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OF THE

THIRD LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1927



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 8th February, 1927.

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

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

PREVENTION OF THE SPREAD OF COMMUNAL ILL-WILL.

317. ***Kumar Ganganand Sinha:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the letter addressed to the Editor, *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, by Dinabandhu Acharya which appeared in page 6 of the P. Dak, Friday, January, 1927, issue of the journal?

(b) If so, will Government be pleased to state what action, if any, is being taken to find out the real significance of such letters as the correspondent and Pandit Sukernath are said to have received and to prevent communal ill-will likely to be caused by such letter? If no action is being taken, why?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) Government have seen the letter.

(b) The question whether any action is required on it is one for consideration by the local authorities.

HEALTH OF MR. SUBASH CHANDRA BOSE.

318. ***Kumar Ganganand Sinha:** 1. Have Government made inquiries as to the health of Mr. Subash Chandra Bose? If so, how is he? If they have made no inquiries, why?

2. Has the attention of Government been drawn to the resolution of the Calcutta Corporation passed unanimously on the 26th instant, and the statements made by its Mayor on that occasion?

3. In case Mr. Bose is ill, what arrangements have been made for his treatment and nursing? Are Government prepared to allow the members of his family to attend and give such medical assistance as he or any member of his family deems necessary? If not, why?

4. Are the Government of India or the Bengal Government considering the question of releasing him or bringing him down to Calcutta for treatment?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I have recently explained to the House that, while the Government of India accept general responsibility for the policy under which the Bengal detenus are restrained, and the application of that policy in the case of Regulation III prisoners is a matter for the Government of India, in the case of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act prisoners, it is a matter for the Government of

Bengal. Mr. Subash Chandra Bose is detained under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, and I will forward, for the consideration of the Government of Bengal, a copy of my Honourable friend's question and the answer which I have given.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

POSTPONEMENT OF THE CONSIDERATION OF THE INDIAN CURRENCY BILL.

Mr. President: I have received the following notice of motion for adjournment of the House from Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar:

"I hereby give notice that I shall move for an adjournment of the House to consider a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the serious situation created by the decision of the Government in putting off the consideration of the Indian Currency Bill till after the disposal of the Railway Budget and till after the presentation of the General Budget."

The decision of the Government was announced only yesterday and it seems to the Chair that, if that decision is to be called into question with any effect between now and the 7th of March, there is no other method for doing so that I can think of except the one proposed in this notice. The motion, therefore, seems to me to be *prima facie* in order and I would like to hear Government if they have any objection.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman (Home Member): Sir, on a point of order for on the merits of this particular application I do not propose to enter. But I would suggest to you, Sir, that the Chair, as indeed you indicated the other day, should watch very jealously these motions for adjournment, as they require, if I may suggest to you and as indeed you said yourself, to be restrained or the business of the House will be disturbed very frequently. On the particular point before the House I submit for your consideration that Government has undoubtedly the right to set down its business on its own day as it likes. If it exercises that right contrary to the general feeling in the House, it prejudices its own case. But in that respect I suggest it must be allowed to take its luck like any other Member. If it appoints a date which is not satisfactory to the House, it may be presumed that the House will show its dislike by approaching the Bill, or whatever the matter might be, in a spirit of hostility. The suggestion which lies behind this proposed motion is that the date will prejudice unfairly the decision sought to be obtained in connection with the Bill. Sir, that is a matter for comment in the debate which could be raised on the motion itself. Therefore, I suggest, the date having been fixed, the matter is in the first place not urgent, and, secondly, that the proposed motion offends against the rule against anticipation.

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas (Indian Merchants' Chamber: Indian Commerce): Sir, I wish to submit, in reply to what has been said by the Honourable the Leader of the House, that whilst Government may be conceded to have the right to set down their business in this House to suit their own convenience, the business which Government bring up before this House affects the whole country, and, therefore, this side of the House also should have a right in saying how Government should set down their business. This cannot be challenged, because, as a rule,

Government respect the wishes of this side of the House in arranging their business. The question before this House, Sir, that is the subject-matter of the motion for adjournment peculiarly affects the public interests. The Railway Budget is to be considered by this House in the third week of this month. As I understood from the programme that was mentioned to us, this House will be called upon to vote Demands for Grants for the Railway Budget from the 21st of this month. Knowing that the ratio is to be taken into consideration on the 7th of next month, how can this House, Sir, proceed to consider the Demands for Grants when we bear in mind that the difference in the Railway Budget, capital and revenue, owing to the ratio being 1s. 4d. or 1s. 6d. will amount to close upon 2½ crores of rupees. I feel, Sir, that if any motion for adjournment of the House submitted to you had the strongest case at any time this one ought to be considered to have that. If the House is to consider the question from the point of view of 1s. 6d. on which basis the whole Budget I understand is likely to be framed, the decrease in expenditure on Railways alone will be one crore of rupees. If subsequently the ratio is altered, this House will not be able to cut down the expenditure, and to that extent this will be a positively wrong lead to give to this House at the time of consideration of Demands for Grants for Railways. I therefore submit that this question is perfectly in order and must be regarded as a matter of urgent public importance.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett (Finance Member): Sir, I would submit that the point which Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas has raised about the Railway Budget can very well be dealt with on the Railway Budget, and that the objection of anticipation is even stronger in view of what he has said. The difficulty that he will be in will be, not that he will vote too much for the Railway Budget expenditure, but too little:

Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Ohetty (Salem and Coimbatore *sum* North Arcot: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Sir, on the question of the urgency of this motion, I would like to say a word. The Honourable the Finance Member said that at the rate of 1s. 6d. we will not be voting too much but too little for the Railway Budget. The Railway Budget grants will be finished by about the third week of this month; the voting of grants will be finished and the Government will be empowered to spend that money. If the ratio is later on to be altered to 1s. 4d., it would mean an increase in Railway expenditure; and if at the time of voting we know what this increase will be, we may perhaps be enabled to make the necessary cuts in the direction that we think proper. But by postponing the discussion of the ratio to a later date we are deprived of the real power that is vested in this House to regulate Railway expenditure, and therefore, I submit this is a matter of very urgent importance to this House.

Mr. President: The Chair is usually very unwilling to admit motions for adjournment of the House which interrupt the ordinary business of the House, except when a clear case is made out for that purpose. In this case the only objection taken by the Home Member is that the matter is not urgent. Well I thought that every section of this House considered this matter of an urgent character. The Government themselves had to consider this question so urgent as to convene a meeting of the Executive Council and pass judgment on the question whether the Ratio Bill should be taken up for consideration immediately or postponed till immediately after the introduction of the General Budget. It does not lie in their

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mouth to say the matter is not urgent. The Home Member cannot complain if the Chair agrees with Government in considering this matter urgent. I therefore rule the motion in order. Does any Member object to leave being given to Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar? As no Member objects, I intimate that leave is granted and the motion will be taken up for discussion at 4 o'clock or earlier if the business of the day concludes earlier.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE PANEL FOR THE CENTRAL ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RAILWAYS.

Mr. President: I have to announce that the following Members have been elected to the panel for the Central Advisory Council for Railways:

Lieutenant-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney,
Sir Darcy Lindsay,
Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim,
Mr. M. R. Jayakar,
Khan Bahadur Nawabzada Saiyid Ashrafuddin Ahmad,
Mr. Ambica Prasad Sinha,
Khan Bahadur Haji Abdullah Haji Kasim, and,
Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE AMENDMENT OF STANDING ORDERS.

Mr. President: The next item on the Agenda is the election of 7 Members as members of the Select Committee on the amendment of Standing Orders. Eight members have been nominated, out of which Pandit Nilakantha Das has withdrawn his candidature. I therefore declare the following Members duly elected:

Mr. L. Graham,
Mr. H. Tonkinson,
Mr. M. Keane,
Mr. M. Ruthnaswamy,
Mr. Duraiswamy Aiyangar,
Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar, and
Mr. M. S. Aney.

RESOLUTION *re* AMALGAMATION OF THE ORIYA-SPEAKING TRACTS.

Pandit Nilakantha Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to be pleased to take immediate steps to put or publish the schemes of putting all Oriya-speaking tracts under one local administration."

To the Government this is not a new subject. It has been before the country practically in the forefront of our political issues for the last 25 years or so. The history of this movement is a very long one, and since 1908, when first the then Home Secretary considered it necessary that all Oriya-speaking tracts should be put under one administration, for some reason or other of purely administrative convenience it has been postponed from time to time. We are given assurances that all our outlying tracts should come under one Government. Sometimes some hope of a sub-province has been put forward but nothing practical has come of it yet which would satisfy the Oriya people. In 1920, just towards the end of the last Imperial Legislative Council, a Resolution was moved by the Honourable Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha on this subject. Government gave assurances that they would enquire into the matter and probably they meant to do something as early as the Reforms scheme was put into operation. Practically the first term of the Reform Council was over and the Government did not move in the matter. At the beginning of the second term, to a question of my friend Mr. B. Das, Government however agreed to institute a committee of enquiry so far as the Madras Oriyas are concerned. Accordingly the Phillip Duff Commission were sent out to enquire into the matter and their report, though it has not been published to all the Members of the House, has been published in the office. After all their enquiries in the Ganjam and Vizagapatam districts they have made out a clear case that the people expressed a very strong desire and anxiety to be united with their fellowmen in the present division of Orissa—I mean the four or five districts in Bihar and Orissa. In case of a few of these outlying localities in the Ganjam and Vizagapatam districts there may be some difference of opinion on account of our census figures; but I may here inform the House that Oriyas have been under several administrations in several tracts, and practically in each of the tracts an intermediary ruling race with vested interests has been created, and the Bengal Government puts it clearly that the census supervisors and enumerators are afraid to record people as Oriya-speaking, because they fear if they put it like that, the tract will be transferred to Orissa. It is there in the letter which was written to the Bengal Government and came to the Government of India in 1922. Actually the Superintendent of Census at a meeting of enumerators and supervisors heard it remarked by one of them that they were not willing to record people as Oriya-speaking even though they had evidence to that effect.

I may quote the passage;
(in the gathering of Enumerators and Supervisors).

"I heard someone say that if there is a large number of Oriya-speaking population at Danton, there is every likelihood of Danton being transferred to Balasore."

This was the remark he heard. It is in a letter by Mr. A. M. Chakravarty, Circle Officer, regarding Oriya-speaking people in Danton and Mohanpur, dated the 5th July, 1921.

Another reason is advanced that the expression of desire on the part of the people is sometimes due to agitation. It may be a fact that when a movement is started some leaders create a public opinion in favour of something which they know will be conducive to the interests of the country. Ordinary people do not understand generally the future of any new movement and it is a fact everywhere

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in the world that opinions are created when the masses are not in a position to understand what is what. But before I go into the history of this movement and criticise it, I should like to enlighten the House about what Orissa is, what it was in history and what are its claims for being constituted as a separate province or to be put under one administration, as I have called it, for I am put in mind of a very curious incident. I was talking to one of my friends in this House—I mean the last House. He asked me, where I came from. I said "Orissa". He looked as if he could not understand me. (Laughter.) Yes; it was a fact; then I said, Bihar and Orissa. He said "Yes, yes; it is somewhere near Assam." I need not say what then followed and how I explained where I came from. But it is perhaps a fact that our people being for the last two hundred years in a state of practical vivisection, so to say, other people in India do not sometimes understand who we are and who we were.

The present Orissa inherits the culture of three ancient provinces; one is Kalinga, another is Utkal, and the third is Udra. Ancient Kalinga was the first colony of the Aryans on the fringe of the Dravida country. The clear history extends so far back as the 7th century B. C. It comprises the coastal strip from Calcutta or Tamluk to the southern extremity of Ganjam. This was the Kalinga, which was conquered by Asoka, the King of Magadha, whose conquests made a saint of him. Kalinga had a robust culture and the present colossal art of Orissa which is a distinct type of Aryan art is the remnant of the development of ancient Kalinga art, which in original may be found even now in the cave temples of Orissa. The sea-faring habits and navigation of Kalinga are well known. The name Bijay Singha is well known to Indian history. He himself is claimed by four provinces, Orissa, Bengal, Gujrat and Burma. But it is a certain fact that his wife who accompanied him to Ceylon and colonised and civilised that land belonged to Kalinga. She was the daughter of the King of Kalinga; and the colonisation of Kalinga in Burma and the Eastern Archipelago, is also a fact of history. The local name of the present Pegu is Ossa, which is a corruption of Orissa, and some temples in Burma were constructed after the pattern of the cave temples of Udaygiri in Orissa. Kalinga navigation was still being practised in Orissa till the seventies of the last century when it was practically crushed out of existence by the high export duty on saltpetre and the salt trade which was killed on account of the ballast system of foreign salt—foreign salt being carried into this country as ballast. It was still living in Balasore and some other coastal towns in Orissa till practically the latter half of the last century and the sloops and small ships in a broken state may still be found in some seaports of Orissa.

Then again Kalinga was a strong Buddhist centre of culture: the Buddhist religion made a stronghold there; when it was again Hinduised the stream of culture came from the Udra country which extended over the South-east portion of the present Central Provinces; and I may say here that the present temple of Jagannath, which stands out as a religious monument throughout India, is a gift of the Udras, and the present Orissan culture may well be proud of that temple where no caste or untouchability is in practice. You will find it nowhere else in India. The culture is purely Orissan; Orissa has kept it up, but that Orissa is not

recognised to be a distinct individual factor in the Indian federation of races.

Of Utkal I should not say more and tire the patience of this House, by detaining them any longer in the domains of ancient history. It would be seen, however that the ancient Utkal influence came from the side of Singhbhum and added many permanent and highly delicate elements of civilisation and advancement to this synthetic stream of culture. Thus it stands out as a fact that we in Orissa from ancient times developed a distinct and individual culture of our own, whose identity could not be killed, though the attempt has been perhaps seriously and continuously made to kill it for about two hundred years.

Orissa was in history always a separate province. It is not in this 20th century that we appeal to the British administration for the first time and claim it to be so. History shows, Sir, that it was always a separate province not only maintained anyhow with its slender revenue, but it was a flourishing State. Even during wars with neighbouring races it could build up a robust art and literature and it could spend enormously on religious art and other institutions of religious and social importance. The extent of Orissa which is now claimed to be from Midnapore to the southern point of Ganjam and from the shores of the sea to somewhere beyond Singhbhum and in the Eastern Central Provinces is not a recent discovery. In olden times it was much larger in extent and a powerful kingdom. Even during the palmy days of Bahmini, Vijayanagaram and Bengal, our kings kept up their independence and carried their mighty peasant militia into the very heart of those countries and our separate existence as an independent race and kingdom was kept up till the latter half of the 16th century when no other province in India except Khandesh—which perhaps succumbed about the same time—kept its independence against the Imperial Moghul arms. Then when Akbar took it, he understood the position. He was a statesman, and not a mere conqueror. He could understand the necessity of the separate existence of the Oriya people and he made it into a separate province. Throughout the Moghul rule it remained separate, and so I must inform the House that our Muhammadans are a respectable class of people, and therefore in Orissa you will seldom find any tension between the Hindus and Muhammadans, nor has any kind of communal rojdyism ever disturbed the peaceful atmosphere of that land.

Then conquest after conquest came, and we were treated like a football. Perhaps during the British régime matters have been carried to extreme lengths. Sometime before the time of the battle of Plassey it was made a part of Bengal. A little before that it was given to Nagpur. I do not know whether—and it is quite probable that—Orissa was given in lieu of the tribute of Bengal to the Mahrattas by the Governor of Bengal under the influence of the merchants of Calcutta who were afraid of the Mahratta raids. Then again it was made a part of the Central Provinces. During the second Mahratta War, it was again thrown on to Bengal, and what happened? The famous historian in his statistical accounts, I mean Sir W. W. Hunter, has admitted how the British Government was responsible for the famine and poverty of our ancient land. It was in Calcutta that the headquarters of Orissa were situated and without practically any notice to the Oriyas our zamindaris were sold in Calcutta for paltry sums, and many of our zamindars now are therefore absentee zamindars, and they live in Calcutta. This is distinctly an act of the

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British Government, as has been pointed out very rightly by Sir W. W. Hunter, in his statistical accounts of Bengal.

This has been our fate, Sir. Since that time we have been made something like a commodity. When it is necessary for the safety and happiness of a major province, we have been thrown about, either partially or wholly, practically like a football. The last of such cruel and heinous experiments was made in putting us with Bihar. Perhaps the Government remember that we were told that we were to supply the sea-board to Bihar. If by supplying the sea-board was meant that we were to wash the feet of Bihar by the gentle offerings of the breezy waves of our hoary and sacred coast of ancient Kalinga, one could well understand it. Or, was there any port open? Was the sea coast of Orissa developed? Was anything at all done to call Orissa a sea-board of Bihar? It was simply an experiment to supply a portion of feeder land to Bihar to enable it to maintain itself as a separate province.

Maulvi A. H. Natiq (Central Provinces: Muhammadan): Do you want that Orissa should be a separate province independent of, and distinct from, Bihar, and that it should have no concern with Bihar?

Pandit Nilakantha Das: Sir, we should like to be a separate province as Assam or the Central Provinces. Assam has been made into a separate province with practically the same or even less population and with about the same amount of revenue. It has not yet got a High Court nor even a University, but it is recognised as a separate province, and the people are expected to determine and rule over their own destinies, while we are always being thrown about. It is quite natural that we should like to be a separate province as we have been throughout the course of our history, but for about these 200 years, when on account of the fault of the Imperial Government we have been thrown about from place to place, as I have said, like a football, and we have been vivisected and thrown in portions here and there. And it is natural that even at a great risk to our economic life we should much like to be a separate province. But perhaps here I feel called upon to refer to the amendments of my friends from Bihar.

They always like to put in an amendment to say that we should remain under Bihar and Orissa, not the present Orissa Division but a little bigger territory. When in 1921 early in the Reforms a Resolution was moved in the Bihar and Orissa Council, such an amendment failed, and the Resolution as I have put it now was unanimously passed. I do not know what charm there is in putting in the words "under the administration of Bihar and Orissa". I have left the question quite open. I have said "under one administration" with the distinct intention that I do not commit myself either to remain under Bihar and Orissa or to be a separate province, which latter course we should like very much. Here I may be allowed to put in a word about the advantages and disadvantages of being under any other province. If the experiment to tag us on to some other province like a barge to a steam boat is to go on, then I think it would be much better first if we are tagged on to the Central Provinces, for there we shall count for something. Our population is almost as large and the railway communication from Cuttack to Sambalpur, which is under contemplation I understand, may be extended up to Nagpur through some station on the Bengal Nagpur Railway, while

the Vizagapatam Harbour railway will also be another advantage. Or if we are to be put under another province, then Bengal with its High Court and University, which have not only a tradition but which command a certain amount of influence and independence, is nearer our home and is within easy reach of any part of Orissa, not more than 12 hours rail journey. I do not know what charm there is in putting us with Bihar, to wash the feet of the province, as I have said. Patna is perhaps more distant from Cuttack than any other centre, and besides throughout our history we have never been with Bihar. We were once with Bengal, then with the Central Provinces, and then we were thrown back into Bengal. It was only in 1911 that, to annul the partition of Bengal and to give Bihar some advantage of territory, we were put under Bihar. Still the wheels of Government sometimes are calculated to crush our destinies and to dictate what we should be, and if it is still found convenient to the Government that we should be with Bihar we must submit to our destiny, but we should like all the Oriya-speaking people to be under Bihar together. That is the only desire now. We are practically a dying race under the present arrangements of administration, and in this state who or where are we to choose between Provinces except that we appeal and plead for being under one administration. For the present any administration that is given us we shall and we must accept, for there is no other way out. Then we shall wait and when we develop as a united race we shall compel the hands of our destiny, I mean the Government, to give us a separate province, which is our hope and goal and without which we cannot have rest. And as to the redistribution of areas, whatever be the objections from the Government standpoint, if the Government do not put one and all our areas together—that is, the remnant which still remains after all the killing agencies have been in operation for ages and generations, nay, even centuries—if all those areas be not now put together—if some are still left out—the process of killing in this present age will not continue any longer. It cannot. Discontent will never vanish; it will still flourish even in the smallest outlying parts. You may say that some parts of Bengal are unwilling, that the Central Provinces Government does not like the idea, or that a portion of Singhbhum is not naturalised in Oriya culture although it has taken that culture for two or three generations; you will see to your great disadvantage that the agitation will go on. The present age is an age of agitators in the political world and our agitators—I confess it—will come out again into the outlying areas. They will again give you trouble and the question will not be finally settled till all our people still living are put together under one administration, and, if possible, and as soon as possible, under a separate administration, a distinct provincial administration.

