

Monday, 16th 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**



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# COUNCIL OF STATE.

*Monday, 16th 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.

## RESOLUTION *RE* RECRUITMENT FOR THE INDIAN MILITARY ACADEMY, DEHRA DUN.

\*THE HONOURABLE MR. V. V. KALIKAR (Central Provinces : General) :  
The Resolution which stands in my name runs thus :

" This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that a committee of officials and non-officials be immediately appointed to suggest ways and means to secure the requisite type of Indian youths for admission into the Indian Military Academy, Dehra Dun "

Sir, the last time when we were discussing a Resolution about increasing the number of cadets in the Military Academy, Dehra Dun, we were told by the then Commander-in-Chief, Sir Philip Chetwode, that they did not get the requisite type of material for the Military Academy. With your permission, Sir, I will read just a sentence from his speech. He admitted that in India there existed fine martial material but said that material was not coming forward. He said :

" Now, it is not too much for me to say that a very large proportion indeed—I am choosing my words very carefully—a very large proportion indeed of the young men aspiring to come before the Interview and Record Board before they sit for the examination are absolutely unsuited ever to be officers and to lead men, and yet, Sir, I know such young men exist in India ; but they are not coming forward "

Then, further on he says :

" I do not seem to be able to get them here. I beg of you to realise that that is very serious and that if we do not get more of the right class of young men, Indianisation will not be the success we hope it will "

And in concluding his speech, he said :

" I know you have got these young men in India. They are there. They are fit to lead your army, but they are not coming forward and I can only hope that what I have said today may be taken note of throughout India and that you will get them "

So, Sir, admittedly, according to Sir Philip Chetwode, fine material is available but it is not coming forward. Well, in deciding this question we shall have to refer to past history. After the Mutiny the policy of Government practically killed the martial spirit of India. The restrictions under the Arms Act, which we popularly call the disarmament of the whole country, came in the way of the martial spirit coming forward to serve the army of the country. Then, about the time of the war, political leaders made an appeal to Government to give commissions to the young men of India, but on account of Government's policy of distrust, they could not find their way to meet the wishes of the people. The policy of Government in discriminating between the martial and non-martial races is also one of the causes why fine material is not coming forward. Also the policy of recruiting for the army from certain provinces

\* Not corrected by the Honourable Member.

[Mr. V. V. Kalikar.]

and banning recruitment from other provinces is another reason for this paucity of suitable young men. I do not want to go into the causes in detail. I have briefly stated that if anybody is responsible for this paucity of young students, it is the Government and the policy they have adopted and not India. After the introduction of the reforms various committees were appointed, particularly the Skeen Committee, which went into this question very deeply, and came to the conclusion that with some improvement in the training of students in schools and colleges we should be able to get fine material for the Military Academy at Dehra Dun. On page 27 of their Report they say :

" It is true that even with their present organisation and system of training they have turned out boys who have succeeded in obtaining commissions through Sandhurst, but those who did so started on their course of training with an unfair handicap as compared with their British comrades, and that handicap must be removed as far as possible in order to obtain really first class material for India's defence. We believe that if the importance of this matter is brought to the notice of the educational authorities and their co-operation is enlisted, much can be done even in the present conditions in the direction of eliminating the weak points stated above "

We have got a testimony from the authorities of Sandhurst that the youths of India who had gone there for their education were quite competent and equal to their comrades, the boys of Great Britain. We have got the testimony of Sir Philip Chetwode that the material which has passed out of Dehra Dun is very fine. If that is so, one cannot believe that in a vast country like India populated by 35 crores it is difficult to get the right type of youths for entry into the Military Academy at Dehra Dun. Sir, many of the causes which are in the way of their embarking on a military career have been described by the Skeen Committee. To a layman like me, one of the important causes is the heavy expenditure which parents have to undergo if they allow their sons to adopt a military career as their future vocation in life. Therefore, Sir, though I do not wholly subscribe to the view that you are not able even today to get 30 students from the whole of India annually for admission to the Military Academy, according to the view expressed by Sir Philip Chetwode, I submit it is my duty to request Government to move in the matter. I have therefore brought this Resolution forward.

Sir, if a committee is appointed according to my Resolution and they do propaganda work, I submit, and I have no doubt, that a large number of competent youths will be available for competition and admission to the Military Academy. I further suggest that in schools and colleges where University Training Corps do not exist, attempts should be made to start cadet schools and University Training Corps with a view to giving elementary training in military matters to the students of colleges and schools. Further, Sir, my submission is, if you start rifle clubs, if you make provision for rifle clubs at important places throughout the country, you will be able to attract good material for the army.

Then, Sir, as I stated just now the committee should find out ways of reducing the cost which a parent has to bear and examine the system at work at present in Dehra Dun and the procedure which is being followed by the Record and Interview Board, so that the selection of competent candidates might be easy and youths may think that they will get admission into the College. The committee should also, I suggest, consider the point whether feeder schools should be constituted in India from which recruitment to the Military College could be made. They should think this matter over, they should examine these proposals and, if possible, start Government feeder schools as well as lay down a policy that if private feeder schools are formed whether a Government contribution should be made to them or not. Sir, according to me, th



whole question before these youths of India is whether they will be allowed to have a military career or not, because people think that the Defence Department of the Government of India is a close preserve for tradition. People may be wrong in that view, but the policy that has been followed up till now clearly lends support to that view. People say that all this tall talk of Indianisation is mere eye-wash. If they are assured of a future career in the army, if they find that encouragement is given by Government in this matter, I am sure that you will get a very large number of competent young men for entry into the Military Academy at Dehra Dun.

Then, Sir, this committee should examine also the question of nomination and open competition. As at present out of 60, 24 are thrown open for competition, while 36 are nominated. If the committee goes into this question and decide that the number of nominations should be reduced, the Government should adopt that view. I must submit that there is a lot of heart-burning in the country over this question of nomination and open competition. It has been admitted in reply to my questions last September that the material which the Military Academy gets for the Indian Army is not extraordinary, but in some respects the material which they get is not quite up to the mark. I therefore submit, Sir, that this question also deserves examination by the committee. Lastly, Sir, I would submit in the interests of the British Government that they should take us more into their confidence. War clouds are hovering over us. They tried the experiment during the war of starting a temporary school at Indore, so they should be prepared from now and allow the people of India to take their part in the national defence of the country. If, Sir, a country having such brilliant past traditions in military matters, having such a large man power, having so many sources of getting recruits, whether from martial or non-martial classes, is not able to supply 60 candidates annually, I think it is a slur on the manhood of India. If really, Sir, that is the position, then I submit it is time for the Government to move in the matter and to see that the people of India take an active interest in defending their country from any foreign aggression which may happen to come.

Sir, the request that I have made in my Resolution is a very moderate one and is due to the speech made by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief last September. I therefore request the Government to adopt my Resolution and request the House to accept my proposal

With these words, I move.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** Resolution moved :

“ That this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that a committee of officials and non-officials be immediately appointed to suggest ways and means to secure the requisite type of Indian youths for admission into the Indian Military Academy, Dehra Dun ”.

I think it will be both helpful and also shorten the debate if His Excellency now gives the views of the Government.

**HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF :** Sir, with your permission, before I deal with this debate I should like to mention a small personal matter. I should like to say that if I have said anything up to date which has appeared offensive to any of my Honourable friends, I want to assure them that that was not my intention for one moment. I must ask them to ascribe it to my total inexperience of public speaking and parliamentary procedure, for I am after all a plain soldier and nothing else. My dilemma can perhaps be best described as analogous to the position of any one of you suddenly

[His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief.]

finding himself on a parade ground, say, with troops to give commands to, and, though I do not suggest for a moment that he would not be able to cope with the situation, I feel certain that he would be somewhat at sea—to start with at any rate. In any case, I feel sure that Honourable Members will expect me in future to say what I honestly think and, if we happen to disagree, I do hope that we shall do so in a friendly way.

I realise full well that this Resolution is the outcome of the remarks which Sir Philip Chetwode made last year in reply to my Honourable friend, who had moved a Resolution urging an increase in the number of cadets admitted annually to the Indian Military Academy. The main point which Sir Philip stressed in meeting that Resolution was that the 15 successful candidates we get at each open examination for entry to the Academy are just about all we can obtain at present of the stamp we really want. In actual fact, although we get eight or nine candidates for each vacancy, which I am sure you will agree is by no means unsatisfactory from the point of view of numbers, what we want is a better *standard* of competition. The 15 or so candidates of the right type stand out from the rest. In short, it is the quality, and not the quantity, of candidates that is in issue; and I welcome this opportunity of letting this Council know what we have been doing in the matter. I can assure you that we *have* been directing unceasing attention to it for a good many years.

As a start, I want to take the House back to the Skeen Committee which sat in 1925 and 1926, and of which my Honourable friend Sir Phiroze Sethna was a distinguished member. This Committee had as its first term of reference :

“ By what means it may be possible to improve upon the present supply of Indian candidates for the King's commission both in regard to number and quality ”.

Their Report, which was based on a mass of evidence to which the educational authorities contributed very materially, dealt with this question in great detail and was not by any means complimentary to the efforts made by Government before that date to fill up the vacancies at Sandhurst. Their main recommendations were for improvements in the system of early education, improved publicity, the introduction of a system of open examination, an increase of opportunity, and a training college in India with reduced cost to parents. What have Government done to put these recommendations into effect? The training college has been in existence at Dehra Dun since 1932, a year ahead of the date recommended by the Committee, and the fees there are acknowledged to be by no means excessive for the kind of boy whom we want as an army officer; the fees are Rs. 800 a term for the first two terms, and Rs. 700 a term for the last three terms, *i.e.*, a total of Rs. 1,600 *plus* Rs. 2,100 = Rs. 3,700; opportunities have been increased from the 10 vacancies a year at Sandhurst to 60 a year at the Academy, and the entrance examination for the 30 of these vacancies which are not reserved for Indian Army cadets is an open one held by the Public Service Commission. Publicity is a matter in which there is no finality, but in the Press and elsewhere we *have* done our best to let the public know what sort of a career the army offers for their sons. All the relevant information about the entrance examination, and about the conditions of service, is sent to the information bureaux of the various universities, and I think it is clear from the number of candidates who apply for information about the examination that our publicity methods are steadily having the effect we have been aiming at. Moreover—and this is a most important point—what we hope is that one of the best advertisements for a military career will be the young officers themselves after they have left the Academy

and joined their units. The number of these young officers is increasing every year, but in the nature of things, it must take time before their influence can be felt. I referred just now to competition. In the last two examinations an average of 70 per cent. of the candidates have not been able to qualify. What we want to have is, say, half a dozen candidates of the proper stamp competing for each of the 15 vacancies, and this brings us down to the question of education as the main stumbling block that still remains. When I speak of education I do not mean merely book-learning, but chiefly the type of education which must begin at a very early age and which will foster the development of character and physique, and will encourage in boys a liking for an open air life such as the army provides.

The Indian Military College Committee of 1931, over which my predecessor presided, and as a result of which the Academy was started, went over much of the same ground as the Skeen Committee; and they noted—

“ We gather from educational reports and other sources of information that in recent years, the ordinary Indian schools have shown considerable improvement in the directions indicated by the Skeen Committee, especially in the provision of better buildings and playgrounds, in a larger supply of trained teachers, in better organised games and physical training ”.

