

24th January 1935

THE  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES  
Report)

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Volume I, 1935

(21st January to 18th February, 1935)

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FIRST SESSION

OF THE

FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,  
1935



NEW DELHI  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS  
1935

# Legislative Assembly.

## *President :*

THE HONOURABLE SIR ABDUR RAHIM, K.C.S.I., KT.

## *Deputy President :*

MR. AKHIL CHANDRA DATTA, M.L.A.

## *Panel of Chairmen :*

SIR MUHAMMAD YAKUB, KT., M.L.A.

MR. S. SATYAMURTI, M.L.A.

LIEUT.-COLONEL SIR HENRY GIDNEY, KT., M.L.A.

SARDAR SANT SINGH, M.L.A.

## *Secretary :*

MIAN MUHAMMAD RAFI, BAR.-AT-LAW.

## *Assistant of the Secretary :*

RAI BAHADUR D. DUTT.

## *Marshal :*

CAPTAIN HAJI SARDAR NUR AHMAD KHAN, M.C., I.O.M., I.A.

## *Committee on Petitions.*

MR. AKHIL CHANDRA DATTA, M.L.A., *Chairman.*

MR. S. SATYAMURTI, M.L.A.

DR. ZIAUDDIN AHMAD, C.I.E., M.L.A.

RAJA SIR VASUDEVA RAJAH, KT., C.I.E., M.L.A.

MR. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

*Thursday, 24th January, 1935.*

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The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. Chairman (Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney) in the Chair.

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## MEMBERS SWORN.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh, M.L.A. (Bombay City: Non-Muham-  
madan Urban);

Sir Darcy Lindsay, Kt., C.B.E., M.L.A. (Bengal: European);

Raja Bahadur Harihar Prosad Narayan Sinha, M.L.A. (Bihar and  
Orissa: Landholders); and

Mr. Madhao Shrihari Aney, M.L.A. (Berar Representative).

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## MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT.

**Mr. Chairman** (Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney): I may inform Honourable Members that I have received notices of motions for adjournment of the business of the House from Mr. B. Das and Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta. Honourable Members are already aware that His Excellency the Governor General will address the Assembly today at 3 o'clock, and it is not known how long the address will take. Moreover, as Honourable Members will readily realise, it will be necessary for the furniture of this House to be re-arranged suitably for the occasion. There will thus be no time, in the opinion of the Chair, today to take up these important matters. In the circumstances, the Chair suggests that these motions may be taken up on Monday, the 28th instant, and, in that case, the Chair will waive the question of urgency, but reserves to itself the right of considering each motion on its merits as to whether it is otherwise in order or not. (After a pause.) The Chair takes it that the House has no objection to the suggestion it has just made.

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## AGREEMENT BETWEEN HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

**The Honourable Sir Joseph Blore** (Member for Commerce and Railways): Sir, I lay on the table a copy of the Agreement between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Government of India.

## PREAMBLE.

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Government of India hereby agree that, during the continuance of the Ottawa Trade Agreement, the following undertakings on the part of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and of the Government of India shall be deemed to be supplementary to that Agreement, namely:—

## ARTICLE 1.

It is recognised by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Government of India that while protection to an Indian industry against imports of whatever origin may be necessary in the interests of the economic well-being of India, the conditions within industries in India, in the United Kingdom and in foreign countries may be such that an Indian industry requires a higher level of protection against foreign goods than against imports of United Kingdom origin.

## ARTICLE 2.

It is recognised by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom that, under existing conditions, import duties constitute an indispensable element in the revenues of the Government of India, and that revenue considerations must be given due weight in fixing levels of import duties.

## ARTICLE 3.

1. The Government of India undertake that protection will be afforded to such industries only as after due enquiries by the Tariff Board have, in the opinion of the Government of India, established claims thereto in accordance with the policy of discriminating protection laid down in the resolution adopted by the Legislative Assembly on 16th February, 1923, provided that this undertaking shall not apply to safeguarding of industries under the Safeguarding Act of 1933.

2. The Government of India further undertake that the measure of protection to be afforded shall be only so much as, and no more than, will equate prices of imported goods to fair selling prices for similar goods produced in India, and that, wherever possible having regard to the provisions of this Article, lower rates of duty will be imposed on goods of United Kingdom origin.

3. The differential margins of duty established in accordance with the principles laid down in the preceding clauses of this Article as between United Kingdom goods on the one hand and foreign goods on the other, shall not be altered to the detriment of United Kingdom goods.

4. The undertakings contained in this Article shall not prejudice the right of the Government of India in cases in which they find it essential, in the interests of the revenue, to impose an overriding revenue duty on imported goods higher than the protective duty required.

## ARTICLE 4.

When the question of the grant of substantive protection to an Indian industry is referred for enquiry to a Tariff Board the Government of India will afford full opportunity to any industry concerned in the United Kingdom



to state its case and to answer the cases presented by the other interested parties. The Government of India further undertake that, in the event of any radical changes in the conditions affecting protected industries during the currency of the period of protection, they will, on the request of His Majesty's Government or of their own motion, cause an enquiry to be made as to the appropriateness of the existing duties from the point of view of the principles laid down in Article 8, and that, in the course of such enquiry, full consideration will be given to any representations which may be put forward by any interested industry in the United Kingdom.

#### ARTICLE 5.

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom will give consideration to the steps that might be taken in co-operation with the respective commercial interests to develop the import from India of raw or semi-manufactured materials used in the manufacture of articles of a class which, on importation into India, are subject to differential protective duties. In particular they invite the Government of India to take note of the steps that have already been taken in the United Kingdom in pursuance of Article 8 of the Ottawa Agreement with a view to the widening of the area of consumption of Indian cotton; and they undertake to continue to use all possible efforts in co-operation with commercial interests to stimulate the consumption of Indian cotton in all possible ways, including technical research, commercial investigation, market liaison, and industrial propaganda.

#### ARTICLE 6.

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom undertake that, in accordance with the principles of the foregoing Article, the privilege of duty-free entry of Indian pig iron into the United Kingdom will be continued so long as the duties applicable to articles of iron and steel imported into India are not less favourable to the United Kingdom than those provided for in the Iron and Steel Protection Act, 1934, without prejudice, however, to the provisions of sub-sections 3 (4) and 3 (5) of the Indian Tariff Act, 1894, as amended by section 2 of the Iron and Steel Duties Act, 1934.

#### ARTICLE 7.

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Government of India undertake that, in all matters relating to this Agreement, they shall at all times receive and consider any conclusions, agreements or reports which may be framed as the result of conferences between the accredited representatives of industries concerned in the United Kingdom and in India.

Signed on behalf of His Majesty's  
Government in the United Kingdom.

WALTER RUNCIMAN.

Signed on behalf of the Government of India.

