

COUNCIL OF STATE DEBATES

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(21st to 29th September 1942)

TWELFTH SESSION

OF THE

FOURTH COUNCIL OF STATE, 1942



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FRIDAY, 25TH SEPTEMBER, 1942.			

COUNCIL OF STATE.

Thursday, 24th September, 1942.

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

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF POSTS AND AIR.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : With reference to the announcement made by me on the 21st September, 1942 regarding nominations to the Standing Committee to advise on subjects other than "Roads" dealt with in the Department of Posts and Air, I have to announce that the Honourable Saiyed Mohamed Padshah Sahib Bahadur and the Honourable Haji Syed Muhammad Husain have been nominated to it. As there are two candidates for two seats, I declare them duly elected.

MOTION *RE* POLITICAL SITUATION IN INDIA.

THE HONOURABLE SIR JOGENDRA SINGH (Education, Health and Lands Member) : Sir, I have listened to the debate with deep concern and a feeling of frustration. It would be futile at this stage for me to dissect the carcass of deplorable events. No Government can rejoice in these fateful days if it is compelled to maintain law and order, when all its energies should be directed in preparations to meet the perils, which it may be at any moment called upon to face.

Nothing is lost ; indeed everything would be gained if we face the realities, sink all party and communal differences and enter upon our heritage. We can then ask His Majesty's Government to close this sorry chapter of misunderstandings ; negotiations and declarations by a definite act, and endow India with Puran Swaraj. By giving at once England can secure India as a willing partner in her struggle for survivorship. Would to God a wave of wisdom swept away cobwebs of distrust and disbelief on both sides and between the communities in the realization in the words of Sadi "That we are limbs of one another". Even Mr. Jinnah may see that he cannot create a holy land unless he sees, in those amidst whom he lives, the face of a brother. May I take this opportunity of mentioning that Mr. Jinnah was wrong. Muslim representation in the army stands at 32 per cent. and the others provide the remaining 68 per cent.

Let Gandhiji worship at the shrine of non-violence and Jinnah sharpen his knife to carve out a Pakistan, but let the Central Legislature do the one thing that is needful and act as representative of millions who desire peace, a better living, whose hearts throb in unison in thousands of villages, who are aware that all religions teach concord is a blessing and discord a curse, who in spite of preachings which have been racing in full blast, have lived for centuries, and live now, as good neighbours.

[Sir Jogendra Singh.]

Let us forget that there are such organizations as the Congress and the League. Let us no more waste our stock of emotions in vain pursuit of theories which have no relation to facts. Let the representatives of the Princes and the people come together and resolve the deadlock. Let them present a united demand for fulfilment of the promise, which was reaffirmed by the Prime Minister only the other day. My lips can utter no word of indifference regarding the aspiration of all the people of India. Let us work for the realization of these aspirations.

My friend, the Honourable Mr. Sapru, and other speakers have spoken of the eleven contemptibles who have joined the Government.

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU (United Provinces Southern : Non-Muhammadan) : I never used the word "contemptible".

THE HONOURABLE SIE JOGENDRA SINGH : My friend the Honourable Mr. Sapru seems familiar with the writings of John Morley. He must have noted the controversy over the appointment of a single Indian to the Viceroy's Executive Council. Lord Linlithgow can in any case claim that he has secured an Indian majority in his Executive Council, while the great Postvisit thinker and liberal statesman could not reconcile himself to the appointment of a single Indian.

I can assure the Honourable Mr. Sapru that we hold these positions in trust. I have not studied the Act or the rules of business but I can affirm without any fear of contradiction that we exercise all the powers which the Members of the Executive Council have exercised. Further, it is not our purpose to make bibles of the fading script of rules, which may not suit the new complexion of expanded Council. It shall be our endeavour of all my colleagues who think alike to transform the Executive Council into a Cabinet, if you also play your part, and endow us with power but if you leave us in splendid isolation then you rob us largely of our power to carry out your wishes. I feel like asking, in the words of Ghalib, "What kind of friends are these, who have turned into advisers and critics, they who ought to have been busy in translating their sympathy into action".

I can assure you I have not come in this last stage of my journey on this earth to waste my days, but to serve my King and my Country, to advocate to the best of my power the views of those whom I represent, to stand for the integrity of India to utilize every opportunity to secure what the heart of India desires, and to make a larger happiness more universally possible.

May I say with all humility that the mantle of a minister cannot cloud the spirit of a man who no more wishes to please men but to please God.

THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU (United Provinces Northern : Non-Muhammadan) : Mr. President, before I deal with controversial matters, I think I must pay my tribute of admiration to my Honourable friend Sir Jogendra Singh for what he has said and for the tone in which he has said it. His speech showed that he regarded himself as a representative of the people and was in the Council not for administrative purposes but to voice the aspirations of those whom he morally represents. I wish that my Honourable friend the Leader of the House had shown a similar realization of his responsibility when he spoke on the present situation yesterday. I can not congratulate him on the speech which he delivered which, if he will pardon

me for saying so, was only a poor summary of Sir Reginald Maxwell's speech in another place. I can understand the preoccupation of the Members of the Executive Council with the seriousness of the present situation. I can understand their anxiety to put down lawlessness and to restore peace and order throughout the country. There is no one on these Benches who is in sympathy with the acts of violence that are being perpetrated today or who can ask Government to let those, who are engaged in carrying out the destructive policy which Government are opposing, go on with their campaign unhindered. All those who desire the progress of their country would wish that there were peace in the country, and that we could unitedly face the common foe of civilization and humanity. But, while I recognize the primary duty of the Government to put down disorder I also ask them to realize the causes that are at work today and to understand why the unrest that has been in existence in this country for years and years has manifested itself in the form which we all deplore. My Honourable friend Sir Mahomed Usman when asked yesterday whether Government considered it their duty to inquire into excesses that might have been committed by their own police and military and whether the Executive Council was considering measures to bring about reconciliation between the people and the country replied that Government had no reason to suppose that their agents had been guilty of any excesses and threw the primary responsibility for suggesting changes in the constitution of India on the Governor General and His Majesty's Government. He would not even admit that the Government of India had any concern with the matter or that they could on their own initiative take up and consider questions of constitutional policy and tender that advice to His Majesty's Government which they thought to be best in the interests of this country and England.

Let me first deal, Sir, with the manner in which the disturbances are being suppressed, at least in some places. My Honourable friend the Leader of the House was able to give us fairly full information regarding the lawless acts committed by those who have been guilty of cutting wires or removing rails or burning post offices and police stations. We have not the same means as he has for making inquiries into the manner in which the authorities are putting down acts of lawlessness. In the present disturbed state of the country the Provincial authorities will scarcely allow any person to proceed to those districts where the police and the military have been stationed. But my Honourable friend Mr. Sri Narain Mahtha, who was fortunately able to tour his district, gave us yesterday an exceedingly disquieting picture of the state of things that prevail there. The account that he gave us of the lawlessness committed by the guardians of law and order was moving in the extreme and showed that Government had on their part been guilty of no less violence than the people at least in certain places. I should like to give one or two instances relating to the United Provinces which seem to me to be based on accurate information. The first instance I shall refer to relates to Allahabad. I have made some inquiries on the subject and I understand that a man was caught hold of by an Indian soldier or the special military police because he was wearing a Gandhi cap. He was asked to take it off which he naturally refused to do. His part was taken by a passer-by. Two or three soldiers came and beat the man who was wearing the Gandhi cap. He turned round on his assailants and attacked them and then finally, shaking off the person who was holding his shirt, he tried to run away. He and his supporters who also ran away were at once fired on by one of the soldiers or military police. He was not hit but a passer-by who was hit died immediately. Another instance of the same kind, I understand, occurred in Allahabad, quite near the place where the

[Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.]

first incident occurred, but I have not been able to inquire into it. The next incident, Sir, that I shall invite the attention of the House to relates to one of the eastern districts of the United Provinces, Ghazipur. One of the inhabitants of the village which I am going to refer to, who is a substantial zemindar, paying between Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 4,000 annually as land revenue, has made representations both to the Local and the Central Governments regarding the excesses committed by the military in his village. The village concerned is Manjha and the story which the zemindar refers to in his representation runs as follows: On the 24th August, four European soldiers—I think he meant four European officers—accompanied by about 100 or 150 Indian soldiers visited the village of Manjha in tehsil Saidpur, ordered all the males in the village to come out of their houses and stand on one side of the road. They then entered the houses, forced the women to surrender all the ornaments they had on their persons, took hold of all the cash, jewellery and other valuables they could lay their hands on and then set fire to a number of houses. Afterwards they returned to the place where the male members of the village including children were standing. The children were asked to go away, but all the males were whipped each of them by two men, one standing on either side of the victim. One of the houses that was looted was that of this zemindar who has complained to Government. He is one of the men who helped Government to put down the non-co-operation movement in 1921. He has helped them to a small extent in recruiting soldiers in the present war. He has contributed to the war fund and has been made an Honorary Magistrate. Yet he was not spared. Sir, if this is the treatment that can be meted out to a loyal supporter of the Government, one naturally shudders to think what happened to those people who were not in that position. I should not like to suggest that things of this kind have happened in every village. But I must state that so many complaints have reached me from the eastern districts of the United Provinces that I feel, and feel strongly, that the Government ought to institute an impartial inquiry into the manner in which lawlessness has been suppressed in these districts. I have received complaints from other parts of India also, for instance from Gujerat, but I do not want to go into any further details on the subject. It has been no pleasure to me to recite even the instances which I have placed before the Council, but I was compelled to do so by the refusal of my Honourable friend the Leader of the House yesterday to admit that the police and the troops might in some places have been guilty of taking the law into their own hands and committing excesses.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR SRI NARAIN MAHTHA (Bihar : Non-Muhammadan) : I want to interrupt Pandit Kunzru for a moment. If he chooses, I will hand over to him a paper which I have received just by this *dak* signed by an individual whom I know—

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : Why do you want to interrupt the speech ? Pandit Kunzru.

THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : I hope, Sir, that the instances that my Honourable friend Mr. Sri Narain Mahta and I have placed before the Council will convince the Leader of the House that at least something has been done by the Government which they should not approve of and that if they are jealous of their reputation they must institute an inquiry into these matters. In asking them to do so, I am only proceeding on precedents set by the Government themselves. After the disturbances in the

Punjab in 1919 the Secretary of State instituted an inquiry into the conditions governing the exercise of the powers conferred on the Punjab authorities under the Martial Law that was proclaimed there and I see no reason why when the present abnormal state of things is over Government should shrink from following the same procedure. Indeed, if they have any regard for their reputation it is their bounden duty to let those who have complaints to make place them before an impartial authority, so that it may be known whether their grievances were justified or not.

Sir, I shall now, by your leave, deal with another point which arises out of the speech of my Honourable friend the Leader of the House. Speaking the day before yesterday he said that taking all things into consideration those responsible for the present disturbances seemed to be actuated with the definite object of inviting Japan to take India. I think the Honourable Member went a little too far in making that statement. I am not a member of the Congress, nor do I agree with its present policy. But I cannot for a moment agree that the object of the Congress was to invite Japan to India. It wanted certainly to embarrass the Government; but I am sure that it has not the slightest desire to invite Japan to this country.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM: Is not that the corollary?

THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU: My Honourable friend Mr. Hossain Imam asks whether this is not the corollary of their action. I shall reply to his question a little later. I had anticipated such questions on the part of experienced and wise members of this Council and I have therefore come prepared for a reply.

THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU: Sir, Government, instead of dealing only with the present situation and thinking that they have no background and that there will be no aftermath which they need trouble themselves about ought seriously to think of the measures by which reconciliation can be brought about between them and the people. It is futile for them to think that the dissatisfaction which has manifested itself in the country has been engineered by the Congress. Considering the fact that the adherents of the Congress got no time to prepare the people for carrying out their programme, did not get time even to inform the people fully of their programme, it is absurd to say that the movement is wholly engineered. I think, Sir, considering the situation impartially one cannot doubt that the upheaval that has taken place reflects the feelings of the people towards the British Government. The despair and exasperation to which the policy of the British Government have driven all people, whether Hindus or Muslims, has unfortunately resulted in acts of lawlessness on the part of the people, but my Honourable friends opposite should on an occasion like this bear in mind Lord Morley's words that when people rebel it is not their fault but their misfortune. A friend of mine, Sir, convened a meeting at Allahabad to ask the people to co-operate with the Government in their war effort. This meeting was convened under the auspices of the Communist Party. My friend in the course of his speech attacked the Japanese for the atrocities of which they have been guilty in China. A man in the audience excitedly got up and said, "You might have said that some time ago but please do not say that now". A day earlier, or the same day, a procession of students had been fired on by the police and one of them had died. The students I understand had not been guilty of any violence and when the news of the firing on the students spread through the city it touched the hearts even of those who deplored the present movement. This little incident should suffice to show to Government which way the wind is

[Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.]

blowing and instead of burying their heads like ostriches in the sand they ought to look facts in the face, realize their responsibilities and think of their duty towards the people whose trustees they profess to be instead of always thinking of their prestige and power.

Sir, it is a tragedy that Government have failed to recognize their responsibility for the present state of things and it is not until they realize their own faults, realize their own tardiness in satisfying the legitimate demands of the people for freedom that they will be able to strengthen their position or bring about friendly relations between India and England. My Honourable friends opposite will challenge this statement and ask whether since the war broke out Government have not taken two steps in order to make the Executive Council more representative of popular opinion than it was before. The Government Resolution issued on the 8th August claims that the Executive Council as constituted at present is stronger and more representative than it ever was before. Sir, considering the situation objectively there is nothing to show that the Executive Council today is stronger than its predecessors and if it is not stronger and does not therefore reflect public opinion as forcibly as it ought to I cannot regard it as more representative. But, apart from this, Sir, let us consider the manner in which the expansion of the Executive Council has been brought about. I do not want to go into the details concerning this expansion because we have dealt with them repeatedly in this House. I shall, therefore, content myself with saying that in spite of the expansion that has taken place in two stages a majority of the most important portfolios still remain in British hands. When the last expansion of the Council took place the portfolio of Communications was divided into two, those of War Transport and of Civil Aviation and Posts and Telegraphs. The latter portfolio was given to an Indian and the former was given to a Britisher. The cry is for Indianization in every quarter of the country. All political groups are united in demanding it; yet the British Government who have expanded the Executive Council in order to convince us of their political sincerity appoint a Britisher to one of the most important portfolios. Can we wonder, Sir, if such actions on the part of His Majesty's Government have created profound distrust and resentment throughout India. The Government have said in extenuation or in defence of their present policy that while they were always prepared to consider suggestions relating to constitutional advance they could not carry on negotiations with the representatives of the Congress in face of the threat of rebellion which they had held out. The demands which were made by the Congress are in substance the demands which have been put forward by other Parties. There may be differences between the Muslim League on the one side and the Hindu Mahasabha and the Congress on the other, but I have yet to learn that the Muslim League, or its leader, is satisfied with the present state of things or wants that Government should remain in undisturbed enjoyment of their present power. I make bold to say that the Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabha, the Liberal Federation and the Non-Party Conference are in effect united in demanding of the British Government that freedom which the Congress has asked for. What heed did the British Government pay to their demands before the Congress passed its threatening resolution? Had they tried in the least to be conciliatory, had they shown any earnest desire to part with power, had they placed the key portfolios in the hands of Indians, they might today have been entitled to say that they had all the Parties in the country except the Congress behind them. But today they are in the unenviable position of having all

thinking sections of the population of India ranged solidly against them. They may flatter themselves that owing to the internal differences that exist in the country they are discharging their duty in putting down the Congress agitators. I wonder however, Sir, whether they can satisfy their conscience so easily if it ever pricks them. It is, Sir, the refusal of Government to consider the proposals put forward by the other parties that has produced that desperation in the country of which the present upheaval is a forcible manifestation. In order, Sir, to show that the demands of all the parties were virtually the same as those of the Congress I shall read out part of the resolution passed by the last Non-party conference which was held on the 21st and 22nd February, 1942 in this city. The conference asked among other things for a declaration that India shall no longer be treated as a dependency to be ruled from Whitehall and that henceforth her constitutional position and powers should be identical with those of the other self-governing units of the British Commonwealth. What attention did the British Government pay to this resolution? They threw it into the waste paper basket. I honour, Sir, those Englishmen who, in the face of the discouragement which they are receiving from the British authorities and some of their own countrymen in this country, are trying to make the authorities both in India and in England realize that their best interests lie in their satisfying the just demands of the Indian people. Government have tried to carry on propaganda in other countries that if only there was unity in the country they would be prepared to surrender power to the representatives of the people. This sentiment was given expression to even by my Honourable friend Sir Jogendra Singh. I do not however, Sir, think that this propaganda is based on truth, for when, Sir, Stafford Cripps came here he made it plain that even if all the parties united in asking for the transfer of Defence it would not be transferred. My friend Mr. Arthur Moore, in view of this and other facts, writing the other day to the Editor of the *Pioneer*, said what was essential was that "Allied military opinion should learn that the problem of obtaining internal peace in India and enthusiastic support for the war against Japan could be solved by a British offer to transfer power (*Hear, hear*) which has hitherto been lacking". He then says that India should be in the same position as the Governments of Australia and Canada, and states that "the British and American public would seem to be under the impression that conditional upon agreement between Indian parties, such an offer is in existence, whereas in India it is universally known that it is not so". It is clear, Sir, therefore, that not only Indians, but fair-minded Britishers admit that the Government, though carrying on propaganda assiduously against Indians in other countries, have never admitted that union among the people would result in the transfer of complete power to Indian hands.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Representative Indian hands.

THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : I shall nevertheless, Sir, make bold to deal with the differences that unfortunately still exist among us. I do not want to deal with these differences in any controversial spirit. I want those Honourable friends of mine in this House who represent the Muslim community to clarify their position in regard to those essential points which must be understood by us before their demands can be properly considered. The agitation for Pakistan has been going on for two or three years. We understand that what the Muslim desire is that what they call their homelands should be allowed to become autonomous and independent States. But, Sir, this statement does not enable us clearly to know what effect their proposals would have on India. I say nothing, Sir,

[Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.]

with regard to the wisdom of the demand, for nothing that I can say will unfortunately have any effect. I will, however, ask them to bear in mind that Muslims do not inhabit this unfortunate country of India. There are other countries also in which there are large Muslim populations. Palestine is one of them. Have they in putting forward the demand for Pakistan in this country ever thought of the effect that such a demand, if granted, would have on the fortunes of their co-religionists in Palestine? They and we have together protested against British encroachment on the right of the Muslim population of that country.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM: Hear, hear.

THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU: I had the good fortune of visiting it 10 or 12 years ago, and the talks that I had with the people has left an indelible impression of their sincerity and a love of freedom on my mind. We are still ready to join hands with the Indian Muslims in defending the rights of the Muslims in Palestine, but they are destroying the basis of their own demands. They will not, if Pakistan is conceded to them in this country, be able to ask the British Government to refrain from dividing Palestine between the Jews and the Muslims. The British Government have cheerfully supported the principle of Pakistan in this country. Had it been accepted in the Eighteenth Century, the United States of America would not have been a united country today but would have been split up into two weak States. I think it is the good fortune of the United States of America that under the inspiring leadership of President Lincoln they succeeded in maintaining a united country against all opposition. Sir, whatever one may think of the demand for Pakistan, but, realizing what the situation in practice is, I will ask my Honourable friends who represent the Muslim League in this House to tell me exactly what are the boundaries of what the Muslims call their homelands? It is clear that they do not want that there should be one common Central Government with authority over the whole of India. They want to disregard the evolution that has taken place, say during the last 100 years. Are they, while wiping out the history of the last 100 years still asking that the old provincial boundaries, which are no less the result of British rule than the present Central Government, should be retained as they are?

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM: No.

THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU: My Honourable friend says "No". Let us understand clearly then what are the limits that they set to the Muslim homelands. This question has been asked repeatedly in the country but it has never been unambiguously answered. My question relates especially to the Punjab and Bengal. I want to know whether they want the whole of Bengal and the whole of the Punjab as they are today, whether they include in their homelands western Bengal and the south-eastern Punjab, or whether their aspirations would be satisfied if they were given full self-government over smaller territories. I was glad to hear from my Honourable friend Mr. Hossain Imam that it was not the Muslim demand that the present provincial boundaries should be maintained intact. I would, however, take leave to remind him and the whole House that the Punjab as we know it today was not the Punjab that existed in the times of the Moguls. That part of the Punjab which is on this side of the Sutlej formed part of a province known as Sirhind. The British united the Province of Sirhind with the Punjab after

its conquest by them in 1856. I hope, therefore, that my Honourable friend Mr. Hossain Imam, bearing past history in mind, and being guided by considerations of fairness and justice, would be able to give an answer which would enable the non-Muslims to understand fully what the Muslim demand is and to consider it dispassionately.

The second question which I want to put to him is whether, when a territory comes to be separated from India, only the views of the Muslim inhabitants of those territories would be considered or whether the non-Muslim inhabitants also would be asked to give their verdict? Judging from what the leader of the Muslim League has said, the Muslim League demands that only the Mussalmans living in the territories which the League desires to be independent should have the right to decide the future fate of those territories. I do not see how such a demand could be justified. The Muslim League has complained that the minorities have not been properly treated by the majority party. It can, therefore, naturally be asked to follow a procedure, in settling the fate of the territories which it regards as its own, which will be regarded as fair by its own minorities. But the demand which the leader of the Muslim League has made does not seem to be consistent with the claim put forward by him that the Muslims will deal with their minorities more fairly than the Congress has dealt with the minorities in this country.

Sir, these are the main questions that I wanted to put with regard to Pakistan. Whatever the causes that have brought them into existence may be, the demand of the Muslims should be seriously considered. I still hope that good sense will prevail in this country and that in the interests of our economic development and the strength of our country we shall have patriotism enough to sink our differences and to face the future unitedly. I for one desire, and desire ardently, to maintain the unity of my country. But there is one thing that I desire even more ardently than unity and that is the freedom of this unhappy country.

And now, Sir, I venture to address a word to the authorities who have it today in their power to decide whether England and India shall be friends or enemies. The authorities seem to take the view, judging from the speech of my Honourable friend Sir Sultan Ahmed in the other House, that Government can, at the present time, consider no measures of a constitutional character in order to bring about a settlement of the differences which unhappily divide the authorities and the people of this country. I am surprised that any Indian Member of the Government should have given expression to such a view. It was therefore, Sir, with a feeling of genuine relief that I heard my Honourable friend Sir Jogendra Singh say that he did not consider that he would be doing his duty if he did not try his best to work for the satisfaction of those aspirations which actuated the country from one end to the other. Let the British authorities remember how they have acted in similar situations in other countries. What I shall say in this connection will answer to the question which my Honourable friend Mr. Hossain Imam put to me at the commencement of my speech. In the midst of the last great war the Irish people despairing of obtaining their freedom from the British Government rebelled in 1916. The Liberal Government was on their side, but the strong minority of Ulster prevented them from doing anything. The situation in this respect was the same in Ireland as it is in India, and what was the result? The Irish people did not want to be under the domination of Germany. Yet in their exasperation they went so far as to ask for German help in order to obtain their freedom. They might have been misguided.

[Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.]

But nobody can charge them with deliberately working for the victory of the Germans and inviting them to rule over Ireland. This incident ought to enable Government to understand the reality of the situation that exists in this country. No Indian wants to be under Japanese rule. Government know this in their heart of hearts as well as any of us do. Yet they are carrying on propaganda in every quarter of the world against us and telling the world that Mahatma Gandhi is pro-Japanese. It is not, Sir, by such propaganda that England can strengthen its position in this country. It is only by taking account of its own history and by being guided by the wisdom which it showed in other parts of the world that it can succeed in uniting this great country with itself. Mr. Churchill who delivered an arrogant and uncompromising speech recently in connection with India which instead of conciliating has irritated the people and added to the complication of the situation was one of those who took part in the negotiations which were carried on with the Irish by the British Government in 1920. When the war was over there was a second rebellion in Ireland. The British Government did not persist in attempts to suppress it by taking purely military action and Mr. Lloyd George had the wisdom and the greatness to recognise that the aspirations of the brave Irish people for the freedom of their country must be satisfied. He therefore asked for a truce between Ireland and England, invited those very people to his conference whose hands were dripping with the blood of the loyalists and in this conference such noted Conservative leaders as Lord Birkenhead and Mr. Churchill took part. I wish that Mr. Churchill would show even a small part of the wisdom which he showed in helping the Government to arrive at a settlement with the Irish in 1920. In any case he should realize that the conflagration which has spread to the whole country, though it may be put out temporarily, cannot be extinguished for ever. The history of the world tells us that people in despair have followed such methods everywhere. Even in this country the example of Bengal shows that pure repression cannot achieve any permanent results. The British Government have been trying to put down terrorists for over 30 years and although the people at large did not have much sympathy with the terrorists, yet it is a fact that the authorities have succeeded in suppressing terrorism only to the extent to which they have widened the bounds of Indian freedom. This small example ought further to convince the Government of the policy which they ought to follow in their own interests and in the interests of this country. A great deal of harm has been done to Indo-British relations by the unwisdom and short-sightedness of the British authorities. If they are wise they should still reconsider the position and grant the demands put forward by the people. We have argued a great deal theoretically about the removal of the Viceroy's power of veto, but Government if they desire to do great things can in accordance even with the spirit of the Government of India Act, 1935, take steps which will enable us to have a Government which in many important matters will be free from the veto of the Viceroy. This can be understood by consulting section 12 of the Government of India Act which enumerates the special responsibilities of the Governor General. Some of these responsibilities the Governor General cannot be asked to part with in the present circumstances, for instance, his responsibilities in connection with the protection of the minorities or the maintenance of the safety and tranquillity of the country or the defence of the just interests of Indian States. But there are equally other cases in which he can refrain from exercising his special powers. These cases fall broadly under two heads, financial and economic and commercial. The British Government have declared through Sir Stafford

Cripps that in connection with the future Government of India they will not ask for any guarantees for British commerce in this country. The authorities can, therefore, easily put an end by convention to the veto of the Governor General in regard to financial, economic and commercial affairs. They can also transfer "Defence" to us, although we shall not be able to control Defence which we want to have under our power in order to be able to train our people to defend their country as fully as the questions which I have just referred to. These are the two ways in which I think that the British Government can still act in such a way as to win the confidence of the people but if they wish to talk only about the future without parting with an iota of power at the present time I cannot hold out to them any hope that they will be able to establish peace in this country. They may be able to suppress lawlessness by force for a while but the relations between Indians and the Britishers will deteriorate to such an extent that India will be a thousand times worse than Ireland, (*Applause.*)

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM (Bihar and Orissa : Muhammadan) : Mr. President, in these days of interdependence and corporate existence and of total war, it is strange and depressing that in India the three forces that count are each pulling its own way and not heeding about the other. I refer, Sir, to the peoples of India, the Army in India and the British Government of India. These three forces when they are facing and fighting with the Nazi menace of regimentation of life yet think of terms of individuality. The Commander-in-Chief of India, the best General that the British Empire has got, comes out with a dictum that he can win the war without the help of the peoples and of the politicians, through the mercenary army that he has got. Did not he have an army in the Dutch East Indies ? Was not there a big force in Malaya, and what has happened to the divisions in Burma ? Have you not yet seen how American possessions in the Phillipines conducted the fight in spite of lack of help, because the people of that country had liberty and they were willing to support the army and the Government ? Will not this live for ever as a monument to American justice. Will not the Dutch East Indies ever remain a shameful reminder of the methods of the Government of Holland ? (*Applause.*) *Yet even now you believe that by repression and by iron heel methods you will be able to keep India in subjugation and defend it from the menace that is coming to it.* Have you realized how great is the danger which India faces today. On the east we have got the dragon of the Rising Sun entering our outer area steps and knocking right at our door. It has already broken some of the staples, the Andamans have fallen. On the west the Nazi cohorts are looming large. They have nearly crossed the Caucasus. No doubt overhead there is the British lion roaring and there is no dearth of Quislings in India to support you, but remember Burma. Your own men, men who have lived their lives here, like Arthur Moore and others are pointing out to you the danger of carrying on government without the goodwill of the people and yet you are not waking up.

