mr. Kale said that the Government started railways without the public asking for it—he meant the public he represented, *i.e.*, the agricultural public—but he did not perhaps mean by the word 'public' the commercial public. The commercial public did want railways and they have always got what they wanted. The agricultural public wanted irrigation and they did not get it because they could not make themselves heard.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: I think, since the Honourable Member is moving an amendment, that he should confine himself to one amendment. When that is disposed of by the Council, he can discuss the general question.

The HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: Then, I would merely say that by the appointment of a board there will be greater delays and perhaps more indecision than there is at present. Therefore I want that the words from "and a proper expert board" down to the end of the Resolution be taken out. If you want real work it is much better to have it carried on by the Inspector General as at present.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: To the Resolution under consideration amendment moved:

"That the words 'and a proper expert board constituted at the headquarters to prevent delays in decision' be omitted."

That question and that question alone is now under the consideration of the Council.

The HONOURABLE SIR ARTHUR FROMM: Sir, I only wish to rise for a few moments. I thought when I spoke just now I made it quite clear that in my opinion irrigation and railways should go forward hand in hand; in fact I think those were the concluding words of my few remarks. I am sorry if the Honourable Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas understood from what I said that I was merely impressing a commercial view upon members. I do not see in what way irrigation in this country would be of any use whatever if there were no railways; that was the whole idea of my saying that irrigation and railways should go hand in hand. I did not wish to press a commercial view as against the agricultural view and I do not think my words should have been thought to incline or did incline towards it.

The HONOURABLE LALA SUKHBIR SINHA: I oppose the amendment, Sir. In my opinion the appointment of a Board will be very useful because in that case we can have the opinion of each province and we can discuss together all these questions and make a reference to provincial Governments if necessary. If there will be intra-Provincial Conferences or Boards as proposed in this Resolution, we can know of the needs of each province, and therefore I oppose this amendment.

The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH: I have certainly no objection to dropping these words, Sir, if that will please my Honourable friend Mr. Samaldas. The main object in proposing a board was because once—I think it was Sir John Ward—the Inspector General of Irrigation told me that he found it very difficult to get sanctioned irrigation projects wandering from India to London and back. It was he who really suggested to me that a board would be really helpful. Possibly things have now changed and under the new regime there is no need for the appointment of such a board. I think I will accept the amendment proposed by my Honourable friend.

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA: On behalf of Government I think I may accept the amendment so far as that goes,—not that I agree to the other portion of the Resolution.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The question is:

"That in the Resolution under consideration the following words be omitted:

'and a proper expert board constituted at the headquarters to prevent delays in decision'."

The motion was adopted.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The amended Resolution is therefore now again before the House.

The RIGHT HONOURABLE V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI (Madras: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I think as the Resolution now stands it still could be objected to upon the ground that it introduces a comparison with the railways in the country which is certainly not necessary for the object which I daresay the Honourable Mover has in mind. If funds could be provided for them on a liberal scale, it would, I think, quite meet his wants. The comparison with railways is an old political cry in this country. We all remember many years ago, in the days of the old Congress for example, railways and irrigation used to be considered as competing subjects for the funds at the disposal of the Government, and it was always complained by the general Indian public, not necessarily the commercial public, that railways got the better contribution. The gravamen of that charge, however, could have been justified at a time when the railways were not a paying proposition and were in some ways a burden on the tax-payer

The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH: They are not paying now.

The RIGHT HONOURABLE V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI: They have, however, come into a more prosperous condition, allowing for the exceptional state in which they at present are, and I think no one who looks upon these matters with an impartial eye will continue to harp on that invidious comparison between railways and irrigation as a whole. The Indian public have changed their attitude towards railways, as evidenced by the very liberal, but none too liberal, provision which the Assembly has made for railway projects within the last few years. As regards irrigation, I am very thankful that the Honourable Revenue Member has made a most satisfactory statement. He has convinced me that the attitude of Government towards irrigation is at the present moment, at all events, perfectly free from objection. On the contrary it deserves praise. If anything emerges from this discussion, it is this, that the industry and zeal of the present holder of the office of Revenue Member have come out with signal conspicuousness, and I am extremely happy that he is able to say to-day to the public of India that no projects of irrigation have been delayed in this Government or in the Provincial Governments. I have not heard, Sir, during recent years a more satisfactory statement on this vexed subject of irrigation. I hope the same progress will be sustained, and the Honourable Sardar Jogendra Singh, speaking on a future occasion, will not find it necessary to repeat his complaint. Well, my object is to propose the words—"if funds could be provided for them on a liberal scale." That is, that the words "on the same scale as for railways" be omitted and replaced by the words "on a liberal scale," merely to avoid this invidious comparison. And then you cannot provide money on the same scale for railways as for irrigation, for the conclusive reason that it is impossible to spend money on irrigation projects as rapidly as upon railways, and to provide as much money as for railways would I think be a waste of public funds.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: To the Resolution under consideration amendment moved:

"That for the words 'on the same scale as for railways,' the words 'on a liberal scale' be substituted."