Some suggestion has been thrown out to us under the name of a sub-province. I do not understand, nor does my friend the Honourable the Home Member there understand what it actually means. To call a province a sub-province is somewhat odd. If I may define it now as I understand it, it is a province without a High Court and a University, which we are told we shall not be able to maintain independently, although I hold that in spite of the famished condition of our land and its economic disadvantages so often flung in our face we shall try our best to maintain a separate University and a High Court. But if it is not found possible by the present masters of our destiny, it may be made

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into a province like Assam, which has not a University or a High Court. But what does a sub-province mean? That is something rather derogatory in name, and our people are afraid that by calling our province a sub-province we may again be put under disadvantages.

Mr. President: Order, order. The Honourable Member from Orissa must now conclude his observations.

Pandit Nilakantha Das: Thank you. I should like rather to have a province like that than an administration with the prefix "sub" which would give some one the idea that we shall again be tagged on to another bigger province with similar disadvantages to those under which we now have to live. With these words, Sir, I move my Resolution.

***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub** (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I am sorry that Maulvi Muhammad Shafee, Maulvi Badi-uz-Zaman and Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan, the Mussalman representatives of the province of Bihar, are not present in the House this morning to represent the views of their electorates. I think, Sir, I will not be able to do justice to this subject as they would have done. But I should be failing in my duty if I did not give expression to the views of my co-religionists in that province on this subject. Sir, I hold in my hand a letter from Mr. Abdul Azeez, Barrister-at-Law, Secretary of the Bihar Provincial Muslim League, which expresses the views of the Mussalmans of that province on this subject and it runs as follows:

"I am sending you a copy of a Resolution passed at an extraordinary meeting of the Bihar Provincial Muslim League. The Mussalmans of Bihar feel strongly in the matter and they consider that if the motion is accepted, it will be a great blow to their political prestige in the province. The inclusion of Orissa in the province of Bihar is responsible for the low percentage of the Mussalmans in the province, and if the other Oriya-speaking tracts were to be brought under the province of Bihar, the percentage of Mussalmans would still go down. The Orissa Division, as it is, is a drain on the province, and if the Oriya-speaking population in India aspires to a unit, a separate political unit should be created and any attempt to foist them on Bihar should be opposed."

The matter was once agitated in the local Council and a perusal of the proceedings will make it clear that the trend of the debate was in favour of the creation of a separate unit. The Resolution which the Bihar Provincial Muslim League passed is as follows:

"Resolved that the Bihar Provincial Muslim League is strongly opposed to the Resolution to be moved in the Legislative Assembly recommending the amalgamation of the Oriya-speaking tracts with the Orissa Division of the Province of Bihar and Orissa, and requests the Muhammadan Members of the Assembly to oppose the Resolution if moved."

(Hear, hear.)

Mr. B. Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): May I ask one question of the Honourable Member? Does the Resolution which my Honourable friend has quoted as being opposed to the amalgamation of the Oriya-speaking tracts give any opinion of the Oriya Mussalmans? Were any Oriya Mussalmans represented?

Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: I understand, Sir, that the population of the Mussalmans in Oriya-speaking tracts is infinitesimally small, they are one or two per cent., and therefore their views on this subject have no

*Speech not corrected by the Honourable Member.

value; probably they had no chance to express their views. Well, even if the feelings of Mussalmans in Orissa were consulted, I consider it my duty to say that the Mussalman Members of this Assembly cannot support this Resolution. Of course we are not opposed to any general scheme of redistribution of the provinces in India. If a redistribution of Sind takes place, if a redistribution of other provinces in India takes place, if there is a general redistribution of the provinces in India, then we are not opposed to it. But I am sorry that we cannot support this Resolution as it stands. With these words, Sir, I oppose the Resolution.

***Maulvi A. H. Natiq:** When the Honourable Mover has clearly stated that he wants a separate Orissa province, distinct from Bihar, the question of the Honourable Member (Maulvi Muhammad Yakub) does not come in at all.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh (Muzaffarpur cum Champaran: Non-Muhamadan): Sir, I beg to move the following amendment:

"That for the original Resolution the following be substituted:—

'That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he may be pleased to take early steps to amalgamate all the Oriya-speaking tracts with the present Orissa Division of the Province of Bihar and Orissa.'

I may at the outset state that we fully sympathise with our brethren in Orissa in their desire that all the areas which are now divided into separate Oriya tracts should be brought under one administration. The object of my amendment is merely to make the original Resolution more specific, and to focus the attention of the House on a definite clear-cut issue. There is no question that opinion is almost unanimous in official as well as non-official circles as to the desirability of amalgamating all the Oriya-speaking tracts under one administration. So far back as 1903 Sir Herbert Risley, who was then the Home Secretary to the Government of India, said as follows:

"The Government of Madras have repeatedly complained of the anxieties imposed upon their administration by the great diversity of languages (Oriya, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Canarese) with which Madras Civilian are called upon to cope, and which render the transfer of officers from one part of the presidency to another a matter in any case of great difficulty, and often of positive detriment to the public interest."

The Government of India also, Sir, in their letter, dated the 3rd December, 1903, said as follows:

"Such a scheme would solve the question of language once for all. This change would relieve both the Central Provinces and Madras of a troublesome excrescence upon their administrative system; and it would result in handing over the Oriya problem to one Government alone, on a scheme and with the unity that would admit of its being treated with consistency and efficiency."

Later on, Sir Herbert Risley proposed that the Oriya-speaking tracts should be amalgamated under one administration. The Bengal National Chamber of Commerce also supported this proposal, and in their letter the Bengal Chamber of Commerce made the following observation:

"The Committee do not anticipate that any such change would prejudicially affect mercantile interests."

But Lord Amptill, who was then the Governor of Madras, took up a hostile attitude, and the matter was dropped. When Mr. Montagu came out to India in 1917 the Oriya representatives waited in a deputation on

*Speech not corrected by the Honourable Member.

[Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh.]

him, and a reference to the Oriya problem is made in paragraph 246 of the Report on Constitutional Reforms. Mr. Stanley Rice, I.C.S., wrote a book "Occasional Essays on South Indian Life"; in that book he refers to this problem in the following words:

"Orissa proper lies within the Province of Bengal and the people of Ganjam suffer in that they have been separated from their brethren; they are founding children, alien from the more favoured, because better recognised Dravidian races; alien even in the origin to which their ancestry has been traced."

Again the book says:

"The Oriya of Ganjam labours under two disadvantages. He is very far from Madras, and he inhabits only part of a District. He speaks a language which is spoken in Bengal, but not in any part of the Madras Presidency save Ganjam."

The Durbar despatch of 1911 pointed out: .

"Orissa has long felt uneasiness at a possible loss of identity as a distinct community."

Thus it will be seen that opinion is practically unanimous on the point. This question was brought up, Sir, in the old Imperial Legislative Council on the 20th February, 1920, when a Resolution on the lines of my amendment was moved by Mr. Sachidananda Sinha and supported by the late Mr. Surendranath Banerji; and among other supporters of that Resolution I find the name of the Raja of Kanika, who was then, I understand, the only representative of Orissa on the Council. Among other supporters of that Resolution, I find the name of Haji Chaudhri Muhammad Ismail Khan. I invite the attention of Honourable Members of this

12 Noon. House to the remarks of a few representative gentlemen of Orissa itself. This is to be found in the Phillip-Duff Enquiry Report which must be in the hands of many Honourable Members. At page 6 we read as follows:

"The zemindar of Khallikote and Atagada, who is President of the District Board of Ganjam, of the Zemindars' Association of Ganjam and of the Khallikote College, Berhampur, is definitely of opinion that a separate Orissa is financially impracticable, that a union of Orissa with an Andhra province would be distinctly injurious to the Oriyas, and that the immediate amalgamation of the Oriya-speaking tracts of Madras with Orissa is essential for the interests of all classes of Oriyas whether they be zemindars or raiyats."

At page 10, again, we read as follows:

"These deputations expressed the views of the enlightened Oriyas of Berhampur and the surrounding area and were unanimous in favour of amalgamation. We gathered that they preferred a separate Orissa province, but were on the whole in favour of union with Bihar and Orissa for the time being in the hope of securing their ultimate object at a later date."

The conclusion of the Commission is as follows:

"Our inquiry has shown that there is a genuine long-standing and deep-seated desire on the part of the educated Oriya classes of the Oriya-speaking tracts of Madras for amalgamation of these tracts with Orissa under one administration. By many we have been informed that it is immaterial whether that administration be Bihar and Orissa, Bengal or Madras."

I will also quote the opinion, Sir, of my Honourable friend Mr. B. Das who has taken a keen interest in this question. He gave a press interview last year. I do not know whether he has changed his opinion, but I hope he

has not. In the course of his interview, which is reported in the *Searchlight* of the 24th January, 1926, he said :

"that he would like to see Orissa remaining with Bihar for another decade till eventually Orissa became a separate province."

We knew our friend, Sir, as an Engineer, and as a politician; but I find that he has blossomed forth into a full-fledged journalist. He is the editor of a paper called *Young Utkal*; and this is what he wrote so late as on the 9th December, 1926 :

"We have advanced no further since 1903 or 1911. Let the Central Government unite the Oriya-speaking tracts under one Government for the present under the Government of Bihar and Orissa and allow the progressive development of the Oriya race unhampered."

Sir, at present, the Oriya-speaking tracts have been scattered over four provinces; a portion is in Midnapore in Bengal, a portion is in Singbhum of Chota Nagpur, Sambalpur and a small portion of Raipur is in the Central Provinces, and a portion in the Ganjam district of the Madras Presidency. There are only two or three alternatives which may be considered by the House. One is to give a separate province all at once, or it may be joined with the present Orissa Division of Bihar and Orissa. If our friends of Orissa want to have a separate province of their own, we in Bihar will not stand in their way, but they must look into the financial aspect of the question also. Orissa is a poor province. It suffers from chronic starvation. Even at the present moment there are signs of starvation in the outlying tracts of the country. If in spite of that my friends want to have all at once a separate province of their own, with its costly paraphernalia of a High Court, University and Secretariat, Bihar will never stand in their way.

Mr. B. Das: Thank you.

Pandit Nilakantha Das: We do not object to being in Bihar. We cannot. You cannot otherwise stand in our way too.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: There is also a suggestion of a Deputy Governor being appointed. Now, Sir, the proposal for a Deputy Governor has been discouraged in the Minority Report of the Muddiman Committee on Constitutional Reforms. For all these reasons, I think it would be safe for my friends to consent to remain for the present with Bihar. Mr. Madhusudan Das, then Minister of Bihar and Orissa, so far back as 1921 made the following observation :

"Jagannath is called the Hindu God, but He is generally known in Orissa among the Pandas and priests of Orissa as Buddha Abatar, as an incarnation, or if I may say so, a deity of the Buddha creed. Buddhism was a religion which did away with caste-system and you find an absence of caste rules in Jagannath. There you find a strong affinity between Bihar and Orissa, the like of which is not to be found between any two parts of a province or any two provinces of India."

With these few words, I move my amendment; but I repeat if my friends persist in having a separate province of their own, quite independent of Bihar and Orissa, we shall not object, but will bid them a regretful but nonetheless a cordial farewell.

Mr. President: Amendment moved :

"That for the original Resolution the following be substituted :—

'That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he may be pleased to take early steps to amalgamate all the Oriya-speaking tracts with the present Orissa Division of the Province of Bihar and Orissa.'

Dr. B. B. Moonje (Nagpur Division : Non-Muhammadan) : Sir, I rise to support the original Resolution of my friend Pandit Nilakantha Das. According to the exigencies of the British conquest in India, fortunately or unfortunately some portions of the Oriya people have been tacked on to the Madras Presidency; other provinces also have suffered similarly. I had personally occasion to go myself to the province, being appointed as an arbitrator by the Congress. I have made enquiries into the matter and I find that the findings that the Committee have arrived at are substantially correct and they represent the opinion prevalent among the people there. I have seen the people there. I have talked with the educated people, with other kinds of people also, and though, I take it, the generality of people do not understand the meaning of remaining in the Madras Presidency or Bihar or any other province, they understand very clearly that all Oriya people should be brought together under one administration, and that is why I rise to support the original proposition of Mr. Nilakantha Das. Mr. Das's proposition is that the Oriya-speaking tracts should be brought under one local administration. It does not say that they should be taken away from Bihar or Madras; it does not say "tack the tracts on to Bengal, to the Central Provinces" or that they should remain with Madras. All it wants is that the Oriya-speaking people should be brought under one administration. It may be under Madras, under Bihar, under Bengal, or under any other province. All that the original Resolution wants is that they should be brought under one administration. Looking at it from the practical point of view, the province of Madras is a very big province, and therefore to bring all the Oriya-speaking people under the administration of Madras is an impracticable proposition. Therefore, that question is ruled out. The question then is, whether the whole of the Oriya-speaking people should be with Bihar or should be with Bengal, or should be made into a separate province. That question Government can decide themselves. If they can find that it would be a financially successful proposal to bring all the Oriya-speaking people together in one separate province, of course it will please everybody; it will please the Oriya-speaking people very much, and also from the linguistic point of view, I think it would be a very safe proposal.

I think it is a very self-evident proposal to bring together one people or people speaking the same language. If that is not possible, if the financial condition of Orissa may not make it a practical proposal, I think from the circumstances of Orissa, their mode of living, their customs and habits, and from the affinity between the two languages of Orissa and Bengal, that it would be more convenient to have Orissa attached to Bengal.

I heard a remark made that no case has been made out to disturb the present arrangement. Perhaps some of my friends may not have read the report that has been published, entitled "Report on Enquiry into attitude of Oriya-speaking population of the Madras Presidency towards amalgamation with other Oriya-speaking tracts." I quote for them from page 12, paragraph 10, which runs as follows :

"There is a deficiency of Oriya officers in superior grades of Magisterial and other services. It has been pointed out that there is at present only one Oriya Deputy Collector in the province, and there are no Oriyas in the superior grades of the Police and Forest Services. Telegu Officers posted as Magistrates, Tahsildars, etc., in Oriya-speaking tracts very frequently do not know Oriya and the quality of their work thereby suffers and Oriyas are put to much inconvenience, even where the Court language has been officially declared to be Oriya."

Other samples of grievances also are mentioned, as for instance :

"In spite of orders to increase the number of Oriya ministerial officers, there is still a vast preponderance of Telegu clerks in all Government offices in the Ganjam district.

Notices and summonses, even when printed in Oriya, are frequently filled up in the Telegu language, which is not understood by the people. Many instances of this were shown to us."

Those who care to read this book will find several other samples of grievances.

I therefore beg to support the Resolution of my friend, Mr. Nilakantha Das.

Mr. O. Ranga Iyer (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Non-Muham-madan Rural): Sir, I rise to move:

"That for the original Resolution the following be substituted . . . "

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman (Home Member): Sir, I rise on a point of order.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member should confine himself to the Resolution and the amendment already moved. He knows perfectly well that his own amendment which is on the paper, is out of order. He should, therefore, confine himself to the original Resolution and amendment already moved.

Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer: Sir, I bow to the ruling of the Chair and shall speak to the original Resolution.

My friend, Mr. Nilakantha Das, has my full support. It is a well understood fact that in the matter of a constitution the importance of the language question cannot be disputed. His demand is that the Oriya-speaking provinces should be constituted into a separate province. This fact has been in the minds of almost all constitutionalists, everyone, whether appointed by Government or an outside agency, who has gone into the question. The latest authority—at any rate supposed to be an authority—who was last to go into the question of the constitution of India, Sir Frederick Whyte,—has a passage in his book about provincial autonomy and languages. I look forward to the Government immediately constituting the Oriya-speaking tracts into a separate province, so that it may be a happy harbinger of the policy of reconstituting the Provinces on a linguistic basis as commended by the Congress. Sir, Mr. Lionel Curtis, who is supposed to be the author of the Montagu Reforms (Laughter)—I know for a fact that he was the brain of the Montagu Reforms,—in the book that he wrote, "Letters to the People of India on Responsible Government", has made a very strong case for the re-distribution of provinces. He repudiates the present arrangement of provinces. This is what Mr. Lionel Curtis says, and his statement very strongly supports the case of Mr. Nilakantha Das:

"The areas and administrative mechanism developed by a system of paternal government, (i.e., the present government) are utterly different from those developed by a system of popular government (for which the Reforms are supposed to stand). When introducing responsible government in a great country which has never had it before you must be prepared to revise your areas (the Resolution of my friend calls upon the Government to revise the present areas of the provinces of Bihar and Orissa) and to re-construct your administrative system.

As every practical man knows, popular prejudice is always a factor which has to be considered in political arrangements."

[Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer.]

And "popular prejudice" in the present case favours the mover of the Resolution. Further on Mr. Curtis says:

"The duty of statesmen is to think out the plan which is right in itself, to state that plan clearly and boldly, and then guide the community towards it as closely as popular prejudice will allow, not failing to appeal to their innate sense of trusteeship for those who come after them."

Sir, it is a well understood fact that without this separation it is very difficult to have any federal form of self-government. Lord Birkenhead has said that the American constitution would admirably suit India. I therefore think that Government can very well make an experiment by creating a small province like that of Orissa. What did they do in America? They divided the country into small provinces. I shall read to you an authority you cannot dispute:

"In all great communities the political field is, or ought to be, divided between one central government and a number of provincial governments. There are various reasons for this, which can best be explained by keeping in mind the United States. Congress at Washington could not pass all the measures required by the different parts of that vast and varied community. It would break down for want of time, and its measures would not be sufficiently adapted to the needs of the various local communities. We cannot imagine one law and system of education for the whole of America. And if we could, its administration from one centre would be too rigid. Areas so far removed as California and New York need different systems, adapted to their local conditions and administered in response to the feelings of each community. Apart from this an educational system, administered from Washington for all America, would be too vast for any one authority to control."

Further on he says:

"Some light will be thrown on the question by a glance at the map of North America as it existed in the middle of the eighteenth century. Its soil was then divided between three Great Empires, which all centred in Europe. Spain claimed to administer, as one huge province, all the territories now covered by Mexico, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Alabama and Florida. Similarly France claimed a vast triangular territory, of which the north-eastern angle was opposite Newfoundland, the north-western angle near Winnipeg, and the southern angle at the mouth of the Mississippi in the Gulf of Mexico. England claimed a much smaller area, the coast strip extending from the boundary which now divides New Brunswick and Maine to the northern boundary of Florida."

I will ask the Honourable gentlemen on the other side to read Mr. Lionel Curtis' book or some other historical survey and improve their knowledge of the subject. (Laughter.)

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated: Labour Interests): May I ask where is the reference to language in this passage?

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer: I am sure Mr. Joshi was not putting a serious question; the Spanish people were not talking the language of Englishmen, the French people were not talking the language of the English people. I hope Mr. Joshi is satisfied.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Sir, when I listened to the last speaker I had the feeling that he was moving the amendment you had disallowed, but of course that could not be the case. (Laughter.) I will say no more about the last speaker.

Sir, the Honourable the Mover of the Resolution made one observation that gave me serious cause to think. He said, and I have no doubt he said it with great truth, that when he first came to this House he

was asked by several of his fellow Members where Orissa was. That, Sir, seems to indicate to me some of the difficulties which a House composed as this is has in dealing with a problem which is very largely a local problem between the Governments around Orissa, and also which would be discussed in local assemblies by people with far greater local knowledge than people in this House can claim. I make those observations because I am distinctly of opinion that when Government has to choose between the numerous conflicting views as to the fate of Orissa it should be after it has considered the discussions in the local Legislative Councils. Now, Sir, I do not suffer from the disability that some of the Members of the House do because I have visited Orissa on several occasions, three I think, and I have quite recently been in Orissa, and I entirely agree with the remarks of my Honourable friend as to the distinctive civilization and the wonderful memorials of that country, which contains some of the temples most revered by the Hindu community. I too, Sir, have visited the great temple of Bhubaneswar, I have seen the cave temples which are close to it, and I have also visited the great Sun Temple, that remarkable architectural production at Kanarak. No one who visits Orissa can fail to be struck with the interesting nature of the country and the distinctive civilization which exists there. On all these points I am at one with my Honourable friend. But, Sir, admitting and sympathising as I do with the undoubted feeling that exists in Orissa, which seeks for some more definite unions of the Oriya-speaking peoples as an emblem to express their racial pride, it must be largely a matter for consideration what are the practical propositions which are open to give effect to their wishes. When I was at Cuttack and again when I was at Puri I talked to many educated Oriyas, and whether it is deep or not, there is no doubt that there is a wide feeling that they would like some change in the present administration to give effect to such a union. My Honourable friend Pandit Nilakantha Das has made one point which I should like myself to make very clear. What most educated Oriyas look forward to is not being tied to some other province, but some form of administration where they will be masters in their own house. They do not, as I understand it, really attach very much importance to the transfer of these few pargannas in the Ganjam district to Orissa, except as a preliminary step, and a step which they hope will carry them to some form of independent existence. They would no doubt be content with that transfer as a first step, but that is not, as my Honourable friend made quite clear in his speech, what their ultimate intention is. That, Sir, is a very important point because, if that is the real intention, then the transfer of these pargannas acquires much less importance, because their mere transfer would not satisfy the wishes of a considerable number of those who are concerned with the present request. Considered in any other light the transfer of these pargannas therefore would have to be justified not in pursuance of the general aim of Orissa as a separate country, but merely as a question of administrative advantage one way or the other.