Sir, in England, the British are in the perpetual habit of disregarding those who are their real friends. There is no love lost between any Indian and Mr. Churchill. He is a Die-hard, but I must give him his due, that he was the only first class politician who realized the Nazi danger ; but what was the result ? He was regarded as a warmonger, and kept out of successive British Governments ; but when the rainy day came Britishers then realized that Churchill was the only man who could save them. Why did you not realize it before ? Because you were complacent. In the same manner you do not realize today

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that it is only we the representatives of political parties who can extricate you out of this morass. *No amount of Indianization, no number of Indian members, no transfer of portfolios, will ever see you through unless you get the support of the recognized parties of India.* (Applause.) Indianization is a failure if it is not accompanied by this first and over-riding consideration that the members must be responsible to somebody outside the Cabinet. They must not look to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for support. They must be able to force them. It is only by forcing them that you can win the victory. I am hopeless of this Government ; I have seen enough of it.

Sir, facing as we do the difficult times I am going to tell you frankly, fearlessly and clearly the truth, however unpalatable it might seem. It might shock my colleagues in this House, but I am going to tell you exactly the truth and nothing but the truth and it is for you, the powers that be, to decide whether you wish to exist at all, because it is now a question of existence, nothing less. They whole British Empire and India stand in jeopardy. If you are complacent and think you can ride roughshod with Indians you can ; but with the enemy you cannot.

Sir, India has got an eternal triangle : the Muslim League, the Hindu Congress and the British Government. I welcome, Sir, the change that has come about in the thinking population of India. In spite of the behaviour of certain parties, I find that thinking men, at least in this House, are now realizing the truth and are seeking elucidations, and much of the hostility to Muslim League has disappeared, and there is a genuine desire to understand. Especially, Sir, my very great friend Mr. Sapru has now become a convert to the policy which I initiated in 1941, that Indianization unaccompanied by transfer or power to political parties is useless. He now realizes the truth and even the Honourable Pandit Kunzru has given an inkling that he is also coming round to my view. Sir, I would like to explain that Mussalmans are the most reasonable people. I do not ask you to believe merely because I say it, but I will prove that according to every canon of democracy and fairplay we have done the utmost that any man could do. We have asked not for 16 annas in the rupee although we could have easily asked for this as the British Government took over India from the Muslim hands. We could have asked that the Government be handed over to the people whom the British dispossessed but we have not done that.

My Honourable friend Dr. Kunzru has asked what is Pakistan? May I say, Sir, that from a man as well informed as Dr. Kunzru and one who has always dealt with his subject so well I am surprised that he should have asked the question : "What is meant by Pakistan"? I am not going to say anything about it. I am just going to read out to you the resolution which we passed on the 23rd March, 1940 because it is self-explanatory and no explanation will be required :—

" Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle"—mark the words "basic principle"— " that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary that areas in which Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the north-western and eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute independent states in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign "

We do not deny, Sir, any right to the minorities in Pakistan. I do not ask that the Muslim minorities in Hindustan should have the right to secede

or have the right to say that they would remain in Hindustan or Pakistan. They are there in a minority and they must learn to live with the majority on the best terms that they possibly can ; and I do hope that the minorities in Pakistan will also be actuated by the same sentiment of democracy . We love democracy so much that we are prepared to live in Hindustan though we are a minority of 11 per cent. for that will be the minority to which we will be reduced in Hindustan, but the non-Muslim minorities in Pakistan who will form 44 per cent. cannot face this. Can cowardice go further than this ? You are 44 per cent. strong ; you are almost in a position of equality, yet you are afraid of facing it ? Look at what is happening now at the present moment in all the five provinces of Pakistan.

THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : Would he mind explaining what is meant by these words "such territorial readjustments as may be necessary" ? It is these words that cause ambiguity, and I should be much obliged to my Honourable friend if instead of contenting himself merely with reading out the resolution of the Muslim League he would explain these words.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : You will pardon me, Sir, for digressing from what I was saying just now. Without acceptance of the principle of self-determination, I am not going to waste my breath in explaining things when I have no assurance that afterwards you will be converted. The words are there and perfectly clear.

THE HONOURABLE SIR A. P. PATRO : Go on.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Sir, I was saying that the minorities in Pakistan would be very strong, and I think that it is in the interests of the minority to be strong. If you wish to separate and make the minorities in Pakistan smaller, it is the minorities who will suffer. At the moment there are five provinces which are called Pakistan provinces. In Bengal you are carrying on a government with the active help, support and co-operation of the representatives of the minorities, not show boys as the Congress had done. In the Punjab, just now a representative Sikh has been taken in the Cabinet, as my Honourable friend the Member for Education, Health and Lands knows, the new member enjoys the confidence of a large proportion of the Sikh population. Look at Sind. The whole Government is carried with the help of the minorities. It is the majority which is divided. In the Frontier they have no government. How can you distrust ? What is there to distrust ? Look at it in an honest straightforward manner. Do not be biassed. What do we want ? Do we ask that the Punjab should be created into a Pakistan today ? Do we ask that any province should be constituted into a Pakistan because the Muslim League wants it ? No. We say give us the right to decide our own future. Look at the support which the Congress and Hindu India has got of our own traitors. I think it is we who ought to be frightened by the menagerie you have collected.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : May I remind the Honourable Member that if he spends a lot of time over the Pakistan question, he will have very little time left for dealing with the actual subject ?

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Pakistan is the main issue. I shall be content if I have my full say on Pakistan and satisfy my friends. I shall not take more time than my friend Pandit Kunzru.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : Unless you are desirous of an afternoon session, you should cut short your speech.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Yes, I am prepared for an afternoon session.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : Others are not.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : I was just mentioning the forces which are at the beck and call of Congress and the Hindu community. Mr. Fazlul Huq, the Premier of Bengal, Khan Bahadur Allah Bux in Sind ; you have got in the Frontier the uncrowned King of the Frontier, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan—all in the pockets of the Congress. In addition to that they have got the mighty Zahiruddin, the sole representative of 45 millions of Momins. You have got the support of more than 100 millions in your pocket and still you are afraid of facing a plebiscite. You say that it is unreasonable of Mr. Jinnah to demand Pakistan. Mr. Jinnah wants nothing except the opinion and the desire of masses of the Muslims to be accepted. If you believe in what your own people, your henchmen, are saying then you ought to come round and say we accept Jinnah's demand. But you know in your heart of hearts that all these claims are false, that there is no public backing behind all these claims, these pseudo-leaders, pseudo-representatives of Muslim opinion, even including Jamiat-ul-Ulema, do not represent the Muslims today. The only body which represents the overwhelming majority of Muslim opinion in India is the Muslim League. I say, Sir, there is nothing undemocratic in demanding Pakistan, and the only reply which I have got from my Hindu friends against Pakistan is that because India has been a united country mostly in slavery, therefore we will keep it down by force of arms. England with a greater force did not use this argument with Ireland. It has allowed Ireland to have its liberty and that action has been praised by Dr. Kunzru. I think if the mighty British Empire can allow Ireland the right of self-determination, a slave India can give easily this right to its own brethren.