That amendment is now open to discussion in the Council.

The HONOURABLE MR. V. G. KALE (Bombay: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I support the amendment which has just been proposed. In fact I

[Mr. V. G. Kale.]

noted, on paper a similar amendment because I found in the original Resolution the words "on the same scale as for railways" and I wondered how it would be possible for the Government of India to provide, for instance, 150 crores for irrigation for the next five years, and secondly how it would be possible for irrigation schemes to be immediately prepared and made ripe for operation. Therefore what was required was a liberal provision of funds for irrigation schemes, and I think my Honourable friend Sardar Jogendra Singh had the same idea in mind. He did not want that the same amount as has been, or will be, provided for railways should also be provided for irrigation. That I believe was not his idea also, and therefore I hope that this amendment will commend itself to the House.

The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS (Punjab: Non-Muhammadan): I also support the amendment that for the words "on the same scale as for railways" the words "on a liberal scale" be substituted.

The motion was adopted.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The Resolution now before the Council reads as follows:

"This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that, as there are many irrigation projects waiting sanction, it will be an advantage if funds could be provided for them on a liberal scale."

The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH (Punjab: Sikh): Sir, I think I will begin by dissipating the disappointment which the Honourable Mr. Sarma mentioned, when he said I spoke in a disappointing manner of the Government's activities. I challenged the Government of India to show what they had really achieved in a constructive way in the last two years. Mr. Sarma certainly made his statement, but he produced no facts as to the activities of the Government. I must leave it at that. Then he raised again the question of provincial and transferred subjects. It is a legal quibble, Sir, which I am not at all in a position to deal with, but it is a question which this House will have to ask itself one day or other, who are the masters—whether the provinces are masters in their own house, or whether the Government of India are the masters, or is it the Secretary of State who is the master? That is a question which will have to be answered one day or another and until it is answered this question will arise here and elsewhere again and again. We really do not know where we stand. We know this, that when you send an irrigation project up, it has to go to the Government of India and to the Secretary of State. That being so, where is the Provincial transferred subject? It is a definition which I, for instance, have not been able to follow so far. Then again Mr. Sarma said that the Government of India could initiate so far as agriculture was concerned, but as far as the development of agriculture generally was concerned they had no power. I think, not more than six months ago, I asked a question, as to what the Government of India were doing in the matter of research, and as far as I remember, the Honourable Mr. Sarma answered they were starting a Cinchona plantation in Burma. If that indicates the utmost effort of the Government of India, I have nothing more to say about it.

The Honourable Mr. Kale in a very lucid speech cleared up the whole position which I wanted to take up, and in an absent-minded moment when I framed the Resolution I did not make my meaning clear. Agriculture is of national importance in India, and as such deserves very great attention from the Government of India, and that attention it has not been receiving. That is the complaint made against the Government of India. Has the Government of India ever offered, as Mr. Raza Ali asked, to finance irrigation projects in the Provinces? Has the Government of India, after the Irrigation Commission, ever as a whole tried to take up the irrigation problem in India and to push irrigation schemes in all the provinces? So far as I am aware, no attempt has been made. The provinces have been left alone and, even when they have put up projects to the Government of India, the experts, as the Honourable Mr. Baker complained, have only delayed them, instead of speeding up any programme that came to them.

The HONOURABLE MR. C. M. BAKER: I did not say that.

The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH: Well, you complained against the experts in any case.

The HONOURABLE MR. C. M. BAKER: No existing expert.