Since that date further progress has been made. I need only point to the Doon School at Dehra Dun, the Shivaji School at Poona, and now the school which Dr. Moonje is starting, as recent indications of a desire to provide educational facilities of a type more likely to produce the material we want for the army. Another kind of innovation which is valuable is the army class which has been started at the Government College, Lahore, and which has produced a far higher proportion of successful candidates in the open examination than any institution except our own College at Dehra Dun. We maintain that it is the early education that counts, and so it is necessary to wait for at least five to six years before the results of any new system begin to show themselves, but as evidence that things are improving, even if slowly, as a result of the tendency I have referred to, I will quote from the Report of the Interview and Record Board at the last open examination :

“ The Board thought that on the whole the standard has risen, that is, that there were more good candidates up, and that the best were rather better than before. They found further evidence, too, of the growing desire of the respectable business and professional classes to launch their sons on a military career. There is no doubt that this section of the population is becoming more alive to the advantages of the soldier's profession and are trying more and more to shape their sons' education and outlook so as to incline them to and fit them for it. There were many youths of this class who made a highly favourable impression on the Board, having *clearly* worked hard to fit themselves for life in the army and being animated by a genuine interest in a military career and military subjects. Some of these youths were given very high marks. There is, however, the same tale to tell as in past years about the considerable number of candidates who have never in all their life betrayed the most elementary interest in soldiers or things connected with them ”.

The brief statement I have made so far will, I hope, have made it clear that the Defence authorities have done, and are doing, all that they can to make these most important schemes a success. The two committees I have mentioned, on both of which the Legislature was well represented, have given us all the assistance we could hope for from such a source, and the question is whether still one more committee, with the same terms of reference, is going to do any good. Personally, I think not. A committee may be very useful to examine a new problem and lay down the broad lines of its solution; but that has already been done. The problem is known: the solution is known. As a result of a recent review of the whole situation, I am satisfied that the

[His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief.]

policy itself is all right, and that no change is required in the *system* of selecting candidates. What is required is to get the rising generation used to the idea of the army as a profession. This is not a matter in which a committee can really help us.

There is, I am afraid, a tendency, not only in India, but all over the world, to place too much faith in committees, and to imagine that you have only to appoint a committee to cure any ill in the twinkling of an eye. Surely, Sir, in a matter of this kind we cannot expect startling changes in a few months, or even in a few years. It must take time for the youth of India to adapt their outlook to what is for them a new kind of profession : and the only means of accelerating that process in any way lies in the hands of the public themselves—and possibly to a lesser extent in the hands of the educational authorities in the provinces—but not, I submit, in the hands of the Defence authorities.

Sir, I am sorry to have to say once again that I cannot accept the Resolution. It is not that I do not sympathise fully with the motives of the Honourable the Mover. I share with Honourable Members the wish that India may produce the best of her young men to build up her own army, and I believe that the raw material is not lacking. I am only, perhaps, not quite so much in a hurry as Honourable Members opposite to produce the manufactured article, and I certainly do not think it can be produced over-night by a committee.

But please do not misunderstand me. I do not want Honourable Members to go away with the idea that I object on principle to committees on military matters. I said the other day that I would always be prepared to appoint *ad hoc* committees to advise me whenever I thought they could be of value to me, and this is just the sort of matter on which I *would* seek the advice of a committee, if I did not think that the committees we have had had already laid a good solid foundation. I believe that we are proceeding on the right lines, and that we have already made some useful progress. The seed that has been sown must now be allowed to develop in peace. I quite agree that there may be details of that development which are capable of improvement, and if Honourable Members have any concrete suggestions to make for this purpose, I should be perfectly ready to arrange for an informal discussion to take place with regard to them. I have incidentally made notes of the four or five suggestions which the Honourable Mover has made already, and these I will examine. There is only one point he mentioned in his speech which I should like to refute at once. He said that the question of Indianisation was a sham and so on, that the officering of the army in India was a close preserve for British officers. I am afraid I cannot agree. Far from being that, we are doing our absolute utmost to produce these young officers, and from the little I have seen of them since I have been here the lads we have received from the Academy are in my opinion excellent.

Indeed, I shall always be ready, as I have indicated already, to take advice from any quarter and to consider any practical proposal designed to improve the quality of our cadets with every sympathy. But I do want Honourable Members to realise that no amount of book-learning and no possible system of academic education can—by itself—produce good military officers : least of all can such a result be obtained by the unaided efforts of a committee, however it may be constituted. I even feel that a formally constituted committee might do harm in this way. It would receive a good deal of publicity and it might give the impression that we were dissatisfied with the quality of the cadets now at the Academy. The last thing that I or any other Members

of the House wish to do is to discourage these young men. They have a big responsibility, and they want all the help we can give them. I feel convinced, Sir, that the best help that Honourable Members can give us at this stage is to exert their undoubted influence quietly on public opinion in those parts of the country where they live. Several Honourable Members have already visited the Academy. Let others go there too. The Commandant and his officers will always be glad to show them round, and talk to them. Then let them go back and recount their experiences to the parents of those who have sons of the type we want. That I am sure will do more practical good than any amount of discussion round a committee table.

**THE HONOURABLE RAJA GHAZANFAR ALI KHAN** (West Punjab : Muhammadan) : Sir, at the very outset I must express my sincerest gratitude to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief for the statement which he has made in the beginning of his speech. I am sure after this statement any misunderstanding which had arisen in the minds of Honourable Members must have been removed. Sir, I may assure His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief that we on this side of the House have very great regard for his personality. We are anxious that in these debates on military matters nothing should be said which should in any way mean discourtesy to such a high person as the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Forces. Now, Sir, it is a matter of higher politics, and I would not detain the House on this question, except to say that I hope a time will come very soon when we shall have a civilian in charge of the army to take part in these debates, because it seems a bit unfair to expect that a man who is a great soldier should also be a great debater.

Sir, I submit that His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief must be as surprised as his predecessor used to be that matters concerning the army should be brought up almost regularly on every non-official day in this House or in the other place. There are several reasons for this. Indians naturally started taking a great deal of interest in army matters at the commencement of the Great War, and I am sure His Excellency will bear me out that in spite of the handicaps under which we laboured in this country, when we were called upon to join the army during the most trying circumstances the number of recruits who volunteered from all parts of the country, particularly from the Punjab, was so great that any nation can rightly feel proud of it. Now, Sir, army matters have attracted the attention of politicians much more since the last Round Table Conference. In fact, if one goes through the proceedings of that Conference one will find that the greatest emphasis was laid on the fact that until India was able to defend herself it would not be fair for them to expect full Dominion status. Since that time practical politicians have thought that the surest and the quickest and perhaps the only way of achieving their goal of Dominion status was to take every possible step to enable India to defend itself. That is why on almost every non-official day you find some Resolution concerning the army being discussed in this House. As far as the Resolution under discussion is concerned, I personally think that after the speech of Sir Philip Chetwode in Simla this Resolution should have been brought by the Government themselves instead of by a non-official Member. The object is not to embarrass the Government by entering into complicated military problems but merely to help them in a matter about which they are as anxious as we non-officials.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT** : His Excellency has already welcomed it.

**THE HONOURABLE RAJA GHAZANFAR ALI KHAN :** I am very grateful to His Excellency because the tone of his speech and some of the sentiments expressed by His Excellency are such that every one on this side would heartily approve them.

The reasons given by His Excellency for not accepting the Resolution were that the appointment of a committee at this stage for this purpose would not be of any practical use. Now, Sir, before I proceed to express my views as to the causes which have not made this King's commission as popular as it should have been, I would like to submit for His Excellency's consideration as to whether a committee appointed by him immediately with restricted terms of reference will not do useful work? His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Philip Chetwode, said in his speech at Simla that Government had taken necessary precautions to see that the requisite number of young men come forward for these King's commissions and as an illustration he mentioned the three military schools whose purpose was to give elementary education to the sons of military officers and sardars. One was King George's School at Jullundur, the other at Jhelum and the third at Ajmer. I would feel very grateful to His Excellency if he would kindly tell us whether any students who have passed from these three schools have been given King's commissions, if any one of these students from these three schools appeared in the competitive examination. As far as my information goes, not a single student of these three schools started by the military has achieved such efficiency as to enable him to appear in the competitive examination or even to get the King's commission through what they call the Y-cadet system, enlisting themselves in the army. If that is the case, if my proposition is correct that in spite of those three schools which were started by the military for this very purpose not a single boy has so far succeeded from these schools, would it not be worth while to appoint a committee of a limited number of Members, officials and non-officials, particularly educational experts—and in this connection I cannot think of a more suitable gentleman than Sir George Anderson—who should advise the Military Department as to what should be done which would enable these boys to come forward for the competitive examination and get the King's commission. I would appeal to His Excellency to leave out for a moment the particular wording of the Resolution and see whether a committee of this nature will not be helpful to the Government. Why the King's commission should not be such an attractive proposition as it ought to be is, I would submit, due to three main causes. There is a certain class of politicians, extremists, although their number is very small comparatively, who believe that the present policy of the army in India is such that this country, that the representatives of this country, have very little hand in controlling the policy of the army and therefore they refuse to consider it as, or call it, a national army. That is one school of thought, but as I said the number of those who belong to it is comparatively small. The other reason is the setting apart of a few regiments, what they call Indianised regiments. I am sure His Excellency is aware that the Sandhurst Committee reported strongly against this setting apart of eight regiments for Indianisation and since then almost every Indian member, every representative, has strongly opposed this scheme, but in spite of that the Government insist that they must continue this Indianised unit scheme. Then, Sir, the third reason is—and on this matter I would particularly request His Excellency to throw some light—that, so I understand, a new scheme has been started only recently, about six months or a year ago, whereby it is intended to replace the Viceroy's commission by the King's commissioned officers and I believe that the proposal is that in these Indianised units in future there will be no Viceroy's commission—that is

jemadars, subedars, risaldars or risaldar-major—as they used to have previously, but instead of that there would be Indian King's commissioned officers who would replace Viceroy's commissioned officers. Now, Sir, I do not know the details of this scheme, but if it is true, then naturally there is a little distinction—

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** Your fifteen minutes have already expired.

**THE HONOURABLE RAJA GHAZANFAR ALI KHAN :** I will finish in two minutes, Sir.

His Excellency is aware that even the slightest distinction in the army ranks naturally discourages the cadets greatly. If this system of replacing the Viceroy's commissioned officer was extended to other units as well, then probably the objection to it will not be so strong. His Excellency Sir Philip Chetwode said that only two Indians had been able to pass the Staff College examination. That is a matter of great regret, but may I know whether there is not a large number of British officers, Staff Officers, who have not passed the examination, who have been exempted from the examination and they are still on the staff? If so, I am sure His Excellency would be encouraging those cadets if he could sanction exemption in the case of Indians also.

With these few remarks, I hope His Excellency will see his way to accept this Resolution in a modified form.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA (Bombay: Non-Muhammadian) :** Mr. President, may I be permitted as well to refer in a sentence or two to the preliminary remarks with which His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief preceded the speech he made this morning. He is perfectly right in assuming that the observations he made on Wednesday last caused considerable irritation on this side of the House, but at the same time I would like to assure him that the House today has reason to thank him for his free and frank explanation which he was good enough to offer and which we all very heartily accept. (Applause.) I would like to go further and say that we shall certainly profit by the advice he gave that he would like both sides to express their views as they think honestly and that we should discuss matters in a friendly spirit. So far as we are concerned, I would like to assure His Excellency that we shall accept that advice in full. (Applause.)

