

Thursday, 26th March, 1936

# THE COUNCIL OF STATE DEBATES

VOLUME I, 1936

*(15th February to 25th April, 1936)*

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## ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE THIRD COUNCIL OF STATE, 1936



PUBLISHED BY MANAGER OF PUBLICATIONS, DELHI  
PRINTED BY THE MANAGER, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, NEW DELHI  
1936.

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# COUNCIL OF STATE.

*Thursday, 26th March, 1936.*

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

## STATEMENT LAID ON THE TABLE.

### ORDER OF FINANCIAL COMMISSIONER, PUNJAB, DISPENSING WITH LICENCE FORM L-10—SALE OF FOREIGN LIQUOR.

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. J. RAISMAN (Government of India : Nominated Official) : Sir, I lay on the table the information promised in reply to question No. 29 asked by the Honourable Mr. P. N. Saprú on the 26th February, 1936.

(a) Yes.

(b) (i) and (ii). In Delhi L-10 shops compete with country spirit shops by selling cheap brands of foreign liquor at a price nearly equivalent to that charged for the sale of country spirit. If L-2 licenses are granted to these shops it will strengthen their position and they would be able to undersell country spirit shops, which would cause heavy loss to excise revenue.

(iii) No. Licensees holding licenses in Form L-2 are persons of approved respectability who deal largely with members of the wealthier classes, and consequently maintain larger establishments in order to run their shops. The expenses of L-10 licensees in running their shops are very small since they are not required to keep a big business and large establishment, and they can usually compete with country liquor shops by selling cheap brands of foreign liquor at low prices. The condition therefore of L-10 and L-2 licenses are very different.

## MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : Honourable Members, I have a Message from His Excellency the Governor General. I received this Message only ten minutes ago. His Excellency says :

" Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herewith a Message to the Council of State together with the Finance Bill bearing my recommendation endorsed thereon.

*Yours sincerely,*

(Sd.) WILLINGDON "

This Recommendation is :

" Whereas the Legislative Assembly has failed to pass in the form recommended by me the Bill to fix the duty on salt manufactured in, or imported by land into, certain parts of British India, to fix maximum rates of postage under the Indian Post Office Act, 1898, and to fix rates of income-tax and super-tax, a copy of which Bill in the form recommended by me is hereto annexed ;

Now, therefore, I, Freeman, Earl of Willingdon, in exercise of the power conferred by sub-section (1) of section 67B of the Government of India Act, do hereby certify that the passage of the said Bill is essential for the interests of British India.

(Sd.) WILLINGDON,

*Viceroy and Governor General."*

*The 26th March, 1936.*

"In pursuance of the provisions of sub-section (1) of section 67B of the Government of India Act, I, Freeman, Earl of Willingdon, do recommend to the Council of State that it do pass the Bill to fix the duty on salt manufactured in, or imported by land into, certain parts of British India, to fix maximum rates of postage under the Indian Post Office Act, 1898, and to fix rates of income-tax and super-tax, in the form hereto annexed.

(Sd.) WILLINGDON,

*Viceroy and Governor General."*

*The 26th March, 1936.*

(The Message was received by the Honourable Members, standing.)

### INDIAN FINANCE BILL LAID ON THE TABLE.

SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL : Sir, in pursuance of the provisions of section 67B of the Government of India Act, I lay on the table a copy of the Bill to fix the duty on salt manufactured in, or imported by land into, certain parts of British India, to fix maximum rates of postage under the Indian Post Office Act, 1898, and to fix rates of income-tax and super-tax, which the Legislative Assembly has failed to pass in the form recommended by the Governor General and which has been certified under the provisions of the same section by the Governor General as essential for the interests of British India.

### STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE.

THE HONOURABLE MR. T. A. STEWART (Commerce Secretary) : Sir, I move :

"That this Council do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct, two non-official Members to serve on the Standing Committee to advise on subjects in the Department of Commerce".

The Motion was adopted.

### STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE INDIAN POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT.