The question was put why the League and the Congress did not come to terms. As an Indian I feel ashamed of this. I for one felt humiliated when Mr. Amery referred to the fact that Sir Stafford Cripps came over 6,000 miles and the Indian leaders could not meet each other in their own country. It is really a shameful thing.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS : There was no invitation.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : It is not a question of invitation. In order to keep 4 annas in your pocket you are allowing the 12 annas to go by. We offer you 12 annas provided you give us 4 annas, and you would rather not have the 12 annas because you hate to give up 4 annas. That is the mentality of my Hindu friends. I am ashamed of this, for I know that if the Congress and the League were to come together, there will be nothing to ask from the Government. We will wrest power by our own force. *No power on earth can keep us down if the League and the Congress were united today.*

Coming to the present unfortunate state of affairs, I say that the Muslims have a natural inclination towards liberty, fraternity and equality. In the natural course of events you would not have found us today here, while the Congress was away. Twice the Muslims joined the Congress in full force and this time too we would have been in the jails and not in these gilded chambers if the Congress had not spurned us and arrogated to itself the right to speak for entire India, a right which we have been contesting for the last five years. In my opinion, Mr. Churchill's statement that the Congress does not represent the majority of Indian opinion is correct. He never conceded the right of the Congress to speak on behalf of entire India. How can the Government go back on its own action of March in September? In March, Sir Stafford Cripps came here with authority to compromise with the Congress and the League, and how can they say now that the Congress does not represent a large section of India. What he means is that the Congress does not represent entire India, and the sooner the Congress realizes that, the better. It can claim to represent entire India but it cannot make others believe that it does so. I had expected the Mahasabha and other Hindu organizations to have the decency to say that the Congress does represent a vast majority of caste Hindu opinion. I have no doubt in saying that it does represent an overwhelming majority of caste Hindu opinion, and no one can speak on behalf of the caste Hindus with that authority with which the Congress can. The Mahasabha should have conceded the Congress demand of speaking on behalf of caste Hindu India at least. The Mahasabha says that the Congress cannot speak on behalf of Hindu India and that it is only they alone who can speak on behalf of Hindu India. Look at the Muslim League. It had the power to say to its people to keep out of this, and we have kept out of it. Why did not the Mahasabha stop people from getting into this rebellion similarly? If the League had not stopped us from the beginning, the Muslims would have been with the Congress. If the Congress had not proved itself hostile and had determined to treat Mussalmans not as equals but as camp followers we would have joined them. Some people have asked why the Muslim League does not find a solution for the present *impasse*. We would volunteer our services but there are two reasons why we cannot do so at the present moment. Firstly, because you want that there should be a settlement first and transfer of power afterwards. Now, settlement first has been denied by the Congress in spite of the fact that Hindu-Muslim unity had been the plank of the Congress since the advent of Mr. Gandhi. But, right at this juncture, Mr. Gandhi has given the go-by to his life-long conviction and has followed in the wake of the Mahasabha, and said that there can be no Hindu-Muslim settlement in the presence of the British. You want us to trust in Congress justice and fairplay, after the two and a half years' experience of their *regime*. Not only the Mussalmans but all the minorities in India, whether they are economic minorities or religious minorities, have had enough of the Congress rule, and not only we but also the other nationalists are saying that the treatment of the minorities by the Congress has been something obnoxious. They picked up a man, posed him as a representative and then said that we must keep quiet because they had got a representative of ours in their Cabinet, just as the British Government are doing now. They have selected a few people and say they are our representatives. I have great regard for these eleven gentlemen, but I think it is their misfortune that they form part of a Government which is so out away from public opinion and so careless of what people think. I shall develop my point later on, but how can I believe that the Congress is honest when it says that it will not have any talk about Hindu-Muslim unity until the British are removed? How can I approach it? It takes two to make a quarrel. I am willing, but how can I do it when the other party

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says in so many words, that they will not talk of Hindu-Muslim unity until the British are removed? There is only one way of doing it. *There must be from the British Government a clear statement that they are prepared to hand over power to representatives of the people. But if it is to be Tom, Dick and Harry, I would not have it even if the whole of the Cabinet including the Viceroyalty is transferred to unrepresentative Indians.* It will not be worth the name. It will not satisfy us, because I believe in the ultimate responsibility of my men to me. Unless I have that power of ultimate responsibility to me, I would not have it. In the Congress regime we had this system. There, the ministers were answerable to the Parliamentary Sub-Committee, and that was the body which controlled them. Some authority of that kind is necessary to keep the 11 gentlemen here on the right path. The moment you give me that power, I am prepared to support the Indian ministers in every step which they take to wrest power from British hands. But unless I get the control over you and I have the power to check you, to turn you out, I am not going to help you in any way to wrest power from British hands. A friend of mine just now whispered while we were listening to the Honourable Pandit Kunzru that there are some cleaner hands than we find in these eleven. May I say, Sir, as I started by saying, that the Muslim League would have been with the Congress in the jails if the Congress had not treated us like this and had come to terms with us. Similarly, I must warn the British people that there is a limit to patience. You have exasperated the Congress and you are fast exasperating the Muslim League too. For three years you have been dangling with the Congress. You had the excuse that it was not prepared to support you in the war effort. We have been offering our support. What do we ask in exchange? Acceptance of the democratic principle of self-determination. You are not prepared to grant that and yet you think that the Muslims will support you or even remain neutral. *In sullen despair one's actions are not guided by the head. If the British Government has any regard for its future and has not forgotten the lessons of Burma, it should awaken and concede our demands, because without that concession—I say immediate concession—you will rule the day.* If you are guided by the advice of your own nominees whom you have selected out of the 400 millions of Indians and you think that they can deliver the goods to you, you are welcome to the delusion; but that delusion will not last long. Some of my European friends have given the advice that no transference of power should take place in midstream. Was England not in midstream when the Low Countries were attacked and did not they change the team then? Was not England in great danger a month before Dunkirk when you changed the team. To say that you cannot change it now here is but petty excuse, untenable position, and self-aggrandizement. I say, Sir, with full responsibility that you are listening to gentlemen who had a glorious past and you have given them a good present; but they have no future. Whether the British win or the British lose, the present Indian Cabinet has no future. We had new elections in 1937. None of these gentlemen after the interim Ministry could find a place in the governance of India. Similarly when the day comes and you are victorious and the British people are honest and truthful in their promise of handing over power, if that happens, even then these gentlemen will have no place. We know them; they are amiable gentlemen but they are not in the good books of the political parties. As to the permanent civilians Indian officers as well as British officers are actuated solely by the desire of bettering their position because they know that the time is short. They believe in the promise of Churchill and Cripps that as soon as hostilities cease power will be handed over. Where will they be? They will be nowhere. *It is wrong to expect the Honourable Members*

to commit *hara kiri* and recommend to the British Government to hand over power to the representatives of the people. They may be willing to do so if circumstances force them to do so, but they will not be human beings if they do not try, the British as well as Indians, to hold on to their position as long as they can. Now, Mr. Churchill's statement is a glorious statement! It at the same time disposes of and treats with one bar brush all those who co-operate or who do not co-operate but happen to be unfortunately Indians. We, Muslims, have been given the great right of self-expression. What enormous concession!! What magnanimity!! What generosity!! No share in the Government. No mention of the League in spite of the fact that the League has kept the Mussalmans out of this affair. If the Mussalmans had joined the Hindu friends now or do so at any future time, you will not have a day's rest.

I for one, Sir, not only recognize but I believe in the right, the inherent right, of a slave nation to revolt. It is our misfortune that we are kept in slavery. The primary responsibility for revolt is on those who keep us down and do not give us a share in the Government. I for one have no share in the Government and therefore I do not feel called upon to adjudicate how far the responsibility is that of the Congress or of the others for the present subversive movement. But, Sir, when I said that it is the inherent right of a slave nation to revolt, like every human right it carries with it its liabilities. The liability of revolt is that it must be for the well-being and freedom of all parts and peoples of the country and not for the exercise of semi-imperialism by the majority over the minorities. It should not be used to keep down a people against its wish under subjection to anyone—it does not matter whether the imperialist is of the same country or of another country. Ireland could revolt, as I said, and it has been praised for its revolt. The British Government have accepted their demand and given them freedom. If the Congress had come to terms with us and accepted our right of self-determination, I would have regarded that at least in this respect their right to revolt is justified. Then, there is another restraining influence, and that was also stressed by Dr. Kunzru, that Ireland rebelled during the time of the Great War, but it did not get its freedom then. It got its freedom when the war was finished. Similarly if we were to revolt today, what guarantee have I got that we will not be run over by Japan? It is this which has been the restraining influence with the Mussalmans. If Mr. Gandhi had come to terms with Japan and then revolted then he would have a guarantee that the revolt, which he was making would, after fructification, get India freedom. But what guarantee have we got? The present-day war is not a war which can be won by non-co-operation or merely by numbers. It is a mechanized war and in that we want the goodwill of the United Nations. It is because we cannot save India from the aggressors without the active help of the United Nations that we have kept out of this revolt and there is no love lost between ourselves and the British. I say it is not the Muslim League which is being utilized, as my friend Mr. Sapru said, by the British people. They are exploiting the Congress. The Congress from the very beginning has been unwilling to share power with others. It can only come to terms with British provided the whole thing is handed over to them alone. When I say this I can quote chapter and verse for it. The Congress assured the British Government of certain fundamental things: that the provisional Government will carry on the war and that they won't come to terms with Axis powers. These assurances have been given without asking, consulting or even knowing the will of the other parties in India. How could the Congress assume responsibility for the entire provisional Government to be formed unless you assume first that Congressmen are the persons who will get the power. It is only then that they can

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give an assurance. The first step therefore which the Mahatma ought to have taken was to have consulted Indian opinion and said, "Am I justified in giving all these assurances to the British people" and when he had taken the consent of the peoples of India then he should have offered it to the British people. What is the worth of the promise that has been made, that they will give you active support, when it has no backing except that of the Congress people alone. As I said at the beginning it is that assumption which Mr. Churchill has repudiated. I say that the British people are exploiting this position of the Congress because the Congress refuses to come to terms. I have not the time but I have brought with me two booklets: *The Congress and the Axis* (extracts from the *Times of India*) and *Practical Politics or not* (some articles from the *Civil and Military Gazette*). These two booklets have amply proved that the Congress has never been willing to support the war effort due to two difficulties. Firstly, Sir, they said they believe in non-violence. Every political party has a right to have a belief, whatever it likes. I am not going to question that. They are wise people. When they decide that non-violence is the best method they are welcome to it. There have been some changes. Sometimes the Mahatma is deposed and the Congress takes up violence as part of its creed, then he comes back and the Congress hands over power to the Mahatma and so on and so forth. Such comings-in and goings-out continue. But if you mark, it, every demand by the Congress is every time accompanied with either a prospective reverse of the British or an actual defeat of the British. At times the demands of the Congress may have differed in parts but in effect they are the same. They want complete power. The Congress will then have such nominees as it likes from other parties. They will be nominees of the Congress just as we have got eleven nominees of the Viceroy in the Cabinet. So, Sir, they only want that they should have complete power and that they may be able to end this war whenever they desire and on the terms they desire. I do not say that they have got any sort of agreement with Japan.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: I hope you are not going to say anything on the present situation.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM: I am going to, Sir. I have got fifteen minutes left, Sir.