Now, my Honourable friend has also made a very great number of alternative suggestions. First of all he would prefer to be on his own. Next he would prefer to go to the Central Provinces. Well, Sir, I have never heard that put forward before as an Orissa demand. I have heard many requests, but not that particular one; but my Honourable friend is quite right, there is a historical precedent for it. When Man Singh

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Akbar's General, annexed Orissa to the Mogul Empire, he placed it under a separate Governor, and later on in 1751, it was ceded to the Nagpur Mahrattas who ruled it on a system which was, I understood, somewhat painful to the subjects. It is not a precedent which I fancy is appreciated in Orissa, nor is there any desire that the Mahratta rule should be restored in Orissa, but my Honourable friend is right to this extent that it was then—and I think that is the only precedent I can find—a part of what is now the Central Provinces. However, I noticed with some interest that Dr. Moonje, who I understand comes from the Central Provinces, is apparently not anxious to have Orissa. Next in order of merit my Honourable friend would like to be transferred to Bengal. We have not had the advantage yet of a speaker from Bengal, but we shall probably know then how Bengal would like it. Last of all, if it cannot be transferred anywhere else it is to Bihar that this United Orissa would go. But my Honourable friend Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh cannot, I am afraid, get much consolation from that, because it is very much the last choice. Well, Sir, a question of this kind must obviously receive very careful consideration in regard to its administrative and financial aspects. My Honourable friend Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh has doubtless satisfied himself that the transfer of a larger tract of Orissa country to Bihar is likely to be profitable to him. If so, Sir, he is more fortunate than the Government of that province, who make it one of the conditions of agreeing to the transfer of these taluks from Ganjam that they shall be financially solvent and of this they are not convinced. I do not know whether my Honourable friend would alter his view if he found they were not, but I fancy when he came to see his constituents they might desire his views to be expressed with more caution on that point. Again any question of constituting Orissa as a separate administration would obviously require most careful consideration from the financial point of view. Those of you who know Orissa know it is a tract very liable to flood, very liable to catastrophies and in the ordinary way not, I am informed by the Bihar Government, a very profitable portion of their dominions. Without taking into consideration anything else, and leaving out the overhead charges, the expenditure is hardly met by the revenue derived from the present districts of Orissa. The Bihar Government do not conceal the fact that they would regard any further demands on their other provincial revenues by additional territory as a good reason for objecting to such a transfer. If, as my Honourable friend contemplates, he formed his administration without a High Court and without a University I conclude that he would probably desire to retain the services of some High Court and some University at any rate in part—that is to say, Orissa would have to pay a portion of the charges both of a High Court and of a University, and that would be a serious burden on the Orissa we know of at present. But, Sir, I do not wish the House to think that in putting forward the difficulties of the case we do not appreciate that there are difficulties which the Oriya-speaking people suffer under at present. It is perfectly true that it must be a matter of very considerable difficulty—and I was much struck by it when I was in Cuttack—for Oriyas to go to Patna and prefer their appeals to the High Court there, where most of the pleaders are unacquainted with Oriya and where their surroundings are strange and where they do not know the language. We have done a considerable amount by setting up a circuit court of the High Court which

sits at Cuttack from time to time, but one complaint that was certainly made to me when I was down there was that the occasional presence of Judges in that place is not the same thing as having a High Court which is readily accessible. Dr. Moonje I think it was who pointed out very pertinently that to take Oriyas to Madras was impossible. I was on the other hand much struck by the fact of the great distance of those cutlying talukas of Ganjam from Madras, and I cannot doubt Oriyas suffer a certain amount of disadvantage from that fact. Also although it is true that improvements have been made in communications between the centre of the Bihar and Orissa Government and Orissa, even now they leave much to be desired; and we cannot deny that it is a hardship for Oriyas to get their education from Patna University and their justice from the Patna High Court. I do not desire in the least to minimise the position; but, on the other hand, we have to come down to practical politics. I think we must reject for the moment any idea of a separate administration for Orissa and the question really to be decided is as to what we can do in the way of smaller modifications. The position now is that we have consulted the Government of Madras, the Government of the Central Provinces and the Government of Bihar and Orissa. Madras desire very much to retain the existing position because they recognise that in the tracts concerned if they benefit the Oriyas they may harm the Telegus who inhabit in considerable numbers those tracts. The Central Provinces, curiously enough like Dr. Moonje, have no desire to add any Oriyas to their territory nor any desire to cede any of the territory which is now in a certain degree populated by Oriyas

Dr. B. S. Moonje: I am quite disinterested in the matter.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I am very glad to see that the Local Government and the Honourable Member in this matter seem to be more or less at one. Bihar and Orissa have a somewhat limited affection for the Oriya talukas of the Ganjam district. They discussed the matter but, like careful housekeepers, they want to know how much the new guests are going to eat. So we asked for figures, as far as possible, to clear up that point. Those figures were supplied and are at present under the consideration of the Government of Bihar and Orissa, and I gather from their communications to me that they find some difficulty in ascertaining the actual facts and of course it is always a matter of difficulty to find what are the financial facts about a particular block of territory which is very much less than a whole district. However, the Bihar and Orissa Government make it perfectly clear that they would not take on willingly the Oriya talukas of Ganjam unless they were satisfied it was financially a sound proposition. They also make it clear that they would desire—and here I think my Honourable friend who spoke in the name but only in the name of the Muhammadans of Bihar will agree—they would desire before they came to any final conclusion that the matter should be re-discussed in the new Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council. And they also suggest it should be re-discussed in the Madras Council, or rather discussed for I do not think there ever has been any discussion in Madras on that point.

Well, Sir, that is the position. Government are engaged with Local Governments in seeing what can be done. They are engaged in examining the administrative aspects of the case. They do feel that there are . . .

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certain disabilities under which Oriyas suffer. How far they are susceptible of merely administrative correction is at present doubtful. They feel, moreover, that, apart from that, Oriyas have a natural pride in their beautiful country, that Oriyas have a natural pride in their ancient civilisation, and that, in so far as that is compatible with the other requirements of the position consideration should be given to that natural sentiment. That, Sir, is the view of the Government on this Resolution.

Mr. B. Das: Sir, I appreciate very much the eulogistic terms in which the Honourable the Home Member has spoken of the past glories of my country. Sir, I may also observe here that the Oriya public appreciated very much the visit of the Honourable the Home Member during last November to Orissa. Some of us took that opportunity to wait on him in a deputation to discuss this very vital problem, so vital to the Oriya race, and the Honourable the Home Member at the time pointed out the financial aspects of the question that may have to be faced if amalgamation with Bihar were to be attained. At the very time the Governor of Bihar also delivered a speech at a Durbar in Cuttack where he mentioned:

"The decision does not rest with this Government and correspondence is still in progress; so I can say nothing definite except that if the verdict is that this Province should undertake these additional responsibilities and that course commends itself to the Legislative Council (since important financial considerations are involved), we shall not demur."

The Honourable the Home Member has just now referred to the views of the Bihar Government and said that they do demur to the financial aspect of the case. Sir, in 1920 Sir William Vincent, while he was Home Member, assured the former Imperial Legislative Council on behalf of the Government of India in these words:

"I am quite prepared, however, if I can secure the sanction of His Excellency in Council to this course, to have a full investigation of the facts to ascertain the views of the Local Governments and prepare such materials for the use of the new Governments as may assist them in arriving at a just decision in this matter."

This was in the Imperial Council. Since then the Government of India had appointed the Phillip-Duff Commission and that led to the correspondence which the Honourable the Home Member mentioned to ascertain the views of the provincial Governments.

Sir, if I were to follow my own personal inclination I would rather support and vote for the Resolution of my Honourable friend Pandit Nilakantha Das. But for the last three or four years I have been taking part in the political problems of my province. I have gone into this problem very thoroughly; and I have seen the difficulties which will face the Government if we press immediately for a separate administration for Orissa or even for that ephemeral thing described in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report as a "sub-province." For the present, therefore, in my own opinion I have no alternative but to support the amendment moved by my friend Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh. Thereby the Government of Bihar and Orissa do not commit themselves to any financial burden. As matters stand, the former Orissa Division in the province of Bihar and Orissa is at present divided into two divisions and one has been made into a political division and we incidentally find that one of the British districts of Orissa, the district of Angul, is placed in that political division.

There will be another Resolution on the subject in this House later on this day and we can then discuss why a British district has been so placed under a Political Agent. But thereby the task of the Commissioner of Orissa has been very much lightened as he is at present in charge only of four districts in Orissa. If the Ganjam and Vizagapatam districts are transferred from the Madras Presidency, and the Contai sub-division, a part of the Midnapore district which we claim as Oriya-speaking tracts in the Midnapore Division is transferred from Bengal, and the Phuljhar, Khariar, Padmapur and Malkhorda sub-divisions from the Central Provinces are transferred to the Orissa Division, including a portion of the Chaibassa district of the Chota Nagpur Division, then the Commissioner of Orissa will not be at all overworked; he will find sufficient work for himself. At the same time, it will not involve any additional financial burden on the Government of Bihar and Orissa. While we are discussing this problem, I would take the opportunity of suggesting to the Honourable the Home Member what was suggested to him at Cuttack by our deputation, namely, that if the financial position is to be determined, why should the Central Government not appoint a small committee consisting of some Government officials and some representatives of Bihar and Orissa, which could go into the question thoroughly. I am quite emphatic that the present proposition that I have submitted now (before the House) will not put any additional financial burden on the Government of Bihar and Orissa.

I must take exception, Sir, to one observation of my friend, Maulvi Muhammad Yakub. Although the Bihar Muslim League passed that Resolution and sent it to Mr. Yakub here, they discussed the attitude of the Bihar Moslems only. No Oriya Muslim was or could have been present at that meeting or could have assented to such a proposition. They never took into consideration all the problems that have been facing the Oriyas since the day we came under the British Government,—since 1803. Since 1903 our agitation has become more vocal and the Honourable the Home Member is fully aware of it. I may just tell my Honourable friend Maulvi Muhammad Yakub that in 1921 when a Resolution to that effect was passed in the Bihar and Orissa Council, two Muslim Members spoke on the subject; one Mr. Majid who comes from Orissa strongly supported the Resolution for the amalgamation of the Oriya-speaking tracts . . .

Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Was he the same gentleman who was a member of the Swaraj Party in the last Assembly?

Mr. B. Das: No.

Mr. Jannadas M. Mehta (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Is he on your brain or what?

Pandit Nilakantha Das: He is a Khan Bahadur and was an officer of the Government.

Mr. B. Das: The other was my friend, Mr. Yunus; and supporting the Resolution he said in the Bihar Council:

"While I support this Resolution, Sir, I wish to assure my Oriya friends that it is not because I have any desire that we Biharis should part from our Oriya friends."

Sir, five years ago there was no question of Hindu and Muslim in Bihar and Orissa. I do not know whether Mr. Yunus is a member of the Bihar Muslim League; but I would be surprised whether such a wise politician as Mr. Yunus will change his mind now and whether he would not support it with the same vigour. I am glad to know that he said "We

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Biharis will support our Oriya friends." There was then no question of Hindu-Moslem differences in Bihar and I believe there will be no such question in Bihar and Orissa—though there might be communal differences in other provinces.

Sir, the problem of a separate administration for Orissa is a much more difficult one; and even if this House were to pass the amendment of my friend Mr. Ranga Iyer which has just been ruled out of order in the shape of a Resolution, it would probably be a matter of decades to give effect to the same. And in my own opinion, even a Resolution of this House cannot bring about such radical changes unless there is a separate Commission that goes thoroughly into the problem. That might take another twenty-five years in spite of Mr. Lionel Curtis' special advice to the Government on its advantages. Redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis may not satisfy other races in India. The people of Orissa will be quite satisfied to be separated on a linguistic basis; but at present that is not the subject matter of our discussion. Nobody knows it more thoroughly than the Honourable the Home Member, for his long connection with the old Government of Bengal and Bihar and Orissa and thereafter with the Central Government would have enabled him to know how we Oriyas were made a catspaw in the hands of different Viceroys and how against our own will we were transferred and tied to the tail end of Bihar and found ourselves there. We were then given hopes of various things; we were promised sea-ports and a one-third interest in the Province. Those promises stand unfulfilled. I have mentioned elsewhere, on public platforms and I mention also here that the present Bihar and Orissa Government are constituted mostly of officials who came from the Province of Eastern Bengal, who never knew the long contention and agitation that the people of Orissa carried on to have a separate province. These officials have shewn little respect to the traditions and peculiar situation of my race. If my Honourable friend the Home Member had had his own way, he would have seen us in 1912 constituted as a separate province, as Assam was. But unfortunately the Bihar people had to be satisfied; the sentiment of the whole Bengali nation was against the partition of Bengal; they were to be united; so the Oriyas were made scape-goats and sacrificed for the Biharis. And what have we got to-day? I have my best friends among Biharis. But the capital of Bihar, Patna, is 600 miles away from Cuttack, the capital of Orissa. The administration of Bihar and Orissa have little time to see into the conditions of Orissa; and therefore Mr. M. S. Das, an ex-Minister of that province, wrote a note which was submitted before the Muddiman Committee on Reforms, where he mentioned that Orissa should be *separately and specially treated*. These arguments must have weighed with the authors of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report when they suggested the formation of a sub-province for Orissa:

"I beg to suggest that a separate Minister should be appointed for Orissa. He will have control over all transferred subjects. It will be necessary to have two Ministers for Bihar; if that is found necessary an additional post should be created." The Bihar Government in their letter addressed to the Government of India and to the Muddiman Committee commented as follows:

"Special treatment for Orissa:—Mr. Das considers that Orissa should always have a special Minister of its own, apparently to be in charge of all transferred subjects in Orissa. The point does not arise in the present connection, but section 52A (1) of the Act provides for placing part of a Governor's province under the administration of a Deputy Governor. It appears to be a question of administrative convenience and financial expediency rather than one connected with the general working of the Government of India Act."

Mr. Das suggested only very minor administrative changes in Orissa. The Bihar Government in submitting their views before the Muddiman Committee said that this could be done without amending the Government of India Act, but the Bihar Government have done nothing in the matter. They have appointed since then Ministers from among Members in their own Council who have no connection with Orissa. The Bihar Government re-appointed their old Ministers who have no popular following save the Government block just to save trouble from the non-official majority, and they took no steps to appoint anybody from Orissa, and this has been a long-standing demand of the Oriyas that their interests are being neglected and sacrificed. Since then the Governor of the Punjab has seen his way to appoint a third Minister and an extra Minister, a Muslim Minister, purely on communal lines. In Bihar and Orissa there is not the least sign of communalism. When my friend Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh mooted the question of Buddhist Bihar and the Jagannathites of Orissa, I agree with him. The similarity ends there. I may say the two races, the Hindi-speaking race of Bihar, and the Oriya-speaking race of Orissa have nothing else in common except their high spiritual tradition. The culture and civilisation of Orissa is quite different. Therefore, Sir, I submit that all the Oriya-speaking people must be united, and later on when conditions permit, Orissa can be made into a separate province. I suggest that the Honourable the Home Member will see his way to appoint a small Committee to go into the financial burden that may be thrown on the Government of Bihar and Orissa.

I do not think it will be necessary to move again separate Resolutions in the provincial Legislative Councils of Bihar and Orissa or the Central Provinces or Madras for the amalgamation of any portion of the Oriya-speaking tracts with natural Orissa. Already in 1921 under the new reformed administration the Bihar and Orissa Council had passed such a Resolution. In Madras where there are few Oriya councillors, they find themselves at a disadvantage; they get very little sympathy from the non-official Members of the Madras Council and even from that Government and the reason is well known. Orissa, Sir, would have been a separate province if Lord Amthill was not promoted to act for Lord Curzon as Viceroy of India in 1905 or 1906. What did Lord Curzon himself say in the House of Lords in 1911? Of course he was talking about the partition of Bengal, but that does not matter. Referring to the Oriya-speaking people, Lord Curzon said:

"If the Oriyas were an agitating people, which they are not, they would soon make their protest heard. As it is, they have been sacrificed without compunction."

Well, Sir, this is the opinion of an ex-Viceroy of India who was a very bold Viceroy. We were sacrificed without compunction not by that Viceroy but by the Governor of Madras who was then acting as Viceroy for six months.

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar (Madras ceded districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): In Madras we had an Oriya Minister.

Mr. B. Das: My friend Mr. Duraiswamy Aiyangar tells me that in Madras they had an Oriya Minister. If he refers to Sir Parashuram Patro, I deny on the floor of this House that he is an Oriya. The deputation that waited on the Home Member at Cuttack took the opportunity to show a photograph to the Honourable the Home Member that Sir Parashuram Patro once used to attend the conference of the Oriya nation. I mean the

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Utkal Union Conference, which is of 23 years standing and which has been all along agitating for the amalgamation of all the Oriya-speaking tracts. But since then Sir Parashuram Patro who speaks two languages, Telugu and Oriya, has become a pucca Telugu and not an Oriya. There may be records, Sir, in the office of the Home Department to show that there is a strong agitation that Sir Parashuram Patro is leading against the amalgamation of the Oriya-speaking tracts of the Madras Presidency with Orissa. I appeal to this House and to the Honourable the Home Member that no consideration should be given to the opinion of an ex-Minister who belongs to a different race and whose self-interest will be affected if those districts are amalgamated with the main body of Orissa. I would therefore again appeal to the Government not to ask the provincial Councils to move or pass further Resolutions on this subject. As far as I have been able to study the Government of India Act,—and I have ascertained the views of popular representatives, as well,—I see all the conditions required by the Act have been fulfilled. At present, it is entirely in the hands of the Government of India to take out portions of particular districts and to amalgamate them with the Orissa Division. That is all, Sir, that I ask Government to do.

Mr. Amar Nath Dutt (Burdwan Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I beg to lend my whole-hearted support to the Resolution that has just been moved by my friend Pandit Nilakantha Das. Sir, I have also read the amendment that has been put forward by my friend Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh. Mr. Das's original Resolution asks only to bring the whole of the Oriya-speaking people under one administration. I do not see why my friend from Bihar should have been so eager as to have an amendment like that. I really do not see why the Biharis should be so eager as to have another province tacked on to them

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: Were not Bengalis eager to have Bihar with them?

Mr. Amar Nath Dutt: It was the British administrator who wanted to tack on Bihar to Bengal, and Bengal never asked for it.

My friends from Bihar want to say that it will be to the advantage of the Oriya-speaking people to be tacked on to Bihar for some time. There is a popular adage in Bengal that "One who loves more than a mother is a witch". Here is a representative from Orissa speaking on behalf of the people of his province while a representative of the province of Bihar wants to have the province of Orissa tacked on to his own province for the benefit of Orissa. Even British administrators did not do away with the name of Orissa, when giving the two provinces

a name. Be that as it may I beg to submit that that question does not arise. I am also sorry, Sir, that an unhappy communal note has been raised here and I will not deal with it, but I may say that none of the Orissa Muhammadans have sent in any representation here or elsewhere to anybody that they should be kept with Bihar. That is my answer to that. Then, Sir, I also know that it is a part of the larger question of redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis, but, Sir, these minor administrative changes can be effected within the present Government of India Act, and I was sorry to learn that the Honourable the Home Member who is not here now

(The Honourable the Home Member rose from a back Bench.)
(Laughter.)

He has changed his place and I did not notice that he had gone into the back Benches. He has said that these Resolutions ought to be moved in the provincial Councils. I may point out at once to him the disadvantages of my Oriya friends in this respect. They are in a minority everywhere, in the Presidency of Madras, in the province of Bihar, in the Central Provinces and also, if the Midnapore district is taken into account, in Bengal. And they being in a minority, as we know that the love of the witch is greater than the love of the mother, our brothers in other provinces will not allow such Resolutions to be passed. I do not know whether the Honourable the Home Member took into account this aspect of the question. My shrewd suspicion is that he probably thought that instead of denying the Oriyas their inherent right to be under a separate administration, which cannot be denied, shelter can be had under the plea that these Resolutions should be moved in provincial Councils in which they would not be carried. Under such circumstances I would request him to consider the opinions of the representatives of the province who are present here to-day and who have voiced the opinion of their own people in no unmistakeable language. Then, Sir, of course certain passages have been quoted about the affinities of the Biharis with the Oriyas. I am not going to deal with all these things. It is for my friend the Mover of the Resolution to refute that if he thinks necessary, but so far as I know the Biharis have no affinity with the Oriyas; rather they have some affinity with the Bengalis though I would not on that account claim to have them with us if they did not like it. With these few words I beg to support the Resolution of my friend Pandit Nilakantha Das.