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. G. CLOW (Industries and Labour Secretary) : Sir, I move :

"That this Council do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct, two non-official Members to serve on the Standing Advisory Committee for the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department".

The Motion was adopted.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : With reference to the Motions which have just been adopted by the Council I have to announce that nominations to the Standing Committees will be received by the Secretary up to eleven o'clock on Monday, the 30th March, 1936, and the date for elections, if necessary, will be announced later.



## RESOLUTION *RE* REDUCTION OF HOURS OF WORK.

The HONOURABLE MR. A. G. CLOW (Industries and Labour Secretary) :  
Sir, I move :

" That this Council, having considered the draft Convention adopted by the Nineteenth Session of the International Labour Conference concerning the reduction of hours of work to 40 a week, recommends to the Governor General in Council that he do not ratify the Convention ".

This Resolution and the following one which stands in my name relate to the deliberations of the last session of the International Labour Conference. I have had circulated to Honourable Members the Report of the Government of India's delegates on that Conference. They will find appended to that Report the results of the Conference. This Convention is in one respect the most simple and in other respects the most difficult Convention that has ever been adopted at the Conference. It is simple in that it is extremely short and, on the face of it, easy to understand. There is only one operative article which I take the liberty of reading to the House. The other articles are formal. It reads :

" Each Member of the International Labour Organisation which ratifies this Convention declares its approval of :

- (a) the principle of a forty-hour week applied in such a manner that the standard of living is not reduced in consequence ; and
- (b) the taking or facilitating of such measures as may be judged appropriate to secure this end ;

and undertakes to apply this principle to classes of employment in accordance with the detailed provisions to be prescribed by such separate Conventions as are ratified by that Member ".

As the concluding words " such separate Conventions as are ratified by that Member " show, this Convention by itself imposes no direct obligation. It is, I suppose, in theory possible to ratify this Convention and then to decline to ratify the subsequent Conventions. But I think the House will agree that that would be an entirely dishonest proceeding and that the obvious intention of the Convention is that if you accept the principle you accept the subsequent Conventions, unless in the case of some particular industry or industries you have special national reasons for not doing so.

So far it is quite plain sailing. Then two perplexing points arise, and the first is this, that at Washington a Convention was adopted for a 48-hour week and has so far failed to secure general acceptance. It has not been ratified by the majority of countries. Why then is the International Labour Organisation now pressing for a 40-hour week before the 48-hour position has been consolidated ? This is the first perplexing point and the second is—how is this system going to realise the object in view ? Now, I think I can explain the first point by reference to the antecedents of this Convention, but I must confess that I am not able to explain the second one. The Washington Convention proceeded mainly from the conception of preventing excessive hours of work. The same conception underlies our own labour legislation, the feeling that the hours of work in the interest of the man working should not exceed a certain length and that he should have reasonable leisure to develop his life. This Convention proceeds from rather a different idea, because the basic motive underlying it is the hope that it will reduce unemployment. It is looking rather to the men out of work than to the men in work, and the idea with

which it started is that if you spread hours you will bring more men into employment. In one or two countries, and particularly in the United States, a good deal of attention has been given to what is called technological unemployment, which means the unemployment created by the introduction of mechanisation and rationalisation. The fact is that in some cases two or three men can do what required a hundred men to do before—and in consequence the idea naturally suggested itself—why not spread hours and thereby absorb the men thrown out of employment?