I was saying, Sir, that the Congress is not willing to have half powers and you are not willing to give full power. Yet you use that argument to deny power to others, and in the same breath you say that the Congress does not represent a majority of Indians. Was it not just that Mr. Churchill should have announced simultaneously that he is calling the representatives of the other parties—the Muslim League, the Mahasabha and others—to come and join the Cabinet. That would have been the right thing and I may tell you that if we are placed in power we will be able to wean the Congressmen from their misguided actions, because we know them better than the other Indians who do not belong to political parties do. We may have our differences, but we honour each other and we have greater regard in spite of our differences than the Members of the Viceroy's Cabinet can have for us or the Congress and we are better able to be and we will be more conciliatory than the present executive can be. I say, Sir, that the British Government must be willing to hand over to representatives of the parties. Without that they may carry on the Government but the prospects of victory will be gloomy, if nothing more.

As I said, Sir, I am not going to adjudicate on the responsibilities of the Congress and others who are taking part in the subversive activity but I can say this much, that when there is a powder-magazine a wise man will avoid going there with his cigarette or throwing matches. Many of my colleagues have stated the fact, which for one I do not combat, that there is exasperation in India, that people of India are dissatisfied with the present Government. Was it wise in this condition to start the civil disobedience movement? The Congress ought to have known the present position. Mr. Aney, I am told, Sir,—and I speak subject to correction,—while he was in Madras sent a long telegram not on behalf of the Government but in his individual capacity (just as Sir Feroz Khan Noon spoke in his individual capacity at Aligarh) requesting the Congress to forego from its action, to be wise, but it had no effect. And Mr. Aney was once a dictator of the Congress—don't forget this. Was it wise of the Congress to start the movement knowing full well that it will embrace the war effort, knowing full well that this is just the same scorched-earth policy which had been condemned by them but recourse to which would be taken by its own people, if not its own party men. Who is losing? Whose lives are lost? It is Indian lives which are lost; it is Indian property which has been burnt down. Was it wise or statesmanlike to start the movement at this juncture? I say, Sir, whoever might be responsible for this movement it was singularly ill-advised, ill-timed and ill-conceived.

But simultaneously with this I must say that the British Government of India has given proof, positive proof, of its incompetence to govern. In the 8th August statement of the Viceroy's Council they stated that they had pre-knowledge that Congress intended to attack communications. Sir Reginald Maxwell has stated in the other House and perhaps the Leader of the House also stated here that the Governors had warned the Central Government that something of this nature would happen. May I ask what precautions had been taken? Any Government worth the name would have taken precautions to make this kind of arson and looting impossible at least in cities. But is that the record of this almighty, representative and democratic Government of India at the present moment? In the present movement in the City of Delhi, in the Imperial City of Delhi, a Government building was burnt down involving a loss of Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 lakhs, and the fire continued not for an hour, but for hours together, probably 18 hours, and big girders of 12 to 16 inches were distorted by intense heat. I would ask Honourable Members of this House to go and see the Clearing Accounts Office and see the competence of this Government in the Imperial City of Delhi. It can only clap in jail a few leaders, but it could not take measures to prevent such things happening, even with all the armies stationed in Delhi. And this is not a solitary instance, Sir. I could give many but to mention another. In the capital of Bihar, the Patna City station was robbed and burnt, and Rs. 2 lakhs worth of things from the goods shed were looted for 36 hours. *This Government has proved itself utterly incapable of handling any situation.* Look at the railways. It is now 40 days since this movement started. Between Calcutta and Delhi we used to have six or seven through trains, and we have now got only 1½ trains. I say 1½ because the Parcel Express is very irregular. Sometimes it runs and sometimes it does not. Only the Delhi Mail runs. Is this control? You say that you have got control of this movement when the Congress had not been able fully to organize its movement. Remember this, for that is the only justification for clapping them in jail. If you had given them time they would have perfected their system: and how will you save the situation if and when the Japanese come and fifth columnists are let loose? You may not have saved the telegraphs, but at least you could have saved the railway lines. You should

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have introduced a system of collective responsibility. May I remind you, Sir, that if you look at the map of India you will find that the intensity of this movement is the highest in the provinces in which the Muslims had complained of oppressions in the Congress *regime*. Bihar is an outstanding example of the present disturbances: and do you know the reason? It is not the entire population that is hostile to you. The hostiles are few. But there are two factors. One is the lurking sympathy which people feel when they have some sort of complaint against the powers that be. Secondly, there is the fear complex. Mobs have been known to retaliate and heavily retaliate on those who side with law and order. You cannot give that confidence to the general public that the forces of law and order will save them unless they have got their own men at the helm. It is only the presence of our own people who can inspire confidence in the public and will make them work for law and order. These military demonstrations will not get the support of the law-abiding citizens. I am not going to cite many instances: but a very unfortunate instance in Bihar, in which two officers were murdered and their bodies paraded through the streets comes to my mind. The whole bazaar saw it: but no one would come forward to give evidence because they were afraid of retaliation, and the mob would have retaliated on these people if they had given evidence. Similarly, Sir, there are instances in which the forces of law and order have also exceeded, and the Government should in all honesty and fairness, while supporting its officers in the exercise of their legitimate power, be willing to condemn acts of excesses wherever they may happen.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Will the Honourable Member close his speech now?

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM: I am at the end of my speech. I will say this in conclusion, *that to carry on the government is a comparatively easy task, but to face the enemy and defeat the enemy, as you have never done so far in the east, mark these words, it is a different task.* All the time you have been having glorious retreats and masterly withdrawals. The casualty list which was published yesterday showing the number of Indian troops killed, missing and wounded in Burma being less than 5,000, shows how little you fought.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Will the Honourable Member please finish his remarks now?

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM: I will not take more than two minutes, Sir.

I was saying that in order to carry this war through and to check the order of your eastern battles, that is to win victory, you must have the support of the people; and without that support you may rest assured that victory will never be won, it will ever elude your grasp.

THE HONOURABLE SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA (Civil Defence Member): Mr. President, Sir, I had very little intention of participating in this debate as there are so many other Government spokesmen much more capable than myself to put the Government case. Sir, I am one of the youngest Members of the Government. I am in fact a baby! (*Laughter.*) But, Sir, I might perhaps place the point of view of the Indian Members before the House.

THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : All the Indian Members ?

THE HONOURABLE SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : I could not swear to it, but I should say of at least many of the Indian Members. Sir, I do not think we are as bad as we have been painted to be by some of our friends. I do not say this with pride, but I am making a bare statement of fact. Sir, we have endeavoured from the very beginning to do what little we can to resolve the deadlock. I hate the word "deadlock" but still it has got to be used sometimes. Sir, we have been working night and day to restore peace and harmony, and if we have not achieved more success surely the fault is not ours.

Sir, let me give to the House a rapid survey of the events which have led up to the present situation. It will be remembered, Sir, that the Viceroy invited Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah soon after the outbreak of hostilities. He had a talk with them, and I believe the object was to reach an arrangement which will hold for the duration of the war. At that time unfortunately the Congress ministries had resigned. I thought and still think, Sir, that that was a great mistake. The Congress were in power in the Provinces and they could have done a lot if they had remained in power. But they chose the other course and they resigned, so that in the Provinces where the people come in contact with the Government, there was autocratic rule, Governor's raj. Sir, that was a catastrophe of the first magnitude to my mind ; and I think it is largely responsible for the embitterment of the feelings as we find them to day. If the Congress had retained their positions in the Provinces, I am sure ways and means would have been found by which everybody would have shared in the administration of the country both at the Centre and in the Provinces. I might also recall, Sir, that before that, the proposal to introduce Federation in the Centre was vehemently opposed by many of the leading parties. I feel, Sir, looking back, that if Federation had come in at that time, we would have been on a much stronger wicket today. I think it was a great mistake that we threw away what was a golden opportunity to my mind. If Federation had been accepted, the bogey of Pakistan would not have been raised, and I cannot help feeling that those who are responsible for not accepting Federation at that time are greatly to blame.

I just mentioned that soon after the outbreak of hostilities the Viceroy summoned Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah. That talk, I believe, led to nothing. I believe the Mahatma demanded the sole right at that talk of nominating the personnel of a National Government which was going to be set up. I speak subject to correction. But, as far as my memory goes, I think he demanded the sole right and on that rock the ship was wrecked. The Viceroy could not agree to it. Thereafter, the Viceroy pursued his efforts and he summoned no less than 52 of the leading men of the country and had talks with the object of evolving a scheme under which Indians could work the government of the country. Sir, those talks also resulted in nothing. Then the Viceroy made another attempt and that was in August, 1940. He made an offer to the organized parties of the country. We all know, Sir, that that offer too was rejected.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Why ?