B. N. MITRA.

*The 9th January, 1935.*

## EXCHANGE OF NOTES.

## No. 1.

Sir,

I am authorised to undertake on behalf of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom that if at any time any further or other special steps are taken by the Colonies and Protectorates to facilitate the sale of United Kingdom cotton goods in competition with foreign cotton goods, they will invite the Governments of the Colonies and Protectorates to accord as favourable treatment to Indian cotton goods of any description as may be proposed for similar United Kingdom cotton goods.

The above undertaking shall remain in force so long as the Agreement of 28th October, 1933, between the Lancashire Delegation and the Mill-owners' Association, Bombay, or any subsequent Agreement which may be concluded between the cotton textile industries of the two countries remains in force.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

WALTER RUNCIMAN.

*The 9th January, 1935.*

Sir B. N. Mitra, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., C.B.E.

## No. 2.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 1 of today's date.

I am authorised to undertake on behalf of the Government of India that as soon as the second surcharge comes off as a general measure, the tariff rates on United Kingdom cotton piece goods will be reduced to 20 per cent. *ad valorem* or 8½ annas per pound on plain grey goods, and 20 per cent. *ad valorem* on other goods, provided that on expiry of the period of the agreement of 28th October, 1933, between the Lancashire Delegation and the Millowners' Association, Bombay, the duties on United Kingdom goods for the remaining period of protection will be fixed on a review of conditions then existing and in the light of such experience as may have been gained. By reference to the second surcharge coming off as a general measure is meant the removal of the surcharge on a reasonably large proportion of, not necessarily all, the items now subject to it.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

B. N. MITRA.

*The 9th January, 1935.*

Rt. Hon. W. Runciman, M.P.

No. 3.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter (No. 2) of today's date.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

WALTER RUNCIMAN,

The 9th January, 1935.

Sir B. N. Mitra, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., C.B.E.

### STATEMENTS LAID ON THE TABLE.

Information promised in reply to part (b) of starred question No. 276 asked by Mr. Bhuput Sing on the 30th July, 1934.

#### EXCISE DUTY COLLECTED ON SUGAR.

Amount of excise duty collected on sugar since its imposition till the end of June, 1934... Rs. 6,22,745.

Information promised in reply to parts (c) to (j) of starred question No. 602, asked by Khan Bahadur Haji Wajihuddin on the 14th August, 1934.

#### NEUTRAL CONTROL SECTION OF THE INDIAN RAILWAY CONFERENCE ASSOCIATION.

(c) Yes.

(d) The staff of the Neutral Control Section have been recruited from State and Company-managed Railways and from the open market.

(e) and (f). No. Reductions in the Neutral Control establishment have taken place on only two occasions since its first organization. During this period 28 men have been retrenched and 18 demoted.

(g) The employees transferred from the Railways to the Neutral Control Section do not retain liens on their previous appointments on the railways. It is, therefore, not possible to transfer any of them back to a railway.

(h) The staff concerned were transferred from railways to the Neutral Control Section when retrenchment was going on and if they had not accepted appointments under the Neutral Control Section they would probably have been retrenched.

(i) Retrenchment or demotion in the Neutral Control Section is carried out on the same general principles as have been adopted by the larger railways.

(j) Government are informed that seniority in the Neutral Control Section is determined by the length of service in a particular class.

*Information promised in reply to unstarred question No. 89, asked by Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen, on the 20th August, 1934.*

### ANGLO-INDIAN SHED APPRENTICES ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

(a) This is approximately correct. The exact numbers are 41 shed apprentices and eight apprentice train examiners.

(b) No.

(c), (d) and (e). Government understand that there were four apprentice train examiners on the Howrah Division but on the re-arrangement of the rolling stock staff they were discharged on and from the 4th April, 1934. They were subsequently absorbed as skilled labourers in the electric branch of the rolling stock section on the 9th May, 1934. Three of them were later on absorbed as train examiners on the 27th July, 1934, and the fourth was, at his own request, absorbed in the vacancy of a ticket collector on the 9th July, 1934.

(f) No, as there are no vacancies.

(g) The six shop-trained ex-apprentices, referred to by the Honourable Member, were appointed in the Howrah Division for reasons given by Sir Alan Parsons in reply to question No. 631 (c) asked by Mr. Bhuput Sing in the Legislative Assembly on the 4th March, 1932.

(h) Yes. It does not, however, preclude appointments being made from other sources, if necessary.

(i) The Agent reports: "The shop apprentices do a course of five years as against three years done by apprentice train examiners and they receive a far superior training as compared with the latter both in theory and practice. There were about thirty-six such men on the waiting list from which six were selected so as to have suitable men available in time to come to fill vacancies in the higher grade of train examiners and to hold charge of stations as head train examiners. It is for this reason and also on account of Sir Alan Parsons' assurance given in the Legislative Assembly as quoted in answer to part (g) above that the shop-trained apprentices were appointed".

*Information promised in reply to starred questions Nos. 910 and 911 asked by Khan Sahib Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha on the 30th August, 1934.*

### EMPLOYMENT OF MUSLIMS IN THE INCOME-TAX DEPARTMENT OF THE PUNJAB, NORTH-WEST FRONTIER AND DELHI PROVINCES.

910. (a) A statement is given below showing the number of Muslim gazetted officers in the Income-tax Department, Punjab, North West Frontier and Delhi Provinces, on 1st January, 1927 and 1st January, 1934:

	Total No. of officers.	No. of Muslims.	Percentage.
1st January 1927.	38	6	15.8
1st January 1934	52	14	27

(b) Yes—except that there are 48 gazetted posts and not 38.

(c) Since the beginning of 1933, three Assistant Income-tax Officers have been promoted by seniority to the posts of Income-tax Officers and of these one is a Muslim.

(d), (e) and (f). The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the recent orders of the Government of India published in the Gazette of India, dated the 7th July, 1934, which will govern such appointments in future.

PROMOTIONS IN THE INCOME-TAX DEPARTMENT IN THE PUNJAB NORTH-WEST FRONTIER AND DELHI PROVINCES.

911. (a) No.

(b) There is no qualification by examination for appointment to gazetted ranks. Certain non-gazetted officials are allowed to sit for the departmental examination prescribed for Officers, but this carries no promotion condition.

The concluding part of the question does not arise.

(c) and (d). Do not arise.

*Information promised in reply to starred question No. 913, asked by Mr. B. V. Jadhav on the 30th August, 1934.*

LOCATION OF THE INCOME-TAX OFFICE AT SHOLAPUR.

(a) The Income-tax Office, Sholapur, is situated about a mile from the main Bazar of the city but is within the city limits.

(b) There is no conveyance stand at present, but the Superintendent of Police has promised to provide one in the near future.

(c) Not in all cases.

(d) No.

(e) Rs. 100 per mensem.

(f) Yes.

(g) Yes.

(h) In all, eight premises were seen and the present one, being the most suitable and convenient, was selected.

*Information promised in reply to unstarred question No. 110, asked by Goswami M. R. Puri, on the 30th August, 1934.*

LICENCE FOR COUNTRY WINE RETAIL-SALE AND WHOLE-SALE BOTTLING IN THE PUNJAB AND DELHI.