That brings us up against the bigger perplexity that I mentioned second. If you are going to reduce hours as a means of spreading employment, the obvious way is to reduce wages too. It involves a sharing out of hours and wages. If you have 3,000 men working 60 hours, you can spread that work over 4,500 men working 40 hours without calling on the employer to pay more wages. There is no insuperable difficulty in most cases to employers doing that. It calls for a very large amount of adjustment and it would involve them in minor expenses in certain directions, but it would not involve any cataclysmic change. But if you are going to call on the employer to pay the same wages for 40 hours that he has been paying for 50 and 60 hours, you are obviously up against an entirely different proposition. Now it is still arguable that if you adopt this process of "spreading out" on a nation-wide scale to apply to everybody, even if nominally the wages are reduced, the standard of living generally will not be reduced: It is arguable (I do not say I accept the proposition), because it would mean that those in employment would get less and those out of employment would get more and the standard of living might remain approximately the same. Of course, if you are going to adopt that method, the obvious way of proceeding would be to find out how many men were out of employment, to find out the general level of your hours, and then to make a corresponding reduction; and I would expect that reduction to vary in different countries. But here we are told that there is a principle involved, and the principle is that hours should be 40 a week irrespective of the conditions in particular countries.

But now that is not the biggest difficulty. The biggest difficulty of all is that you are asked to proceed industry by industry; you are asked to apply the principle first to one industry and then to another. In my second Resolution I shall be dealing with one of the consequent Conventions designed to carry out this policy and I must confess that I fail to see how the principle can be applied first to one industry and then to another. Remember that what you are asked to do is to reduce hours to 40 in such a manner that the standard of living is not reduced.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. SHANTIDAS ASKURAN:** The cost of production would be higher.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. A. G. CLOW:** The cost of production would obviously be higher.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR DAVID DEVADOSS** (Nominated: Indian Christians): And the consumer must pay for it!

**THE HONOURABLE MR. A. G. CLOW:** Take people working 54 hours a week at present in any particular industry that occurs to any Honourable Member of this House. We tell the employer that he must reduce hours to 40. We also tell him that the standard of living must not be reduced.

He must pay the same wages for 40 hours as he pays for 54. This point is rubbed in by a Resolution which Honourable Members will find on page 36 of this booklet, which refers to the procedure for maintaining the standard of living of the workers. What is to happen? He has got to pay an increase of 30 to 35 per cent. in his wages. He may get a very small increase in production. It would not be anywhere approaching his increase in wages; it might be 5 per cent. He has obviously got to put up the price of his articles. As my Honourable friend Sir David Devadas suggested, the consumer has got to pay more; but the consumer is not going to pay more for securing the articles. He is going to cut down his demand for the articles. In consequence, so far as I can see you are going to create unemployment at the other end. Honourable Members of this House may be able to penetrate more deeply into the thought underlying this Convention than I have been able to, although I have tried my best to follow the proceedings of the Conference. I recognise that this proposal has been considered in different forms at three successive Conferences, but I must frankly admit that I cannot see how this method of proceeding is calculated to secure even the object which its framers have in view.

If we come from the general sphere to the national, I am sure that all Honourable Members will realise that to attempt to enforce a 40-hour week and to keep wages at the same level, as the standard of living should not be reduced, would mean absolute chaos in Indian industry. It is just a little more than a year ago that we asked employers to reduce their hours in perennial factories to 54; it is less than a year ago that we asked employers in mines to reduce their hours. I submit, Sir, that to go to a 40-hour week or anything approaching it at present on the conditions indicated in this Convention is outside the realm of practical politics for us. (Applause.)

**THE HONOURABLE MR. SHANTIDAS ASKURAN:** Will the Honourable Member give the House an idea as to how much the cost of production has gone up by a reduction of nine hours in the hours of work?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. A. G. CLOW:** The Honourable Member is, I understand, an employer and I must leave it to him to work it out for himself.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU (United Provinces Southern: Non-Muhammadian):** Sir, I move:

"That to the end of the Resolution the following be added, namely:

'but that he do take such steps as may ultimately enable, by gradual stages, the Convention to be ratified'."