THE HONOURABLE SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : I am not going into the "why". I am only stating the fact that that offer too was

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rejected. Last of all there came the mission of Sir Stafford Cripps with which we are very familiar. I believe the main object of that mission was to placate the Congress and the Muslim League, and whatever may be said now, I think that at that time both these parties thought that they were very near the goal. Unfortunately, at the last minute, the Congress rejected the offer and Sir Stafford Cripps had to go back to England. That, I believe, Sir, is the culminating point of the present tension. The information which I received here when I joined my present appointment was that preparations had been going on by the Congress to embark on a mass movement of great magnitude. I do not know whether any of the Honourable Members present here are cognizant of that fact. But I believe that these preparations had been in train for several months and it was openly hinted that the machinery of Government should be paralyzed. I would like the House to look at the position of Government from this background. We were faced with a life and death struggle; the enemy was standing at our doors and we were presented with the prospect of a mass movement of that character. As I have said, I only joined the Government a few days before the crisis took place, but I wish to assure the House that so far as the Government was concerned, they had a lot of information which gave them no alternative, no choice at all, if they were to save the country from a catastrophe of the first magnitude. It may be that the steps they took did not succeed as well as they thought they would. Still, what was the alternative before the Government when they had that kind of information? Sir, it cannot be said that the Government is composed entirely of men who have no love for the country. I do not claim myself as a great patriot although I have my own opinions of love for my country. But there are people in the Executive Council who yield to none in their love for the country and if they all deliberately took a decision like that, the circumstances must have been grave. That is the only thing that I can say on that point. And, Sir, supposing the whole blame rests with the British Government, why did they take such a step? What was the reason? We know very well that they have been endeavouring very hard to win over the Congress. Why should they embark on a step which would cause all this trouble in the country unless they were driven to it? They were on the edge of a precipice and they had to do it. The steps that we took were never intended to be punitive. They were entirely preventive, and although I am not aware of the excesses that have been talked about, I hope my Honourable friend the Leader of the House will answer these charges. I wish to assure the House that we, Indian Members of the Executive Council—in fact the entire Executive Council—was fully agreed that no vindictive steps should be taken, that the minimum force only should be used and that distinguished leaders should be housed in conditions of comfort and even luxury. They are merely detained so that they might not actively support the Congress programme. We had thought that their detention would not be long. We had thought that very soon probably the country would learn better and that this danger would pass off. But things have turned out to be different and I hope the House realizes that we are not doing anything with a view to penalize leaders whom we all respect. I have never been a Congressman myself. In fact I have been a strong opponent of the Congress; but I have great respect personally for Mahatma Gandhi and many other leaders. They are India's greatest sons.

Now, Sir, I turn to some of the points raised by my friends the Honourable Mr. Sapru and Mr. Kunzru. The position of an Executive Councillor under the Act of 1919 is a little bit peculiar. The House is doubtless aware

that so far as the Centre is concerned most of the provisions of the Act of 1919 still apply. Sir, if we had had Federation, then these transitory provisions would have gone. But, Sir, rules are one thing, the Act is one thing, and yet practice and convention can be different. I wish to assure the House that we, Executive Councillors, today are being treated in the most liberal manner and we have never had an instance—if I am not giving away a secret—in which the Governor General has seen it fit to exercise his veto. I make that statement categorically. Of course I have been a member for only six or seven weeks, but during this brief time I have never had an instance of interference and what is more we have been allowed to function as a composite government. Sir, what the law cannot do can be done by practice and convention. As regards the controversy about the Executive Councillors not having done anything to resolve the deadlock or to initiate proposals, I think there is a little misunderstanding. According to the letter of the law no Executive Councillor or the Executive Council as such is allowed to initiate measures for constitutional changes. The reason is very simple. My friends who are eminent lawyers will know this better than I do. My Honourable friend over there says "No". Dr. Kunzru too has been an eminent lawyer at one time. Now, we cannot in the very nature of things frame a constitution affecting ourselves. We are not allowed technically to initiate constitutional measures and I make bold to say that never so far has the Executive Council initiated any such measures. Before us there have been distinguished Indian Members of the Executive Council and excepting in one instance—and that related to the Muddiman proposals; because that was a more or less local matter, they appointed a committee to examine the working of the Montagu Reforms—except in that one instance never have any constitutional proposals been initiated by the Executive Council. Whether this is the right position or not I do not know, but the Act makes it clear. When I have said that I do not mean that the Executive Councillors cannot use their influence and adopt other methods for the resolution of the deadlock. Sir, my friends over there know that we cannot give out secrets of the Executive Council. Our mouth is closed and I do not wish to say definitely what we have been doing or not doing. But, Sir, I wish to assure the House that we are not oblivious of our responsibility in the matter. We are very conscious that something must be done and in doing anything in that connection it is the members of this House who can be of the greatest help. Sir, when we want to put forward any proposal for the establishment of a National Government we are at once faced with this communal deadlock. In fact the speeches which have been made here today give us the completest justification for not doing anything. These speeches had better not been made on the floor of this House. I think these speeches ought to have been made outside the House. It would have greatly strengthened our hands if Messrs. Kunzru and Hossain Imam had come to me or to my friend here with an agreed formula. That is what we are up against all the time. In fact, what is a National Government? A National Government is one in which all parties are united which leaves no room for controversy or opposition, and unless we have these fundamental prerequisites there can be no National Government. What is the use of a National Government from which the Congress and the Muslim League is standing out? We have these real difficulties and I appeal to the House to assist us in solving them. I wish to assure the House that we are most anxious that a way should be found out of the present *impasse*. We have been exerting all the little influence which we possess in order that a solution may be found, but so far we are no nearer it. Sir, my friend Mr. Hossain Imam has talked of the eternal triangle. That is a very bad thing. I wish he would get rid of the triangle, I feel as soon as we get rid of it we

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shall have our freedom. If only Mr. Hossain Imam and Mr. Kunzru could talk out their differences and come to us as one man, not as a Muslim Leaguer and a Liberal Leader but as one man, I think no power on earth could refuse to give us what is our birthright. It is only these differences that are stopping us. I myself have been and probably am still a member of the Hindu Mahasabha, but all my advice to that body, to whom I owe my loyalty, has been that they should try and reach an agreement with the Muslim League. We have been endeavouring to do it. So far we have not seen daylight and I do not know how long it will be before the two parties will come to an agreement. I wish to assure the House once again that the Indian Members of the Executive Council are at their command, beck and call. We regard you as our masters. I have been a Minister ; so I know the position of a Legislative Council. We regard you as our masters and it is for you to command us, to come to us with a definite thing. Give us a definite formula ; do not talk in the air and do not make us more confused. We shall carry out your wishes provided you would come and give us a definite lead. (*Applause.*)

THE HONOURABLE MR. R. H. PARKER (Bombay Chamber of Commerce) : We have just heard a very lucid and illuminating description of what has led up to the recent happenings in India. To what has just been said I find I have very little to add. I do not know how any Government could have been expected to have taken no notice of an announcement by the leaders of a major political party of its intention to organize rebellion. There seem to me to be two possible alternative methods of dealing with that. One is the Nazi way and one is, if I may say so, the British Indian way. My Honourable friend Mr. Sapru yesterday rather, I thought, left the impression on my mind that he really believed that there was practically no difference between what he called British imperialism and Nazi imperialism. I hope he did not mean that, because I find it very difficult to believe that anybody can come to that conclusion with a knowledge of the facts as we know them in this world today. In most countries—certainly in Nazi countries—I feel no doubt that the leaders would have been immediately arrested and immediately shot. Now that is a very different line from the line taken by the Government under whom we are now serving today. That Government took a totally different line. They took no action till the very last moment, till they were assured that the recommendations of the Congress Working Committee were going to be accepted by the All-India Congress Committee. There are those—and I think Mr. Hossain Imam is among them—who have grave doubts as to whether they were right to wait so long but I do believe that if we members of this House had had to decide the points which Government at that stage did have to decide we would not have delayed one day longer than the Government did. Whether we would have been able to deal with it more effectively I do not know because I do not know now what the position is. I do not know whether any of us know the immediate position but we know this that a great deal of the damage that has occurred did occur partly because there was the delay which I have already mentioned and partly because we did not take sufficiently strong measures quickly. I think the second important result of the rebellious efforts of the Congress was to reduce the efficiency of the war effort. By doing this it seems to me that Congress, for the time being at any rate, have lost the sense of public duty. After all what have they done ? They have done what they could, in effect, to help the Japanese and the Germans and so on and they have done what they could to harm the interests of their own friends—the Chinese, the Russians and the United Nations—quite apart from

the fact that they are harming their own masses themselves. Who were the people who were going to suffer first and primarily as the result of these attacks on communications? Clearly the very people whom they were exhorting to attack these communications. The poor are the people who have suffered, they are the people who have had to go without food or found it more difficult to get or more expensive to buy. It is not fair, it is simply damaging their own people; this sort of thing.