Sir, Mr. Kalikar's Resolution today is the third of the same kind relating to military matters which have been brought up before the Central Legislature this session. The first of them was moved in the other place and went much further. The second was moved in this House by the Honourable Mr. Sapru when he asked for a committee for consultation and advice. That Resolution was out-voted by a majority, but I am sure Government have realised that so far as the elected Members are concerned all those who were present voted in its favour with the exception of two—and one more, who for reasons best known to himself did not choose to exercise his right of vote. Today Mr. Kalikar's Resolution does not go even as far as Mr. Sapru's. He only asks for a committee to discuss with Government as to the ways and means by which there may be better recruitment in answer to what was said by Field-Marshal Sir Philip Chetwode, our former Commander-in-Chief, in September last when he complained that although there was the material in the country it was not forthcoming. Now, Sir, as we know, the King's commission was denied to Indians until 1918. Indians were allowed then

[Sir Phiroze Sethna.]

to contest for it and this concession was given from 1918 because of the honourable part played by Indians in the Great War and also because of the invaluable services which India then rendered to the Empire.

The question of more cadets to be found for the Military College was discussed at length and reported upon by the Skeen Committee. Reference has already been made by the Honourable Mover to some portions of that Report. But I would like to draw the attention of the House to the statement made in the Skeen Committee Report where it said that the educated middle classes till then were definitely debarred from a career as military officers in the army of the country. That was before the Skeen Committee came into existence. The Skeen Committee then made certain recommendations. In paragraph 20 it observed :

“ The most substantial reason for the dearth of candidates and one which we believe, after very careful consideration, to be the governing factor in regard to future policy is the extremely narrow scope of the scheme for the Indianisation of the higher ranks of the army in India which has so far been sanctioned ”.

It went on to explain that there is material in the country and it suggested ways and means how such material could be secured. It quoted the opinions of such eminent Civilians as Sir John Maynard, formerly Member of the Executive Council of the Punjab, who served for 40 years in India, who assured the Committee that in the Punjab alone there are many boys who do not appear for the Sandhurst examination but are of better quality than accepted Sandhurst candidates whom he himself had seen. And the Report goes on further to add :

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“ We have similar testimony from other witnesses and also from those of our colleagues who are well acquainted with the standard and type of qualifications required in a King's commissioned officer ”.

Again, the Skeen Committee drew the particular attention of Government to the treatment which Government gave to the military as compared with the civil side in these words :

“ But the difference of treatment which is at present accorded in the two departments of the administration is great and conspicuous : and the result must surely be that the average Indian parent is reluctant to destine his son to a military career, and feels that the Indianisation of the army is, in the minds of the *authorities*, still suspect and uncertain ”.

I will not trouble the House with a long quotation but I will refer the House to a particular paragraph in which the recommendations were made by the Committee how best to get the material which would be useful for the purpose of making officers of our boys. This is paragraph 26 on page 28. It is headed “ Publicity ”. I may be allowed to read just two or three sentences :

“ The existing methods of publicity may with advantage be continued, but they should be developed and greatly improved ; and, just as we consider that the educational authorities should play a greater part than they do at present in the process of selecting candidates for an army career, so we consider that they should be utilised to a much greater extent for the purpose of diffusing knowledge of an army career and the means of entering upon it. We recommend that in the first instance the aid of the registrars of universities should be enlisted. They should be asked to start information bureaux in consultation with the military authorities and with the help of material supplied by the Army Department of the Government of India ”.

Now, Sir, His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief has told us that he does not approve of the appointment of a committee inasmuch as the appointment of a committee at this stage, after two or three previous committees



have reported upon this question, would do harm instead of doing good. But at the same time he repeated the assurance he gave us a few days ago that if necessary he would appoint an *ad hoc* committee. If when he speaks again His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief will give us an assurance that he will prepare a statement to acquaint the Legislature as to what means have been adopted in terms of the Skeen Committee's recommendations or in terms of any other recommendation as to the best way of securing recruits, we will get to know whether they are working on right lines in the matter of getting suitable recruits and if not we will make concrete suggestions as His Excellency wants us to do. How can we make concrete suggestions before we know what is the procedure adopted and before we know whether the recommendations of the Skeen Committee in regard to finding suitable cadets have been carried out by Government? His Excellency will admit that we are totally in the dark as regards the methods they employ. If therefore an *ad hoc* committee is appointed, His Excellency and his officers will be able to place before us facts and figures as to the manner in which this question is dealt with by them. It will be then for us to make concrete suggestions, if necessary.

On Mr. Sapru's Resolution, Mr. President, I had occasion last Wednesday to quote from the speech of Vice-Admiral Sir Humphrey Walwyn where he said that, although he had difficulty at the start he had no difficulty later on in finding men for the Indian Navy. That applies not only to the rank and file but with equal force to the cadets who are receiving training on the "Dufferin" to become officers in the Mercantile Marine. If they can find suitable boys and far more than they want, I cannot possibly understand why out of a population of 350 millions the military authorities cannot find 60 suitable candidates a year of the right sort who would meet the requirements of the army. If that is done, there will be no cause for complaint by His Excellency the present Commander-in-Chief as was made by his distinguished predecessor. In connection with this minor question as to the manner in which this recruitment is to take place I hope His Excellency will have no objection to appointing an *ad hoc* committee. I do not think that such a committee would be required to meet more than two or three times and in that time, provided the papers are circulated beforehand, those whom he chooses to consult or those who would like to offer their advice will be able to make the concrete suggestions that His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief has asked for.

This question, as already mentioned by previous speakers, is engaging the attention of the whole country. It is not only the Legislature, it is not only the general public, it is not only the Indian but even the Anglo-Indian press which is of opinion that there ought to be a contact between the Legislature and the Army Department. I cannot do better, Sir, than quote from so important a newspaper as *The Times of India*. In its leader of Saturday last of the 14th instant it refers to this question and I propose with your permission to read a few sentences from it. It says:

"It is only right that since India pays for her own defence her people should be associated as far as possible with the general principles of their protection. In the new Constitution the Instrument of Instructions to the Governor General makes it clear that 'the defence of India must to an increasing extent be the concern of the Indian people'."

Then it goes on to say:

"Nevertheless, His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief's uncompromising reply was somewhat disappointing. Some day India's Federal Government must take charge of the country's defence. To prepare for that eventuality, means should be established now to effect some kind of liaison between the Legislature and the responsible executive."

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT:** I thought you were going to refer to these remarks. On previous occasions I have always disallowed extracts from the newspapers.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA:** Very well, Sir, I will put it in my own words. The paper goes on to say that to refuse this liaison between the Government and the Legislature is merely to perpetuate the vicious circle in which Indians are told that they cannot be associated with defence because they know nothing about it. That, Sir, is the purport of this article in a leading newspaper which shows that even the Anglo-Indian press support us in our efforts, and Government should permit us to give them advice on subjects on which we think we can offer sound advice. This Resolution therefore attempts nothing more than to point out to Government that we will be able to advise them how to get more and suitable candidates. According to themselves Government have failed—and I use the word “failed” advisedly because it stands to reason that in a country of the size of India there ought to be very little difficulty in finding 60 men a year with the requisite qualifications.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT:** Will you please conclude your speech now? You have already exceeded your time.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA:** As regards cost, His Excellency told us that it comes to about Rs. 3,700 for a cadet during his cadetship. I admit that that is not very large. But it is certainly large for the average Indian parent. On the other hand, it might be argued that the Indian parent spends three or four times that amount to send his boy for the Civil Service. But in the Civil Service the prospects are brighter and the initial pay is larger. In the army, they start on a smaller pay, and perhaps, in the initial stage, they have to join the mess and perhaps pay for uniforms and spend more than a civil servant. Therefore the military line may not be a sufficient attraction for the Indian parent to send his boy to the Indian Sandhurst. This is also a point which, if His Excellency chooses to appoint, if not a full committee at least an *ad hoc* committee, we would be able to make clear to him.

I have many more points to deal with, but I will accept your ruling, Sir, and resume my seat as my time is up.

**THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS (Punjab: Non-Muhammadan):** Sir, I rise to support the Resolution. I fully endorse what my esteemed friend Sir Phiroze Sethna said on the explanation of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief today. I also express my hearty thanks to His Excellency for making amends. Sir, I will follow his advice, as I consider it is our moral and religious duty to place in this House the honest opinion of ourselves and of our constituents.

Sir, one of the reasons against a good many people coming forward to enlist themselves in the Military Academy, Dehra Dun, is the new stigma which has been placed upon its output. Rumour still goes that in England, a responsible high official, while addressing university students, assured them that they will never be placed under the command of a “blackie” if in case they join the Indian Army. If I am wrong, I wish His Excellency to put me right, because such rumours, if wrong, ought not to be allowed to remain in

circulation. Many people believe that this rumour led to the differentiation in the King's commission in India as compared to the King's commission in England. That this was the reason also which led to the formation of the eight Indian units scheme, the theory that an Indian will not be allowed to be in command of European officers under him is a stigma to Indian self-respect. I therefore wish that His Excellency will clear that point well today.

Then comes the question of education. My Honourable friend Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan has already told you that the product of the military schools in the Punjab, at Jullundur, Jhelum and elsewhere, has not been availed of. Another reason which stands in the way of recruitment is that 50 per cent. of the candidates are promoted from subordinates now serving in the army. Sir, at one time, when I gave evidence before the Royal Commission, some years ago I said—but I now realise that I was then wrong—that the subordinates may be promoted as officers. But my experience since then has proved to me that barring honourable exceptions, these promoted officers cannot banish the slavish mentality which they have developed while serving as subordinates. May I ask His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief whether in Sandhurst they allow such a rule? Sir, on the one hand, Government intend giving a few King's commissions, though of a lower status, to Indians while, on the other hand, they are abolishing the Viceroy's commissions. I should like His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief kindly to tell us what the ultimate effect of this change of policy will be. According to my information—I speak subject to correction—there were 13 to 14 Viceroy's commissioned officers in every Indian unit and now I understand that there will be at the most four King's commissioned officers in such units. So, Sir, instead of increasing the pace of Indianisation this step goes towards anti-Indianisation. On this retrograde step also I want some light to be thrown.

Sir, during the last Great War, it was proved that Indians had established their solid worth in warfare. Punjab, Sir, is a province which finds most of the recruits for the army, and during the war, there has been a great deal of zeal and competition among the people to get themselves enlisted in the army. That shows what interest the Punjabis take in the army. When recruitment was going on, I myself was instrumental in finding over 8,000 recruits—combatants and non-combatants—for the army. Sir, in case you remove the colour complex and satisfy the people and also have a wider field for admission to the competitive examination, you will find many people coming forward. Sir, the restrictions which are at present in force in allowing students to compete in the Academy examinations are not very desirable. Why should the political qualifications of one's parents, and other qualifications regarding his class—whether he is of a martial or of a non-martial class—count a great deal in admissions? Thus, there are very grave restrictions on the recruit.

His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief himself admitted in his own statement that out of the selection which the present Recruiting Board has made, there have been 70 per cent. of failures. In case I am wrong, I hope His Excellency will put me right. I think there is some inherent defect in the present Board. Why not throw this examination open to the public as you have in Sandhurst and then, if you find any undesirables, they can be picked out and not given a commission? If there are restrictions and political considerations and other considerations in the examination, you will always find that the people will not come forward in the numbers you want.