(a) No, except in Simla and Sultanpur (Kulu) towns. The restriction was imposed because of malpractices found to result in the Punjab from a combination of the two classes of licences.

(b) The Financial Commissioner, Punjab, supplied to the Chief Commissioner, Delhi, a copy of his instructions to the Deputy Commissioners in the Punjab for the disposal of excise shops in their districts, which also embodied the proposal mentioned, but he did not suggest that it should be followed in Delhi.

(c) The instructions were forwarded to the Deputy Commissioner for suggestions for conducting the auction of excise licences in Delhi.

(d) and (f). The proposal was duly considered but, as the conditions obtaining in Delhi differed from those in the Punjab, it was decided not to prohibit the grant of a retail licence and a wholesale licence to one and the same person. Such a step would have caused an unnecessary decrease in licence fees.

(e) Yes.

(g) No. The bottling is done under the supervision of the Excise Sub-Inspector, and no case of adulteration has been discovered.

(h) No. The retail shop licensee is not authorised to stock bottling material on the licensed premises. Moreover, adulteration can be readily detected by the use of the Hydrometer.

### ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT.

**Mr. Chairman** (Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney): In accordance with the provisions of rule 5-A of the Indian Legislative Rules, the House will now proceed to elect a President by ballot. In compliance with the provisions of sub-rule (3) of that rule, I have to announce to Honourable Members that three nomination papers duly filled in have been received by me on behalf of Mr. Tasadduq Ahmad Khan Sherwani, and four nomination papers duly filled in have been received on behalf of Sir Abdur Rahim.

The names of the proposers and seconders of Mr. Sherwani are as follows:

Proposers . . .	{ Mr. S. Satyamurti. Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant. Mr. Asaf Ali.
Seconders . . .	{ Mr. N. V. Gadgil. Mr. Asaf Ali. Munshi Iswar Saran.

The names of the proposers and seconders of Sir Abdur Rahim are as follows:

Proposers . . .	{ Dr. F. X. DeSouza. Maulvi Muhammad Shafi Daudi. Mr. K. L. Gauba. Sir Cowasji Jehangir.
Seconders . . .	{ Nawab Sahibzada Sir Sayad Muhammad Mehr Shah. Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang. Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury. Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad.

Honourable Members will now come up to the table and receive the ballot papers from the Secretary in the order in which I call out their names, and in order better to preserve the secrecy of the ballot, I would invite Honourable Members, on taking the ballot paper, to come into the room behind the Chair, where a table is provided for them, and after recording their votes to hand the ballot papers to the Secretary at the table.

(The ballot was then taken.)

**Mr. Chairman** (Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney): The result of the voting is that Mr. T. A. K. Sherwani has secured 62 votes and Sir Abdur Rahim has secured 70 votes, and one vote for Sir Abdur Rahim I have declared invalid. I, therefore, declare Sir Abdur Rahim to be duly

electd by the Legislative Assembly as its President. (Loud and Prolonged Applause.) All that is necessary now is to secure the approval of His Excellency the Governor General required by sub-section (1) of section 63C of the Government of India Act. In order that the requisite approval may be obtained and communicated to the House before His Excellency addresses this House this afternoon, the House will re-assemble at ten minutes to one of the Clock today, until which time the House stands adjourned.

The Assembly then adjourned till Ten Minutes to One of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled at Ten Minutes to One of the Clock, Mr. Chairman (Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney) in the Chair.

**Mr. Chairman** (Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney): I have received a Message from His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General, which reads as follows:

((The Assembly received the Message standing.))

#### "ORDER.

*In pursuance of the provisions of sub-section (1) of section 63C of the Government of India Act, I, Freeman, Earl of Willingdon, hereby signify that I approve the election by the Legislative Assembly of Sir Abdur Rahim, K.C.S.I., as President of the said Assembly.*

*New Delhi,*

*The 24th January, 1935.*

(Sd.) WILLINGDON,

*Viceroy and Governor General."*

Mr. President, the Message which I have just read out from His Excellency the Governor General now authorises you to come and occupy the Chair. Mr. President, you are no new comer to this Assembly. Your record of public service to the country is one of which anyone and any country would be proud. (Applause.) Your appointment as a Judge of the Madras High Court which lasted for a long period of twelve years has peculiarly well fitted you to occupy this important Chair. Indeed, your record has it that you frequently officiated as Chief Justice of the High Court of Madras. After that, I understand, you were appointed a member of the Public Services Commission where you rendered signal service and after that you were appointed an Executive Councillor of the Bengal Government, which appointment you held for a term of five years. To our memory, you have been with us for nearly four years as Leader of the Independent Party, in which position—I am sure I am voicing the opinion of every one in this House, if I may say so—, you distinguished yourself not only as a Leader, but as one who took a very equitable and

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very clear perception of all important matters that were presented to this House. With such a record, Mr. President, it needs no further words nor persuasion from me when I say I am voicing the opinion of every Honourable Member of this House, that we have no doubt in our minds that you will ever guard jealously the rights and privileges of this House and of the Chair which you are about to occupy. If the reception you will get from this House—and I am sure it will be great—is as warm as was given to me for the few days I had the honour to occupy this Chair and kept it warm for you (Loud Applause), I am sure, Mr. President, your feelings will be so permeated with a warmth of justice and equity that while you will be the friend of all in this House you will eschew all parties and will thus render to this House that great service which everyone in this country expects of you. Mr. President, I now invite you to come and occupy the Chair. (Loud and Prolonged Applause.)

[Mr. Chairman (Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney) then vacated the Chair, which was occupied by Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim, K.C.S.I.) amidst Applause.]

**The Honourable Sir Nripendra Sircar** (Leader of the House): Mr. President, it is my privilege to say a few words of congratulation on your elevation to your high and responsible position as the President of this Assembly. Sir, you have filled the highest judicial and administrative offices in this country, and your political experience also has been so great and so well-known to every Member of this House that I do not feel justified in recapitulating them over again. I am sure, I am voicing the opinion of every section of this House that we have not the slightest doubt, indeed we have the greatest confidence, that the high traditions of this post will be kept up by you and that we shall have nothing but decisions from you arrived at without fear or favour—decisions which will demonstrate to everybody here that you are swayed by no other consideration than the sense of justice and fair play. Mr. President, I offer you congratulations on behalf of this side of the House. (Loud and Prolonged Applause.)