Pandit Dwarka Prasad Misra (Central Provinces Hindi Divisions: Non-Muhammadian): Sir, I have no mind to prolong the debate but for the speech of my Honourable friend Dr. Moonje here. I am glad that he has supported the Resolution, but, Sir, I want to point out to the Honourable the Home Member that we, the Hindi-speaking people of the Central Provinces, are not as willing to give up the so called territories of the Oriyas as my friend Dr. Moonje is. My Honourable friend Mr. B. Das has just pointed out that Phuljhar and Khariar must be transferred to Orissa. These tracts are, Sir, in my constituency, the Raipur District, and therefore, I take it to be my duty to express the opinion of the people there. We would be very glad if our Oriya friends could be constituted into a separate province. Having ourselves suffered, in the company of our Mahratta friends in the Central Provinces, I can quite realize the feelings of my Oriya brethren in being tagged on to the province of Bihar. But at the same time the just self-interest of my constituents makes me say that I am not willing that Phuljhar and Khariar should be taken away from the Central Provinces. They are claimed by my friends as Oriya-speaking tracts, but I may tell them that there is a sub-dialect called Laria in the Chhattisgarh Division and this Laria is only slightly allied to the Oriya language and is closely related to Hindi. There is a great difference between the two races. The Laria-speaking people come from the same stock as Hindi people of the Central Provinces and have no affinity with the Oriyas. The question whether the people included in these districts are Oriyas or Hindustanis was only recently

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discussed in an article of our weekly paper the *Hitavada* published in Nagpur. Therefore, Sir, though I am here to lend my support to this Resolution, it is a qualified support. It was clear from the Honourable the Home Member's speech that the discussion is not an academic one and that the three Governments of the Central Provinces, Madras, and Bihar and Orissa are now considering the matter, and I hope, Sir, that, when this matter comes up for thorough investigation, this view will be taken into account.

Mr. Varahagiri Venkata Jogiah (Ganjam cum Vizagapatam: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, coming as I do from Ganjam, I thought I should say a word on the subject, as the population of Ganjam has a large proportion of Oriyas. So far as my view is concerned, I support the division of provinces on a linguistic basis; but I must admit that, in this matter, I do not represent the whole of my constituency. There is a large section in Ganjam and a small section in Vizagapatam which strongly opposes the excision of Ganjam or portions of Ganjam and Vizagapatam from the Madras Presidency and their transfer to Orissa. They base their argument, among others, on the fact that Ganjam and Vizagapatam, along with Orissa, formed an integral part of the Northern Circars which had been within the limits of what was called Kalinga Desa for over 3½ centuries and they say that a prescription of 3½ centuries cannot be broken unless a very strong case is made out. The other side, no doubt, says that historical conditions should not be of much value in a case of this nature. Whatever the reasons be, there is no doubt that the question of division of areas on a linguistic basis has been before the public for the last quarter of a century, and in the conferences of the Andhras, Utkals, and Kanarese, it has, over and over again, been resolved that there should be territorial redistribution of provinces on the basis of language. There were no doubt protests from the people in the bi-lingual districts in which the different races intermingled. The Indian National Congress approved of this principle and Resolutions were passed in the Assembly approving of the same. Speaking for myself I was a party to some of these Resolutions. I wrote to the press and I gave a statement before the Phillip-Duff Committee approving of the idea of division on a linguistic basis. So that I am prepared to agree to the Resolution of my Honourable friend Mr. Nilakantha Das that the Oriyas should have a province of their own, but that province I say must include all the Oriya-speaking people and not merely some tracts. I cannot agree to Oriyas being truncated.

As regards the amendment moved by my Honourable friend Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh, I strongly oppose it. In case the Oriyas cannot, for any reason, get a Province for themselves but should be under a major administration as a sub-province or otherwise, then I say it is not Bihar but Madras that has the undoubted right of having it under its administration. It is said that if Orissa is tacked on to Madras, the province will be very large and may become unwieldy. If an Andhra Province is carved out of the Madras Presidency then it would not be as large as the Madras Presidency and the re-addition of the Oriya-speaking tracts thereto will not at all make it large or unwieldy. Orissa once formed an integral part of the Northern Circars, which, as has already been said, formed part of Kalinga Desa which extended from the mouths of the Ganges to the River Kistna, with its capital at Calingapatam in the District of Ganjam.

In pre-historic times, in the days of Hindu sovereignty, under Moslem rule, during the short-lived French supremacy and even under the British rule for sometime Orissa formed part of the Northern Circars of the Madras Presidency. As I said, if a separate and independent province is formed for the Oriyas, it is well and good, and I have no objection; but if it is to be joined on to any province, I say, it must be to Madras and no other province. It has been said that there are already several languages spoken in Madras, and there will be administrative difficulties. The best judges in this matter are the Madras Government. They never complained of the diversity of languages but repeatedly stated that they found no difficulty. On the other hand we find young Civilians coming to our Presidency learning Oriya and other languages and coping successfully the diversity of languages. I therefore support the proposition and oppose the amendment.

Kumar Ganganand Sinha (Bhagapur, Purnea and the Santhal Parganas : Non-Muhammadan): Sir, after hearing the Mover of the Resolution and the Mover of this amendment I fail to see what difference there really is between the original Resolution and the amendment that has been put. Both of these Honourable gentlemen from Muzaffarpur and from Orissa agree that they for the time being do not object to Orissa being joined to Bihar. What would happen in future is a question of time and that has to be settled by time and by circumstances. The Honourable the Home Member has made it quite plain that financially it is not a sound proposition now. We can know by inquiry what will be the fate of Orissa on the amalgamation of the Oriya-speaking tracts. I would only request him to expedite the inquiry and to publish a statement for the information of the public showing the difficulties if any, that stand in the way of such an administration. The jarring note that was sounded in the course of this debate was from an Honourable Member from the United Provinces. I am sorry that there is no Honourable Member from Bihar representing the Muhammadan community here—to-day. I hope, if any of them had been here, he would have stood up and repudiated the statements of Maulvi Muhammad Yakub who tried to throw an apple of discord in the House. I am glad that no Honourable Member here took much notice of it, and I submit, Sir, that it deserves to be ignored. We in Bihar have had many occasions when communal matters have been discussed; even during the last election these matters were settled. And how did we settle them? We settled them by conferences and negotiations, not by promoting differences, and I may only reply to the Honourable Member that the two communities in Bihar know how to accommodate each other, and there is no use spreading the contagion further into that province.

Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qayum (North-West Frontier Province : Nominated Non-Official): What about the election speeches, please, all over the country?

Kumar Ganganand Sinha: The Honourable gentleman, I am sure, had not had to make any speech; he might leave it to the good sense of the Mussalmans of Bihar. Sir, I do not think the discussions in the various Provincial Councils, as suggested by the Honourable the Home Member, will improve the situation to any appreciable extent, although I think that they may prove profitable in certain respects. I think that the original Resolution, as moved by Pandit Nilakantha Das, is wide and elastic enough, and I lend my support to that motion.

Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum: Sir, I am glad that I have at last caught your eye. You have of course to see to the best interests of the debate and allow only those who can speak more intelligently on the subject, but I can assure you, Sir, that I am only a casual speaker and shall always be very brief and will never tax the patience of the House.

The adjustment of the provinces in India, Sir, is a question in which I am a bit interested. It is a very very important question. The efficiency of administration largely depends on the formation of provinces. A good deal of what I thought of submitting to the House has already been said by the speakers who preceded me, and I have not got much to say. A good many reasons have been advanced in support of the formation of Orissa into a separate Province—a new Province, by the readjustment of other Provinces, that is the transfer of divisions from one Province to the other. As far as I could follow the reasons in the debate, I think they were either reasons of races and communities or linguistic reasons, and very little was said about administrative reasons or conveniences though that was also alluded to by one or two of the speakers. Well, Sir, as regards the question of races I fully sympathise with the sentiments of the Mover of the Resolution, but that question is a very complicated one; and, as we all know that the present day India is composed of a vast number of races I do not know where we should be if we were to follow the formation of provinces according to the different races inhabiting the country. (Hear, hear.) That question ought not to come in as the sole reason for the formation of a Province, if we were claiming to be one nation. Sir, however opposed I personally may be to that belief, still we all claim to be one nation,—one nation under the Indian Empire; and if the race question is done away with as the chief reason, we shall have saved a good deal.

As regards the linguistic question, Sir, I do not know how even that can be introduced as a principle for the formation of provinces. The languages of India are also innumerable. There are dialects, there are languages, written and spoken, and to my knowledge we have not yet arrived at a stage when we can say that such and such languages are to be recognised as the languages of the various communities living in this vast Empire. There was some idea of recognising a *lingua franca* for the whole of India, but even there we could not be united. While some were trying to support the old Urdu which took its birth for some similar reasons as are now existing in India, there were others who would like to revive the old Hindu languages and dialects of the country.

Pandit Dwarka Prasad Misra: Is the Honourable Member speaking on the Resolution or opposing the amendment of Mr. Ranga Iyer, which has been disallowed by you, Sir?

Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum: Sir, I expect these interruptions, very often, when I do speak, because a fresher to a debate is likely to be confused by these interruptions. The language basis cannot, I think, be very seriously considered, because the other day I was reading in a paper that a member of the Madras Government could not answer certain interpellations in his own language. I do not know what his language was. (Some Honourable Members: "Question?"). What is that. (Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar: "We are not so badly off.") I may be wrong. I thought the whole country was going in for English, (Honourable Members: "No.") and that English was becoming the medium of debates

(Honourable Members: "No, no; shame.") in all the Provincial Councils and that we are going to see everything through the telescope of English, though I wonder if the whole 83 crores of people in India are going to adopt English as their medium of communication. If that is the idea, as I see all the Members here taking advantage of the study of that language as against those who have not studied it so fully, then it looks as if we are going to give up all other languages except English and that English is going to be the only language of the country. At least it is my personal view. I may not be right but that is what I am thinking of. Sir, if the race and the linguistic basis are not to be considered, then the only other course open is to form these provinces from the point of view of administrative conveniences. If anything in that direction could be suggested by the House, the Government ought to consider it seriously. But I have not heard very many things suggested in that direction. There is of course that impracticable theory of "self-determination" for all, but it is sure to land us in difficulties as it is liable to be claimed by small communities and even individuals.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member is not entitled to open up the bigger question of redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis.

Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum: As I have said in the beginning, Sir, this is a very important and delicate question. I do not believe anything else should be weighed in considering this question, excepting the question of the efficiency of administration, based on administrative conveniences in forming these provinces. With these observations, Sir, I beg to oppose the Resolution.

(Several Honourable Members moved that the question be put.)

Mr. President: The question is that the question be now put. As many as are of that opinion will say "Aye". (Honourable Members: "Aye"). As many as are of the contrary opinion will say "No." (Honourable Members: "No.") I think the "Ayes" have it. (An Honourable Member: "No.") Does the Honourable Member wish for a Division? (After a pause.) The "Ayes" have it.

The motion was adopted.

Pandit Nilakantha Das: Sir, my thanks are first due to the Honourable the Home Member for his appreciation of our desire, qualified though it was in many respects and hedged in by many considerations some of which I consider practically foreign to the question. He says this is a local problem. Yes, local it is. But I maintain it has been made local by the Government themselves. The North-West Frontier question was not a local question, nor was the partition of Bengal. We have been cut to pieces and thrown into different provinces for these 150 years or more and this is distinctly an act of the British Government; and our question when it is pressed in this House is called a local question, so that members may be dissuaded from interest.

I am sorry that though I raised the question of comparison with Assam, my Honourable friend the Home Member did not enlighten me in any way as to whether a real comparison can be made and we can be formed into a province like Assam. He refers us to Local Councils and says that the question should be raised in the Local Councils and it should be first decided there. The opinions of the people may be gauged there in the Local Councils, for the outlying areas are represented there. If that be

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the intention, then it comes to no practical importance. They are in a very small number there. If he refers to the note of the Joint Parliamentary Committee under section 15 of the Government of India Act, then I am sure he will be satisfied that this question was urged in 1921; it was raised in the Bihar Council and received the unanimous support not only of the people representing Oriya tracts by a majority but the unanimous support of the House; and about the same time it was moved in the Madras local Council by Mr. Sashi Bushan Rath; there were only two members representing the Oriya tracts of Ganjam and both of them spoke and supported the Resolution, though it was ultimately withdrawn in view of the fact that Government gave an assurance of making an enquiry and coming to a settlement on the subject. As to other small tracts in the Central Provinces and Midnapore, the question in local Councils means nothing very practical; there may be half or even a smaller portion of a member representing those parts in the Councils.

Then if he is under this technical difficulty I am sure he is satisfied. Local Councils—I mean the people representing the area in the local Councils, have sufficiently expressed themselves in most emphatic terms. He says that because I have said that this step of putting all Oriya-speaking tracts under one administration is a preliminary step towards putting the whole tract under one separate government, the question of Ganjam coming into the present Orissa does not perhaps so prominently arise. We hear something strange. We are suffering under dismemberment, and as I have said before, we have become a dying race. Piece after piece is falling off. We cannot make any common cause to help one another. Our culture, which is based upon the language, that ancient culture is practically falling out of existence, and we want that all our people may be put together so that we shall make a common cause and develop our culture, our land, and help the administration in developing ourselves into a separate province. If that is not done we shall be appealing to this Government for all time to come, i.e., so long as we live, and that perhaps without effect. Fragments in all the provinces without any common voice to make it audible to the Central Government or even to the provincial Governments themselves fall asunder and perhaps lose themselves in the alien environment so difficult in nature for assimilation to a grown up individual with a developed culture.

Then as to the question of a separate province, administrative considerations always weigh more with the Honourable the Home Member, and as to administrative convenience, much has been quoted by Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh and Mr. B. Das. In provinces, in the Madras Presidency especially, it is very difficult to transfer an officer of the Government from Madras to Ganjam

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I think I recognise very fully the administrative inconveniences and expressed sympathy with them. But if the Honourable Member wishes to alienate my sympathies he is going the right way to do it.

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

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

Pandit Nilakantha Das: Sir, I was rather surprised to hear the Honourable the Home Member say that, by criticising the administrative and financial aspects of the question, I had alienated his sympathy. I did not know his sympathy depended on the feeling which one man's criticism might create in him. It should not be so very slippery that it should be alienated so easily and on such flimsy pretexts. This is a problem which perhaps from the administrative point of view he, representing the Government, should view most dispassionately and from a different aspect, and he should look to the good of the people and how much this good is involved in such a momentous problem as the one under discussion. Whether my remarks are palatable to him or not is not what matters in alienating his sympathy from the interests of a whole race of people. To please him, however, I desist from making any more remarks (Hear, hear) on the financial and administrative aspects of the question. But one thing I must say. It pains me as a representative of Orissa to hear very often the remark flung in our face that we are a famine-stricken, flood-stricken and poor people. Yes, a poor people we may be, but I must make this point clear and carry the idea home to my friend the Honourable the Home Member, that all this is to a great extent, although it may not be entirely, due to the administration, to the Government under which we have been living. I do not know why my Honourable friend did not ask the official representative of my province to have his say on the subject. Unlike my Honourable friend, who has seen Orissa, I doubt whether the representative of my Government over there, Mr. Shyam Narayan Singh, has ever been to my place, and if he says anything here, he will say it from papers or some experience of a pilgrimage which he might have made at least once in his life to Puri. If my Honourable friend, Sir Alexander Muddiman, goes to my province and I have the opportunity. . . .

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I had the honour of being in the Honourable Member's province, and the only representative of Orissa who did not come to see me was the Honourable Member.

Pandit Nilakantha Das: I speak of a future visit. I shall be glad to show the Honourable the Home Member if he comes to country villages how the system of irrigation and village planning was made by ancient kings of Orissa and how those canals and embankments built for the purpose of irrigation and development of land have been neglected. Two or three years ago it is a fact that the Bihar Government wanted to make some enquiry, and constituted a Committee for the purpose; and it is a fact, too, that the Committee sat in the Commissioner's bungalow and wrote a report to say that all the embankments should be demolished, though no evidence worth the name was taken and no witnesses were examined; and this is how we are cared for. Honourable Members in the House may know now that the famines and floods are due not to any fault of the people but are to a great extent the fault of the Government and the want of care under which we have been labouring for these 150 years and more. If we go into history we see that famines were practically absent in olden days, and yet they have been so frequent under the present administration. I shall not speak any more; I do not like to alienate my Honourable friend's sympathy (Hear, hear), for a poor and oppressed people as we are, we cannot afford to alienate any man's sympathy in a matter like this, whatever be our political principles; we have no principles in this matter (Laughter). We cannot afford to have any, we are-

[Pandit Nilakantha Das.]

so very neglected, so very lonely, so very outcasted so to say. But I must make it clear that I expected the Honourable Member, after so many years' agitation, to understand our position and give us some sort of assurance in this House that our wrongs are going to be redressed.

Now, the only thing that remains for me is that I must clear the doubts of some of my Honourable friends who have spoken. Let me again make it clear to my friends here that nothing less than a separate province will satisfy us, and I never want to commit myself to the amendment of my friend, Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh. My friend, Maulvi Muhammad Yakub, has also raised a question and said he understands the Bihar Muhammadan friends oppose this proposal, but so far as I know the majority of the opinion among the Bihar Mussalmans is not opposed to it.

Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: So far as I understand they are not opposed to it if you want to form it into a separate province.

Pandit Nilakantha Das: Yes, I want it, and in most clear and emphatic terms I say on the floor of the House to-day that nothing but a separate province will satisfy us. If Government wishes to attach us to any province, our agitation will go on so long as we are unable to determine our own destiny. That is what we want and that is what every individual race should want. As for the language question raised by my friend over there, Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum, that there are many languages in India, he may if he likes attempt to adopt the English language as the common tongue of the nation. But that question does not arise here. I stand here not for a language alone, but for a language linked to a culture. There are languages which are not based on culture. Here there is a language which has been linked for thousands of years to a distinct culture which has something to give to the federal nationality of India, and if that culture, of which the language has been the vehicle, is allowed to die or to go to rack and ruin in disruption and neglect, then I feel and every one else of my friends should feel that a distinct element of Indian nationality will be no more. This is the principle on which the linguistic provinces will be based. There are about 671 languages in India. India cannot be formed into 671 provinces. But language, linked to culture and a common history and tradition, should be recognised; and the principle of forming our provinces in future should be based on this. With these few words I commend my Resolution to the support of the House.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Sir, it is at any rate satisfactory to know that the Mover of the Resolution has made clear to the Mover of the amendment what was apparently not clear to him before, namely, that the Resolution to which I am replying is a proposal that the Oriya-speaking tracts should be constituted a separate administration. The Mover has now made it clear, which he certainly did not do in his first speech, that his real demand is that Orissa should be constituted into a separate administration. That, Sir, is a proposition that obviously would require far greater enquiry and far closer scrutiny than has been so far given to the smaller proposition, which is the only one that has been seriously under consideration—that certain Oriya-speaking tracts in the Ganjam district should be placed under the jurisdiction of some other administration, which administration should also have charge of the existing Orissa districts. In support of his proposition the Honourable Member brought forward in his speech, both this morning and again

this afternoon, very interesting circumstances as to the desire of the Oriya-speaking people to maintain their ancient civilisation. As I said in my first speech, with that portion of his argument I have great sympathy. The Oriyas are, and undoubtedly will remain in spite of administrative divisions, a people with distinct traditions, with distinct language, with distinct script and distinct artistic development. But to ask the Government to accept a Resolution, or even to give great sympathy to a Resolution, which requires us to constitute a new Province is rather a serious matter. It is clear that a decision on a point of that kind would have to be taken after a very full examination of the financial position, and it would probably only be taken as the result of reference to the Statutory Commission.