Sir, I do not expect that the House will favour my amendment. I shall not be disappointed if the House rejected my amendment. I have a certain point of view and I wish to place that point of view on the records of the House and that is the main reason why I am moving this amendment. I am not going to argue that a 40-hour week is immediately practicable. We have not yet recovered from the period of economic depression. I also recognise that our industrialists have to compete with other foreign markets, with countries which are not observing these international rules with regard to hours and with countries which have depreciated currencies. Therefore I do not say give effect to the Convention immediately.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** But your proposition is a very indefinite one.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** I will just explain, Sir, what my proposition is. But I would say this, let us keep in view this goal. I am not opposed to progress by gradual stages provided it takes us to the ultimate goal that we have in view. Now, I think that on humanitarian grounds it is necessary that the workers should not be made to work long hours. The question is not one of profit but of humanity. (*An Honourable Member :* "What about other countries?") Sir, we must think in terms of a new social order. My Honourable friend Sir David Devadoss does not think in terms of a new social order. This new social order will be achieved not by a process of revolution but through gradual stages. But we do think, Sir, in terms of a better and higher social order.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** How many hours do you think would be reasonable?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Forty hours I think is a reasonable limit. When the new Factories Bill was before the House—and I recognise that the Factories Bill has improved the position of the workers in regard to hours of work—I had the honour of moving that the reduction should be to 48 hours and 54 hours. Therefore, Sir, our first effort should be to reduce the hours to 48 and 54 as was suggested when the new Factories Bill was under discussion. Shortened hours mean more leisure for the working man. They mean that the worker will have more opportunities for self-development. (*An Honourable Member :* "And the grog shop!") The question is not entirely an economic one. There are certain spiritual values which we must place before material values. Profits are all right but we cannot think always in terms of profit. (*An Honourable Member :* "If there are no profits would there be any industry?") Well, Sir, that is a very very big question and I do not wish to enter into the question whether the profit incentive is necessary for work in life. I have my own views with regard to that incentive. That incentive is good within certain limits but we want, in the world as we conceive it, to regulate that incentive within certain definite and proper limits.

It is said, Sir, that the Indian worker is lazy, that the work he puts forth is not of a concentrated character and that further reduction of hours would make industries more depressed than they are. Well, Sir, one result of a reduction of hours would be that we would be able to find more employment for our men but I think that if you make a man work fewer hours you would make him work in a more concentrated manner. Probably the reason why the Indian worker is lazy is that he has to work long hours. If there was a reduction of hours you could, without having your production reduced, make him work concentratedly better.

Then, Sir, it may be said—it has been said—that shortened hours might lead to a reduction of wages and a lowering of the standard of life of the worker. Well, Sir, these arguments are arguments which employers have always employed whenever the question of the reduction of hours has been taken up in any country. You remember, Sir, how the same arguments were used in England when the Factories Act was passed somewhere about the middle of the last century. With a proper minimum wage and proper state supervision I see no reason why wages should go down, and as for cost of production, well, Indian industry, if I may say so with all respect to my industrialist

friends, suffers from over-capitalisation and excessive overhead charges. They are always thinking of the wages they pay to their workers. They are never, if I may say so respectfully, applying their minds to reconstructing their business on modern lines. Sir, there are directions in which our employers can reduce their expenses. Sir, I am a supporter of the point of view of the employers to a certain extent. I want protection for Indian industries. Not that I have a very genuine belief in the protective tariff but I know that in the circumstances that exist in the world today we cannot do without protection, and if we must have protection we must have adequate protection. (*An Honourable Member* : "Not at the cost of the consumer".) I am not going into the question of the burden on the consumer. Therefore, Sir, those of us who are for protecting our capitalists must not be blamed if they sometimes think of the poor down-trodden workers. I do not say our capitalists do not treat our workers well. (*An Honourable Member* : "Do they?") Well, Sir, I will not make any statement in regard to that, but I know that there are some very good men among the capitalists. The men are better than the system. That is certainly true. Therefore, Sir, I am not asking the House to adopt a 40-hour week immediately. I am just in my amendment asking the House to keep in view this goal and to work to this goal by gradual stages. The first stage would certainly be the reduction of hours to 48 and 54 and I would therefore say that my amendment is a very moderate amendment. It keeps a certain goal in view. It does not say that that goal is to be achieved immediately or within any given period of time. We are going to work to that goal by gradual stages and therefore I have placed this proposition before you.