The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH: Then the Honourable Mr. Sarma has also referred to the fact that there are no irrigation schemes at present before the Government of India. I do not know what the legal meaning of the thing may be, but here is the Irrigation Review of the Government of India for 1918 and 1921, and it devotes a chapter to the projects that are pending in the provinces. These may not be before the Government of India officially, but the Government of India know that they have been waiting for the last 30 years or so and my charge is that the Government of India has done little in speeding up these projects. If the contention of the Honourable Mr. Sarma is true that within the last two years all the irrigation schemes that have come up to the Government of India have been sanctioned, then why not call for some of these schemes, which are mentioned in the Irrigation Review and which have been worked out by the Irrigation Engineers? For instance, the Sutlej Valley scheme, which has just been sanctioned, was proposed ten years ago to be taken in-hand at the same time as Lower Bari Doab scheme. Possibly the Finance and Revenue Departments of the Government of India will enlighten us on that point. The main point, Sir, is that the Government of India either departmentally or by appointing a Committee should survey the whole field of irrigation and then help the provinces in speeding up their irrigation programme. The Honourable Mr. Sarma also brought in the question of the water rate, to which I referred, and he certainly was justified in saying that all irrigation works should be productive. For his enlightenment and that of the Council I should like to point out what some of the irrigation works have been earning. The Lower Chenab is earning 44 per cent.; the Eastern Jumna is earning 31 per cent.; the Cauvery is earning 24 per cent.; the Lower Jhelum is earning 19 per cent.; the Kistna is earning 17 per cent.; the Godavery is earning 17 per cent. Well, if these are not productive irrigation works, then I think we shall have to wait a long time before we find anything else which would earn profits at the same rate, and if the earnings would limit the raising of the water rate, I suppose the case for raising the water rates falls through on these canals in any case. The Honourable Mr. Cook has given us an assurance of his support, which I value greatly and I think the House will value even more his assurance that any irrigation project which comes to him properly

[Sardar Jogendra Singh.]

worked out would receive financial support. This, I hope, will lead to the two or three projects which are waiting in the Punjab being financed at no remote date. I accept his assurance but I must wait till these assurances materialise. I must really apologise for having worded my Resolution loosely. If I had been allowed to amend it, it would have made things much clearer; but, as it stands, it only stands for this that the Government of India might provide funds for any irrigation projects that may come to them, and I hope this proposal will receive the support of the whole House.

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA: Sir, there seems to be a great deal of misapprehension as regards the facts and I am sorry I have not made myself clear in my opening remarks. There seems to be a misapprehension that the Government of India and the Provinces have got no schemes and no programme before them, that they have got no schemes under construction, no schemes under consideration and that they have to be waked up now into activity in order that they may do their duty. I may inform Honourable Members that this is not the fact. There are, at the present moment, works under construction, the total cost of which is Rs. 97 crores 59 lakhs. I have already alluded to the Sukkur Barrage scheme, expected to cost another 18 crores, which has been practically agreed to, but is awaiting the sanction of the Secretary of State. That means that projects to the value of 55 crores are under construction or are about to be under construction. There are projects worth another 52 crores under consideration, and these projects relate mainly to four provinces, the Punjab, Madras, the Central Provinces and Bombay. The Punjab would require, if all their schemes are found to be feasible 26 crores of rupees; Madras about 13 crores; the Central Provinces 5, and Bombay about 4½ crores, roughly. Honourable Members will, therefore, see that there has been no remissness in the past, that the engineering staff are fully engaged on work of a beneficent character at the present moment, they will have many years to work in order to bring these works to completion, and that the finance has been found for these works by the Government of India and the provinces and an assurance has been given that finance will be forthcoming when there are suitable projects which require help. If this is not a considered programme, I fail to see what can be called a considered programme. I would suggest to the Honourable Sardar Jogendra Singh to study his facts a little more carefully and not to air general views and not to come forward with statements that projects have been hung up for 20 or 30 years without the requisite care being taken for speedy sanction being granted. I would ask, would any Government be justified in sanctioning a project without all the details being worked out? Where there are more than one province, we have to consider as to whether there would be enough water for all the projects in those provinces; where there are Indian States and British provinces, we have to consider whether the difficulties arising from various considerations have not to be overcome, conflicting interests reconciled and brought into harmony, and the projects can be financed. It is not as if the thing were plain sailing the moment a man talks of projects owing to a river running through lands lying idle and asks that the Government should put in money there and bring the lands under cultivation. Take, for instance, this question of the Sukkur Barrage, the Sutlej project and the Thal project. There are vital questions of importance which have to be considered by the Government of India before they sanction any more projects, because it