Pandit Nilakantha Das: May I ask if we cannot take steps towards making a separate Province?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: My Honourable friend seems to me to have made it perfectly clear that he did not want any steps. He wanted the whole thing. Nothing less would satisfy his demand, if I understood him on that point. I am quite prepared to admit—what I have always admitted to be the case—that the reason of this agitation in Orissa is not merely the administrative convenience of transferring a few tracts from the Madras Government to the Government in charge of Orissa, whatever that Government may be. Very different points of view have been put forward but most urge this as a stage to what my Honourable friend seems to want and that is a separate Province. If I am right in thinking that then he does not wish it merely as an administrative change. Mr. B. Das, who has also spoken on this question at some length, made it clear, if I understood him rightly, that he regarded this as a preliminary with the ultimate aim of achieving the main object he had in view. If I am wrong he will correct me; but that I understood was his aim. But he recognised that for a time at least the question of an entirely separate province for Orissa was outside practical politics; and he hoped by moving slowly to get the Oriyas at any rate into one fold and then to cut that fold off from the other folds. Well, Sir, as I pointed out, the transfer of these talukas must necessarily be a matter largely of administrative considerations and financial considerations, and if I pointed out that the local Legislatures ought to be consulted it was not with a view, as my Honourable friend thinks, that they should vote on the question whether it was desirable that the present provincial boundaries should be changed, but that the local Legislative Councils should at any rate have some idea of the financial burdens which would or would not accrue in the event of any changes in territory being made. That seems to me to be an entirely reasonable proposition and that does not necessarily involve a majority vote. It can be considered by the Government with the help of the members who happen to belong to the competing communities. Madras would probably have opposition from the Telegus. My Honourable friend who sits almost opposite me told us he was in favour of a united Orissa but it was to be an Orissa united to Madras. I think perhaps the Madras Legislative Council might like to know what is the effect of that proposal from the financial point of view. I have reason to believe, that the Oriya-speaking tracts are not in favour of that proposition. The rich Telegus who I am told supply the greater part of the income-tax in Ganjam might possibly object to having to support a province which was liable to floods and so forth. On the other hand, my Honourable friend from

[Sir Alexander Muddiman.]

Bihar, who spoke with such security, such certainty, as to the welcome the Oriyas would receive within his fold, is probably also not quite certain what the financial position there might be; and that is a matter which I still submit might well be considered in the Bihar Legislative Council because it has not so far been considered. The figures have not, I think, been laid before that Council. Again the Bihar and Orissa Government very rightly from their point of view are anxious and reasonably anxious to know what position will be created by the transfer. Now, I submit, therefore, that my argument that the Legislative Councils might well be consulted in this matter is a reasonable one. I do not suggest they should be consulted whether these transfers should be made or not. That is a matter for the Government of India, and I can only regret that it has to be discussed in a House which is not largely composed of persons interested in it. That is one of the difficulties of India when you have a subject of this kind brought up in a House of which not more than 10 persons are interested in it or can speak the Oriya language and of which a large number had perhaps never seen an Oriya till they came to this Council.

Pandit Motilal Nehru (Cities of the United Provinces: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Does the Government of India speak Oriya?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Sir, I have forgotten it; I used to speak it a little; but there are Members behind me who speak Oriya well.

Then, Sir, if we turn to the actual words of the Resolution my Honourable friend has made it clear that the one administration he had in view was a local administration of Orissa itself. Other Members have made it quite clear that they would welcome this Resolution if Orissa went to Madras. Others want it to go to Bengal. Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh welcomes the Oriyas into Bihar and Orissa, a welcome which is not accepted by the Honourable the Mover. The only consistent person who desires to have nothing whatever to do with the Oriyas is my Honourable friend from the Central Provinces. Now, Sir, I do not want to make an entirely debating reply. It is very easy to make a debating reply and I suggest that I have made a fairly effective one. But apart from that there is the question—and my Honourable friend has not alienated my sympathies to any serious extent—there is the question, a quite serious question, in regard to Orissa. I feel and have felt that the present arrangement is not altogether satisfactory. It may be that we cannot do everything that has been asked for. It may be that we shall have to meet, largely in the first place by administrative changes, the difficulties that arise, but I do feel that there is much that can be done, that ought to be done, in the interests of the Oriyas. And I go further and say that in my judgment—and here I am speaking not for the Government of India, but for myself—if financial investigation shows that these talukas could conveniently be transferred, I should be in favour of the transfer, personally speaking. But to what Government they should be assigned is a matter that must clearly be determined by administrative reasons. I hope my Honourable friend, having heard that, will gather that I am not alienated from the Orissa cause; I feel, though perhaps not as strongly as he does, that something can be done; but I hope after what I have said he will see fit to withdraw his Resolution.

Mr. B. Das: May I ask the Honourable Member one question? Will he please consider my suggestion to appoint a small Committee, consisting of a member of the Government and some elected representatives, to go into the financial question?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Sir, my Honourable friend invites me to take a step that I very much dislike. When I have replied to a debate I do not think I ought to be cross-examined. As I did not refer to the matter, my Honourable friend might have gathered I was not particularly sympathetic towards his proposal. I think, however, it might be possible for the Local Government to do something of the kind and I am quite prepared to forward them a copy of this debate in order that they might consider this point.

Pandit Nilakantha Das: Sir, in view of the remarks just made by my friend the Home Member, I should like to withdraw, and beg permission of the House to withdraw this Resolution. But I hope at the same time

Mr. President: Order, order. Does the Honourable Member ask permission to withdraw his Resolution? That will be enough for the House.

Pandit Nilakantha Das: Yes, Sir.

Mr. President: Does the Honourable Member (Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh) ask permission to withdraw his amendment?

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: Yes, Sir.

Mr. President: The question is that leave be given to Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh to withdraw his amendment.

The motion was adopted.

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

Mr. President: The question is that leave be given to Pandit Nilakantha Das to withdraw his Resolution.

The motion was adopted.

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

RESOLUTION RE INDIA'S FITNESS FOR SWARAJ.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, the Resolution which stands in my name runs thus:

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to convey to His Majesty's Government the opinion of this Assembly:

(a) that India is fit for complete Swaraj and therefore the Statutory Commission should not be appointed to inquire into the question of further reforms inasmuch as such an inquiry will be a reflection on India's fitness for Swaraj;

(b) that immediate steps be taken to hold a Round Table Conference in London or Delhi of representatives of the Indian people, half of whom should be elected by this Assembly and the other half by the Indian National Congress, to meet the representatives of His Majesty's Government to discuss and settle the question of Swaraj for India."

Sir, I do not move this Resolution at this stage.

Mr. President: It was unnecessary for the Honourable Member to read his Resolution if he did not want to move it.

Sardar Gulab Singh (West Punjab: Sikh): Sir, under the direction of my Party I do not move my Resolution.*

RESOLUTION *RE* TREATMENT OF THE SANTHAL PARGANAS AS A BACKWARD TRACT.

Kumar Ganganand Sinha (Bhagalpur, Purnea and the Santhal Parganas: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I rise to move the Resolution
8 P.M. that stands in my name. It runs as follows:

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he may be pleased to take steps to bring about the withdrawal of the Santhal Parganas District in the Province of Bihar and Orissa from the operation of sections 52A and 71 of the Government of India Act, 1919, and so amend the Scheduled Districts Act, 1874, as to omit from it 'III—The Santhal Parganas' occurring in Part III under the head 'Scheduled Districts, Bengal' of the First Schedule of the Act."

Sir, howsoever clumsy the drafting of the Resolution may appear, the one object which I have in view in moving this Resolution is to recommend to the Governor General in Council that the Santhal Parganas may cease to be recognised as a backward district. I admit, Sir, that ordinarily statistics are very dull things, but sometimes they are very illuminating, and I crave the indulgence of the House to quote some statistics to show in the first instance what it is that we call the Santhal Parganas and how far "backward" it is, and why.

In 1911 the population of the district was 1,882,781; in 1921 it was 1,798,639; so that in one decade there was a decrease of 84,142. This tract is sharply divided into two parts (1) the Damini Koh tract, the population of which in 1921 was 372,687, comprising 80 per cent. of Santhals and 20 per cent. of non-Santhals, and (2) the Dikku tract. Of these latter parts—the non-Santhals are called Dikkus,—population in 1921 was 1,425,000. In the Dikku tracts there are 16½ per cent. of Santhals in the Deoghar sub-division; nearly 41 per cent. in the Jamtara sub-division; 52 per cent. in Dumka; 10 per cent. in Rajmahal; 22½ per cent. in Godda; and 53 per cent. in Pakour. These statistics I am quoting approximately. I cannot be very precise. The Santhal percentage in the whole district is only 48½ per cent. of the population of the whole district; and in the non-Damini Koh districts it is only 34 per cent. So the House will at once see by these statistics that the non-Santhals in the Santhal districts are more numerous than the Santhals themselves. Now, Sir, I could have understood the justification of the laws if they could be applied only to the Damini Koh region as at present constituted. When I look at the laws, I should say arbitrary laws, I fail to understand how and in what sense of fairness they could be applied to the Dikkus including them among backward classes. Three per cent. of them are educated; but there are other districts in Bihar that enjoy all the privileges of the existing laws, where the percentage of education is not greater. In Purnea district it is approximately 3 per cent., in the Ranchi district,

*"This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that India be accorded Dominion status at an early date."

the summer capital of the Bihar Government, it is $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; in Palamou it is nearly 8 per cent; in Hazaribagh it is nearly 8 per cent. and in Singhbhum it is 4 per cent. But these districts have got their District Boards. Except a few Municipalities, the Santhal Parganas cannot claim to have any District Board or other local bodies. I think I owe it to the House to describe the present state of administration in order to show how these people are governed at present. The executive and judicial functions are vested in a single person. The Deputy Commissioner is the guardian of 17 lakhs of people there. He has got his underlings in the Sub-Deputy, Deputy Collector, the Sub-divisional Officer and others. They try criminal cases and in most of them they are the final arbiters and can inflict as hard punishments as they like. In ordinary cases the Divisional Commissioner, who has got the power of the highest Appellate Court, is the highest authority, and in certain Sessions cases or in the case of Europeans appeals can lie to the High Court of Judicature at Patna.

With regard to civil suits again, no suit valued under a thousand rupees can be tried by the procedure laid down in the Civil Procedure Code, and in cases which are not tried according to the procedure laid down in the Civil Procedure Code, the Sub-Deputy can try cases up to Rs. 200, the Deputy Collector can try cases up to Rs. 500 and the Sub-divisional Officer up to Rs. 1,000 and so on. Sir, if you consider the economic condition of the district, you will see how many cases which could ordinarily be tried in other parts of the country under the procedure laid down in the Civil Procedure Code could be tried by that procedure in the district.

The average land in the district is nearly 15 cottas per head, and the average paddy which can grow under the existing circumstances is not more than 7 or 8 maunds a year. What wonder is there in such circumstances that 84,000 coolies have had to leave their homes and their children and go and serve in coal-fields or in tea gardens. Sir, the general discouragement which handspinning and weaving receives from officials has tended much to throw out of employment the weavers who used to live mostly on weaving and the decline in the price of lac and the general depression in the lac industry have aggravated the difficulty of unemployment. So, practically they have no option but to go and earn their livelihood elsewhere, because their own lands have been rendered unproductive by the existing laws and regulations. They are not allowed to engage pleaders. Everything depends on the officer trying the case, and if he likes they are allowed to engage pleaders, otherwise not, and these poor people with very little education find it very hard to get justice or to satisfy themselves that they are getting justice from the court.

Now, Sir, the other difficulty under which they labour is that they are not allowed to transfer their lands. There is a village community dominated by Pradhans, and they in turn by the Sub-divisional Officer and the immediate officers-in-charge, which has the management of lands in a village in hand and irrespective of the fact whether the cultivators are Hindus, Muhammadans or Christians, the succession is governed by the decrees of the village communities headed by the Pradhans. It might be argued that the Pradhan is a relic of the old Santhal institution, but in fact the Santhal institution was more or less representative in character, whereas we find the present Sardars to be mere agents of the executive officers. There is no power attached to them like the *Moschor* or *Panch*.

[Kumar Ganganand Sinha.]

of the Santhal institution. I fail to see, Sir, what good the Santhals derive by such an institution. In the Damini Koh area the police duties are entrusted to the villagers. I may say that the villagers are supposed to be the custodians of law and order. Of course, in theory it is a good thing, no doubt, but what is the actual state of things? Ignorant people who have not the capacity of preserving their own lands are entrusted with the duty of preserving law and order, and the House can well see what idea such people will have about law and order. The Parganayats of the Sardar of the police force takes an oath of office before being appointed, and the first duty of his is to prevent the use of intoxicating drugs which is honoured more in its breach than otherwise. We have had this institution of taking oaths to prevent the use of intoxicating drugs in the villages without any effect whatsoever. Their work, as is generally seen, is to go to their officers with their men called Chakladars and dance attendance on them and do their biddings. Every villager has to pay for the police force at the rate of Rs. 1-10-0 per year.

So it comes to this, that the Deputy Commissioner, with his subordinate officers, Pradhans and Damini Koh area Parganayats, is the final arbiter of the destinies of 13 lakhs of people, inarticulate, helpless and groaning under the administration of bad laws. The history of non-transferability of land is assuming a very vicious shape of late. We know that from 1863 to 1871 transfers were freely made. In 1872 some restriction was put on the transferability of land, but after the Wood settlement no restriction was observed. In 1886 circular letter No. 83 was issued, and by that letter gift, mortgage and sale of lands were stopped. The object of that enactment, as was declared then, was to protect the Santhals against money-lenders. Now, Sir, it is to be seen how far such measures are effective in protecting the Santhals from money-lenders. We have only about 1,115 people who are money-lenders in the district, and if you work out the proportion it comes to this, namely, there is one money-lender for every 1,610 people in that district. Such being the case, and when we see that the population has decreased by 84,000 in the past 10 years under the present administrative system, I venture to think it is not the money-lenders but the existing system of administration which is accountable for the gradual extinction of the Santhal population in the district. Formerly, *bhowali*, (that is a form of the division of the produce between the agricultural labour and the landowner), *kut* and *krishani*, all different forms of grain contracts, were not recognized as transfers; they were mere contracts. But in 1908 attempts were made to characterise them as illegal transfers by amending section 27 of Regulation III. The law was further restricted in the year 1923. In that year settlement rules were made by which *raiya*s were liable to be ejected even if they gave *bhowali* of the land for a year. Suppose I entered into a contract on my land with another cultivator so that he may cultivate it and share the produce with me, the next year under the settlement rule I could be deprived of my land because somebody else had cultivated it. Agitation, as was quite inevitable, was carried on against it and the period of incurring liability for ejection has now been fixed at 12 years. But *krishani* continues to be an illegal transfer and in Taluka Hundwa in the Santhal Parganas District 7 or 8 *Krishani* ejections have occurred. If *Krishani*, which the Government characterise as slavery, were to be abolished the improvement of cultivation would become practically impossible. If the Government really wanted to protect the Santhals, they ought to have given them loans or advances to improve

their land or to have supplied materials by which the productivity of the soil could have been improved, instead of making these laws and making agriculture day by day a growingly difficult problem. They are shutting up capital because of non-transferability, and they are not doing anything themselves to mitigate the sufferings of the people. The Government of India Act, 1919, gave the Santhals representation in the provincial Council and also in the Assembly. But what can the representatives do? The Governor of Bihar and Orissa in Council and His Excellency the Governor General in Council confer with each other, make laws and thrust them upon the population of the Santhal Parganas District, without giving the Members representing the district any chance of expressing their grievances or remedying them. Had it been a case of the ordinary laws of the land they could have brought them forward in the form of a Bill which could have been discussed on the floor of the House and amendments could have been moved if necessary; but in regard to these rules the Legislatures are powerless and they can do nothing but agitate in other ways. Therefore, so far as the Santhal Parganas are concerned, the representation given by the Government of India Act is no representation at all. So I think, Sir, I have made four points clear, namely, that the land remains uncultivated for want of capital and no provision is made nor any advances are given for the improvement of agriculture; the employment of labour is restricted and indigenous enterprise checkmated; the procedure of administration of justice is defective; and fourthly, the representation given by the Government of India Act, 1919, amounts to no representation at all. If the district were administered by the ordinary laws of the land and not by special Regulations, it would, I venture to submit, have a far more beneficial effect on the Santhal population as a whole than the present Regulations. It would improve the administration of justice, remove economic disabilities and improve agriculture and industries. Sir, with these words, I move my Resolution.

Mr. Ram Narayan Singh (Chota Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadian): Sir, there is an amendment on the paper standing in my name, and my amendment runs thus:

"That for the original Resolution the following be substituted:

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he may be pleased to take immediate steps to bring about the withdrawal of the Chota Nagpur Division, the district of Sambalpur and the Santhal Parganas District in the Province of Bihar and Orissa from the operation of sections 52A and 71 of the Government of India Act, 1919, and so to amend the Scheduled Districts Act, 1874, as to exclude from its operations the said tracts."

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman (Home Member): Sir, on a point of order. I suggest that this amendment enlarges the scope of the original Resolution and is out of order.

Mr. President: Has the Honourable Member anything to say on the point of order? The Honourable the Home Member contends that the Honourable Member's amendment extends the scope of the original Resolution and is therefore out of order.

Mr. Ram Narayan Singh: Sir, so far as I think, an amendment is certainly either an extension or limitation of the scope of the original Resolution. The subject is the same and refers to the same Acts. So I suggest that the objection raised by the Honourable the Home Member should either be withdrawn by him or over-ruled by you.

Mr. President: I rule that the amendment is in order.

Mr. Ram Narayan Singh: Sir, I move the amendment which I read out a little while ago. In doing so, I want to say something in support of it. Sir, when I consider the race, the physical features, the character, the customs, the manners, the caste, the creed and the religion and also the general progress in education and other matters of advancement of the people of the Chota Nagpur Division and the Sambalpur District and compare them with those of my countrymen living in other parts of Bihar and the country, I find no tangible difference at all. By this I do not mean any absolute similarity which is impossible even between two individuals. Considering all sides of the question together, no just man in the world will differ from me when I say that the people of the said two areas are not in any way inferior to those living anywhere else in this country. But when we are told that we belong to a "Backward Tract", we are at a loss to imagine where has the difference come from. Taking for granted that there is some sort of difference, I assert with all the emphasis at my command that this so-called difference must be due not to anything in the people themselves but to the defects in the administration there. It is no good arguing that only a few of the Acts and only a few of the sections of some other Acts are not applicable there and that therefore there ought to be no trouble. Sir, much depends on the character and the nature of the administration. Sir, the laws are there, the statutes are there, but they are all in books only. In dealing with the people, they are not to be used by the administrators there. For this area practically there are no written laws. Orders and even the words of District Magistrates of every district defined and damned as a "Backward Tract" are laws. Mr. E. Lister, the late Deputy Commissioner of Hazaribagh, once said so. In short in these areas there is no loud-trumpeted British rule there, not even the shadow of it. Sometimes there is Mr. Murphy's rule, sometimes Mr. Hammond's rule and sometimes Mr. Toplis's rule, and so on. Only rarely there is a little better rule, but after all it is one man's autocratic rule on all occasions. It is not only a piece of injustice, Sir, but a terrible act of tyranny to place the life, the honour, the property and the future prospects of several lakhs of people in the hands of one single alien ruler who, having absolutely no sympathy for the people nor any interest in their welfare, is to govern them as an independent king. I shall later on illustrate my statements with facts. Sir, the Governor General personally knows nothing of a district. The Governor even labours under the same disadvantage. A District Magistrate, the man on the spot, forwards a report to the Governor. The Governor forwards it with his recommendation to His Excellency the Viceroy. And what does he do? He considers it only in the light of the recommendations submitted and, in exercise of the powers given to him under section 52-A of the Government of India Act, 1919, declares a certain area to be a "backward tract". Similarly on the report of a District Magistrate, the Governor prepares a draft of a certain Regulation and submits it to the Governor General in Council for approval. The Viceroy having assented to this, the Regulation gets the force of law under section 71 of the said Act. Thus, the District Magistrate takes the initiative in every case, and in fact he is the all-powerful man. In 1925 the Local Self-Government Act for Bihar and Orissa was passed and thereby local bodies were given much power over certain local affairs. This certainly curtailed the powers of all District Magistrates to a very large extent. Sir, human nature being what it is, Mr. Murphy, the then Deputy

Commissioner of Hazaribagh and now the Collector of Bhagalpore, did not like it. He submitted a report stating that nobody in the district was fit to be the Chairman of the District Board. In collusion with him the other Deputy Commissioners of other districts in the Chota Nagpur Division submitted similar reports. The result was that the Governor at once issued a notification that in these districts there should be official Chairmen. Thus laws are or are not to be applicable in these areas according to the will of the District Magistrates. Hence it can very well be said that in these districts there is one man's rule.