Another point, Sir. The lower status commissions to these eight Indianised units restricts the chances of promotion, as their promotion is confined

[Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das.]

to those units. That is another reason why people are not coming forward in large numbers. It is a pleasure to me to see that, according to the recommendation of the Skeen Committee, Government does not restrict admission to the competitive examination to certain martial classes and that it is open to all. I hope that, if they will take some of their cadets from the University Training Corps and take them in adequate numbers, that will give a stimulus to university students to offer themselves.

Sir, the people consider that the present Indian King's commissions with lower status merely mean dignified subedars and dignified risaldars, and that stigma I must frankly tell you is being very badly felt by every one.

With these remarks, Sir, I strongly support the Resolution and I hope that His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief will be good enough to reply to the questions and points that I have raised in my speech.

THE HONOURABLE LIEUTENANT-COLONEL NAWAB SIR MAHOMED AKBAR KHAN (North-West Frontier Province : Nominated Non-Official) : Sir, I ascribe the shortage of recruitment for the commissioned ranks mostly to one cause and I will confine myself to that one cause. India, as I have been told by my colleagues in this Council, has a big population of 35 crores and of that population the martial classes form a very big proportion—the Rajputs, Mahrattas, Jats, Sikhs, Punjabi Mussalmans, Pathans, Gurkhas, Rangars, and so on. (*An Honourable Member* : “ And United Provinces Brahmins ”.) Yes, and United Provinces Brahmins. These form a very considerable portion of the total Indian population, and that there should be difficulty in getting 50 or 60 suitable candidates and five nominees of His Excellency for admission to the Military Academy seems to me rather a puzzle. In case it is really so, the shortage of candidates must be due to the lowering of the status of military commissions from that of the King's commission to the colonial form of commission. At the time of a former discussion in this Honourable House in regard to the colonial form of commission, I made an earnest appeal to Sir Philip Chetwode, the then Commander-in-Chief, not to change the status of the King's commission, and on that occasion I also stated distinctly that the granting of this commission should be restricted to whatever number His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief deemed proper, because after all what was conceded to India by Lord Curzon in 1901-02 should not have been taken away from Indians by lowering the status of the military commission. During the Great War Indians proved themselves fit for the King's commission, and considering the war services of India it does not seem proper that the concession granted by Lord Curzon in 1901-02 should have been taken away from the Indian Army. Well, Sir, if the Indianisation of the army is to be accelerated, let the colonial form of the present Indian commission remain in force, but a few King's commissions should also be granted to Indians in the Indian Army in whatever proportion His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief may think it proper to promote Indianisation.

In France the commission given to their colonial troops and specially to the Algerian Corps is the same as that given to any Frenchman and is in no way inferior in status to that granted to Frenchmen. The class of people in the army in India today are in no way inferior to those who in Moghul times were made commanders of *panch hazari* and *deh hazari*. The Rajput Chiefs of Jodhpur and Jaipur were commanders of five thousand and twenty and thirty thousand troops and in the Afghan period too there were Hindu commanders in their forces such as Himu and other Hindu Rajput

Chiefs fighting for the House of Ghazni against the House of Ghor. Today, Sir, in the 20th Century, when self-determination, liberty and democracy are the burden of song all over the world, I think the status of the King's commission bestowed on Indians by Lord Curzon in 1901-02 must be thrown open again to Indians of good families who have some stake in this country and whose fidelity to the British Crown is unquestionable. If an English public school boy can command his platoon, company or regiment, I fail to understand why a boy of the martial classes in India should lag behind his English colleague? When there are precedents of an Indian being appointed as Governor and as Financial Commissioner, what could be the difficulty for an Indian to command a regiment or a brigade. In the last Great War an Algerian commanded an Algerian battalion, and in the Russian Army there were Generals of Asiatic origin and there are so even now. Well, Sir, if other European powers are not denying commissions in their armies to their Asiatic subjects, I fail to understand why the King's commission in India should be whittled down to the colonial form of commission. If Indians are capable of being financial commissioners and governors of provinces, why should Indians be denied the King's commission if they desire to obtain it. I say that the selection for a King's commission should remain entirely in the hands of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, but the martial classes of India should be given an equal position in the army to those which Indians are enjoying in civil departments. Sir, the solidarity of the Empire rests on equal opportunities being offered to all subjects of His Majesty, and the past services of the martial classes in fair justice demand that they should not be handicapped in the matter of military commissions. If my humble advice is taken by the military authorities I think that shortage of recruitment will never be heard of again. I suggest that the granting of the King's commission to Indians of approved fidelity and merit should be restored to whatever extent His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief deems proper, and this if thrown open to Indians will secure more candidates for the army than are required. The appointment of a committee will not be necessary provided the grievances of Indians are properly redressed in this respect by throwing open the King's commission to them.

With these remarks, Sir, I would like to hear something from His Excellency on the subject, and I will keep my mind open to vote on whichever side I think proper to do so.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM** (Bihar and Orissa : Muhammadan) : Mr. President, the Resolution which my Honourable colleague Mr. Kalikar has moved was brought forward not because we had any doubt or suspicion of our boys who were at the Military Academy, but because we found that His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Philip Chetwode, was not happy over the material he got. His exact words were :

" But we do not disguise from you and from this House, Sir, that I am not altogether happy about the progress we are making in regard to young Indian officers ".

It is not for us who are laymen to lay down the rule as to what would be the best material for the army. We only know that an expert has given us an opinion that at the present moment the material he is getting is not what he really desires to get. Is it not natural for us to suggest that some measures should be adopted to set right the difficulty that exists at the present moment? Either you have to tell us that the kind of material you are getting at the Indian Military Academy is of the right sort, is sufficient for your necessities or you have to tell us what steps you are taking. The mere fact that you have the report of the two Committees is not sufficient in itself, because it was under those Committees' Reports that you adopted the present method. Now the

[Mr. Hossain Imam.]

Government finds that that method is not making the return which they had expected. What that return is, what is the requirement of the army, we do now know. We are only told that the army wants boys who are not too much of book worms. I agree there. It is necessary to have in the army boys who are not book worms, but the system of having competitive examinations will not return anything but book worms, it will return only those who are able to secure the highest of the total marks in literary and other tests. No doubt there is a small equalising factor, the *viva voce* examinations, but we do not know, Sir, when His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief referred to the 70 per cent. failure in the competitors whether he means the net result of both the examinations combined; but he will probably find that the failures in the literary part of the examination are not so high as in the *viva voce* examination.

Now, Sir, what is the issue before us? The issue before us is not whether the material which is now being supplied is good or bad. We have to decide, Sir, whether we are able to get the quality and quantity that we want. After receiving the opinion of Sir Philip Chetwode I do not think that anyone can doubt that there is a necessity for looking into the matter. We are not addicted to or enamoured of committees, but we suggest this because there is no other method which the Defence Department has brought to our notice as a substitute for this. If the Defence Department have any method better than this of remedying the evil which necessarily exists we will be quite prepared to consider it and not to press our Resolution, but to say that we should sit idle and let propaganda alone give us the right type of student is pinning too much faith on propaganda.

Then, Sir, there is another question. When this system of six cadets was adopted, I do not think they looked forward to the possibility that so many of the students who enter this Academy would be disqualified before they passed out. While I am not prepared to say that all such cases of students who have been turned out have been due to injustice, there might be some cases of that type. I have heard of one case in which I am not particularly interested on the communal basis, it is the case of a Sikh boy who was in the Indian Military Academy but was turned out only because of the fact that it was found that his father was serving in some department as an ordinary clerk. If the army wants to preserve this as a stronghold of classes, let them say so and then look forward to the classes and not have any competitive examination; have nominations alone; but if they wish to have the people to come and join the army, then they should not be so strict about having only rich people in the army. There is another trouble which I am afraid the Defence Department does not wish to publish. The fact of the matter is that in the opening stages you get a certain number of men. Now the rule of promotion in the army is mainly by seniority. When all these people have served a certain term of years, they will be eligible for higher rank. There being only these 15 fighting units in which Indianisation has been effected when these men become colonels by seniority, there will be difficulty, as there will be too many colonels. That is why the army is anxious to get men of the right type, men like the English nobility who join the army not as a career but as a sort of tradition, and after a few years' service in the army they retire. I think the army is anxious to get that kind of men. If that is so, the Commander-in-Chief might tell us that this is the type of men they want, that they want the men to come to the army not as a profession but as a sort of diversion,—young men must be young men, therefore this is one of the ways in which they can have a good time. Sir, we on this side of the House do not wish to embarrass the Government or the

army, but we feel we will be failing in our duty if we do not bring forward our grievances to their notice and ask for redress.

Sir, I support the Resolution.

\*THE HONOURABLE MR. V. V. KALIKAR : Sir, I am very grateful to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief and I thank him very much for the expression he has given in the beginning of his speech that he is ready to treat in a friendly manner whatever views are expressed on this side of the House.

Coming to the Resolution before us, I feel I am in very good company. My Honourable friend Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan has brought prominently before the House the cases of students from Jullundur, Jhelum and Ajmer who did not get admission to the Military Academy. It seems, Sir, that real grievances exist and though over three years have elapsed since the establishment of this College, these grievances have not been removed. Sir, I do not want to dilate on the question of recruiting cadets from all classes in India. But it is my view that if you want to form a national army you must encourage the martial spirit in India so that you can get good men from all classes and all provinces. His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief said, that if this committee is appointed it will not do any good. Well, I beg to differ with him on the point. Does His Excellency mean to say that the last three committees, *i.e.*, the Shea Committee, the Skeen Committee, and the Indian Military College Committee, did not help in any way to solve this problem? We think that these three committees have to a great extent solved the problem of the Indianisation of the army. As compared with these committees, the committee which my Resolution seeks to set up is of a very restricted scope. As my Honourable friend Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan remarked, it is really the duty of the Government to bring in such a Resolution and to get a committee appointed and ask the committee to examine the whole question. But I am really surprised, Sir, to find that the answer given by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief is to oppose this Resolution. Sir, it is now our duty to press upon the Government that grievances do exist, that a committee should be appointed to examine these grievances and remedy them. If Government opposes this Resolution, we will consider that action of the Government as proof of their distrust of us and a desire to conceal from us what is going on in the army. I therefore submit, Sir, that His Excellency will think the matter over again and accept my Resolution.

The Council then adjourned for Lunch till Half Past Three of the Clock.

The Council re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Three of the Clock the Honourable the President in the Chair.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF : Sir, the points of detail raised in this debate have been so many and varied that I feel it would be impossible for me to do full justice to them in my reply today. Moreover, with reference to what the Honourable Sir Phiroze Sethna said, I have already given a rough outline of what steps Government have taken, and are taking, in my original speech; and I do not think it can be denied that a good many of the points raised were hardly relevant to the present Resolution. There is only one point on which I should like to say something straightaway. The Leader of the Opposition referred to a rumour which he said was current all over the Punjab

\* Not corrected by the Honourable Member.

[His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief.]

that a high official, when addressing undergraduates at Oxford and Cambridge, had said that British officers, according to the present Indianisation scheme, need have no fear that they will ever be called upon to serve under Indians. Well, Sir, this is the first time I myself or Government have heard of this story.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA :** It is referred to in the Skeen Committee Report.

**HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF :** That is rather past history, Sir.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA :** Government had their Report before them.

**HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF :** Anyway, I have not heard this particular rumour until it was brought to my notice this morning.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA :** It is not a rumour, Sir, it is a fact. It was denied by the India Office and subsequently we were able to prove to the hilt that it was so.

**HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF :** Well to continue. It is true that one result of selecting units for Indianisation is that all further recruitment of officers for these units is confined to Indians. But the main object of this is to secure in the shortest possible time an adequate test of the ability of Indians to train troops in peace and lead them in war. There is complete reciprocity within the Indian Army of status and powers of command as between British and Indian officers.

Now, to return to the main point. I have a practical proposition to make. What I suggest is that there should be an informal conference on the main issue arising within the four corners of this Resolution ; that is to say, the quality of the candidates for open examination for the army. This conference should be attended on one side by a few representatives of this House, and if you like, of the Legislative Assembly, and on the other side by the Military authorities concerned and the Secretary of the Defence Department. At such a conference we should be able to talk freely round the table and thresh out the various suggestions that have been made. If the House will agree to this suggestion, we should both be in a much better position to consider as the result of the conference whether any really useful purpose would be served by setting up a formal committee. If you can persuade me after the conference that there is, I will ask Government to appoint such a committee, and I am sure that it would be quite unnecessary to have any further debate in this House before taking that step. On the other hand, I do not mind saying that I personally still remain of the opinion that a committee is not going to solve this question, and I hope by the procedure indicated we shall be able to convince Honourable Members that the attitude I have taken today has not been unreasonable. (Applause.)

**THE HONOURABLE MR. V. V. KALIKAR :** Sir, in view of the statement made just now, I beg leave of the House to withdraw the Resolution.

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



## RESOLUTION RE. REMOVAL OF MASS ILLITERACY.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA MATHURA PRASAD MEHROTRA (United Provinces Central : Non-Muhammadan) : Sir, I rise to move :

“ That this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council to take immediate and effective steps for the banishment of mass illiteracy from this country”.

Sir, no greater apathy has been shown to any other problem of the day than the removal of mass illiteracy in India by the Government of India. Whenever this question has been placed before the Government, they have shirked their responsibility by saying that Education is a provincial subject and should be dealt with there. I agree to the extent that it is a provincial subject and great attention should be paid to it by the provinces. But what are the actual facts? Let us examine them patiently and calmly. We all know that the provincial budgets are in deficit. The Provincial Governments have limited sources of income. They cannot spend as much as is demanded by this important problem. They have left the responsibility for mass education to the district and municipal boards. The condition of these local bodies is also deplorable. They cannot spend as much money as is demanded by this great and important problem. So it is a vicious circle, and illiteracy in India is appalling. After a rule of about two centuries, the percentage of education in India is not beyond 10 per cent. It is time now that the Government of India should come to the help of the provinces in evolving a scheme by which they may fix a certain period within which illiteracy should be removed from India as other countries have done, and I have brought this Resolution forward with this object. I do not mean that it should be removed by magic. A regular programme should be set up by which we should know the time during which this important problem will be tackled successfully. Sir, our rulers very often ask us to be thankful to them for introducing into the country railways, telegraphs, telephones and other inventions of modern civilisation. But they forget that in the absence of these, the government of the country would have become impossible, and today, even no army of occupation can do without them. The test of the success of a Government is not merely whether it has supplied the country with these modern means of communication, but whether the country has kept pace with other countries in respect of education on which its whole future depends. Sir, I would like to draw the attention of Honourable Members to the statements by two important educationists, one belonging to the Government—I mean Sir George Anderson, formerly Educational Commissioner, and the other, Dr. Tagore, whom we all revere and for whose learning we all have considerable respect. Honourable Members will remember that in the first week of February, 1936 there was an Educational Week in Bengal, and these two eminent educationalists took part in the Week and delivered addresses. What Sir George Anderson said about this problem I would place very shortly in two or three sentences before the House. Recognising the vital importance of education in the life of the country, he said :

“ Though education by itself cannot remove poverty, cannot improve communications, cannot abolish disease, cannot modify social customs, it is yet an essential preliminary to all reforms ”.

[Rai Bahadur Lala Mathura Prasad Mehrotra.]

Further on he said :

" When we review the actual effects of our labours we realise, as we must, that the quantitative progress in primary education is by no means attended by a commensurate reduction of illiteracy and that such increase in literacy as has been achieved is almost counterbalanced by the increase in population, then there is certainly much cause for grave disquietude ".

Sir, it is on account of this " grave disquietude " that we are pressing this Resolution before the House. Further on he also observed that there are two great obstacles in the way of mass education in India, and those were the grinding poverty of the masses and social customs. But I must submit that if we have to wait for the removal of poverty and the change of social customs before introducing compulsion, then we may have to wait till the Greek Kalends. The experience of every country which has introduced compulsory primary education has been that this much desired change followed and did not precede the spread of enlightenment. Now, Sir, what did Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore say in his address on the " Ideals of Education " in the same place and during the same Week. He advocated universal education of the masses and described the present system in the following beautiful words :

" A society with its strong vitality constantly exerts its natural will to live mainly in the two-fold pursuits of livelihood and learning. It is a sign of partial paralysis, a disease peculiar to barbarism if the upper classes alone are properly fed and taught and flourish while society as a whole remains indifferent to the lower classes being half or wholly starved ".

Further on he said :

" No civilised society can tolerate the soul-destroying barbarity of a miserly irrigation of the popular mind, such as can enable knowledge to penetrate but a few inches of its upper layer putting at least a thin veneer of intellectual life over the stony inertness of the vast desert beneath. And I cry shame on the cruel fate that compels India to submit supinely to such a plight ".

These are the observations of two distinguished educationalists, one belonging to the service of the Government of India and another whom we all respect for his learning and education.

Now, Sir, the next important thing that can come in the way of the spread of mass education is lack of funds, as I think the Government might say. But I do not agree on that point also, because I would like to know from the Government if the Provincial or Central Governments have ever taken the loan of a rupee for the sake of spending on education ? I know, and we see daily, that money has been and is being borrowed for other objects of administration, defence and other things. But as far as I am aware—I speak subject to correction—money has never been borrowed for the sake of stimulating mass education.

**THE HONOURABLE LIEUTENANT-COLONEL NAWAB SIR MAHOMED AKBAR KHAN :** Money is spent on useful purposes which are of closer concern to the Government.

**THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA MATHURA PRASAD MEHROTRA :** I quite agree that money is spent on useful purposes according to his views. We on this side of the House think that the spread of education is the most useful way of spending money and is the first and foremost demand on any civilised Government.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** You are referring of course to primary education ? Why do not the provinces borrow money ?

**THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA MATHURA PRASAD MEHROTRA :** Sir, I am personally in favour of borrowing for this object both by the Provincial and Central Governments.

Sir, the total amount spent from public funds in the whole of British India for education of all kinds and grades is comparatively insignificant, is in fact smaller than what Great Britain is spending on the London County Council.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** Because you refuse to be taxed in the provinces.

**THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA MATHURA PRASAD MEHROTRA :** Sir, we are of opinion that we are paying very heavy taxes according to the poverty of India. Even the emergency taxes are being continued and I do not know what more taxes are required for education.

For the benefit of this House I have collected some figures from which the House will see what India as a whole is spending on education and what is being spent in only one part of Great Britain, in the London County Council. I have got the figures for 1931 and 1932. In 1931 the population of the whole of British India was about 271 millions and the amount spent on education was Rs. 16,84,25,628. Out of this amount Government contributed Rs. 12,46,07,893 ; the district boards contributed Rs. 2,80,01,313 and municipal boards contributed Rs. 1,58,17,220. Hence the Government spent in 1931-32 about Rs. 13 crores or less than eight annas per head per annum. Now what are the figures there ? The population of the London County Council in 1931-32 was 4,385,825. The expenditure on education was Rs. 16,95,64,720. Hence for the education of about 44 lakhs they spent about Rs. 17 crores, which is not spent on the 27 crores of people in India. It comes to Rs. 38 per head per annum. Our Government in this country are spending eight annas per head per annum, while in Britain in the London County Council they are spending Rs. 38 per head. The whole population of India including Burma and the Indian States is 352 millions against 44 millions in Britain—I am taking the same year. India contained 18 universities, while in Great Britain there are 16. Thus so far as university education is concerned there is less than one-fifth of the facilities here. In Great Britain with a population of 44 millions university-going students were 53,306, while in India with a population of 352 millions the number of university-going students was only 10,458. In Great Britain the number of college students—I am speaking of intermediate colleges—was 78,979, while in India it was 150,238. As India's population is eight times that of Great Britain, India ought to have about 631,832 college students. Such is the condition of India—

**THE HONOURABLE LIEUTENANT-COLONEL NAWAB SIR MAHOMED AKBAR KHAN :** By rule of three it ought to be.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. BIJAY KUMAR BASU (Bengal : Nominated Non-Official) :** May I ask a piece of information from my friend ? What is the amount of tax per head in Great Britain and in India ?

**THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA MATHURA PRASAD MEHROTRA :** I have no figures for that and I hope my friend will supply them.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. BIJAY KUMAR BASU :** I wish I had those figures ; they would completely give the answers.

**THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA MATHURA PRASAD MEHROTRA :** Now let us read one or two sentences from the latest book, *Education in India in 1933-34* as published by the Government of India and in the very first sentence of this book they admit that it is very slow, rather practically negligent state of improvement in education in India. The first sentence of this Report runs :

" Successive recent reports have necessarily dealt rather pessimistically with the absence of educational progress in recent years. This absence of progress has been attributed mainly to retrenchment, to the ineffectiveness of primary education and to the drift in higher education. But annual reports dealing so largely with a comparison of statistical tables for a single year with those of a previous year must necessarily give the impression that the quantitative advance in education has been very small ".

Later on, on the second page they say :

" The need for caution in the quantitative expansion of mass education has been fully recognised and consolidation and concentration are being attempted in most provinces. The evils of waste, stagnation and wastage which were scarcely recognised or diagnosed 20 years ago have been tackled and are being tackled with signs of ultimate success in most parts of India. There is, however, it is true, a general dissatisfaction with many of the existing conditions ".

We find from this that the policy has now been changed. Instead of expanding mass education the policy is now going to be adopted to consolidate rather than expand. I do not agree with the policy as long as we do not have a sufficient percentage of education in our country. We all know what Russia has done in the short period for removing illiteracy from its country ; we all know what Turkey has done under Kemal Pasha since the Great War ; we all know what Japan has done in 20 years and to what extent they have removed illiteracy from their country and I do not know any reason why our Government after a rule of about two centuries should only put before us that they have removed illiteracy to the extent of 10 per cent. from India. There is one other interesting thing and I will not quote figures, but relate in a sentence from the Census Report of 1920 and the one recently issued after 1930. You will find that the percentage of illiteracy in 1920 was greater and it has come down in the second Census Report, which shows that with the increase of population the percentage of illiteracy has not even been kept up, not to speak of any improvement.

So I submit, Sir, with all the emphasis I can command that it is time now for the Government of India to turn its attention and give larger contributions to the provinces as well as guidance and formulate a scheme for removing mass illiteracy from India within a definite period. So far as the period is concerned, I would leave it to the Government to decide, but for God's sake we want to have a definite programme and a definite period during which to expect progress along with other nations and other countries.

With these words, Sir, I move.