**Mr. B. J. Desai** (Bombay Northern Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Mr. President, if I am the next in order of time in tendering my congratulations to you, they are nonetheless warm and nonetheless sincere. (Applause.) So far as you, Sir, are concerned, though I have not had the advantage of personal friendship, I certainly have known you through those records which have been preserved in the recorded judgments from time to time delivered by you which have evinced a clear mind, almost a stern character and a straightforward method of looking at questions which only even-handed justice inspires, and there is one thing I wish to assure you in offering you my congratulations, namely, that I am one of those—and I hope every other Member of this House shares that feeling—who feel that there is nothing greater in life than to fight without rancour and to lose without bitterness (Loud and Prolonged Applause): and I wish to assure you that every support that personally I myself can give and also those who will otherwise support me in this will be forthcoming freely—and I do not like every time to talk of this side of the House for at all events we have had two occasions on which there is no sense except one of unanimity in the feeling of welcome to



you. (Loud and Prolonged Applause.) I hope and trust that you will occupy this Chair for the full period of its time with energy and vigour and that we shall always look to you every time not merely for justice, but, if I may add a little to it, a certain amount of consideration also for novices like myself so far as legislatures and Legislative Assemblies are concerned. (Laughter.) It is not merely with a sense of humility, but it is with a genuine sense of welcome, Sir, that I look to you and I hope and trust that every section will from now onwards look upon you as entirely above parties and entirely above sides, in fact a little above the House itself: and I hope and trust that you will adorn the Chair with that dignity, that independence and that clarity of perception of which we already have experience and which you are justly reputed to be credited with. (Loud and Prolonged Applause.)

**Sir Cowasjee Jehangir** (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Mr. President, I need hardly say that the Party to which I have the honour to belong congratulates you most sincerely on your occupying this place of honour and dignity. It is superfluous for me to add any more words to our genuine and sincere congratulations. You, Mr. President, have been not only a member of our Party, but our Leader, and no one more than ourselves know your sense of justice, your honesty of purpose and, above all, your strict impartiality. You now belong to no Party, Mr. President, and we say with the greatest confidence, that you are sure to discharge your duties with honour to yourself and credit to the Chair you occupy. (Loud and Prolonged Applause.)

**Mr. M. A. Jinnah** (Bombay City: Muhammadan Urban): Mr. President, I regret very much that accidentally I was delayed; but I entirely endorse the views and the sentiments that have been expressed by the Deputy Leader of the Independent Party. Sir, I hope that in that Chair you will hold the scales even: and I have no doubt that, with your great experience as a Judge for many years and also as Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, there will be fair play in this House so long as you preside over this Assembly. (Loud and Prolonged Applause.)

**Raja Sir Vasudeva Rajah** (Madras: Landholders): Mr. President, on behalf of the Party to which I have the honour to belong, I should like to associate myself and the members of my Party with the expressions of congratulations that have been made on your accession to the Presidential Chair. It is a fitting recognition, Sir, of the eminent services that you have already rendered in various spheres of life both as a Judge of the Madras High Court, as a Chief Justice, as a Member of the Executive Council, Bengal, and also as a Non-Official Member of this Assembly. You are known to everyone of us, and we know exactly what we are expecting of you and we have no hesitation in thinking that you will add further lustre and laurels to the office which you have now been called upon to occupy. I wish you every success in your office. (Loud and Prolonged Applause.)

**Mr. A. H. Ghusnavi** (Dacca cum Mymensingh: Muhammadan Rural): Mr. President, we on this side of the House extend to you our sincere congratulations on your election to the Chair. We feel that you are well qualified by your legal, judicial and administrative experience and also by your familiarity with the practice, procedure and precedents of this

[Mr. A. H. Ghuznavi.]

House to discharge the responsible duties of the high office on which you are entering today. Sir, speaking for myself, it is gratifying to find that for the first time in the history of this Assembly a Bengalee has come to occupy the Chair (*A Voice from the Congress Party Benches*: "An Indian."), and it is all the more pleasing to me that he is a Muslim. (*Cries from the Congress Party Benches*: "Oh!") (*Sir Muhammad Yakub*: "No communalism"). From today you belong to no Party (*"Hear, hear from Congress Party Benches"*), and we have no doubt that you will guide the deliberations of this Assembly and maintain and uphold its traditions, rights, privileges and dignities with impartiality.

**Sir Leslie Hudson** (Bombay: European): Mr. President, it gives me very great pleasure to voice on behalf of myself and of the Honourable Members of the European Group sitting behind me our sincere congratulations on your being elected to the Honourable Chair of this House. It is perhaps a little unfortunate, Sir, that in respect of these speeches of congratulations—and on other occasions in respect of speeches from the Leaders of the various Groups—I come at the end of the line, and, therefore, I find myself a little "cribbed, cabined and confined" in the matter of language. But, believe me, those encomiums which have been passed on you by the other Honourable Members who have spoken before me are fully endorsed by myself. We know your qualities of head and heart; we know the long Parliamentary experience you have had and also your wide judicial experience. We are quite sure that the rights of every Honourable Member in this House will be safe in your very capable hands and we trust that you will enjoy good health throughout the period to which you have been called to that Chair. (Applause.)

**Mr. M. S. Aney** (Berar Representative): Mr. President, I wish to associate myself and the Party I represent with all that has been said in praise of you. I need not refer to the services you have rendered as a public man both as a member of the Public Service Commission as well as a legislator and a Leader of an important Party in this House. I also need not refer to the experience which you have gained and the legal acumen which you have displayed as a Judge of the High Court. All these things have eminently fitted you for the high office which you are occupying now, and I have no doubt that in you the rights and privileges of this House are safe. I am sure the House will always get from you the correct lead and proper guidance whenever it needs it during the term it shall be your good fortune to occupy this high office. I wish to congratulate you, Sir, once more on behalf of my Party. (Applause.)

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I greatly appreciate the confidence which the House has placed in me by electing me to the Chair. I fully realise the great responsibilities attached to this office, and I need hardly assure you that I shall strive my best to discharge my duties to your satisfaction. I am a confirmed believer in Parliamentary institutions and I assure you that it will be my constant endeavour to guide the deliberations of this House in a way which will best lead to the development of Parliamentary institutions in this country. (Applause.) I need hardly assure you that in discharging my duties I shall be strictly impartial to all sections of the House and all views that the Honourable Members of this House may hold. (Applause.) I know that at times when feelings may be excited on particular questions, the Chair will be

called upon to keep order, and I hope and trust that all sections of the House and all Honourable Members individually will give me abundant co-operation in discharging my difficult duties. I need hardly tell you that I am greatly sensible of the onerous duties which I shall have to discharge as the occupant of the Chair, and I hope it will be given to me with your help and co-operation to uphold the dignity of the Chair, its usefulness and its authority. I feel sure from what I know of you and have seen of you during these few days that I shall receive all the co-operation that may be necessary in guiding and conducting the proceedings with dignity and in harmonious order. I do not think it is necessary that I should say anything more except that I am extremely obliged to all those Honourable Members who, representing different sections of the House, have said about me, the kind words they have uttered and the confidence they have expressed in me and I shall strive my best to deserve that confidence which they have reposed in me in the fullest measure possible. I thank all those Honourable Members who have spoken such kind words very cordially and I thank every Member of the House for the confidence placed in me by electing me to this office.

Now, I shall ask the Honourable the Leader of the House to make a statement of the business for the next week.