In the same connection it will not be out of place to say a few words about the method of administration in these districts. As the matter stands, the District Magistrates are, for all practical purposes, the Badshahs and the Sub-divisional Officers are semi-independent Nawabs. In many places the same Sub-divisional Officer decides all kinds of cases, criminal, civil and rent. In courts like that at Semdya in the Ranchi district even legal practitioners are not allowed to appear. When a similar case was stated by Kumar Ganganand Sinha, my friend over there clapped. At the same time, when the percentage of education was stated, my friend on the official side clapped. I think you should be ashamed of this. If there is no education there, it is you and you alone who are responsible for it and not the people. If any mukhtear or pleader dares to go there, the place is made too hot for him. Even in some other places where lawyers are allowed, they have to remain and work there at the sweet will of these Nawabs. Once they have in any way incurred the displeasure of these Nawabs, they are nowhere. They have to leave the place bag and baggage. These Nawabs can treat the people in any manner they like. They can with impunity abuse, beat and assault people of all ranks. Once about 3 years or so ago I represented such a case about Mr. C. S. J. Home, the Sub-divisional Officer of Chatra, to His Excellency the present Governor of Bihar but most likely to no purpose. Not only this, no sufferer should ever report the fact to anybody else. Once Babu Sarwari-Kant Gupta, a Deputy Magistrate of Hazaribagh, assaulted Ramdhani Ram, a chaukidar of the District Board bungalow at Peterbar. I heard of it and brought it to the notice of Mr. Murphy, the Deputy Commissioner of Hazaribagh. The Deputy Commissioner, the judge, fined the chaukidar for this. Cultivation is generally utterly destroyed by wild animals. People are not allowed to keep guns to protect their property. Tigers also are in abundance. Several human lives are destroyed almost every year, but sometimes verbal orders are passed that this or that tiger should not be killed even by one who has been favoured with a license for a gun, save and except by the sahibs. Forests, especially in the Hazaribagh district, are reserved without any regard to the raiyats' rights therein and people even with stock of foodstuffs with them have been known to be starving for want of fuel. In short, the misery of the people knows no bounds. I hope this House will leave nothing undone to save these unfortunate people. In the affairs of the District Board, primary education, medical relief and other works of public good, though transferred to the local bodies, are not only neglected but greatly hampered by unsympathetic and mischievous official Chairmen like Mr. Murphy and Mr. Toplis. A confidential report of an honest man about the affairs of the district board of Purulia and Hazaribagh will convince the Government about the truth of these statements.

Sir, the connection of these areas with the British Government dates from 1765. Before this they were governed by their own chiefs, that is, in a way they were capable of governing themselves. Nominally by the year 1772 and actually by the year 1834, these districts came into British possession and Sambalpur came only in the year 1849. Since then they were governed exactly in the same way as other districts of Bihar till 1854 when they began to be treated as backward tracts. After a century of British administration, it is a pity that the people of the Chota Nagpur Division and the Sambalpur district could not again be what they themselves were before the year 1854 or what the people of Gaya and other districts of Bihar were in 1765. It is a great pity.

Mr. President: Will the Honourable Member oblige the Chair by bringing his remarks to a close?

Mr. Ram Narayan Singh: The House and the whole country will feel greatly obliged if the Honourable the Home Member will let us know the various tests and standards prescribed either by themselves or the British Parliament by which, and the method according to which, they distinguished in the past and still distinguish to-day the people of Chota Nagpur and Sambalpur district from those of other parts of Bihar and other parts of other provinces. It ought to be made clear as to how many stages these people have to pass through to qualify themselves for being ruled by laws. Sir, the truth is

Mr. President: Order, order. Perhaps the Honourable Member has not understood the Chair. The Honourable Member's time is up.

Mr. Ram Narayan Singh: One minute more, Sir. With these words, I commend this amendment to the House and I hope this will be unanimously carried, and I hope His Excellency the Viceroy also, in order to prove his sincerity for the good of the people, will see that immediate steps are taken to remove all the grievances of the people of the Chota Nagpur Division and the other districts, whose miseries are a blot on the character of British rule in this country.

Mr. President: Before we proceed further, I should like to make one observation, and it is this. The Chair expects Honourable Members who wish to raise any point of order on any Resolution or amendment on the paper to give timely intimation of it if possible. This observation applies with greater force to Members of Government, because they are in possession of Resolutions and amendments long before non-official Members get them.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I should like, with your permission, Sir, to be quite clear about this point. Is it your desire that we should give notice in writing?

Mr. President: Not at all. The Honourable Member knows that the President is always accessible, should any Honourable Member desire to consult him in any matter regarding the business of the Assembly.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I shall have very great pleasure in adopting that course. I thank you for the invitation. I have not previously gone to you, because I understood that you wished the points should be raised in the House.

(Mr. President on calling on Mr. B. Das to move his amendment.)

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Sir, I was not aware of your request before, but if Mr. Das is going to move his amendment, I desire to object on the same grounds as I did on the last occasion.

Mr. B. Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I move my amendment on the same grounds as my predecessor.

I beg to move:

“That for the original Resolution the following be substituted:

‘This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he may be pleased to take immediate steps to bring about the withdrawal of the Chota Nagpur Division, the districts of Angul, Sambalpur and the Santhal Parganas in the Province of Bihar and Orissa from the operation of section 52A, sub-section (2) of the Government of India Act, 1919, and to amend the Schedules of the Act accordingly.’”

My friends, Kumar Ganganand Sinha and Mr. Ram Narayan Singh have already dealt with the Santhal Parganas District and the Chota Nagpur Division. I will confine my remarks to the districts of Angul and Sambalpur in Orissa. I confess I have no knowledge of the form of administration of either the Chota Nagpur Division or that of the Santhal Parganas district. With regard to the district of Sambalpur I would say that it enjoys all the benefits and all the advantages that a British district in Orissa enjoys. The people of Sambalpur have similar rights and all the electoral rights; I think that Sambalpur being classed as a backward district is a technical mistake. It has been so placed because in the old days Sambalpur was taken out from the political areas. Except in one or two matters; as regards appeal of the people of Sambalpur to the Commissioner of the Orissa Division, the Sambalpur people enjoy equal benefits with the people in the Orissa district. So that I think it is a simple matter of correction and that district may be now declared a full-fledged British district.

As regards the district of Angul, the district of Angul is a pure Oriya-speaking tract, and when it was annexed by the British it was made a non-regulated district. Angul has also a sub-division, Khondmal, which is inhabited by Khonds, a primitive people. I do not mind that sub-division being regarded as a backward tract, but to place 1½ lakhs of Oriya people under the brand of a backward district is to deprive them of the privilege of education, to deprive them of the rights of franchise—municipal or councils—to deprive them of local self-government, and to place them entirely under the administration of a Deputy Commissioner, who at times is not a Civilian but belongs to the Provincial Civil Service. The people of Angul district are of similar social status and similar stock to the Oriyas of the main districts, though they are at present backward in education. Education and civic rights are denied to those people and I appeal to the Government to allow Angul to be declared a regulated district and to give the people there equal rights with the people of Orissa.

My amendment differs from that of Mr. Ram Narayan Singh. I have taken out section 71 of the Government of India Act, because section 71 gives the Governor General or Governor of a Province extraordinary powers to make Regulations and Ordinances. My purpose will be served if these districts are withdrawn from the operation of section 52-A, sub-section (2) of the Government of India Act, 1919, and with these remarks I move my amendment.

Pandit Nilakantha Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I am simply surprised at my own ignorance. So long I was under the impression after reading the Schedule—and it was a mistake perhaps, which I now realise—that no discussion could be raised about Angul, it being practically a British Native State.

(*An Honourable Member*: "What is a British Native State"?).

There are some small Native States in Orissa, not like Hyderabad, where people may demand the right of representation in Council. They are small States practically under a double Government of the British Raj. The British Government rule the Rajas, feudatory chiefs, in the dark through a Political Agent, and the Rajas rule the people at their rapacious will and vicious pleasure.

Angul was—not recently, as my Honourable friend said, but about a hundred years ago—annexed, perhaps during Dalhousie's reign, if I remember aright. It has remained a dark Garjat State under a Deputy Commissioner. No man can enter there, no question can be raised about it, no budget can be discussed, and even during budget time, questions about Angul cannot be raised. It is practically administered according to the will of the Deputy Commissioner there. He is the Chief Officer, executive and judicial. He will take all criminal, civil cases, rent suits, and he is all in all.

(*An Honourable Member*: He is a small Czar?).

Yes, he is. The real Czar has succumbed to the spirit of democracy, but the Deputy Commissioner is there to represent him. So I think that these disabilities should be removed in Angul. There is a high school in the district and there are about a dozen graduates, some of whom are Deputy Collectors. They ought to have the right of representation. As to Sambalpur it is simply a formal change and it should be made as the people of Sambalpur have no title or claim to be called backward. The change should affect only our Bills and Acts, where the clause, 'it should be extended to Sambalpur by notification in the Gazette' will no longer appear.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh (Muzaffarpur cum Champaran: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I do not want to take up the time of the House at the fag-end of the day, because I find there is something very important coming on at 4 o'clock. I had intended to speak at some length on this subject, but will now content myself merely by saying that I lend my whole-hearted support to the amendment.

Mr. Siddheswar Sinha (Gaya cum Monghyr: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I rise to give my whole-hearted support to the amendment moved by my Honourable friend from Chota Nagpur. It is said that the people of Chota Nagpur and the Santhal Parganas are backward. It is also said that the aim of the British Government in India is to make the people fit for governing themselves. But what have they done in Chota Nagpur? They themselves say that for about a hundred years in that province they have been practically able to do nothing in matters of education. Up till 1766 those tracts were independent and managed their own affairs. After that they gradually came under British rule. It was only in 1854 that those tracts were declared to be backward. Any one who had the privilege of living even for a short period in close touch with the people of Chota Nagpur cannot but declare that the people of that area are as

forward in their sincerity, honesty of purpose and in their devotion to their duty as any man in any other part of India. They are as rational, as discriminating and as advanced in education as many other districts of Bihar and yet a different treatment is meted out to them under the provisions of certain blessed sections of the Government of India Act. In theory it is all very well to say that they are governed by the same laws as other Biharis; the little differences that are introduced are to suit the special circumstances and that too very rarely; but in fact the wishes of the Deputy Commissioners are accepted in all cases. No recommendation as far as we know of any Deputy Commissioner has failed to be made into a Regulation. I shall be obliged if the Honourable the Home Member can give any instance in which the recommendations of a Deputy Commissioner have not been given the force of a Regulation and law. Sir, if there is any deficiency it is due to this—one man's autocratic rule in the form of Regulations. And what are these Regulations? Let us examine the one instance cited by the mover of the amendment. The Local Self-Government Act came into force in 1924. According to the provisions of that Act non-official members have the power to elect non-official Chairmen of District Boards. But the Deputy Commissioners of Chota Nagpur did not want to give the slightest power to non-official members and hence their recommendations that the non-officials of those districts were unfit to manage the affairs of the District Boards. It is astonishing that when these very men happen to possess only a few acres of land in other adjoining districts they become fit to discharge the duties of Chairmen efficiently. Such instances are not wanting when a man has been recorded as a voter in two districts. Other Regulations will be found to be as unreasonable as this if scrutinised. Sir, these districts have long been kept as backward under vain excuses. Now the Government should be more impartial and they should at once extend the same privileges to the people of these tracts as are enjoyed by their neighbours in other districts of Bihar.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I move that the question be now put.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

POSTPONEMENT OF THE CONSIDERATION OF THE INDIAN CURRENCY BILL.

Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar (Madras City: Non-Muhammadan Urban):

Sir, I rise to move the adjournment of the House in order to discuss the serious situation created by the decision of the Government in putting off the discussion of the Indian Currency Bill till after the disposal of the Railway Budget and till after the presentation of the General Budget.

Sir, the question relating to the Currency Bill has been before the country since the dissolution of the last Assembly and there is no excuse whatever for the Government not proceeding in a normal way with the Bill, as I understand they promised to do at the instance of the last Assembly, of which I had not the doubtful fortune to be a Member. The Finance Member, I understand, promised to bring up this Currency Bill this Session, and when once the Bill was brought up nothing was done to it, it was left severely alone. I suggest the Government's policy as regards this Bill has suddenly changed. They wanted to surprise the

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country on the last occasion, to rush the Bill through on an unprepared country, to force the representatives of the people to accept the ratio they suggested or the policy that they supported. I do not wish to discuss the merits of the question, and I do not express any opinion one way or another as to what the ratio should be or what the currency policy should be on the present occasion, but it is quite clear that they wanted to take the country by surprise, but when the Assembly naturally wanted time, time was given and it was agreed that it should be brought up now. Now having raised the country, perhaps not in the way that was desired by the Finance Member, and after having made far more numerous currency experts than he perhaps imagined would spring up in answer to his demand, he naturally feels afraid to face the storm and this Bill is dropped like a hot thing and he will not proceed with it. He simply introduces it and drops it, and we were told yesterday by the Honourable the Home Member that it is a matter of very trivial moment, that it will not matter one way or the other: that things could be rectified after the budget discussion,—and the Bill could be taken up at any time. What, then was the hurry of bringing this forward on the last occasion? What was the hurry for this financial liberalism and other things which the Currency Bill promised, and why all this fervour for it? Why should there have been after this fever this astonishing convalescence and sudden cooling down? I suggest it was because they found throughout the country, there had been a practically unanimous opinion as to the great importance of this measure. The issues it raises are of vast importance to the people. Many many interests are affected and every moment's delay in this must mean one way or the other the loss of so many lakhs of rupees to one set of interests and a gain of so many lakhs of rupees to another set of interests, and it is idle, therefore, to justify delay in a measure which must naturally affect the money market and which must enable speculators to indulge in various transactions and which also unsettles the financial and economic conditions in the country. Now I would suggest that rule 50 of the Legislative Rules is clear enough and it states that supplementary or additional grants should be asked for only when the amount voted in the Budget is found to be insufficient for the current year or if a need arises for expenditure for which the vote of the Assembly was necessary upon some new service not originally contemplated. Therefore, it only allows supplementary budgets and additional grants in the case of unforeseen contingencies or in the case of the amount not being found sufficient by an accident, by an oversight, and, not to a case like this where the Government must know that if it is 1s. 4d. it must be so much more expenditure they will have to meet, or if it is 1s. 6d. so much less. Therefore, it is quite clear they know that in this case no supplementary budget which would be within the meaning of the rules could be brought forward, and the proper time to discuss this question is before the Budget, because it is admitted on both sides of the House that the Currency Bill and the ratio go to the very root of the Budget. It affects almost every head of the Budget, and, therefore, it was necessary for them to bring up this matter as early as they possibly could. Then again we were told that it was really not necessary to do this because Members of the House would be unaware of their duties to the country or to the Government, whatever that may be, until they were in posses-

sion of the figures which were to be found in the Budget. But this question of the ratio, the question of the Currency Bill is not a matter which has to be discussed in connection with the Budget at all; the Budget has to be framed in connection with the currency policy of the country undoubtedly and in connection with the fixing of the ratio; but you have not to discuss the ratio or the currency policy in connection with the Budget, because the currency policy of the Government, the stability of exchange or the ratio that may be fixed at which you are to stabilise the rupee—those are things which affect the permanent interests of the country independently of any budgetary considerations for this year or that year or so much revenue under this head or so much expenditure under that head. Therefore, it is obvious the excuse which was given is not any reasonable or acceptable excuse to anyone who bestows a moment's reflection upon this question. I consider that in addition to these arguments there is this fact that the main reason, the main purpose of this delay is undoubtedly to force this House, to persuade the Assembly to accept the ratio which is proposed by the Honourable the Finance Member. That is the reason, I submit, for the delay in bringing it up, the purpose of putting it off. If you do not agree to this ratio, you will have to agree to so much taxation or you will not have these Provincial Contributions or you will not be able to get this or that. The Members of the Assembly are sought to be placed on the horns of an imaginary dilemma—that is the object of this procedure.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett (Finance Member): Imaginary?

Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar: Of course so far as I am concerned. The persuasive powers of the Finance Member may enable him to get votes and that is the reason for the delay. It is imaginary so far as I am concerned. I dare say he will be able to capture votes by this kind of contrivance, which I submit is wholly unjustifiable and should not be allowed in this House. Supposing again, it happens contrary to the opinion of the Government that the 16 pence ratio is accepted by this House, then it is perfectly obvious that various items of expenditure would have to be considered very carefully by the House. Retrenchment will have to take place or alternative schemes of expenditure may have to be proposed. That will raise very serious considerations and it will not be possible within the limited time at the disposal of this House to deal with the two complicated questions—(i) the general question of currency policy and (ii) the budget figures for a particular year. The two things ought to be separated. If the Government profess to do it in a scientific way for stabilising exchange, they ought not to complicate it with the temporary transactions of a particular financial year but should disentangle it from those momentary things and put it on a permanent healthy and wholesome plane. It is quite obvious that the procedure adopted is open to the severest possible condemnation both in the interests of the country and I submit also by the voices of the Members of this House. I submit, Sir, this is really trifling with the rights of this House when it has possession of a Bill of first-class importance not to have it deliberated upon, not to have it voted upon, by the Members of the Assembly in a detached fashion. In order that we may come to a conclusion one way or the other with due regard to the totality of India's interests, we should have an unprejudiced vote. That will be possible only if it is taken at this stage and red herrings are not drawn or complications introduced in various

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ways. "You want this for your province? You want that for your department? Well, you will not get it unless you agree to this". That is the kind of thing that will go on both in the House and in the lobbies and we do not want that kind of advantage to be taken. We want a perfectly straight vote upon this question and upon its merits long before the Budget is taken. And the Railway Budget comes on almost immediately. It is not simply the consideration of the Budget or the presentation of the Budget. The Budget has to be voted upon and it has to be disposed of. Therefore I submit, Sir, that the reason why this House should express its opinion on the conduct of the Government by adopting this motion is too cogent and obvious to need any further elaboration.

Mr. President: What is the motion?

Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar: The motion is to adjourn the business of this House for the purpose of discussing the serious situation created by the Government in putting off the consideration of the Indian Currency Bill till after the disposal of the Railway Budget and till after the presentation of the ordinary Budget.

Mr. President: Order, order. That is not the motion. The only motion is "that this House do now adjourn."

Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar: Yes. That is for the Chair to put the question. So far as I am concerned, it is a discussion of this question, and therefore I submit that the House should adjourn for this purpose by way of expressing its opinion upon the conduct of the Government. I have nothing more to add.

***Mr. M. B. Jayakar** (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadian Urban): Sir, I rise to support this motion that the House do adjourn; and the grounds on which I support it are these, that in keeping back the Currency Bill to such a late date the Government are practically going back upon the promises which they made in the course of the debate which took place in the month of August last. I had not the fortune to be in this House then, but I remember following the debate very carefully and I hold in my hand an authenticated copy of the proceedings as they were reported from time to time. If I may recall to the mind of the Honourable the Finance Member the promises which he made in the course of the speech which was made by him on the introduction of the Bill and also in the course of the debate which took place on the motion of Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar that the Bill should be circulated to elicit opinion, three distinct statements were made by way of promises to the House. The first was and I shall quote the very words of the Honourable the Finance Member which he used at that time—that this House would have the chance of discussing this Bill in an atmosphere of cool detachment without bringing into the question any other side issues, that they would have the chance of discussing this Bill entirely on its merits.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I would like to know which is the quotation.

Mr. M. B. Jayakar: I will give it very shortly. And in the course of the debate it was further stated in reply to Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar who urged that the Bill had been presented with precipitancy, that it would be presented in an atmosphere where there was not the slightest hint of a *fait accompli*. The third statement made in the course of that

*Speech not corrected by the Honourable Member.

debate was that Members would have ample opportunity of stating their views upon this Bill so that Government would have ample time to adjust the difficulties which might arise.

Now, Sir, as regards the first I would just ask the attention of the House to the statement made in the course of the debate by Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar, which statement was practically accepted by the Government. I refer to the speech of Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar at page 216 where he stated the needs of this House, which on this occasion were practically conceded by the Government Benches. What the Diwan Bahadur stated was:

"The very reason why I have come forward with this proposal is that the subject should be considered in an atmosphere free from the heat of the moment and in a calm and cool one."

That was one of the grievances of the House at that time and that grievance was conceded by the Government Benches who had the grace on that occasion to accept the amendment proposed by the learned Diwan Bahadur. Then in the course of his speech, Sir, this is what the Honourable the Finance Member stated, and if I may take the liberty of calling his attention to that statement I shall do so:

"The Government have been accused of precipitancy in bringing this Bill before the Legislature this Session so soon after the issue of the Report. As against this I am glad to be able to record that it has been recognised in quarters which are not usually on the side of Government, that the Government are to be congratulated on giving the Assembly the earliest possible opportunity of considering this question. It is I think a sufficient answer to those who accuse us of precipitancy to ask them what they would have said to us if we had refrained from bringing this Bill forward now and had waited till the next Delhi Session. We have been unjustly accused in the Minute of Dissent of deliberately presenting the Commission and India with a *fait accompli*."

These are the three quotations which make out the point.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: What point?