**THE HONOURABLE KUNWAR SIR JAGDISH PRASAD (Education, Health and Lands Member) :** Sir, my Honourable friend the Mover of the  
 4 P.M. Resolution hails from my own province and I have often had to face his criticism in regard to a number of provincial subjects. I am glad today to have again the opportunity of

meeting some of his points. He began with a general tirade against the delinquencies of the Government of India to the effect that it has shown a want of a sense of responsibility in regard to education, that whenever the subject was brought up the answer was given that this is a provincial responsibility and that the matter had better be taken up in the provinces. I am glad at least of one thing, that the genesis of this Resolution is the speech which was made in Bengal by the Educational Commissioner for India, Sir George Anderson. To that extent at least we may claim credit that my Honourable friend was set thinking on this subject by the remarks that were made by Sir George Anderson, and before I proceed to deal with the Resolution I should like to take this opportunity of bearing my testimony to the great work that Sir George Anderson has done for education in India. He was for a long time Director of Public Instruction in the Punjab. He was a member of the Sadler Commission and his services to the cause of education, especially of primary education, will long be remembered in India.

I will now, Sir, come to the several points that have been raised by my Honourable friend. I think in discussing this Resolution it is dangerous to go and quote trans-oceanic analogies. This is being done in England; so and so is being done in France: Why is it not being done in India? My Honourable friend seems to forget that since 1921 the responsibility for primary education is that of the provinces. They have to formulate the policy. They have to bear the cost. It is they who have had to deal with the question of the advancement of mass education. And let us now see whether they have discharged their duties efficiently, whether they have paid sufficient attention to this very important subject. It is very easy to quote statistics. I shall not worry the House with many but I shall quote a few broad facts. Between 1917 and 1933 the expenditure on education had more than doubled. It has gone up from over Rs. 11 crores to over Rs. 25 crores. As regards primary education expenditure from public funds has more than trebled. It has gone up from over Rs. 2 crores to over Rs. 6 crores. If we are only taking the quantitative expansion of education, the total number of pupils has increased in that period from 8 millions to 13 millions. Taking my own province with which I am familiar and in regard to which I had a good deal to do as Educational Secretary for more than seven years, in 1918 the Government contribution for primary education was Rs. 14 lakhs. In 1929-30 before the slump it was over Rs. 70 lakhs. The expenditure on primary education between those years had increased from Rs. 30 lakhs to over a crore. In the United Provinces the total expenditure on education is over 17 per cent. of the total provincial expenditure. It is now over Rs. 2 crores and I believe it is the largest item of expenditure in the provincial budget. Every province has tried to do what it can within its financial resources. But the difficulties in India are very considerable. Sir George Anderson in his address in Bengal has drawn attention to some of them. We have certain social customs. For example, in other countries, in Japan, in Europe, women are generally the teachers in the primary schools. In this country on account of our social customs it is not possible to employ them. (*An Honourable Member*: "But now you can, at least in the Punjab".) I say the difficulties are there—some may have more and some less, but I say these are the difficulties which are in the way of the rapid advance of education. Apart from that it is not merely a question of increasing the number of schools. You have to see that the children who are enrolled in the schools are kept there for a sufficient period in order that they may not forget what they have learned. This is one of the most important points. I am afraid that looking at the figures we find that for India as a whole, in the first four classes, only about a fifth of the boys reach class IV and the rest drop out. That is one of the unfortunate

[Sir Jagdish Prasad.]

things, that you may have a large number of pupils but they do not remain sufficiently long to retain what they have learned at school. There is much wastage.

Then we have further difficulties. The distribution of schools has been most haphazard. If my Honourable friend will read the latest Report, he will find that in India the number of pupils per school is on an average 50. In Japan it is 300. On the other hand, the number of teachers per pupil is only 27. The educational codes of practically every Provincial Government permit 40 pupils per class. In England there are classes where primary teachers teach up to 50 or more. It has been calculated that if each teacher on an average were to teach 40 pupils, we should have nearly five million more students in the existing schools. If we were to teach on an average 30, the increase in the number of pupils would be over a million. Where you are spending such large sums of money, it is essential that your administration should be efficient. It is not enough to increase the number of schools. You have to see that the teachers are properly trained. You have to see that the schools are properly distributed, that the classes are so organised that the pupils who go there receive sufficient education of the right kind so that they can retain their literacy.

As regards the question of trained teachers a very considerable advance has been made in the provinces. But there are large variations. For instance, while at the other end, in the Punjab over 70 per cent. of the teachers are trained, in Bengal I understand the percentage of such teachers is only 20.

Then my Honourable friend did not touch on the question of compulsion. It is very often said that if compulsion were introduced, that would be a panacea for all our ills. There again, it is a question of administration. It is no use introducing compulsion unless you are sure of your ground that the schools are efficient, that they are properly housed, and that there is a trained staff. Another point which is very important is that in our endeavour to advance primary education we should not repeat some of the mistakes which we have made in regard to secondary and university education. While it should be our object to get our people literate, we should guard against the danger of isolating them from their surroundings, of getting them out of harmony with their surroundings. It would be a great disaster if all the agricultural schools were to be taught-by urban teachers in an urban atmosphere. It is very essential that literacy should not lead to a drift from the country to the town. Therefore, the question of proper text books is also important.

I hope I have shown that the provinces have, since the reforms, pursued a forward policy, and have devoted considerable attention to the question of primary education, that since the reforms the question of mass education has been prominently before the Provincial Legislatures and Indian public opinion. We have a number of reports of provincial committees who have examined the question as to how best to utilise the existing funds, as to what measures should be taken in order to improve the present organisation, and to increase the number of literate people. My Honourable friend may say, "This is all very well; we have heard what the provinces have done; but what about the Government of India? Can the Government of India sit absolutely unconcerned and say that because this is a provincial subject, they do not mind what kind of education is being imparted and what is being done in the provinces". That is not the attitude of the Government of India. But I think it is desirable that we must be clear in our minds

as to what the position of the Government of India is under the existing constitution. We cannot dictate to the provinces. We can only advise and in that respect we have recently taken a very important step. We have constituted a Central Advisory Board of Education, on which will be represented either the Minister or the Director of Public Instruction of each province, and on which there will be three representatives of the Inter-University Board and a number of other prominent men. It will be the function of this Board to act as a kind of clearing house of ideas and as a reservoir of information. People will be able to meet and learn from each other's mistakes and follow each other's successes. We have a very eminent educationist, as I have already said, as the Educational Commissioner. The Government of India fully recognise that it is most important that the lines of policy in regard to primary education should be clearly and soundly laid. I am prepared to send the proceedings of today's debate to the Central Advisory Board. I am sure that they will give it their closest attention. I am confident that they will examine the question and see in what respect the system of primary education in India can be made more effective. But I cannot accept the financial heresies which have been propounded by my Honourable friend to meet the recurring cost—the very large cost—that will be involved. He has suggested that the Government of India or the Provincial Governments should borrow. Has he worked out, while he was immersed in these statistical figures, what the cost would be of getting the school-going population into the schools? The figures were worked out by the Hartog Committee. I am rather inclined to think that theirs was probably an under estimate. They said it would cost Rs. 7 crores annual recurring expenditure for the education of boys alone and for girls their estimate was Rs. 19 crores. Apart from that, there would be an enormous amount of non-recurring expenditure in regard to equipment and school buildings and all the rest of it. In my own province, I think Mr. Harrop recently made an estimate of the number of boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 11 who should be at school and who are not there, and I think the figures were 18 lakhs of boys and about 30 lakhs of girls. Some years back, when I was in the province, we made estimates and we found that under the present financial conditions, it was really impossible to get all the children, who should be in school, to get them there. We must realise our limitations. Further advance is bound to be slow, but there is no need to be despondent. The great progress that has been made in recent years should make us feel hopeful. I am certain that Education will be one of the most prominent subjects under the new Constitution. I have not the slightest doubt that no Minister will be allowed to rest on his oars. There will be constant pressure that more and more funds should be spent on education. But I also think there will be a good deal of pressure that the control of the Ministry of Education on the expenditure of educational funds should be much more strict than it has been in the past. I think there has been a general feeling that Government have allowed local boards and other expending agencies too much of a free hand. I have pointed out to Honourable Members some of the difficulties which are in our way in making an advance. I have shown to them that the Government of India are fully alive to their responsibilities, and that they have taken a very important step in constituting the Central Advisory Board of Education. I am sure that in the provinces this question will not be allowed to be forgotten. I do not see what more the Government of India can do at present. They cannot take up the position of making large recurring contributions to the provinces, and then, as a corollary, resume control over primary education. This is, in effect, what my Honourable friend suggests,—that primary education should really again become a central subject. That

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is a line that I do not think will be acceptable either to the provinces or to Indian public opinion.

**THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS** (Punjab : Non-Muhammadan) : Sir, I had no intention of speaking on this Resolution, but as a few points have not been dealt with either by the Honourable Mover or by the Honourable the Leader of the House, I bring them before the House. Sir, as far as my information goes, in Travancore, an Indian State, the percentage of school-going children is about 95 per cent. if not more, which percentage cannot be achieved in India at the present pace of progress for centuries to come.

Then, Sir, another reason which stands in the way of the progress of education is unemployment. So far the Government of India has practically done nothing in this matter. In Great Britain elections have been fought on that issue. There the Government is called upon to explain every year what they have done to solve the problem of unemployment. But in India committees are appointed and then their proceedings are shelved. I am glad that the province from which the Honourable Leader of the House comes did appoint a committee under the able guidance of the Right Honourable Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, and now we shall see how the Government deals with the recommendations of that Committee and how they intend to translate that Report into practice. Unless and until the question of unemployment is solved, it is no use saying that we want more education. I am not opposing education, but I must say that education has raised our standard of living and in the present economic depression it is the paramount duty of the Government to consider the question of unemployment before they go into the question of mass education. Mass education is a necessity. A man who has no education is like a savage and it is the duty of the Government to go on with both these things together and then bring India, so far as education is concerned, on a par with other civilised countries of the world.

**\*THE HONOURABLE MR. Y. RANGANAYAKALU NAIDU** (Madras : Non-Muhammadan) : Mr. President, although I am not a great speaker I want to say one or two words about education. Education is a necessity of civilised society. A man who has no education is equal to an animal, and in the modern State it is better to improve education and extend it before anything else. So I would request the House to support this Resolution, and I hope the Honourable the Leader of the House will directly instruct the provinces to improve the standard of mass education.

**THE HONOURABLE RAJA RAGHUNANDAN PRASAD SINGH** (Bihar and Orissa : Non-Muhammadan) : Sir, the Resolution that is being discussed is very important and has got a very far-reaching effect. There is no denying the fact that during the period that India is being ruled by Great Britain, much has been done for the spread of education, but still there is sufficient scope for removing illiteracy from the masses. Local Governments do not lag behind in providing primary education, as funds permit, both for urban and rural areas. Landholders, too, although hard hit owing to the economic depression, try their level best to eradicate this evil of illiteracy as far as it is practicable within the sphere of their zemindaries. But still rural masses are, to a great extent, ignorant of the primary rules of sanitation, hygiene and child welfare. Dearth of skilled labourers in large numbers either in the field

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\* Not corrected by the Honourable Member.



of agriculture or industry are no less due to this evil. The rural population are, to a great extent, ignorant in the advanced methods of cultivation, manuring, cattle-breeding and dairy-farming which are so essential in a country like India whose 85 per cent. of the population has to depend mainly on agriculture. Sir, I therefore think that Government, who has done so much for the uplift of the rural population, will gradually evolve a more vigorous scheme for the spread of mass primary education whenever they have surplus funds at their disposal.