With these words, Sir, I would commend this amendment to the acceptance of the House. I do so, not in the expectation or belief that the amendment will be accepted by the House but in order to place a point of view which does not always find expression in this House.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** Amendment moved :

"That to the end of the Resolution the following be added, namely :

'but that he do take such steps as may ultimately enable, by gradual stages, the Convention to be ratified'."

The debate will now proceed simultaneously on the original Resolution and the amendment.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM** (Bihar and Orissa : Muhammadan) : Mr. President, I rise to support the amendment moved by my Honourable colleague Mr. P. N. Saprú. Sir, after the speech of the Honourable Mr. Clow in which he explained the difficulties of the situation, it would seem not very reasonable to press him to accept this amendment. But my difficulty is that although I accept all his statements, my acceptance makes me suggest that he should adopt the amendment. I refer to a very pertinent question brought out by Mr. Clow which is agitating the minds of India, that is, the advent of mechanisation. With the advent of mechanisation in every industry, human labour is being gradually and insidiously and effectively replaced by machines. For instance, in the Bombay mill industry, if they do introduce automatic looms and if you mechanise and reduce the labour charges, as you have been doing all along, you are reducing the number of wage earners. I can give you the instance of one industry at least with knowledge. In the Tatas, who are the best paymasters in India, if you look at their wages bill, you will find —

**THE HONOURABLE MR. SHANTIDAS ASKURAN :** Tata steel or all the concerns ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** Tata steel. You will find that the wage bill has not increased *pari passu* with the increased production. The same is the case with the mill industry of Bombay. Although the wage per head has increased—I do not deny that—the total amount of wages paid to labour does not bear the same relationship to the finished cost as it used to in former days. Our total population is on the increase. No step is being taken by Government to check it.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR DAVID DEVADOSS :** You proposed that last year.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** They did not support it. That is my difficulty. The amendment of the Honourable Mr. Sapru does not involve any radical change in the position of Government. It simply gives an inducement to the Government to work up to that standard. I quite appreciate the point of the Honourable Mr. Clow that we have not worked up to a 48-hour week—we passed a 54-hour week Bill last year—and it is rather something like dreaming to come now to a 40-hour week. But there are employers in the world who have adopted that system. I refer to Henry Ford, who has already adopted the 40-hour week, and that without decreasing the wages.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** Do you think the Indian workman will agree to have his wages reduced ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** Henry Ford has not reduced the wages and yet he is producing at cheaper costs. He has the knack of doing things which other gentlemen have not got. He works in huge sums and in a huge organisation. He has his own supplies.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR DAVID DEVADOSS :** How many Fords are there in the world !

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** He gives income to the wage earners and then collects them by his other activities, so that the higher charge is returned to him in the profits that he has in supplies and other things. The only thing which is required to make a 40-hour week a success is the will to establish it. May I draw the attention of the industrialists to the fact that the days of *laissez faire* are gone. The State is intervening every day by means of protection to give them profits. The profits which the industrialists are earning are not the result of their own capital. If they had been fighting the world in competitive markets, then they would have been justified in saying that they are not prepared to shoulder this additional burden. There is another reason. The world's monetary rates of interest have fallen immensely since 1929. You may have the law of constant real interest which would say that if you increase the purchasing power of money, the monetary interest charges always fall, so that you have equilibrium in real interest charges. If the prices are high, the interest is high, and when prices are low the interest is low. But in our Tariff Board calculations, they always calculate at the higher rate of interest for the millowners, and we have made deduction of their overhead charges. At the time of high salaries, the fall in the prevailing interest