Mr. M. R. Jayakar: Now, Sir, may I ask the Government Benches what is the idea in keeping back this Bill in a most unnatural way? I should have thought that a more natural process would be to get a decision from this House upon really the calculation of our unit of value, if I may say so. As such this Bill ought to be considered by this House before the Budget is considered, because it is inextricably mixed up with the Budget. Is it the intention of Government that this delay should have this disadvantage, that it should become favourable in the sense of showing greater price adjustment for the *de facto* ratio? I live in a room where little birds come every morning, and a little bird came and told me two days ago—I hope it was not making a true prophecy—that the idea of keeping back this Bill is to set one province against another, and that the Government propose to do in the following manner. If I am wrong I beg to be forgiven. But is it the intention of Government to present the Bill in a manner which will put us on the horns of a dilemma? Will the provinces be told, with a view to accept the 18d. ratio, that there will be so much surplus which will go to reduce provincial contributions? Will Madras be told: "Well, Madras, look here; you must support the Currency Bill because that leaves a surplus so that the Madras contribution becomes less and the Bombay contribution becomes greater?" So that the principle of divide and rule in a short compass will be applied to the consideration of this Bill. Is it the intention of Government to do these things, •

[Mr. M. R. Jayakar,]

as my friend, Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, said, to do a considerable amount of lobbying on these questions, setting up one province against another? If it is not so, may I know what is the reason for reversing this most natural order of things? If you come to this House and block its decision on a most important Bill which enters into almost every figure of the Budget—because we understand the rupee to be the unit of value for the whole of India—if instead of having the most natural order, you keep up your sleeve the Bill until such time as you propose to bring it before the House, which is the time when possibly the provincial issues will be cast in an iron manner, I do say, Sir, that it is a most flagrant breach of the promises which were made by the Government on the last occasion. We do desire—and I am voicing the sentiments of a very large section of our countrymen—that this Bill should be presented to this House in an atmosphere of cool and dispassionate detachment, at a time when no issues are likely to arise which involve the setting up of one province against another, which raise those sordid elements in one province against another, which raise the cupidity of one province against another; if I may say so, in an atmosphere when the plain issues of this Bill alone will be considered on its merits as they affect the whole of India, not one province against another; and I submit, Sir, the Government are depriving this House of the dispassionate and cool atmosphere in keeping back this Bill for such a long time.

There is another ground that I would urge why Government should have presented this Bill now. Speaking to a bench of Englishmen, may I quote: "It is one of those issues which by fear of change perplexes the country" as one of your poets has said. It is causing much agony and suspense that such an important question should be kept aside, when the Bill should have been presented to this House within the first week or two of the present Session. Instead of doing that the Government are keeping back the Bill; and I fear, Sir, it will come at a time when there will be very little chance of having the plain issues considered apart from the consideration of other matters. On these grounds, Sir, I support the motion for adjournment.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Sir, while recognising the strength of the objections that were voiced by my Honourable friend the Leader of the House against this motion this morning, I cannot help feeling in my personal capacity some pleasure in knowing that this motion has slipped through the narrow meshes of that sieve with which you, Sir, cry all the suggestions for motions for adjournment, because it gives me an opportunity of attempting to dispel some at any rate of that fog of prejudice which it is being sought to create in regard to the Government's decision on the question of the order in which the Currency Bill is to be taken up. I think there has been some genuine misapprehension on this subject. But that I should have thought would have been cleared by the full statement that was made of the Government's reasons for their decision in the House yesterday. On a previous occasion, when it came up, Mr. Jinnah in particular used some rather strong language; but I cannot help thinking that in the light of the further knowledge which is now open to him, he must feel that some at any rate of the things that he said were not entirely justified; and I do feel that the whole House ought to realise that if they give that calm deliberation to this subject which I agree with Mr. Jayakar in regarding as desirable—though I am not so optimistic as

he is in thinking that it is probable—they will see that any other course than that chosen by Government would have been unfair both to the House and to the Government and would have compelled this House to discuss the question of the ratio while in the dark as to some very important and relevant facts and figures. I can well understand that it is unpleasant for those who advocate a different ratio from 18d. to be brought face to face with the fact that a lower ratio not only plays havoc with every budget in the country, but also plays havoc with the Government's policy, in which they have the full support of the House, of reducing and eventually getting rid of the provincial contributions at the earliest possible moment. That fact exists and is not altered by the date on which the Budget is introduced or on which this Bill is discussed. That fact exists to-day. If the Bill is discussed before the Budget, that fact exists just as much as if the Bill is discussed afterwards. But the Government are surely entitled to bring to the attention of those Members of the House who desire to discuss and decide this question in the interests of India the exact extent and bearing of the ratio on the budget figures; and I think it would have been much more reasonable if this House had brought a motion for adjournment to complain, if the Government had so decided, of the Government's decision to bring the Ratio Bill before the House before introducing the Budget. I have no doubt that that would have happened if that was the position the Government had taken. When, therefore, I hear the accusation made that there is some trickery in this matter, that there is some question of breach of faith on the part of Government, I am inclined to rub my eyes and ask what all this excited language portends. I think it is natural that I should put to myself the further question whether, if there is any trickery in this matter, there has not been some attempt to trick the House into expressing a final view on the question of the ratio in blind blissful ignorance of some very important consequences; and if faith enters into this matter at all, does it not argue a deplorable lack of faith in the advocates of 1s. 4d. if they are so desperately afraid of discussing the ratio in the light of relevant facts and figures? The adjournment has been moved in order to protest against the Government's decision to bring this Bill forward after the budget figures are known to the House. I do not question, no one questions the indubitable right of the Government to choose the order in which it should run its business. I do not question either the right of this House if the order in which the Government chooses to put down its business is likely to cause serious damage to India to make a protest against that decision. If a delay of even two or three weeks were going to damage India seriously in this matter, then there might be some reason in this motion. I should be the last to deny the importance of an early and final decision on the question of the ratio. I have always pressed that the decision should be an early one. I never concealed from myself nor from this House in August last that the decision not to proceed with this Bill at that time had some consequences which must be detrimental both to the market and to India in general owing to the absence during the busy season of absolute certainty as to the continuance of stability of exchange. But it was deliberately decided by this House and accepted by the Government that the advantages of an immediate decision were outweighed by the advantages of postponement in order that there might be no risk of the House rushing into a premature decision on this matter in ignorance or without a complete understanding of the issues involved. Mr. Jinnah was one of the foremost on that occasion in pressing that time should be

[Sir Basil Blackett.]

given in order that Members of the House might study the minutes of the evidence which were not then available

Mr. M. R. Jayakar: They are not still available.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I shall be very glad to lend the Honourable Member copies and he can use the next four weeks to read them. The minutes of evidence have been on sale all over the country for at least three months and were available actually before, and so I think the Honourable Member should withdraw that statement. Mr. Jinnah, as I said, was foremost in demanding that time should be given. That was nearly six months ago. Is it unreasonable that the Government should ask for a delay of one month more for precisely similar reasons in order that the House may be able to come to a conclusion on this very important matter in the light of a full understanding of the facts? It is common ground that the reduction of the ratio from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 4d. must have disastrous consequences on the budget

Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar (Tanjore *cum* Trichinopoly: Non-Muhammadan Rural): No, no, not disastrous.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: If that is contested, then does it not absolutely prove that it is necessary that the budget figures should be before the House before it comes to a conclusion on this very important matter? The effect on the Budget is the same whatever the date of the decision on the ratio. It is not the Government which is responsible for this Bill coming up for discussion in a Budget Session. It was the deliberate decision of the last House. From the moment that that decision was taken it was absolutely inevitable that the Budget for 1926-27 should be prepared on the basis of 1s. 6d. No other course was possible. All the proceedings of the Standing Finance Committees have naturally had to be conducted on the basis of 1s. 6d. for the Budget. All the figures that were put before the Standing Finance Committee were necessarily on that basis. There could be no possibility of putting the figures on any other basis before that Committee, at whatever moment at the earliest possible date in this Session the Currency Bill had been discussed. If there was a decision now, and that decision were in favour of 1s. 4d. the Demands for Grants would have to be presented to this House in exactly the same form as if there was no such decision. It is quite impossible to alter the figures at this date. I agree that there are difficulties owing to the fact that the ratio was not decided last August but it is quite impossible to avoid those difficulties, and the question was whether any advantage was to be gained by a discussion or a decision on the ratio before the Budget was introduced when the Government would have been in possession of facts and figures which they could not disclose to the House without disclosing the contents of the Budget and when a decision could not alter the fact that the Budget would still have to be presented to the House with figures on the 1s. 6d. basis. The position, I think, is perfectly obvious. There was no choice but to prepare the Budget on the 1s. 6d. basis. That was the deliberate decision of the last Assembly. If we had brought this question of the ratio up before the Budget, we should have been working in the dark as to figures which the Government would possess but would not be able to disclose. Certainly inconveniences are involved in discussing some

of the budget figures in advance of the ratio, but that was an inconvenience which was the inevitable consequence of the decision of the House last August, to postpone the decision on the ratio. I do not understand what the last speaker, Mr. Jayakar, was referring to when he said that there was some breach of promise on my part in this matter. I found it difficult to know when he was quoting me, though I sometimes recognised my prosaic phrases among his more polished ones, but I heard nothing which even remotely suggested to my mind that any promise had been given either by myself or by any other Member of the Government or on behalf of the Government that the Currency Bill would be brought up for discussion before the Budget was introduced

Mr. M. R. Jayakar: I meant to say, Sir, that the Honourable the Finance Member said that the Bill would be presented in an atmosphere in which it would not be regarded as a *fait accompli*.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I think my argument was that the advantages of bringing it up in August last were that it was very difficult not to prejudice the issue in favour of 1s. 6d. if the Bill was postponed from last August till a later date, because the main argument of the opponents of 1s. 6d. at that time was that it was not too late to change as prices had not settled down. That has nothing whatever to do with the question whether it should be brought in before or after the Budget. I pressed at that time, in view of the importance to the market, for an immediate decision. I agree that it is very important, and it is a matter which I have always stressed. But after six months' postponement last August, for the express purpose of securing a decision in the light of fuller knowledge and understanding, I claim that there is complete justification for a further postponement of one month on precisely similar grounds. The market and the whole of India are immensely interested in an early decision, and there is no conflict of view in this House that that decision ought to be taken in this Session. But even more important than a decision to-day or to-morrow, is a right decision, and if a right decision is to be reached, the whole facts ought to be clearly before those who are going to decide. Why has a decision this month suddenly become vital? It was not vital, though it was very important last August; it is not vital now, surely, that the decision should be taken on the 8th or 9th of February, rather than on the 7th or the 8th, or the 9th of March. The market long ago realised that, once the Bill was postponed last August, it must necessarily continue to work in a state of uncertainty, for a time. That state of uncertainty will continue no doubt for another month. The speculators to whom Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar referred will no doubt find postponement of their cherished hope of profit out of persuading the Legislature to reduce the rate to 1s. 4d. uncomfortable, especially if they are speculating with borrowed capital. But we are not here to consider the interests of the speculator. We are here to consider the interests of the honest merchant and trader and of India as a whole, and they, unlike the speculator, are interested in a right decision. I claim that if that decision is to be a right one it should be one taken in the light of all the available facts. Any attempt to obscure those facts can only lead to a risk of the decision being a wrong one. I submit, Sir, that if the meaning and purpose of this

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motion are clearly analysed, it comes simply to this, that the House is being asked to censure the Government for refusing to allow the House to run the risk of being misled. I feel confident that the House will not support the motion. (Applause.)

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas (Indian Merchants Chamber: Indian Commerce): Sir, I support the motion that the House do adjourn because I feel very strongly that the decision of Government to delay consideration of the Currency Bill till the 7th March, is without precedent, is unjustified and requires this House to follow an unnatural method of voting the two Budgets. It will hamper due consideration of the correct standard of value to be put on the Statute-book and to that extent it is a source of grave danger in the interests of the country. Sir, on the 25th of last month, when the Honourable the Finance Member made his first speech he told us of a startling discovery that he had made, that there was a general feeling in the House that the Currency Bill should not be brought up for consideration till after the general Budget was introduced. When he found Member after Member on this side of the House rising from his seat and disowning any knowledge of the sort of opinion which seems to have influenced the Honourable the Finance Member in the decision that he then announced, he very soon found the Honourable the Leader of the House run to his rescue. The Honourable the Leader of the House then said:

"I must really ask the House, however, to bear in mind that no Government can hand over the carriage of its own case to the House. The Government must observe their reasonable rights in these matters, just as the carriage of a case is with the plaintiff, if he is the plaintiff, and not with the defendant. However, I have no doubt that the observations that have fallen from Members of this House in this debate will receive careful consideration of Government."

The result, Sir, of that "careful consideration" was announced to us yesterday. The Honourable the Finance Member asked why has it become necessary to have a decision of this House on the ratio on the 7th or 8th of this month. I do not know what insinuation the Finance Member meant in that remark of his, but I may tell him that ever since the 25th of last month leaders of the various parties on this side of the House have been in communication with the Honourable the Leader of the House, and in case the Honourable the Finance Member does not know what has transpired by way of persuasion between them behind the scenes in the Lobby, I am quite prepared to give him the information. It is only, Sir, because of this consideration given to the Leader of the House by some of our leading members that the Finance Member is able to get up to-day and say, what is the significance of taking up the Currency Bill now, and not some time in March.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I may say that I was fully informed of a great deal that went on in the Lobbies, perhaps some of it not known to other people.

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas: I wonder what the Finance Member refers to. Let him say it frankly; but what I refer to is what happened between the leaders of the various parties on this side of the House and the Leader of the House, the Honourable the Home Member, Sir. The fact of the matter is, Sir, that ever since the 25th, when this House came

to know that the Finance Member wanted the support of something in the Budget in order to get his 1s. 6d. ratio, ever since that moment, there has been a strong feeling on this side of the House that that artificial support to that ratio should not be made available to him; the reasons for which, Sir, I propose to put forward to the House forthwith. It now, Sir, comes to this, that the Government who have the privilege of arranging the business of the House have decided to abuse that privilege. Various Members on this side of the House got up and told the Government that they never gave the impression to the Finance Member that the Budget and the Ratio Bill should come up together. The Government however now say—and we had it to-day very plainly from the Finance Member—that the inducement of provincial contributions and anything else which might go with the next Budget, which it is for the Finance Member again to make up and put before the House, is absolutely necessary in order that the House may approve of the 1s. 6d. ratio. It is to that, that the House has very strongly objected.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Why?

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas: The reason is clear. The ratio is not for one Budget but for 50 Budgets and more, and the Finance Member at least ought to know that instead of asking that question.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I still ask, why?

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas: May I ask whether the Finance Member is prepared to guarantee that with 1s. 6d. on the Statute-book there will be no more deficit Budgets even after he has left India? Or is he only anxious to balance the Budget for the period of his office and let the deluge come upon us after that? We are, Sir, concerned with the correct ratio which will tend to the prosperity of the country as a whole and for good. We are all concerned with provincial contributions, and my province is concerned most because it comes last. But I do not wish, Sir, to say more on that to-day because my time is limited. My point to-day is to make out that the step which the Government have taken is absolutely unjustified and is without parallel in the history even of the Government of India. Now, Sir, what has happened since the 25th of January? The Finance Member proposed to put off the question of the ratio for 40 days. Let us see what the Finance Member said at the August Session of the Assembly; I am quoting from page 211 of the Official Report, and it is his speech on the 28rd of August. He there said, Sir:

"The substitution of certainty for uncertainty will be welcomed by every one and cannot fail to bring economic and social benefit to the country as a whole. Instability inevitably brings undeserved losses upon the people of a country and it is only the speculator and the profiteer who can gain thereby, at the expense of both the producer and the consumer. As I have already said, I do not propose to pursue the question of the rate further at this stage, and argue the reasons for preferring 1s. 6d. to any other rate. The only point which I make is that stability of the rupee ensured by Statute is desirable and desirable at once."

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: What did you say?

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas: It does not matter what I said. I did not say a word and if the Finance Member has forgotten he may look up the proceedings. What is the good of asking me what I said?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Why did you not protest against postponement?

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas: I did not protest against postponement for the obvious reason, Sir, that the Finance Member got the Government of India to put the Assembly in the most unenviable of all positions, namely, by giving a few members a copy of the Report less than a month before, and the evidence and the appendices only 10 days before. It does not lie in the mouth of the Finance Member who treated the Assembly so badly last August to complain that I did not protest. How could I when he himself dare not press his own view although he was so anxious to. Then, Sir, on page 214, the Finance Member goes on and says:

"Once the report was issued, no option remained for the Government but to announce that, pending consultation with the Legislature, they would maintain the ratio at 1s. 6d., and once they had made this announcement, it was essential that the interval before consultation took place should be as short as could reasonably be arranged. It is true that with a good monsoon exchange is now showing strength and that during the next six months any action by the Government to maintain exchange is likely to take the form of action to prevent its rising above 1s. 6 3/16d. as in 1924 and 1925 and that a fall is unlikely, so that no question of the sale of sterling is expected to arise during that period."

That is, Sir, the importance he gave to time in considering the question of the ratio. Five months after that have passed by. The Assembly met last month, and the Finance Member, Sir, now finds it necessary to postpone consideration of the Currency Bill until there is something in addition which he can put before the Assembly in order to make his 1s. 6d. even a ratio which can be tolerated by the Assembly. Instead of his finding himself in the enviable position of having to oblige India by keeping the exchange from going over 1s. 6 3/16d., as he very optimistically expected last August, he had the greatest of difficulties in maintaining exchange at 1s. 5½d. and in preventing it from going below that lower gold point of 1s. 6d. He had, Sir, to part with India's resources to the extent of £16 millions in this, and unless he now finds some method by which he can please the Assembly by an extra present, temporary and short-sighted though it may be, I say that he is afraid of approaching the Assembly. That, Sir, is the reason why he has got the Government of India to postpone the consideration of the Ratio Bill until next March. That, I submit, is the clue, and I say that that should not be tolerated by the House. We on this side of the House clearly saw through this game on the 25th January last and we felt that the earliest possible opportunity must be taken in order to expose this trickery. Now, Sir, this much for the unworthy part of the Government in this, the manipulation of the arrangement of the business before this House. I have not the least doubt that when the Ratio Bill is considered on its merits, as it is bound to be by this sane House, all these manœuvres will be borne in mind.

But now, Sir, I propose to say a few words regarding the practical difficulties involved by the Government's decision. We are asked, Sir, to vote the Railway Budget. The Railway Budget, if it is framed on a 1s. 4d. basis, or if the ratio is changed to 1s. 4d. afterwards, will involve an additional expenditure on the revenue side to the extent of about a crore. (*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:* "More.") On the capital side it will involve an expenditure, an extra expenditure of a crore and a half. (*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:* "Far more.") Well; that is enough for my purposes and is from figures given to the Currency Commission: the Honourable the Finance Member must not interrupt me as my time is limited. Now, Sir, I ask, is this the right way to deal with a

commercial Budget, a Budget which you have been imploring Members of this House not to treat as a political question? Is this the right way to deal with it? How are Members on this side of the House, Sir, to make cuts? Supposing they wanted the 1s. 4d. basis; how are they to make cuts if the present Budget is presented on the basis of 1s. 6d.? That is the question; but the most surprising part of it all is, Sir, that ever since the period the Government of India started presenting Budgets, I would like the Finance Member to name me any period or any year, when, after the presentation of the Budget and the introduction of the Finance Bill, any other Bill has ever been introduced or considered by this House until the Finance Bill left the House for the other Chamber. What is now proposed to be done? On the 7th March, Sir, the Currency Bill is to be brought in. That Bill is a contentious Bill. There is a difference of opinion on it. There is a strong Indian opinion that this ratio cannot be put on the Statute-book. It may take two days, it may take a little more. It may have to be referred to a Select Committee. The Finance Bill, Sir, must leave this House and go to the other House and must be passed into law before the 31st March. Now, I ask Government Members on the opposite Benches whether from a practical point of view they are not really trying to stam pede this House if there is a difference of opinion? (*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett*: "No.") What is the good of saying "No", Sir? It is good enough to say "No" at present. Where is the time? All these years we have been told that after the 1st March until the 20th March, until the Finance Bill leaves this House, nothing else can be considered. The Members on this side of the House have always bowed to it. No non-official day even for the most urgent matter has been given during this period: now, because it suits the Finance Member, who wants to enlist non-official support for what is a lame suggestion of his, namely, the 1s. 6d. ratio, you make room for it; and if there happens to be a substantial difference of opinion, you will then tell this House, "The Finance Bill must be passed by both the Houses this month. Therefore you must pass this Budget. We shall look into the question of the ratio next year". This is the sort of stability, Sir, that the Finance Member is very anxious to give us. All that he wants is: "India may have stability, but only on the terms which the Finance Member wants". Indian India says: "India will take stability at the rate which suits India and not at anybody's bidding". That is the reason for the motion of adjournment, and I support that the House do adjourn.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I wholeheartedly support the motion for adjournment moved by the President of the Indian National Congress. The entire public opinion in this country is behind this motion for adjournment; the President of the Indian National Congress represents the considered opinion of the educated community and the masses of the people of this country. (*Honourable Members*: "Question?") Sir, Government are breathing hot and cold in this matter. (*Honourable Members*: "Question?") You will soon know it—they are breathing both hot and cold on the question of this Bill. In August last nothing was so important as the immediate passage of this Bill. The interest of all India, we were told, required that then, in August, we should settle the Bill once for all. That was for the good of India. Now it suits the Finance Member to say that we shall not consider it for nearly two months after the opening of this Session—it does not matter—and even that is of course for the good of India. If you delay it, then it is for our good; if you hurry it, it is for our good; only if the delay and

[Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta.]

hurry are at the bidding of the Finance Member. I think this kind of breathing hot and cold in the same breath is a thing which is an insult to the intelligence of the House. The Finance Member is putting the cart before the horse, and the House is not going to allow him to do it. Sir, he knows and the country knows that the Currency Bill should be regarded as a matter of permanent importance, that it affects the financial policy of the Government; that being so the Currency Bill should not be tied down to the chariot wheel of a single year's Budget. What the Finance Member said is that he wants to tie down this question of the ratio and of the currency to the chariot wheel of the next Budget. I say, Sir, this is a most unnatural thing. The ratio question is a matter of importance for all time to come; and the Finance Member knows it, (*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett*: "Hear, hear".) I am glad you say "Hear, hear", but you seem to be deaf all the same, because it is a most unnatural thing in the world that if you regard it as a matter of permanent importance you should tie yourself down to the momentary question of a single year's Budget; and yet that is what you are doing. Sir, the Finance Member is convinced that 1s. 6d. is the best ratio. If that is so, why does he not place its beneficence forthwith on the Statute-book to-day? If that is the best for the country, why do you deprive us of its beneficence even for a single day? If on the contrary, it is not the best ratio, why prolong its iniquitous career for a day more than is necessary? That is the question. If you think it is good, come here and now; if it is bad, come here and now. But you know if you come here to-day, you will affect your complacency in a moment that you cannot contemplate with equanimity. Sir, there is the further question of the convenience or inconvenience to which this House will be put, as Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas has very ably shown. If the question of the ratio is a matter of great importance, then where is the time after the 7th of March when that Bill can be considered in detail and in fullness? Members will have the budget figures, piles of books weighing about one ton, to be studied, mastered and debated in the course of two or three weeks; and side by side we will have running parallel a Bill the importance of which has not been exaggerated by anyone. How can the House do it in the short time at its disposal and why should the Government hustle us in that manner. The pros and cons of the ratio are given by the Currency Commission in their Report. If 1s. 6d. is so beneficial, its results are stated in all the fulness, all the detail in the Report of the Currency Commission; the Members who want to study the beneficence of that Ratio will find it stated there. If they are true, we will be able to understand. If, on the other hand, they are not true, our opinion is not going to be changed because of a single year's figures. In a temporary period of twelve months you who can manipulate the currency will manipulate the Budget and try to show that the fate of India hangs on this Budget and therefore you please try and have 1s. 6d. That is the most unnatural way, the most unreasonable way, which a Government conscious of its strength will ever adopt. If you are conscious of the truth and the strength of your case, this is not the manner in which you should proceed. Therefore, your procedure deserves the greatest condemnation and this House should adjourn as a protest.