**THE HONOURABLE RAJA GHAZANFAR ALI KHAN** (West Punjab : Muhammadan) : I am very glad that the Honourable Leader of the House has not opposed the Resolution, because opposing this Resolution would really mean refusing to take early steps to remove illiteracy in this country which cannot possibly be the object of any Government. I acknowledge that the Provincial Governments have done something for primary education during the past years, but since 1932 or 1933 the progress has not been appreciable. On the other hand I think many schools have been closed down which were open during the period from 1920 to 1930.

Now, Sir, the future of this country as we all know depends upon the proper working of the new Constitution and that will entirely depend upon the interest which the voters take in sending their representatives both to the Provincial and Central Legislatures. At present a large number of these voters are absolutely ignorant and illiterate. Government having given them franchise, it is their duty to see that illiteracy is removed at the earliest possible moment. The Provincial Governments are extremely anxious in this respect, but there is no denying that their hands are very much tied and the finances at their disposal are very limited. Even under the new Constitution I shall be astonished if any minister, however well intentioned he may be, can do anything with regard to improving the present condition of education in this country. Sir, the money which is being spent on rural uplift and in introducing modern implements of agriculture and all that will only result in the income of the provinces being decreased and the income of the Central Government being increased. Therefore the Government of India should not think that education should be left entirely in the hands of Provincial Governments. As a matter of fact Government should be like parents who think that the education of their children is their most important duty, even at the risk of cutting out many of their interests and requirements in other directions. Similarly the Government of India, if they are determined to see that illiteracy is removed, should be able to make a move in that direction by contributing towards provincial funds. Now, Sir, if we had said two years ago that the Central Government should give something to the provinces for rural uplift, I am sure Government would have emphatically refused and would have said that that was the concern of Provincial Governments. But in these two years they have been able to find a little money for this object. Similarly, if the Government of India feel that it is their moral duty to see that illiteracy is removed at the earliest possible moment, they should certainly take steps in that direction, and the only step they can take is to give money to the provinces.

**THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA MATHURA PRASAD MEHROTRA** : Sir, I think some of the points raised in my speech have been misunderstood by the Leader of the House. I never wanted to say that the provinces have been shirking their responsibility or that they are not doing what they could do. I am of opinion that they are doing the best they can, but my whole object was this. They are short of funds and they cannot

[Rai Bahadur Lala Mathura Prasad Mehrotra]

cope with the demand and they cannot make much headway unless they receive some help from the Government of India. My object of submitting this point was that the Government of India should not regard that this is only the duty of the provinces and the Government of India has nothing to do with it. We all know that a crore of rupees was set apart for rural development last year and in this year's Budget we find that the sum has been developed to about Rs. 2 crores and 17 lakhs. But I consider that this money is practically a waste unless you begin with giving mass education. What they are taught is practically impossible and they were stressed by my Honourable friend Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan. They are asked to put windows in their houses and to have mosquito screens and so on and so forth. These reforms ought not to precede but follow the one and only reform by which these reforms can be utilised and that is mass education. Then, Sir, the Leader of the House pointed out many difficulties in getting trained teachers, fixing the number of boys in a class and so on. These are not difficult things. Where there is a will there is a way and they can be solved by the Central Advisory Board established by Government. As for the borrowing of money for education, I never made the suggestion referred to. What I said was that the Provincial Governments or the Government of India have so far not borrowed a single rupee for the sake of spending it in removing illiteracy from this country. If they have borrowed for other things they could have done for this also.

Sir, I am ready to withdraw the Resolution on account of the very sympathetic way in which the Leader of the House has dealt with it and as he himself was Education Secretary in our province for a very long time and knows the subject thoroughly, I am of opinion that this Resolution will find justice in his hands and he will advise the Central Advisory Board to formulate a definite scheme for removing mass illiteracy in India as well as fix some period and try to find as much money as he can from his colleague the Finance Member and give a contribution to the provinces, so that this scheme might materialise.

Sir, with these words, I do not want to press the Resolution.

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

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#### RESOLUTION *RE* LISTED POSTS IN THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM (Bihar and Orissa : Muhammadan) : Sir, I rise to move :

"That this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council to request the Secretary of State for India to increase the number of listed posts in the Indian Civil Service, from 20 to 25 per cent. and to reduce the cadre from 202.79 per cent. to 175 per cent. of higher posts".

Sir, the Resolution which I have just read is but a partial and a modified reiteration of the demand which I placed before the House on the 11th September, 1933. It has been brought forward with the idea of getting information from the Government as to exactly what they have done in this period of two and half years. I am not going to inflict on the House, especially at this late hour, the full details of the facts of the matter and a critical study of the position. (*An Honourable Member* : "Thanks".) You need not thank me, Sir. The fact is that if I do that I will not be able to conclude my speech and hear the reply of the Honourable Home Secretary. Want of time enforces me to do that if it is any pleasure to you.

Now, Sir, the reason why I wish to reiterate this question is that as a matter of fact the Government has adopted the latter part of my Resolution to a certain extent without adopting the countervailing portion about the listed post. The theoretical strength of the cadre of 202·79 per cent. is being gradually reduced. We have already reached a reduction of about 12 per cent. This means that the intake of Indians which was on a 50 : 50 basis is being reduced. Therefore we demand that if the Government is really honest in its promises and wishes to honour its own word that by a certain date it will try to see that the 50 : 50 basis is established ; it must adopt the countervailing proposal also of throwing open more listed posts for the Provincial Services. For the benefit of those Members who were not present in this House, I should like to say that in this service the number of superior posts in British India *minus* Burma is 525, for which there are already in service about 1,025 men. For 525 posts there are 1,025 men, although theoretically we ought to have something like 1,070. There has already been an appreciable reduction in the cadre. Out of these 525 posts 58 are in the Government of India. While on the one side we have the brilliant example of Bengal and the Punjab who have listed the entire number of 40 listed posts which were allotted as their share, on the other hand we have the example of the Government of India which has not listed a single post. This is an action for which there can be no defence. It is this sort of action of the Government of India which gives it a bad name. It is not what the Congress says that reduces their prestige but what they actually do themselves. If they are not careful, if they do not take care to save their fair name by conscientiously acting up to the promises that they make, there is no one that can save their face and their words will never be honoured, regarded, respected. Sir, for the 58 superior posts, there are inferior posts, there is a leave reserve, and altogether there are 111 people in the Government of India from the Indian Civil Service, and not one of them is a Provincial Service man. My complaint is that the leeway which remains to be made in the listing of the posts is only in the Government of India appointments. Out of 131 posts that were to be listed, we have already 117 Provincial Service men occupying permanently superior posts. There are only 16 posts left, Sir, out of which 12 are in the Government of India. The Honourable the Home Secretary has remarked that they have not yet worked up to that. When will they work up it ? The deficiency lies right under the nose of the Government of India and yet nothing has been done. Sir, Provincial Service men are fully efficient, as the Honourable the Home Secretary has remarked. We have four Provincial Service men who held permanently superior posts in this House, and I say with confidence that Provincial Service men can rise to any heights if you give them an opportunity to prove their worth. It may be thought, Sir, that I am making an empty boast, that I am theorising, that I am saying sentimental things. But as a matter of fact, I will cite the example of the Government's own action to prove to what heights Provincial Service men can rise if they are given the opportunity. There is the example of the Punjab where you have raised a Provincial Service man to the Executive Council. The Honourable the Leader of the House, when he left the Provincial Government, was succeeded by a Provincial Service man, but unfortunately not as a Provincial Service member but as a non-official, but he belongs to that Service. If two men in two different provinces are eligible to hold the highest post under Governors, why cannot Provincial Service men be given posts under the Government of India in the Secretariats ?

The whole trouble is due to the wrong policy of the Provincial Governments. They will not confirm a Provincial Service man until he is about to retire. I have known cases where a man has not had even one year in a permanent superior post. It is merely eye-wash. I am tempted to say that it

[Mr. Hossain Imam.]

is not honest dealing. What is the meaning of this—to confirm a man when he is about to retire? I have known a man confirmed when going on leave preparatory to retirement. Now, Sir, it has become almost a rule never to confirm a man before he is 48. We know the rule is very strict, and it is now the exception rather than the rule to be confirmed even at 48. Then, Sir, formerly the position was that seniority for a Provincial Service man used to count from the time that he had an officiating chance. But Government found that it gave him added seniority and entitled him to the post of Commissioner. This has been the great trouble of the Provincial Governments. They do not want a Provincial Civil Service man to be a permanent Commissioner. Therefore the method that is adopted now is that seniority should count from the time that he is confirmed in the post and the confirmation does not take place until it is too late. I have with me, Sir, the Civil List of the United Provinces as well as Bihar and Orissa. In Bihar and Orissa there are seven vacancies in the permanent post of magistrate and yet Provincial Service men are not being confirmed. In the United Provinces there are more than that number of posts vacant in the permanent cadre and yet no one is being confirmed. If the Punjab and Bengal can take the lead and list the whole of the required number, why should not the other provinces follow suit? The only reason is the sweet will of the Government and there is no desire on the part of the Government of India to see that its promises are honoured. It is a question of the *izzat* of the Government of India that they should honour their own words. They have got into the bad habit of disregarding the advice of others and therefore they do not mind if their own promises are disregarded.

Now, Sir, I should like to mention that when I want an increase in the listed posts it is in order to counterbalance the reduction in the cadre that has been already adopted as a matter of policy by the Government. The numbers in recruitment has been reduced. In the new recruitment we get a 50 : 50 basis. For every Englishman we get an Indian. That ratio will remain. But formerly in the services a large number of Englishmen could not be counterbalanced. For instance, there are 50 Englishmen in the Service. Now out of 50 men who are admitted now you get 25 Indians. So that in the total of 100 you have 25 Indians. Now, by the change of the method, we have 50 Englishmen already in the Service and we recruit only 40 men out of which 20 only are Indians so that in 90 we get only 20 which is about 22 per cent. so that the percentage of Indians in the Service will be reduced unless you increase the listed posts. If, Sir, the Provincial Service men are not brought to the Government of India, the reason is that the Provincial Service men do not get that experience of the Secretariat which an Indian Civil Service man gets and that is because, as I said, a Provincial Service man has to run the hurdle race of seniority. Until he comes up to the top—the selection grade—he is very rarely given a listed post. Now, by the time he reaches the selection grade he is already old. He has no time to learn the business. The real cure is that Government should take as under secretary or deputy secretary men from the Provincial Service who show special merit. Until you start taking men in the lower grade of the Secretariat, you can never get qualified men and your complaint will always remain. Whose fault is it that you do not train them up? And it is about time you did—for 12 years have elapsed since this announcement was made in 1924 and yet Government have done nothing to list the posts in the Secretariat. I therefore appeal to the Honourable the Home Secretary to convey our demand to the Secretary of State. It is not in the power of the Government of India to decide this question. I is a question in which you are to some extent in the same boat with us. The

power rests with the great Autocrat of Whitehall. I do not call him the Moghul because that would be a slander on the Moghuls. I have more respect for them.

Now, Sir, I come to the second part of my Resolution—the reduction of the cadre. The Honourable the Home Secretary in reply to my original Resolution of September, 1933 promised to look into the question of leave reserve. He admitted that 41·96 per cent. was too high a leave reserve in the present circumstances of the Service, because there were quite an appreciable number of Indians; and Indians do not require the same amount of leave as Europeans require. And on account of the easier facilities for travel even Europeans did not require leave for such long periods as formerly when they had to spend such a long time on the journey. I should like to know what steps have been taken?