#### STATEMENT OF BUSINESS.

**The Honourable Sir Nripendra Sircar** (Leader of the House): With your permission, Sir, I desire to make a statement as to the probable course of Government business in the week beginning Monday, the 28th January. It was originally proposed that the 28th, 29th and 30th should be placed at the disposal of the House for the discussion of a motion on the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee. It has, however, been ascertained that it will be more acceptable to the House that the debate should be taken in the following week. Arrangements will accordingly be made for the motion on the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee to be debated on Monday the 4th, Wednesday the 6th, and either Saturday, the 9th February or Monday, the 11th February. It has not been possible to provide business for the whole of next week, but it is thought that Members will not be averse to having some spare time to prepare for the constitutional debate in the following week.

The following business will be taken on Monday and Tuesday, the 28th and 29th January. On Monday, motions will be made to set up the Emigration Committee, the Education, Health and Lands Departmental Committee, the Hedjaz Pilgrimage Committee and the Industries and Labour Departmental Committee. It is expected that the Payment of Wages Bill and the Hedjaz Pilgrim Guides Bill will be ready for introduction on that day. Thereafter, motions will be made to refer to Select Committee the Indian Mines (Amendment) Bill which was introduced on the second day of the Session and for the consideration and passing of the Bill to amend the Indian Naturalization Act which was also introduced on the same day. On Tuesday, the 29th, a motion will be moved by the Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore to take into consideration the Trade Agreement concluded on the 9th January between the Government of India and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, the 28th January, 1935.

## SPEECH DELIVERED TO THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY.

His Excellency the Viceroy having arrived in procession with the Honourable the President of the Legislative Assembly took his seat on the Dais at Three of the Clock.

**His Excellency the Viceroy:** Gentlemen, in rising to greet Honourable Members to this, the first Session of a New Assembly, my first very pleasant duty is to congratulate you warmly, Mr. President, on your election to your important and responsible post. With some knowledge of your activities during long years of public service, I am confident that you will carry out your duties with fairness and justice to every Honourable Member of this Assembly, and I am equally confident that I can rely on every Honourable Member giving his full support to the Chair.

My next duty is to welcome to the Legislative Assembly those who have been elected by their constituencies to represent their interests. Many of those who were Members in the Assembly when I last addressed it have failed to secure re-election, and though I and my colleagues cannot but regret the absence of those with whom we have been so closely associated during the life-time of the last Assembly, our welcome to those who have taken their places is none the less sincere. I trust that closer association with my Government will make those of you who come to this House for the first time appreciate more fully the difficult nature of the problems with which we all are called upon to deal, and that discussions, whether formal or informal, will make you realise that even though we may differ as to methods, we all have before us the same ideal, the welfare and advancement of India.

Before I pass on to refer in greater detail to some of the matters which will engage your attention during the Session, I must touch on one matter which falls outside the realm of politics or political controversy. The year 1935 marks the twentyfifth anniversary of His Majesty the King-Emperor's accession to the Throne. It is in accordance with His Majesty's wishes that May 6th is to be a day of special thanksgiving throughout the Empire. Local Governments and the local Committees which they are constituting will, I feel sure, receive the cordial support of members of all communities, classes and creeds in carrying out their thanksgiving celebrations in the manner most appropriate to the locality. You will also have seen the Public Appeal which I issued a few weeks ago, with the gracious approval of His Majesty, suggesting that in commemoration of this auspicious occasion a fund should be raised in India for charitable purposes and to be devoted to four institutions of an All-India character, which are well known to all classes in the country as a constant source of relief to cases of suffering and want. The very ready response which was given to the appeal to relieve the distress caused by the Earthquake a year ago makes me hope that once again the Princes and Peoples of India will give proof of their devotion to the Crown and of their generosity to those in need of assistance. I profoundly hope that all Members of the Assembly will do their share in helping on this work.

May I also say that I am glad to think that, at the very outset of their association with the Indian Legislature, Honourable Members will have an opportunity of seeing something of the work of the Army during the course of the manoeuvres that are now taking place in the vicinity of Delhi. It

has always been the view of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, and it is one in which I entirely concur, that the representatives of the tax-payer should have every right to see in every sphere as much as they can of the way in which their money is spent.

It is my custom on this occasion to give you a general survey of the situation in India under the various heads of our administration and to inform you of such legislative measures as we propose to lay before you for your consideration, in addition to the Railway and General Budgets which are always brought up for discussion at this Session.

Let me commence by saying that, as regards Foreign Affairs, India's relations with her neighbours continue to be friendly and peaceful. The question of the undemarcated frontier between Burma and China to which I referred when I last addressed the Members of the Assembly appears to be on its way to a satisfactory solution by means of a Boundary Commission which I hope will meet before very long.

I also look forward within the next few days to receiving a visit from His Highness the Maharaja of Nepal as the guest of the Government of India. You will all I am sure join me in extending a hearty welcome to our distinguished guest.

In the course of my address to the two Houses of the Central Legislature, last August, I referred to the position of Indians in Zanzibar. Mr. Menon, who was deputed by my Government to this territory in order to study the effect of the legislation in question, presented his report at the end of September. A special meeting of the Standing Emigration Committee of the Central Legislature was summoned in the middle of November to consider the report. In full agreement with the advice of the Committee, which endorsed the recommendations of Mr. Menon, representations were made to His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies. In view of the close connection between debts and the security on which they have been advanced, we have, acting on Mr. Menon's advice, decided to defer final comment on the Land Alienation Decree until the Commission appointed by the Government of Zanzibar to report on the question of indebtedness has reported. As regards legislation relating to the clove trade, which appears to be of immediate and far-reaching menace to Indian trading interests, we have suggested drastic revision. The comments of the Resident in Zanzibar, to whom the Colonial Office referred Mr. Menon's report, have been recently received. Both the report and the comments will be published shortly. Meanwhile, I would like to give Honourable Members the assurance that the Government of India will continue to do their utmost to secure that the interests of the Indian community, which has a long and honourable record of association with Zanzibar, are fully safeguarded.

Honourable Members will be aware of the anxiety which leaders of the Indian community in Kenya have for some time voiced regarding legislation to regulate the marketing of Native produce in that territory which they expected would be introduced. Profiting by Mr. Menon's deputation to Zanzibar, my Government secured the concurrence of the Colonial Office to Mr. Menon's investigating the operation of similar legislation in Uganda and Tanganyika, where it has been in force for some time, and to assess its probable effect upon Indian interests in Kenya. On the basis of the report which Mr. Menon submitted representations were made early in

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November. Honourable Members will be glad to learn that, pending consideration of Mr. Menon's views, progress with the Bill, which the Government of Kenya had gazetted, has been deferred.