Then here we have, as I have just said, a major political party which has created a rebellion and is still attempting to carry on a rebellion and we are at the same time urged by some people, not by others, to create a National Government, to bring what they call a National Government into being. Now, certainly to an Englishman at a stage like this it seems to be a confusion of thought to talk about a National Government. We in England would certainly not regard anything as a National Government from which any one big party was completely excluded. It would be the antithesis of a National Government from our point of view and for that reason it seems to me that not only is it impossible to create what we have called here National Government but it is also impossible to find the appropriate recipients to whom to transfer the powers which it is urged upon His Majesty's Government that they should transfer. You must find the appropriate recipients and, as the Honourable Member who has just spoken said, if you will only create the conditions—and it is in your power to do so—if you will only create the conditions and make arrangements which will make it possible to transfer power to someone who will exercise the power properly then the whole problem is solved.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Follow Arthur Moore.

THE HONOURABLE MR. R. H. PARKER : There is an unfortunate feeling which has been mentioned in this House, of some doubt as to the real intentions of the British Government—of His Majesty's Government—regarding the handing over of power after the war. There is a suspicion that this is not the real intention. Personally I can find absolutely no grounds for that suspicion at all. I have had a lot of correspondence with people in England and in India and generally speaking the impression left on my mind is that the anxiety is the other way. The anxiety is not, as somebody said this morning, to cling to power by the British Government but the anxiety is to find somebody to whom to hand it over. That is the difficulty that I can see. In fact I know there are those among the British who very strongly hold the view that we have done our best for India and that we ought to say to her "Whether you like it or whether you don't, we shall take no part in Indian affairs after this war is over." Now I do not think that is a right point of view at all. I am one of those who have always believed in co-operation, but co-operation does involve each party helping the other and that is what we have got to learn to do. I think what we ought to do when we have a little time to think about matters is to see whether we can learn anything from the mistakes which seem to have led to this present state of world-wide war in which we are very much concerned. I think the democracies failed in the main because they depend so largely on a high sense of duty being found in a large proportion of the people. The other kind of control, the Nazi kind of control, is based on force and cruelty that we all heartily disapprove of and dislike, but if we wish to attain or retain freedom from the Nazi kind of control we must each of us accept the duty of contributing our individual quota to the affairs of the State. We must not think, as many of us are apt to do now, that when we

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have paid our taxes we have performed our duty. Our duty to our fellow-men is really limited only by our capacity to help them and we have only to look down the past and see the conditions of today to realize the failure of a policy of standing on one side and leaving it to someone else to do our share. All too often such a policy leads to power being in the hands of the incompetent or the actively wicked.

We must therefore watch and work. If we do not we cannot expect reasonable results. If we fail we risk more than existence—nothingness, non-existence, may not be a serious state. The conditions of horror which the Axis States have brought about must be destroyed. That is the first thing.

THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN (Leader of the House) : Mr. President, Sir, I am reminded of an Arabic proverb which says that truth is bitter. If it was my duty yesterday and the day before yesterday to place before this House true statements of facts and figures and if they have produced bitter repercussions in the minds of the Honourable Mr. Sapru and the Honourable Mr. Kunzru, it only justifies the truth of that proverb. My Honourable friend Mr. Sapru said that my speech was characterized by a lack of statesmanship and irresponsibility. All that I can say is that when we have to face difficult situations, statesmanship and responsibility consists not in ignoring facts but in taking facts into account and trying to find remedies for them. As regards the speech that I made in connection with the Resolution that I moved the day before yesterday, I am glad to find general support from this House. Except for three speakers who evidently took exception to two or three small matters of fact, there has been general support from this House. In the first place the non-Congress opinion represented in this House has been voiced forth by my friends Sir A. P. Patro and Sir Ramunni Menon. They have told us clearly that it is the duty of the Government to maintain law and order and that what the Government have done is right. They have further said that for all this struggle the Congress is responsible, and their responsibility is due to the fact that they could not come to any settlement with the British Government either on the August offer of 1941 of His Excellency the Viceroy : nor would they accept the solution offered by Sir Stafford Cripps six months ago. Then we have got the orthodox Muslim League view put forward by Mr. Hossain Imam who found fault to a certain extent with the Government and to a greater extent with the Congress ; and we have got the orthodox Congress view put forward by my two friends the Honourable Mr. Sapru and the Honourable Mr. Kunzru.

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU : On a point of order. Neither Mr. Kunzru nor I belong to the Congress organization—

THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN : I never said that you belong to the Congress. I only said you have put forward their views.

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU : We have put forward the views of the Liberal Federation and of nationalist India.

THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN : Unfortunately they coincide with those of the Congress. It is not my fault.

THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : We have happily put forward views which have been accepted by all the parties unanimously, and which are also the opinions of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Dr. Jayakar.

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU: You stand condemned as a Government without any support.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: I think you can ignore this interruption.

THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN: What I meant to say with regard to the present situation was that my Honourable friends Mr. Sapru and Mr. Kunzru found fault with the Government for not allowing Mr. Gandhi to interview His Excellency. If this had been done, things would have been delayed. After the passing of the resolution at Bombay by the All-India Congress Committee, if the Viceroy had permitted Mr. Gandhi to see him, a number of days would have been wasted, and what would have happened was that the Congress leaders would have gone back to their provinces from Bombay, and would have perfected their plans for civil disobedience, as has been said by the Honourable Mr. Hossain Imam and by another speaker here, and Government would have been faced with trouble a hundred times or five hundred times more difficult than what it was on the 9th August. As the Honourable Sir A. P. Patro rightly said, in all these disturbances, as a result of the Congress movement, a number of poor innocent people have lost their lives

As regards excessive force, of course in a big movement like this, I do not deny that here and there there may have been some little excessive force used by the police or by the military. In such cases I think the Honourable Member should bring such instances to the notice of the local authorities. As far as the Government of India are concerned, from the facts and figures that we have got before us, there are no strong reasons at all to assume that excessive force was used either by the police or by the military. Therefore there would be no inquiry into their conduct.

THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU: You ignore facts: it is shameful.

THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN: Order, order.

THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU: You are not the man to call us to "Order."

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: I have given some latitude. You should not overstep it.

THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN: I would repeat the Arabic proverb that "Truth is bitter".

As regards the political situation, Sir, speeches have been made from the point of view of the non-Congress, from the point of view of the Muslim League, and from the point of view of the Congress or the Liberal Federation, expressing different views. But unless and until it is possible for leaders to come to an agreed formula, how is it possible for Government to accept any such proposal with such differences of opinion. The views of the Princes and other bodies have to be considered. Unless and until there is a joint agreed formula, I do not see how there could be a real solution of the political problem.

The Honourable Mr. Sapru said that in quelling disturbances Nazi methods were adopted.

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU : On a point of personal explanation, Sir. I did not say in all cases Nazi methods were adopted. What I said was that people were asking whether in some cases those methods were not adopted and whether there was much difference between Nazi methods and the methods adopted in some places in the country. That is a very different thing.

THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN : Anyhow some suggestion like that was made. I should like to assure the House that Nazi methods were never adopted by the British Government in the administration of this country at any time. If they had been Nazi-minded, they would not have brought parliamentary institutions like the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State into existence and have allowed a discussion of the present situation.

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU : What about the bombing of the Hurs? Is it not a Nazi method?

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : Do not interrupt now.

THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN : Today barring the Congress, the whole country stands behind the Government in the prosecution of the war—

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU : Nonsense!

THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED USMAN : It is due to the sense of British justice and fairplay which they have introduced in the administration of the country.

The Honourable Mr. Sapru condemned the speech of Mr. Churchill, pleaded for the abolition of the India Office, and condemned the attitude of Sir Stafford Cripps. We all know that when Sir Stafford Cripps, well known for his sympathy towards the political aspirations of India and a great friend of the Congress, came to India and carried on his talks with all the important political parties, he discovered that the real object of the Congress was to get unlimited power for itself. As a true Britisher he refused to allow this, as it would be very unjust to other parties. Mr. Amery has been trying to protect in any political settlement the interests of the Muslim community, the Depressed Classes, the Princes and other interests. For this offence the office of the Secretary of State for India should be abolished, according to the Honourable Mr. Sapru. Instead of being grateful to the Prime Minister for making the Cripps proposals as the settled policy of the British Crown and Parliament he is condemned because he spoke the bitter truth that the Congress does not represent the whole Indian nation. When the Muslims have all practically gone out of the Congress and have come under the leadership of Mr. Jinnah, the Congress has lost its national characteristic. If further evidence of this was needed, you will find that the Muslims throughout India obeyed the mandate of Mr. Jinnah and completely abstained from joining the present civil disobedience movement.

As regard the political solution, Sir, we have got the Prime Minister's assurance. He said :—

“ The broad principles of the declaration made by the British Government, which formed the basis of the mission of the Lord Privy Seal (Sir Stafford Cripps) to India must be taken as representing the settled policy of the British Crown and Parliament. These principles stand in their full scope and integrity. No one can add to them and no one can take anything away ”.

And the Secretary of State has made the following statement :—

“ Statements already made show that the Viceroy will always be willing to listen to suggestions made within the framework of our previous proposal by any representative body of Indian public opinion ”.

Thus, the solution of the political problem lies in our own hands. If we do not agree among ourselves and do not show any spirit of give and take, why blame the British Government ? (*Applause.*)

The Council then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, the 25th September, 1942.