rate and the fall of overhead charges, is not accounted for. Therefore, we will be perfectly justified in demanding that shorter hours should be introduced and thereby the wage bill should be increased. I would refer to one other aspect. The efficiency of the worker is materially increased by the lesser hours that he works.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR DAVID DEVADOSS :** He will be more efficient, according to you, if he works only 30 hours a week.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** The Honourable Sir David Devadoss will excuse me if I say that a better judge of that would be Sir Nasarvanji Chokey, who is a doctor, and who can understand what the element of fatigue does in the outturn of work. If we organise the works, we can eliminate any amount of unnecessary steps. If you have shorter hours and employ more men, the incentive will be greater, and unnecessary works can be eliminated, and thus the cost need not rise to prohibitive heights. I do not deny that there is a possibility of rise in cost, and there might consequentially be a fall also in the wages. But it need not be exactly in the same proportion as the reduction of hours. You can find out a formula by which there will be mutual adjustment in the case of increased efficiency on the one side, and decreased hours on the other, so that a reduction of about 10 per cent. in the wages would about compensate, due to the increase of efficiency for the reduced hours. If you take into account the number of men whom you will reduce by means of mechanisation, you will find that even with 40 hours a week your wage bill will remain as it was before 1925, given the same number of employees. Sir, we do appreciate the great services which the Industries Department have done. The Industries Department can readily be called a sort of transferred department, because it has always been working in the interests of India. But the trouble is that in Indian interests, labour and capital are at clash. It is very difficult for the Industries Department to choose the one or the other. The leaning is more often towards capital, though I do not say that they have not forced capital to accept some of their reforms which were very much overdue.

Sir, I commend this amendment to the House.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. SHANTIDAS ASKURAN (Bombay : Non-Muhammadan) :** Sir, I am sure that my friend the Honourable Mr. Sapru, if he had known the real condition of industrial labour at present, would not have moved this amendment. He will be surprised to know that in the cotton industry, with which I am concerned, we are paying labour charges of seven pies a yard. While in Japan the labour charges for manufacturing cloth like that which I have on, is only two pies a yard, against our seven. Millions of yards of cloth are daily placed on that basis, i.e., you can buy and sell in the Kobe market millions of yards at one anna eight pies per yard. You do not know the position there and I think nobody in this House can throw light on how they can manufacture at that price or whether they follow the Conventions of the International Labour Conference or not. I certainly am not prepared to say. But I may tell you that in spite of reducing the hours of work last year our cost of production in labour alone has gone up by 5 to 9 per cent. in Bombay. I will give you all the figures in my speech on the Finance Bill and the name of each and every mill which has been sold by auction and you will be surprised to know what the position is today. Mills to the extent of Rs. 11 crores worth have been scrapped owing to the competition and all their labour is at a loose

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end. If this 40-hour week were accepted I do not know what would be the fate of the textile industry in India. I only want to bring to the notice of this House that our industry is not in a happy state. On the contrary all the mills in British India last year have lost Rs. 20 lakhs, and if you count the depreciation charges it comes to Rs. 1 crore and 18 lakhs. That is the state of the industry.

With these words I oppose the amendment.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA JAGDISH PRASAD (United Provinces Northern : Non-Muhammadan) : Sir, I hope my Honourable friends Messrs. Sapru and Hossain Imam will forgive me if I join issue with them so far as the amendment before the House goes. It is quite easy to think theoretically of reducing the number of hours of work for labour in India. But we must face hard facts. We must consider what it would mean to our industries situated as they are. We must realise the difficulties which the employers have to face, for example, the competition of Japan and other countries and the existence of factories in Indian States where there are no factory laws. Will it therefore be opportune to advocate a reduction of hours of work at this time? The Honourable Mr. Clow has reminded the House that the majority of European countries have not still adopted the 48-hour week according to the proposal of 1919. My friend Mr. Sapru says that he does not want the 40-hour week to be achieved immediately. But my point is this. The International Labour Conference holds its session every year, and almost every year it recommends a reduction in the hours of work. Why cannot we therefore wait till our industries are able to hold their own in the industrial world? Then only could my Honourable friend Mr. Sapru ask the Governor General in Council to ratify such a Convention, when our industries could really afford to reduce the number of hours of work for labour. Situated as we are, I consider that an amendment of this character is premature and I hope that Mr. Sapru will seriously consider whether it would be proper for him to press it at this stage.