Before leaving the subject of Indians overseas, I wish to refer to the impending change in the office of Agent of the Government of India in South Africa. For domestic reasons Kunwar Sir Maharaj Singh has decided to return to India a few months before the expiry of the normal term, which is three years. My Government will be sorry to lose his services. His successor, the Honourable Syed Raza Ali, who is known to many of you personally, has already served in the Union as member of a deputation which the Government of India sent there in the difficult days when the Class Areas Bill was under consideration. His previous knowledge of the country and general experience as a man of affairs should enable him to continue with success the work of his distinguished predecessors.

Honourable Members cannot but be familiar with, probably many of them have participated in, the discussions and enquiries which are afoot regarding India's educational system. I am not one of those who feel that the present system has served no useful purpose, that it is an unmixed evil. Social and economic changes, not to mention political changes, create conditions which necessitate an overhaul of educational as of other activities. They are signs of a progressive national life; not necessarily accusers of what has been or exists. My Government welcome the keen interest which educational problems have aroused throughout India; the profound attention which they are receiving from Local Governments, from educationists, from leading public personalities. The constitutional framework has made Education the responsibility of Provincial Ministers and local Legislatures. This is as it should be. But education is at the very root of national prosperity. The Government of India cannot, therefore, be disinterested and aloof spectators. They may no longer direct or control; they can help to provide machinery which will facilitate and promote interchange of ideas and information. For this purpose my Government have decided to revive the Educational Advisory Board from the next financial year. The Assembly will be approached in due course to vote funds for the expenditure involved.

During its last Session the Assembly approved the proposal of my Government to locate the Imperial Institute of Agricultural Research in a more central place. A suitable site has been finally chosen for the purpose, and I hope to lay the foundation-stone of the building next month. The new Institute, when ready, will be within easy reach of this Chamber. Honourable Members from all parts of India will thus be able, without the effort or inconvenience of a tedious journey, to familiarise themselves with the work of the Institute for India's staple industry.

The Imperial Council of Agricultural Research has continued its efforts to assist, co-ordinate and guide agricultural research throughout India and its help has been appreciated and utilised to a steadily increasing degree. As you are aware the Hyderabad, Mysore and Baroda States have participated in the work of the Research Council and contributed to its funds for some time past. Recently the Travancore, Cochin and Bhopal States have joined the Research Council and undertaken to make suitable contributions to its exchequer. At the present moment perhaps most interest attaches to the steps which have been taken with the object of improving financial return to the cultivator for his enterprise. When I

addressed the House last August I referred in some detail to the steps which my Government was taking for improvements in the marketing of agricultural produce. I mentioned, in particular, our intention to initiate, at as early a date as possible, marketing surveys for certain main groups of commodities, viz., cereals, oilseeds, fruit and vegetables, fibres and tobacco, dairy produce and poultry, livestock and livestock products. Since then the Public Service Commission has been engaged on the recruitment of 17 central marketing officers and assistant marketing officers, and these gentlemen are expected to take up their duties under the Marketing Expert early next month. The details of the provincial sections of the scheme have also been completed and work will start almost immediately in the various Provinces. Simultaneously with the commodity surveys, the existing markets both primary and terminal will be studied and also the results of the previous efforts which have been made to organise producers and improve the markets open to them. It gives me great pleasure to add that we have also been assured of the active co-operation of a number of Indian States in the carrying out of this important project and that several of them are appointing special marketing staffs of their own for the purpose. As each survey is completed the practical conclusions to which they are designed to lead will be examined in consultation with Local Governments, so that active development work for the improvement of marketing may be undertaken without delay.

For simplicity in administration and the convenience of the public, the Marketing Expert to the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research has been designated Agricultural Marketing Adviser to the Government of India and a separate office created and attached to the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research Department.

Another matter which came under consideration at the Provincial Economic Conference in April 1934 was the improvement and development of the dairy industry in India—a question of first-class importance to producers and consumers alike. In these days when world markets appear to be too well supplied with every kind of grain, the better development of livestock industries is an avenue of progress which cannot be neglected. In any attempt to develop the dairy industry it is particularly important that better methods of marketing and technical improvements in the industry should be introduced simultaneously. This question also has been studied by the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research and proposals have recently been approved by Government under which the Imperial Institute of Animal Husbandry and Dairying at Bangalore will be supplemented by a Dairy Industry Institute including a model creamery and a laboratory for research on the physical and chemical properties of Indian milk and its utilisation. Various methods of processing and transporting milk under Indian conditions will be studied experimentally as well as the manufacture of condensed milk, milk powder, casein and other milk products including butter and ghee. In this manner we hope to give a definite stimulus to developments which should improve the supply of milk and milk products to the general population, specially in the towns, and be of financial benefit to a large number of Indian agriculturists.

Our general proposals in regard to both the marketing and dairying schemes have already received the approval of the Standing Finance Committee. During the debates on the Sugar Excise Bill which was passed into Law last April Government accepted a recommendation of the Select Committee of this House that adequate provision should be made for scientific



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and technological research designed to assist the Indian Sugar Industry and thus repeated the assurances given when the Sugar Industry Protection Act was passed in 1932. In fulfilment of this promise my Government have now approved the broad outlines of a scheme for a Central Sugar Institute prepared by the Sugar Committee of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research. This Institute is intended to provide for research work in sugar technology, suitable training for scientific and technical staff and for technological assistance and advice to the industry. The Sugar Committee recommended that the Central Institute should be established at Cawnpore and if possible the existing Sugar section of the Harcourt Butler Technological Institute should be expanded to the extent required. Not only is Cawnpore a very suitable Centre for this purpose, but the Harcourt Butler Technological Institute is already the headquarters of the Sugar Technologist and the experimental sugar factory maintained by the Research Council in co-operation with the United Provinces Government. I am glad to say that the provisional concurrence of the United Provinces Government in these proposals has been secured, and we are now at work on details. The need for building up a really efficient Indian sugar industry during the 15-year period for which tariff protection has been given by the Legislature is self-evident, and I need hardly emphasise the essential part which scientific research and properly organised technical instruction must play in that process.

In the Posts and Telegraphs Department the past year has seen some notable extensions of the trunk telephone system of India, and my Government intend to pursue their policy of expansion actively, as they feel that this rapid and effective means of communication must be of great benefit to the commercial community. You may be interested to hear that the Department, under the instructions of my Government, is now making arrangements to issue a special series of commemoration stamps in connection with the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of His Imperial Majesty the King-Emperor.

The great developments which have taken place in the last two months show the increasing importance of air transport in this country. A new air mail service was inaugurated in December between Karachi and Lahore, which will make connection with the Imperial Airways Service at Karachi and so bring the people of North-West India into closer relations with western countries. An even more striking development has been the duplication, at the beginning of this month, of the Imperial Airways Service from Croydon to Karachi. I am glad to be able to say that this duplication has been supplemented, in a praiseworthy spirit of co-operation, by the companies operating our internal air services. The trans-India service to Calcutta has been duplicated, and the duplication carried on from Calcutta to Rangoon. The feeder services to Madras and to Lahore have also been duplicated. As a result of these expansions, the whole of India has now the benefit of two air mail services a week, and I trust that these increased facilities will be a factor in improving Indian trade.