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes (Member for Commerce and Railways): Sir, what impresses a layman who does not pretend to be an expert in currency matters is the heat which these currency matters seem to engender. I have done my best to understand why Sir Purshotamdas

Thakurdas and Mr. Jamnadas Mehta attach such importance to the bringing on of the discussion of this Bill at a very early date. I understand that the feeling behind their speeches is this. They feel that the Government are taking an unfair advantage of their position as the Government and that they are trying to trick the House; as Mr. Jamnadas Mehta put it, they are trying to get this ratio Bill, which we all admit to be a Bill of the greatest importance, a Bill which is going to settle once and for all, the ratio for India, considered in the light of a single Budget. That, I understand, was the point tried to be made both by Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas and Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. Well, Sir, I may say that we in the Government did recognise that we were likely to give rise to that impression, but nevertheless we decided that it was right that we should bring on this Bill on the date we mentioned. It is perfectly true that the question of ratio should not be decided in the light of figures of a single Budget. At the same time, you cannot call a question of ratio a question of principle. I think everybody will admit that whether we adopt 1s. 4d. or 1s. 6d. depends upon the balance of advantages and we definitely decided in the Government that the House would be able to decide in which way the advantages lay only if they had the facts before them. It may be, as Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas says, that that lets us open to the charge that we are offering the House the inducement on the one side of having provincial contributions lessened or taken away altogether, and on the other hand their choice of taking the 1s. 4d. ratio. But, Sir, surely it is a relevant consideration that if you revert to 1s. 4d. you may have to postpone the liquidation of your provincial contributions,

5 P.M. and surely the House should know how the facts lie in that matter. Similarly, the House should know in the light of the Budget whether the reversion to 1s. 4d. means additional taxation, or whether it means the postponement of useful measures of reduction of taxation. Surely again the House should know whether reversion to 1s. 4d. means the slowing up of railway development. I should like to assure the House that that was the only consideration which weighed with the Government when we decided on this date. We thought that before the House came to a decision on this important matter, they ought to be able to balance up for themselves the advantages one way and the other, and we felt assured that they could not balance the advantages unless they had the facts before them. There was no other consideration at the back of their minds. I am quite prepared to admit, as Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas has put it, that there is bound to be a certain amount of inconvenience, especially in regard to the Railway Budget. Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas calculated that if we reverted to 1s. 4d. our revenue expenditure on the Railways would be sent up by at least a crore and our capital expenditure by 1½ crores, and he went on to say that when Members have that prospect before them, how can they make cuts in our budget. I have introduced many Railway Budgets and the House will remember that our Railway Budgets when they are put before the House are Budgets which have been scrutinised most carefully by the Railway Finance Committee and I have always tried to get the House to come to the position in which they accept our estimates—for after all they are only estimates—and use their power of moving motions for reductions merely for the purpose of bringing up matters for discussion. That I think is the answer to Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas. The only point I wish to make now is that I would like the House to feel that we are not trying to trick them in any way at all and that we have decided most deliberately that there is no immediate

[Sir Charles Innes.]

reason, no urgent reason, why this Bill should be brought on at this particular moment and that it is better in the interests of India that when the Bill is considered at any rate the House should know what the immediate effect is going to be on the Budget for 1927-28.

Mr. Arthur Moore (Bengal: European): Sir, I am rather in a difficult position because, when as a new Member for the first time I feel moved to address this House, I find myself very much out of sympathy with the extreme right and the extreme left. I should like to put forward some of the reasons why Government having a perfectly good Bill, as I think it is, should have produced it and some reasons why my Honourable friend on the extreme left should not attack them for postponing it. I have no sympathy at all, Sir,—and I think that there are other Members of this group who have the same feeling—with the way in which Government have handled public business this Session. The Steel Bill was originally, we were told, to come back from Select Committee early last week and this week we were to be considering it. The whole programme was changed when the Bill was postponed for a week. The bottom dropped out of the Government programme. They have nothing to offer us this week, although they have this perfectly good Bill in their possession. Three Members of this group have gone away for the week, because they were assured that there was no real business doing and we all were going round trying to find private Members' Resolutions (*Honourable Members: "Who?"*) to fill Government papers. (*Honourable Members: "Who?"*) Members have been going round and trying to get a chance of putting down Resolutions.

Now, when I turn to the extreme left, I find that I have no more sympathy with their attitude. I am told that amongst those who sit behind the Honourable Member who moved the adjournment there are several who are in favour of 1s. 6d. and I understand that those Members would very much like the discussion postponed till the Budget came on. (*Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: "Are you their spokesman?"*) No, I am not their spokesman, but I understand they are being asked; I have read in the papers that they have been asked. I understand that these unfortunate Members are at the moment without a spokesman. I understand that they have been asked in the interests of party discipline to vote for 1s. 4d. and would much prefer to wait till the Budget came on, because then the case would be much more easily arguable on both sides, and whatever vote they gave, they would be able to justify themselves to their constituents who are at present being worked upon by outside agencies. As a simple outsider I should have thought it would be quite a good thing to have this subject treated on its merits and discussed openly; but I find that that is not the case. I find that my Honourable friends who sit at that corner of the House give as their reason for wanting the question to be brought on now before the Budget is introduced that they will be able to have a discussion in what Mr. Javakar called an impartial atmosphere; but it seems to me to be such an extraordinarily impartial atmosphere that it may be described as extremely rarefied. I cannot understand a discussion on currency in which you do not consider provincial contributions. I cannot understand a discussion on currency in which you do not consider whether you will have to raise fresh taxation; how much fresh taxation you will have to raise, and whether if you vote for 1s. 4d. you will give the Finance Member

power to raise that taxation. I find myself in the somewhat paradoxical position, that I have a quarrel to pick with both sides, and as a new Member there is a third paradox that strikes me, and that is that we are having the adjournment moved as a protest. But if we were not here protesting we would have adjourned long ago. Nothing prevents us adjourning but the motion for the adjournment. I am quite sure that the Home and Finance Members wish to adjourn. I am quite sure that Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar wishes to adjourn, therefore I say, Sir, why not adjourn? I have, I hope, quite effectively exposed the misdeeds of the Government and the extremely hollow tactics of the other side, and I suggest that we should now adjourn without further ado.

Mr. M. S. Sesha Ayyangar (Madura and Ramnad *cum* Tinnevely: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I am surprised at the indifference with which the Government have chosen to treat the considered opinion of this section of the House. The House may well remember that on the 25th January last, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya told the Government that the House was anxious to have an early date fixed for the discussion of this all-important Bill. The Honourable the Finance Member interrupted doubting if that opinion of the House had been expressed in clear terms, and an Honourable Member said he would even bring in an adjournment motion on that point, if necessary. In his speech on the 23rd August, 1926, when on that memorable day he discussed the Currency Bill, this is what he is reported to have said:

"What would have been said of us if we had deliberately ignored, flouted, insulted the Legislature? I can hear the torrent of accusation gathering force and rolling forth in the House and in the Press if we had quietly expressed our intention to maintain the ratio of 1s. 6d. without asking for any expression of opinion from the Legislature from August to February."

Now, what has happened? The same torrent of accusation that he visualised has really come to pass because of his action, or I may say inaction. Though the House wanted that this question should be discussed early yet the Government were not pleased to see that an early date was fixed for the debate. I waited to hear the Honourable the Finance Member's answer when the question was raised. The only thing he said was that he pleaded not guilty to the charge of breach of promise levelled by Mr. Jayakar and the charge of breach of faith levelled by Mr. Jinnah. I am prepared to accept those statements on their face value. Next he said, "Look here. We, the Government, have power to fix any date we please". We quite admit that you have the power on your side, and we are painfully conscious of the limitations of this side of the House. The only question is, are you using or abusing the power that you have? Next he said, "Look here, if we rush this Bill now, before the Budget time, there may be a necessity for readjustment of the figures in the two Budgets." Is it so difficult a task with your army of accountants behind you, when you have discussed the rates and have come to a definite understanding?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: It is quite impossible before the 28th.

Mr. M. S. Sesha Ayyangar: Lastly he said, "I do not want to rush this Bill through lest we come to a wrong conclusion." We are quite prepared to join issue in this matter. We have not been unaccustomed to the way in which manipulation has been going on so far as currency

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legislation is concerned, and know how ratios have been fixed time after time since the year 1893. It is clear that the rate was one thing and the rate at which the rupee was sought to be stabilised by legislation was a different thing. We are not unaccustomed to the ways of Government in respect of this matter. In 1893-94 when the exchange value was 1s. 2-546d. the Government fixed it at the ratio of 16 pence, and in 1920, when it was really 1s. 4 $\frac{1}{8}$ d. Government rushed through legislation wanting to maintain the rate at 24 pence. Even Government have had to admit the evils following out of that legislation. Nearly 55 millions of pounds were wasted in 1920 over the Reverse Councils. At whose cost? At the cost of the Indian taxpayer. England always profits and India invariably suffers.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I should like to have some substantiation of one or two of those remarks.

Mr. M. S. Sesha Ayyangar: I have the figures here, and I certainly can substantiate them. Then, so far as the present rate is concerned, in October, 1924, exchange stood at 1s. and 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. Government could not then think of attempting to stabilise the rupee. They waited for a higher rate and when they got the higher rate, by artificial means, by careful manipulation, they have tried to fix the ratio at 1s. 6d. I have known what was being done from time to time and I would invite the attention of this House

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I should like to have your ruling how far all this is in order.

Mr. President: Order, order. The question is not whether the ratio should be 1s. 4d. or 1s. 6d. The question before the House is the motion for adjournment.

Mr. M. S. Sesha Ayyangar: Sir, when the Honourable the Finance Member replied to our observations saying that we may be led to wrong conclusions by taking up this matter early, I was simply suggesting to the House that we were not unaccustomed as to how the ratio came to be fixed up time after time. I am not going to pursue the matter further. In 1925 and 1926 they say the rupee stood at 1s. 6d., in 1927 they say the rupee is stabilized at eighteen pence. Now, how do we explain that position, Sir? We maintain that the rupee has been artificially kept up at that rate. All these years, when the figures stood at a low rate of exchange, they always tried to maintain the high rate which was beneficial to them. So it was for these reasons we wanted to hasten the discussion and wanted a date fixed so that we could completely discuss this point. But the Honourable the Finance Member is aware, as the result of the circulation of the Bill, that the whole country unanimously wants a certain definite lower ratio to be fixed and also that they are for a gold standard and a gold currency. The question ought not to be delayed any further; I submit for these reasons I have great pleasure in supporting the motion for adjournment.

Dr. L. K. Hyder (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I rise to oppose this motion. I am sorry that, in discussing this question, as has been pointed out by the Honourable the Commerce Member, much feeling has been aroused. I think this question requires a calmer atmosphere.

It is no doubt true that the House last August wanted more time, but I wish to remind some of the Members of this House that this is a new House, its composition is not the same as it was in August last. Therefore, Sir, some of the Members who were not Members of the last House do require more time to go into it. It has been said, Sir, that the 7th of March is not a very suitable date. Is it because it falls in the month of March and the Members are afraid of the Ides of March? With regard to the merits, of the question whether ratio should be 16d. or 18d. I think one date is as good as another date and since a date has been announced, I think, Sir, an uneasiness about that particular date certainly would create in the mind of a cynic the feeling that the arguments are not all effective and there is some doubt on the side of the advocates of the sixteen penny rupee.

An Honourable Member: I move that the question be now put.

Mr. President: The question is that the question be now put.

The motion was adopted.

Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar: Sir, I do not think I need answer the remarks made by the Finance Member because I must say I am thoroughly unrepentant and I am thoroughly unconvinced by any observations which were made on the other side. Of course we have not got a Secretariat behind us and we have not got a whole library and various appliances and apparatus for the purpose of studying this question. There was no wonder, therefore, that the Members of the last Assembly did ask for some time in order to enable them to make up their minds, and that was a very proper request to make. To go and say that simply because the Members of the last Assembly on the last occasion made a request like that, which was a very reasonable request, and was agreed to, therefore this Assembly should pay the penalty for it, and even when most of the Members who have been able to judge of this question have come to a decision one way or another upon this question, even then that the business of the House should be delayed on such a matter of vital importance, is a serious thing. The Honourable Sir Charles Innes said that the only reason and the only purpose that induced the Government to delay this matter, though they considered it was open to misrepresentation, was, they had to make up their own minds and see whether the Budget could be at 1s. 6d. or 1s. 4d. I think that is hardly an argument which requires serious consideration because I have no doubt that, so far as the Finance Member is concerned—and I take it the Government of India stands committed to his views—he is the expert who has studied this question, and the findings of the Commission are there, and this is their policy, and whatever the object, I have not the slightest doubt the conclusion of the Government of India was in favour of 1s. 6d. It is the policy of the Government of India, and the Government seldom changes its attitude when it has pronounced it; even if it is convinced it is wrong, it seldom changes. As I know perfectly well the gentlemen who form the Government do change their opinions, do sometimes feel convinced that they are wrong, but nevertheless as a matter of etiquette they are obliged to adhere to the policy of Government. None knows that better than myself, and, therefore, I say they had long ago made up their minds on this point and it is simply idle to contend, as has been contended on the floor of this House, that

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they had to make up a Budget and therefore it was necessary they should have all the figures and look up all these things. I submit the real reason and the real purpose on this side of the House for such delay as there has been is for fuller information, for better knowledge of the subject. We have been trying to consider this from all aspects of view, to judge of the just adjustment of all interests of the country and there has been that unavoidable delay on this side. On the other side there has been no reason for that delay. On the last occasion when Sir Purshotamdas and Mr. Jinnah raised this issue they said Government would make a statement. We all understood it to mean that they would be willing to put down an earlier date than the budget date, though some of us may have had a shrewd suspicion, the English language being what it is and the Honourable the Home Member's statement being what it was

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: What was the statement I made? I ask the Honourable Member what statement he is challenging.

Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar: The statement made on the last occasion that Government would fix a date.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: If the Honourable Member suggests that I had made up my mind at that time, he suggests that which is not true.

Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar: Very well, I do not suggest he had made up his mind; but Honourable Members, some of us at least, certainly understood an earlier date would be given. That was certainly the impression and, if the words were incapable of that interpretation, I think it should have been made quite clear, and it was not made quite clear. I do not say the Honourable the Home Member had any other intention when he made that statement, but I am perfectly certain that that statement was a very ambiguous statement, to say the least of it, and, therefore, we did wait for an explicit pronouncement on this point; when the decision was made, and when that statement was made, then was the time to express our opinion on this question. I submit on this matter it is not a question of feeling, it is not a question of heat. I think some of the Members who spoke on that side imagined that there was a great deal of heat on this side, but I do not think this was so; but there is greater heat on the other side, and my own belief is that this is disadvantageous to the House. The course adopted may be right from the Government's point of view but certainly it is not the country's point of view. The course adopted is injurious to the best interests of the country. We want stability and we want this question disentangled from all other questions and judged on its own merits. Naturally observations were made by Mr. Jayakar and others that this question enables the various influences to combine, the voting strength of one side or the other to operate, but it is our business really on a matter like this to get rid of irrelevant and alien considerations and look at this question as a scientific question and decide it having regard to the totality of the interests of this country. That is the question with which we are faced and it was in that spirit and in that spirit only that those of us on this side of the House have tabled this motion; and I am perfectly certain that the House understands that the responsibility for the currency policy of this country—if the Assembly is, as I understand, a representative institution—the

responsibility of this side of the House is as great, if not greater, than that of the opposite Benches. We have been asked to assume a greater responsibility by a great authority the other day, than that expressed in the Statute. Assuming it and seeing that there is nothing in the Rules of Business beyond the fact that certain days should be set down as official days and others as non-official and that certain classes of business should be put down, on certain dates, I dispute the right of the Government, independently of the opinion of the House, to choose any day it likes for its motion to take the Bill into consideration. It may have to fix the dates for official and non-official business and it may regulate its classes of business; but the particular point I am urging is perfectly plain on the rules. Apart from that, Sir, I submit also that if the House were by a majority to decide on a 1s. 4d. ratio it would be very difficult afterwards to bring in a supplementary Budget. I may point out that from the wording of the Rules it would not be within their purview to bring in anything like that because it cannot be said that this was unforeseen at the time the Budget was considered or that this is found to be subsequently insufficient. On the contrary, it is deliberately, and with our eyes fully open, that we shall pass the Budget knowing full well that what is vital to the Budget is to come afterwards. Therefore, I submit for all these reasons, the arguments urged on this side of the House remain really unanswered, and require all Members of this House to vote upon it to show that this House wants business of this character to be put down at as early a date as it can without being bound down to other considerations which it cannot wait for.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Sir, I have only two things to say. The first is this, that I heard with the very greatest pleasure the statement made by the President of the Congress that this House has a great responsibility when it comes to vote on the ratio (*Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty*: "More than you have!"); and that he, as I understood, speaking for his Party, is prepared to consider it on its merits, and that the statements that have been made in the Press that the Party have already come to the conclusion to decide the matter on grounds other than merits is untrue. (*Swarajist Members*: "Wholly untrue!") The House has a very great responsibility in this matter and I hope the statement, as I understood it, of my Honourable friend, Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, that his Party intends to come to a conclusion on the merits of the case is one which will be realised when we do come to vote on the ratio.

The other is simply this. I have never claimed and I do not claim that the question of the effect on a particular Budget is decisive in deciding what the ratio should be. Certainly it is not decisive. A ratio is for all time, as Mr. Jamnadas Mehta said, and the question what ratio should be fixed should be decided from the point of view of what ratio is most for the benefit of the people of India and from no other. But to say that the effect of the ratio on the Budget is one which should be ignored or slurred over in considering what the ratio should be is a statement which I dispute. I say that it is most important that when the House comes to decide on the question of the ratio it should have a perfectly clear understanding of the exact bearing of that ratio on the Budget both for the year and for the future, and that it cannot have that unless the question is discussed after the Budget figures are available. Sir, I have nothing more to say