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. G. CLOW : I am sorry that I am unable to accept this amendment. I think the House will recognise that first on a point of form it is impossible for me to accept it, because it says

" to take such steps as may ultimately enable, by gradual stages, the Convention to be ratified ".

Now a Convention like this cannot be ratified by gradual stages. It must be ratified once and for all, and in ratifying these Conventions even reservations are not allowed. But I am sure what my Honourable friend means is that we should work up gradually by stages to a position in which we are able to ratify the Convention. Now I think the House sympathises with the courage with which my Honourable friend, in perhaps a somewhat critical atmosphere, has advocated the cause of the workers of the country. But I would ask him to reflect in the first place, that he has not indicated what steps we are to take. As I listened to his speech I did not gather that even the 48-hour week was to be enforced now. Well, if we are not to take any steps now, I submit we should not adopt an amendment of this kind. I have never been one of those who believe that wisdom will die with us and that our successors will not be at least as well able as we are to decide on the proper steps to be adopted in the future. Still less at a time when big constitutional changes are impending should we attempt to commit our successors to a particular course of action.



THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : Amendment moved :

" That to the end of the Resolution the following be added, namely :

' but that he do take such steps as may ultimately enable, by gradual stages, the Convention to be ratified '."

The Question is :

" That that amendment be made ".

The Motion was negatived.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : I will now place the original Resolution before the Council :

" This Council, having considered the draft Convention adopted by the Nineteenth Session of the International Labour Conference concerning the reduction of hours of work to 40 a week, recommends to the Governor General in Council that he do not ratify the Convention ".

The Question is :

" That that Resolution be adopted ".

The Motion was adopted.

## RESOLUTION *RE* REDUCTION OF HOURS OF WORK IN GLASS-BOTTLE WORKS.

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. G. CLOW (Industries and Labour Secretary) :  
Sir, I move :

" That this Council, having considered the draft Convention adopted by the Nineteenth Session of the International Labour Conference concerning the reduction of hours of work in glass-bottle Works, recommends to the Governor General in Council that he do not ratify the Convention ".

I do not think I need detain the House long with this Resolution, first because the Convention to which it refers is merely a corollary of the one we have been considering, and, secondly, because the House considered only a year ago a Resolution relating to sheet-glass works which is in almost exactly the same terms. This Convention seeks to reduce the hours in automatic glass-bottle Works to 42 per week. 42 of course in place of 40 is in recognition of the fact that it is a continuous process and you therefore must have a number divisible by seven. I have made inquiries and the only automatic glass-bottle Works in India are the small one near Allahabad at Naini—and one recently started in Bombay by transference of a machine from Naini. These factories like practically all continuous process factories work on a 56-hour basis. What we ask them to do if we accept this Resolution—in fact force them to do—would be to cut down their hours by a quarter. Now I suggest—and I think Honourable Members will agree—that there is no reason for singling out this tiny little branch of industry for such extraordinary discriminatory treatment. And while as I suggested in the previous Resolution reduction of hours, particularly in those factories working in shifts already, is not a very serious matter for the employer provided he can reduce wages too, it is a very serious matter from the point of view of the operative—a point which I think was not noticed in dealing with the previous Resolution. There is nothing in this Convention, in spite of the fact that it follows on the previous one, about wages, so that in theory one could ratify it and reduce wages. But to ask workmen to accept a reduction—a reduction that would be considerable if the employer was to

[Mr. A. G. Clow.]

carry on his business as before—will be to ask them to accept a very greatly reduced standard of living.

The Motion was adopted.

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#### STANDING COMMITTEE FOR ROADS.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : The Council will now proceed to elect three Members of the House to serve on the Standing Committee for Roads. I may, however, point out that the Honourable Sardar Buta Singh and the Honourable Sir Hayat Khan Noon have withdrawn their candidature.

(Ballot papers were distributed and the election was proceeded with.)

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : The result of the election will be announced later. The Council will now adjourn.

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The Council then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, the 30th March, 1936.