You will have gathered from statements which have appeared in the Press that His Majesty's Government have now under consideration a scheme of the very highest importance for the introduction of an Empire Air Mail Service, the adoption of which would bring about far the greatest single advance which has yet been made in the speed and frequency of air services and incidentally bring India into much closer contact with



Empire countries, and with other countries lying on or near the Empire air routes. My Government fully realise the extent to which India is concerned in these proposals, and the part it is desirable that she should take in any scheme of Empire air routes. I am not in a position at the moment to say more than that they are giving the scheme their most serious consideration.

In connection with Road Development, two important events have occurred recently. In December last an Indian Roads Congress was held, which was attended by Engineers from all Provinces and important States in India and by a number of business-men, professionally interested in road-making. The object of the Congress was to enable those concerned with the technical aspects of road construction to pool their experience and to learn how the problems which confront them have been attacked and solved in other parts of India. I understand that the general impression amongst those who attended the Congress was that this was successfully achieved, and that it was felt that the meeting should be the first of a series which will keep road engineers in close touch with those methods of road-making which have proved of value and enable them to avoid methods which have proved failures in the past.

The Road Congress was followed in January by the first meeting of the Transport Advisory Council, a body of an entirely different character and with a different purpose. It consisted of the Ministers in charge of Roads in the Provinces or their representatives, with one or two technical advisers; and its function was to arrive at a considered statement of policy which could be generally acted upon by the Provinces for the furtherance of the co-ordinated development of road, rail and other forms of transport, a purpose which all must admit is of the very highest importance. I am glad to be able to say that the Council was able to formulate a statement of policy which covers many, if not all, of the major problems now facing us in connection with this very difficult subject, and that they also indicated definite lines for further investigation. This statement of policy will now be placed by my Government before the Provincial Governments, and I trust that it will not be long before it is in active operation and that it will prove of great economic benefit to the whole country.

While constitutional issues naturally tend to occupy the leading place in our minds at present, the consideration of these should not hamper us in pursuing reforms in other directions. The Whitley Commission, after quoting John Bright's maxim that "the nation in every country dwells in the cottage", added that the well-being of the people must be the primary concern of every Government, whatever its composition. The same is true of every Legislature, and it is satisfactory to find on looking back that, although Legislative Assemblies have varied considerably in composition and outlook, they have all agreed in pursuing legislation designed to protect and ameliorate the condition of labour. We are at present pursuing an important programme of labour legislation, which follows the general lines suggested by the Whitley Commission, and some Bills arising directly or indirectly out of that Commission's recommendations will come up for your consideration. One of these Bills is designed mainly to prevent certain abuses relating to the payment of wages and represents a beginning for India of what is known elsewhere as "truck legislation". A Bill for this purpose was introduced in the preceding Assembly and circulated for opinions. After these were received, a motion

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for Select Committee was tabled, but it was unfortunately not reached. We have used the interval to attempt ourselves to incorporate a number of changes suggested by the opinions, and thereby to facilitate further progress, and the new Bill accordingly represents a revised edition of the old one: I commend it to your careful consideration. A second Labour Bill which has already been introduced involves a revision of the main labour provisions of the Indian Mines Act: it includes proposals for reducing maximum hours and for raising substantially the minimum age for employment in mines.

Two further Bills owe a certain amount of inspiration to the Whitley Commission, although they do not fall within the category of labour legislation, but have a wider aim. They both seek to amend the Civil Procedure Code in respect of the execution of decrees and they are both designed for the protection of debtors. The problem of indebtedness has been very prominently before the public in recent years, and in some Provinces bold legislative experiments are being essayed in the endeavour to alleviate what is undoubtedly a grave weakness of our economic system. Our proposals are more modest in scope and aim at ensuring that the law cannot be invoked to enforce undue hardship on those who become embarrassed. The most important provision of one of these Bills extends protection from attachment to all salaries not exceeding Rs. 100 per month, while the object of the other is to protect honest judgment-debtors from imprisonment for debt.

We are now in the sixth year of the economic depression which fell like a blight on world trade and commerce in 1929. Our hopes of better times have been disappointed too often in the past few years to warrant more than a measure of cautious optimism for the immediate future, but we in India may at least take comfort from the fact that the recovery in our foreign trade which manifested itself last year is still being maintained, while the recent improvement in railway traffic may fairly be regarded as significant of better things to come. But the full restoration of prosperity to India does not depend on India alone. So long as the natural flow of world trade is interrupted, or diverted into artificial channels, for so long will the process of recovery be retarded. It is unfortunate that some of the best of our customers for the raw and semi-manufactured products of India have been driven, by sheer necessity, to adopt expedients to balance their trade exchanges which a few years ago would have been unthinkable. But whatever opinion we may have of the wisdom of systems of quotas and exchange restrictions, we cannot but recognise the stern logic of facts and the practical difficulties which lie in the path to recovery. In particular, the financial embarrassments of Germany have called into being a régime of import and exchange control which may have serious repercussions on India's export trade in many important staples. This is a problem which has been receiving the most earnest consideration of the Government of India. It is a problem which is capable of no facile solution, but I am hopeful that my Government, with the co-operation and advice of the commercial interests mainly concerned, will evolve a solution which will be as satisfactory in the ultimate, as in the immediate, interests of India.

As Honourable Members of this House are no doubt aware, the Trade Agreement between India and the United Kingdom which was concluded

at Ottawa in 1932 related only to such goods as were subject to non-protective or non-concessional rates of duty. There was signed on the 9th of this month a Supplementary Agreement between the Government of India and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom which covers the important field of protected commodities which was left untouched by the main Agreement of 1932. It is in the nature of things that the later Agreement should differ in its character from the earlier one. It relates not so much to the tariff treatment of specific commodities as to the general principles governing the exercise of our present policy of discriminating protection. It is the hope of my Government that the clear and unequivocal statement of their tariff policy contained in the new Agreement will remove any lingering doubts, or suspicions, and help to inaugurate an era of good-will and friendliness with profound benefit to the trade and political relations of Great Britain and India.

The separation of Burma from India is an issue of prime importance from many points of view; but I would refer here to one aspect of the question only. If and when Burma separates, there will arise the problem of the future trade relations of two countries which, up to the moment of separation, have been in the closest possible economic union. It is of equal importance to both countries that there should be no abrupt discontinuity or dislocation of their mutual trade, and it is therefore essential to provide against such a contingency. You will, I think, agree that it would be unreasonable to pass on to two responsible Governments a ready-made régime which would fetter in perpetuity, or for any considerable period, their powers and discretion to formulate, and put into operation, a tariff policy in consonance with their own particular circumstances. At the same time the period of transition and adaptation to new conditions will be a difficult one, and I believe that it will be a service to both countries if there is prescribed a régime governing the mutual trade of India and Burma for a limited period after separation. Within that limited period it should be possible for both Governments to take stock of their position and to negotiate freely, and on their own responsibility, a fresh agreement in the best interests of those whom they represent. The nature of the temporary régime is the subject of conversations between my Government and representatives of the Government of Burma. In a matter of so vital importance to commerce and industry in India, we have sought the advice of representatives of those interests, and the views which they have expressed will receive the fullest consideration of my Government in the negotiation of any agreement or convention.