has to be considered as to whether the waters of the Indus would be sufficient for all these works. Therefore, many important and vital questions have to be carefully considered and, if the Sukkur Barrage scheme was hung up, it was because the Secretary of State was not satisfied with the project as it was sent up some years ago. The revised Sukkur Barrage scheme was considered by all the Bombay and Government of India experts. It was found to be satisfactory and was sent up to us on the 8th September 1920 and it was forwarded to the Secretary of State on the 17th of March 1921 with a delay of only six months. That was because the Government of India Public Works Department was continuously in touch with the irrigation officers of the Bombay Government, and, therefore, I cannot see where my Honourable friend draws the authority for his statement that the matter has been hung up for 10 years. (*The Honourable Sardar Jogendra Singh*: "30 years.") May be in Bombay for 30 years, but there are various considerations into which I need not go. The last time it was before the Government of India was in 1920 and that is where the position stands. We may not be able to sanction certain projects in the Punjab unless we know what the effect of the sanction of those projects would be upon the Sind valley.

Take, again, the Kistna project. The Kistna project could have been started some time ago but was not because the Madras Government were not in a position to take up that question on account of the Cauvery project. They said they would handle that after the Cauvery project had been taken up. The Cauvery project could not be handled because it was hung up owing to a dispute with Mysore. The whole matter has been hanging fire for 10 years and we do not see the light of day yet. That is a matter for regret, it is a misfortune; but neither the Provincial Government nor are we responsible for it. And if the Cauvery scheme cannot be taken up, the Kistna scheme would not be ready either because certain outstanding questions had first to be settled with the Hyderabad State.

One Honourable Member asked how much money has been spent by the Government of India. I may state that if he had taken the trouble to read the last Triennial Report, he would have found that up to that date 58 crores of rupees have been spent. There are 12,000 miles of canals, 34,562 of distributaries and I think any Government can be proud of such an achievement. (Hear, hear).

Well, Sir, it has been asked what have the Government of India been doing in the matter of agricultural research. If the Honourable Member had only taken the trouble to find out what the Pusa Institute has been doing for him, for his profit and for others' profit, he would not have twitted us with the charge that we have been only able to show a Cinchona plantation in Burma—as if, by the way, that were in itself a small matter! He owes his prosperity partly to the research work that was carried out in Pusa on wheats. The latest advices when I went to Pusa were that the Behar sugar planters were so eminently satisfied with the work there that they have undertaken practically to finance the expert's proposals. In many other respects also has great activity been shown by the various research institutes and my Honourable friend, without taking the trouble to ascertain the facts, has the audacity to come to this Chamber and charge this Government and the various research officers who have been doing such splendid work, twit them with having been absolutely idle.

"The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid the Honourable Member is going too far. I did not hear the word "idle" used.

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA: I am sorry if I have. Then with regard to the Sutlej Valley scheme, it was sent up here on the 8th September. The Sukkur Barrage scheme was sent up on the 30th July. It was sent up for sanction in December 1920. Now with regard to the statement that many projects are waiting for sanction, I have said that many of the projects have not yet been considered by the Governments concerned, and so there cannot be any equivocation, any legal subtlety displayed when I say there are no projects here awaiting sanction. And as there are no projects awaiting sanction, I am sorry to say that this expression which the Honourable Mover has used—"as there are many irrigation projects waiting sanction"—is not a correct statement of fact. I therefore suggested to him that it might be omitted; but he is not prepared to omit that, and I do not see how this House, knowing full well that there are not many irrigation projects awaiting sanction, can pass this Resolution. All that I have said and all that I shall say now is that the Government of India have always been ready and will always be ready to assist the provinces within the constitutional limits prescribed to find funds for irrigational activities, as they have realised and do realise that in irrigational activity in this country lies largely the prosperity and contentment of the agricultural population and the future prosperity of the country. I therefore hope that if I have spoken warmly, it will be understood that it is because I find here as well as outside charges made that the Government of India have been neglecting irrigation while promoting other activities which are not really beneficial. It is for that reason that I have spoken with warmth. I hope I have been able to show Honourable Members that the Government in India have irrigation programmes, that every Province has got the welfare of its people at heart and is promoting to the best of its ability these irrigation schemes, and that the matter will receive the fullest sympathy, support and consideration from the Government of India.

The HONOURABLE SAIYID RAZA ALI: Sir, may I ask—I will not do so unless you permit me—whether it will be at all in order to omit the words "waiting sanctioned"?

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid no further motion can be made now. I have called upon the Honourable the Mover of the Resolution to reply, and the Government Member has also replied. After that stage, no further amendment can be moved. The only thing that remains is to put the motion:

"This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that, as there are many irrigation projects waiting sanction, it will be an advantage if funds could be provided for them on a liberal scale."

The motion was negatived.

The Council then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 31st January 1928.