Then, Sir, I should like to refer to a point on which I was probably misunderstood by the Honourable the Home Secretary. When I inferred that the number of inferior posts need not now remain at the high level of 38·70 per cent. because the district magistrate's work was reduced, he thought that my demand amounted to an aspersion on the activities of the district magistrate. What I then said, and what I do say now again, is that you wanted a joint magistrate of fair seniority—about eight or ten years standing—to help the district magistrate in part of his work, but now what you get in the districts is not Indian Civil Service joint magistrates, but Indian Civil Service assistant magistrates. A perusal of the Civil List will confirm that statement of mine. The Indian Civil Service men go to the districts only to learn their business and as soon as they have learnt their business, they are sent mostly to sub-divisions to act as Sub-Divisional Officers. The work which a joint magistrate used to discharge before 1922 is now mostly discharged by the senior deputy magistrate in the district. Therefore, it is possible, without in any way impairing the efficiency, to reduce appreciably the inferior posts. I myself would have placed it at 27 per cent. for the inferior posts and 27 per cent. for the leave reserve and thereby effected a reduction of 27 per cent. which I now want. Formerly, I placed my demand at 160. Now on account of the conciliatory language in the reply of the Honourable the Home Secretary, I have increased it. The Secretary of State may or may not accept this ratio for want of information on the subject. But one thing he ought to do at once, and that is, he should order that the intake should be reduced. Reduction of cadre is not a thing which can be done overnight just like exchange, which may be changed in a minute. It will take seven years at least, even if we were to adopt a modified form of restriction by taking one man for every two who retire. Even on this, it will take seven years from now to work down to that basis. It is for these reasons that I have brought this matter to the notice of the House and I do hope that the Honourable the Home Secretary will give me a somewhat satisfactory reply.

Sir, I move.

THE HONOURABLE MR. M. G. HALLETT (Home Secretary): Sir, I do not think it is necessary for me to detain the House very long. It is rather late in the evening and possibly we are all getting somewhat sleepy. One result of that is possibly that Honourable Members have felt it difficult to follow some of the Honourable Mover's arguments. That, however, is a matter on which I cannot express a definite opinion. To follow statistics in a speech is never a very easy task even for those who know something about the question.

[ Mr. M. G. Hallett. ]

I therefore propose to deal with the question on broader outlines. It may not satisfy the Honourable Mr. Hossain Imam, but I trust it will satisfy the rest of the House.

I think I can do very little more than repeat what I said in 1933 when I dealt with a similar Resolution which was rejected by a very large majority. The first point the Honourable Member raised is that the number of listed posts should be increased by 5 per cent. The Honourable Mover held up for praise the Governments of Bengal and the Punjab, where they have already got the full 20 per cent. of listed posts and held up to shame the Government of India because they have no listed posts. Well, Sir, the Government of India never intended to have any listed posts. The Honourable Member, by making that suggestion, misunderstands the whole system on which the Indian Civil Service cadre is based. It is rather difficult to explain concisely what the exact position is. As you know, Sir, all the officers of the Indian Civil Service as well as the listed posts officers belong to a province. There is no question of their being recruited for service under the Government of India or in the Central Secretariat. We all belong definitely to a province. Therefore, recruitment to listed posts only goes on in the provinces. If officers are recruited either to the Indian Civil Service direct or promoted to the listed posts, then they stand a chance of getting superior posts either in the provinces or on some occasions in the Government of India. There have been cases of officers who come up here and have risen to high positions. There have been cases of officers who have risen to high positions in their own provinces. I have just been told of a case in Madras where an officer from the Provincial Service got a listed post and then rose to the position of Member of the Board of Revenue, which in that province is a very high position.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR DAVID DEVADOSS (Nominated: Indian Christians):** He is the third member. There have been two other instances before.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. M. G. HALLETT:** We have had other cases of Provincial Service officers rising to very high positions. To charge the Government of India with not listing a certain percentage of the posts in the Government of India misconceives the whole position. Recruitment to the listed posts must be in the provinces themselves.

As regards the general question as to why we cannot increase the number of listed posts, the whole difficulty is that we cannot do so without damaging the prospects of officers who have been appointed to the Indian Civil Service, Indian or British, in the expectation that after a certain term of years they will rise to what is known as a superior post, that is to say, post of a District Officer or a Sessions Judge, or a Magistrate or Collector. If we put a whole lot of other officers over their heads, that naturally damages their prospects and makes them discontented and reacts unfavourably on the general conditions of their service and on the work which they carry out. It is for that reason that in making these promotions to listed posts, we have to see that the interests of both sides of the Service, that is to say, the interests of the Provincial Service officers and of the Indian Civil Service officers, are safeguarded, and that is the reason for the delay. That delay was anticipated from the very first. When this increase in the number of listed posts was made in the year 1924, it was anticipated that the percentage will be worked up to by 1939—a period of 15 years. We are not yet in 1939, and till that time comes, till we have worked up to the present 20 per cent., I submit it is premature to raise the question of increasing the number of listed posts. In doing so,

I am not in the least disparaging the excellent work done by these officers. I think I said on the last occasion that I have good reason to know that they are doing excellent work in the provinces. We have got in fact several examples of officers who have held listed posts in the Council of State at the present moment, and they fully deserved their promotion.

Then, Sir, the Honourable Mover raised a point, which was only incidental to the main issue, that Provincial Governments generally promote these men too late in their service. He suggested that that was due to a deliberate policy in order to prevent their being promoted to Commissionerships and other higher posts over the heads of their Indian Civil Service colleagues. I have pointed out that in Madras, one member has risen to the position of Member of the Board of Revenue. In the United Provinces we have the instance of an officer being a Member of the Executive Council or a Commissioner for several years. We have had cases in Bombay, we have had cases in other provinces, and to suggest that the Local Governments are jealous of the success of Provincial Service officers in these higher posts is entirely wrong. I have frequently talked to Provincial Service officers myself and they realise how difficult it is to select people at a very early age; they recognise that such selections give rise to difficulties and may upset the whole system on which we are at present basing our system of recruitment for these higher posts.

Then, Sir, the main point that the Honourable Member made—as I have said I regret I had considerable difficulty in following the Honourable Member's statistics—was that, as at present we were making some reduction in the annual recruitment, therefore we should increase our number of listed posts. But the fact remains that the more posts filled by promotion, the less direct recruitment there is. If we increase the listed posts it means that instead of recruiting say 45 a year we only recruit 40. But, Sir, the main objection to increasing the number of listed posts is the fact that officers who have come in with the prospect of rising in the Service by certain stages will be deprived of that legal and justifiable expectation.

I do not think it necessary for me to deal with the question of the work which junior officers of the Indian Civil Service do. That is entirely a matter for the decision of Local Governments. They are employed on whatever work is most suitable. In some cases they do in the districts exactly the same work as Provincial Service officers, whether they are in charge of a sub-division or whether they hold the post of Joint Magistrate at headquarters.

Sir, I regret that I cannot entirely accept the Honourable Member's proposition as it stands, but if on further study I find there is anything which deserves consideration in his speech—I will certainly examine it carefully—and if opportunity offers and any question connected with this arises, I will see that it is forwarded to the Secretary of State. Whether, in forwarding it, the Government of India will agree is a different matter. We are bound in this matter to have our own opinions. But I can certainly assure him that the Secretary of State shall see it if opportunity arises.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM: Sir, I had high hopes that the Honourable Home Secretary would be more conciliatory, but he shattered those hopes when he said that there was no intention of listing any post in the Government of India. We, Sir, seem to live in a fool's paradise. We thought that when the Government started listing posts it would list throughout. We did not think there would be a mental reservation, that the Secretariat would be out of it. The argument that there cannot be an increase in the number of listed posts because that would mean infringing the prospects of the

[Mr. Hossain Imam.]

Indian Civil Service men comes rather late in the day, because the Indian Civil Service man has all along known that listing has been adopted by the Government as a matter of policy. The number of such posts was first 16 per cent. ; it was then increased to 20 per cent., and he could have no objection if that was further increased to 25 per cent. Well, Sir, I can cite the Government of India's own example about promotions. There are posts in which you take men by direct recruitment as well as by promotion. There the Government of India in its own services has put no quota on what would be the intake from promotions, because both happened to be India, and the only difference in the Indian Civil Service is that the other party to this contract are Europeans. Sir, I do not like to bring racial questions into this.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: But you have been bringing them in all the time.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM: Sir, we are forced to do it by the inaction of the Government. In the beginning I never said a word about it, but it is these declarations of policy which forces us to do such things. Then he cited the example of Kunwar Maharaj Singh, who was confirmed as a Commissioner. May I remind him, and I think the Honourable Leader of the House will confirm me, that that was the solitary instance when they blunderingly confirmed a Provincial Service man rather early. The Government of the United Provinces were wiser after that and would not allow young Provincial Service men to be confirmed in the superior posts. I have seen the list and that blunder has never been committed after that instance. It was the only blunder they committed in confirming a man young enough to rise to a Commissionership. (*An Honourable Member*: "Why blunder?") From their point of view because they have avoided this sort of thing ever since then.

Then, Sir, I admit that if you increase the listed posts you decrease the direct recruitment. But what is the net effect? By listing you do not decrease the number of Indians. By reducing the cadre you reduce the numbers of both Europeans and Indians recruited direct, but you counter that by taking more Indians through the listed posts. I do not wish to disturb that formula of 50 : 50, but if you work it out on a mathematical basis you will find that reduction of intake from direct recruitment does involve a lessening in the number of Indians who will get in. I do not wish to argue that out, but if you leave it to the Government Actuary you will find my points are borne out, that unless you list more posts by reducing the cadre you are shutting out Indians.

Now, Sir, I purposely did not bring in questions which are not directly at issue; I mean whether the Indian Civil Service cadre also requires revision or not. There are any number of departments like the Income-tax, the Posts and Telegraphs, and the Accounts. All these have their own cadres and there is no need to have Indian Civil Service men there. That is a different matter. But when I say that the posts in the Secretariat should be thrown open to Provincial Service men, I do not mean that Government should recruit men directly. I mean that Provincial Service men should be confirmed early enough to be eligible to come to the Secretariat. May I remind him that 65 per cent. of the men who are in the Secretariat are not confirmed as District Magistrates? They come to the Secretariat before they are confirmed in superior posts. How can a single listed post man come to these jobs which are the preserve of the Indian Civil Service? Unless he goes through the mill and goes up step by step he can never rise to a secretaryship.



I do wish, Sir, that the Honourable Home Secretary will examine my points closely, and if there is any reason in my madness I hope he will adopt it. I should have liked to press my Resolution, but I know the mentality of the House; I have sad experience of it. As usual it will reject my Resolution, therefore, Sir, I seek the permission of the House to withdraw it.

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

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**RESOLUTION *RE* PROPOSED SUBSTITUTION OF NOMINATION  
FOR ELECTION IN THE FIJI LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.**

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT** (to the Honourable Mr. P. N. Sapru): I would advise you only to read your Resolution today and discussion will take place on the next non-official day.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU** (United Provinces Southern : Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I rise to move the following Resolution:

“This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that he may be pleased to communicate to His Majesty’s Government the dissatisfaction of this Council with the recommendation”—

I would substitute the word “recommendation” for the word “decision” because there has been no decision—

“that the method of Indian selection to the Legislative Council in Fiji should be nomination and not election”.

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The Council then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 18th March, 1936.