In speeches I have made since the publication of the Joint Select Committee's Report I have expressed myself generally on the scheme of constitutional reform, but I feel that in addressing Honourable Members on this subject I have a special message to deliver, in order that I may give expression to thoughts on which my mind has dwelt far longer than is perhaps realised. My association with India now dates back so many years that I can without presumption lay before you reflections based on my own experience. For that reason, speaking as the head of the administration in India, I hope I may be allowed to strike a more personal note than is usual in these addresses.

I would ask you in the first place when you turn over in your thoughts the scheme of constitutional reform now embodied in a Bill to fix your attention on the broad lines on which it is planned. Place on one side

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for the moment the arguments and discussions of recent years, the evidence and the memoranda, the documents and the reports, in short all the literature of the reforms. Free your minds of these, and let your thoughts centre on the great principles which have increasingly asserted themselves, until they have dominated the scheme. They are the foundations on which the scheme is built, Provincial Autonomy in British India and a Federation comprising the whole Continent. I can remember the time when Federation was discussed as a visionary dream, something in the remote future, something distant and scarcely practicable. Gradually it has taken shape, it has come nearer. Honourable Members with as close a knowledge of India's political history as my own will remember that the authors of the Joint Report of 1917 were not content with sketching an immediate scheme of reforms. They let their minds run on into what the future might bring. What was it they saw before them, when they assumed the mantle of prophecy? Let me take their own words: "India was to be a sisterhood of self-governing States, presided over by a Central Government occupied with matters of common interest, external and internal. The units were not to be the Provinces alone. With them there were to be associated the Indian States anxious to contribute to the common service, but sensitive to maintain their own individuality". In 1917 these thoughts were expressed as a conception of the future, something to aim at, something not yet within reach. But where do we stand now?

Never should we forget the contribution of the Princes at the first Round Table Conference when they declared their readiness to enter an All-India Federation. The appeal of this great principle was irresistible. The Princes rose to the occasion. What was till then scarcely more than a picture of a possible future was transformed at once into something substantial on which to build. Here at last were the real foundations on which to construct a scheme embodying the essential unity of India. Look back over India's history to the time before the British connection established itself. This dream of a dominion extending its authority from one end of the Continent to the other from age to age seized the mind and gripped the imagination of the great rulers of the past. We, the British in India, have brought peace and ordered government over a long period of years. Under our hand the political life of the country has grown and expanded. New ideas of public and personal liberty have been encouraged and have taken root. But in a Federation of all India I see the coping stone of British achievement. I can confidently assert that this ideal with its necessary corollary of Provincial Autonomy should command the support of all, both British and Indian, who honestly desire the advancement of India in the successive stages of her political development.

But if this is our objective, how is it to be reached? The answer will be found in the Report of the Select Committee and in the Bill presented by His Majesty's Government to Parliament. Years of thought and careful investigation have been given to the preparation of the scheme in all its multifarious and complicated details. It is no easy road that leads to Federation. The higher we set our aim, the more numerous the difficulties to surmount. But that is no reason why we should be deterred. Do not imagine for a moment that it is possible to construct so great a scheme of political advance with as much ease and exactness as an

architect can command in planning or altering a house. There are many diversities of taste, many varieties of ambition, of which account has to be taken when a new constitution is planned. Let us as practical men recognise that in any large and general question differences of opinion must exist. Take the question of reservations and safeguards, to which especially Indian criticism has been directed. In a sense these safeguards are themselves a measure of the advance intended. Were the transfer of power contemplated by His Majesty's Government so small, so exiguous a thing as critics are apt to suggest, the need for safeguards would scarcely have been raised. It is because the transfer of power is real, both in range and in substance, that caution demands safeguards to carry us safely from one system of government to another. Is the inclusion of safeguards an unreasonable or unfriendly act? Surely this would be a narrow and a prejudiced view. We owe an acknowledgment to the Select Committee for helping to put the constitutional safeguards, for instance, the special powers of the Governor General and the Governors, in their true light as the necessary complement, in present conditions, to responsible government, without which it could have small hope of success.

In other directions also the scheme is criticised. For instance, it is suggested in some quarters that a sinister motive underlies the substitution of indirect for direct election to the Federal Legislature. It is no secret that I personally and my Government supported the principle of direct election. That does not mean that we do not recognise that there are cogent arguments on the other side. After balancing the considerations the Committee decided in favour of indirect election. But mark their words. They have said in the most explicit terms that they do not think it possible for Parliament to lay down today the exact method of constituting the Central Legislature for any long period of time. They express the hope that, after time has passed for experience to be gained, the Federal Legislature, if Indian opinion thinks modification is required, will lay its own proposals before Parliament. We cannot anticipate the decision Parliament will reach on this important question; but advocate as I have always been of direct election, I do not feel that what the Committee wrote on the subject should leave Indians with a sense of grievance.

Some of those who criticise the proposals admit that Indian disagreements have contributed to the sufficiently formidable difficulty of framing a constitution on so vast a scale. Undoubtedly these disagreements have influenced the form of the proposals. But be it remembered to the credit of His Majesty's Government that they have at no time allowed disagreements among Indians to impede the paths of reform. Of this no better illustration could be given than the Communal Decision undertaken by His Majesty's Government solely for the reason that the communities were unable to agree among themselves.

A constitutional scheme prepared in these conditions may not be ideally perfect. Were that the test to be applied, all human action would be impeded and no human institution would be commendable. But I am satisfied that the scheme gives to India the opportunity, to which she so earnestly aspires, to mould her future nearer to her heart's desire. Parliament may make modifications in this or that direction during the period while the scheme is under their consideration in the ensuing months. Let Indian leaders work to secure changes or improvements on

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points to which they attach importance. But I counsel them in all earnestness to take the scheme as the only path likely in any period of time that we can yet foresee to bring within their reach the great ideal of an All-India Federation, my faith in which I have just expressed. If, as I confidently hope, the proposals of His Majesty's Government are accepted by Parliament, on whom lies the final responsibility, I look to this country to respond with no uncertain voice to the opportunity offered. It has always been my ambition to see India take her position on terms of complete equality with the other members of the British Commonwealth. As her problems differ from those of other parts of the Empire, so too may her constitution take a form different from constitutions elsewhere. But I am convinced that the path to Federation is the path that leads to India's sure advance. The constitutional scheme that takes India on that road is a scheme well-worth the exercise of her best exertions.

With these words I leave you to your labours, and it is my earnest prayer that a Divine Providence may, in the momentous days that lie ahead of us, guide us all in the discharge of our several responsibilities.  
(Loud Applause.)