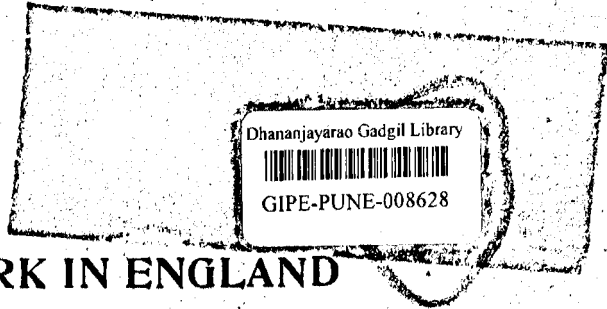
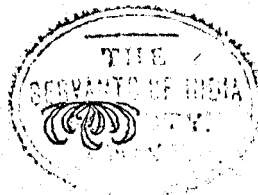


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Conference (Bombay)*



WORK IN ENGLAND
OF
THE DEPUTATION
OF
**THE INDIAN STATES' PEOPLE'S
CONFERENCE.**



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WORK IN ENGLAND

OF

THE DEPUTATION

OF THE

INDIAN STATES' PEOPLE

At the fourth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Indian States people's Conference held in Bombay on 11-7-28 it was resolved to send a deputation to England consisting of Diwan Bahadur Mr. Ramchandra Rao, the president, Prof. G. R. Abhyankar, the general secretary, and Mr. Amritlal D. Shet, M. L. C. to England as soon as convenient, Accordingly friends in England were requested to advise about the propriety of sending such a deputation. The London Correspondent of Saurashtra saw many people in England and ascertained their views about this deputation. He saw Dr. Anne Besant who said "I for myself positively believe that the deputation will have many benefits. I am leaving England for Europe in the 4th week of July and hope to be back here a few days before I leave for India. But I shall speak to one or two leading members of Parliament to give all help and support to the deputation". The veteran leader of the labour party Mr. George Lansbury said "I have received a cable from the All-India States people's Conference with reference to this deputation and I have in reply cabled to them telling that the deputation should come. I have the same thing to tell you. The States' subjects should send a deputation here". Mr. Fenner Brockway the political secretary of the independent labour party, who had recently been to India per-

ceived the usefulness of the deputation and said "I suggest to you to inform the All-India States people's Conference by cable that I shall help the members in all possible ways". Mr. Pollock the ever enthusiastic Champion of Indians overseas said "I well understand that the subjects of Indian States want to represent their side in order to secure their rights and I positively believe by privately representing themselves before any leading and influential gentlemen here. You know that the Princes themselves instead of depending upon the drafts prepared in India have thought it advisable to secure the services of eminent lawyers here and the people too will achieve a great deal by securing the aid in the best way they can of the lawyers here to prepare the best representations of their demands. If our Indian friends agree to this let them send a deputation as early as they can. It is a misfortune that this matter is delayed even so far. When I was leaving Bombay I spoke to some friends who came to see me in this connection that if they wanted to adopt this course the earlier it was done the better. Even now much can be done and the deputation should now prepare to reach here by November next". Dr. Paranjape said to him "I do not know much about the present activities of the Princes being very busy these days I cannot visit the clubs from where most information can be had. The Butler Committee works with closed doors and very secretly so nothing more is known from that direction and yet one thing I know; the followers of the Princes and particularly Prof. Ruskbrook Williams are working hard in the pulpit and the press to canvass the sympathy of the British public in favour of the Princes. The Professor in a recent public lecture invited the public to stand by the the Princes and support their claims as arising from the treaties and other documents. And he went so far as to say that as long as the problem of Princes is not solved the problem of India would remain unsolved". Dr. Paranjape further added, "It is a very weak argument put forward by the Princes and their followers when they say that the treaties on which their claims are based should be looked upon as sacred. What pains the subjects of the States most is the fact that the Princes do not go with the age. We of British India have little to do with the personal good of the Princes. But the welfare of the people is a subject that concerns us most. We see

no harm in seeing the people of the States uniting in federation to acquire the rights already acquired or contemplated by the people of red India. But if the Princes look upon the States as their personal estates they can hope for no support from the Indians of British India". (Bombay Chronicle 5th August 1928).

Diwan Bahadur Ramchandra Rao and Prof. Abhyankar had gone to Simla in the beginning of September to ascertain the views of officials and of the leaders of public opinion assembled there for the session of the central Legislature. The leader of the deputation had interviews with the private secretary the political secretary to the Government of India, with His Excellency the Viceroy and some members of the Executive Council. The question of a deputation to England was discussed with prominent nationalist leaders. The general sense appeared that there was no harm in sending the deputation ; that it will have facilities of enlightening the British public, the press and the prominent party leaders ; and having gone all the way to England the Butler Committee also may be pleased to hear what the people have got to say. A statement was issued to the press before their departure from Simla. On their arrival in Bombay at the 5th meeting of the Executive Committee held on 16th September, the following resolution was passed :—“ That in view of the non-representative character of the Indian States Committee, its narrow terms of reference barring the legitimate voice of the people of the states and the attitude taken up as well as the procedure adopted by it, so far, this committee apprehends that the interests of the people of the Indian States will be seriously prejudiced ; this committee resolves that it is necessary to create public opinion both in India and in England on vital problems affecting the interests of the people of the Indian States.

This Committee therefore appoints a deputation of the following gentlemen to proceed to England at an early date to create opinion in England on the problems of Indian States. The deputation will be at liberty to lead evidence even before the Butler Committee provided they are invited to do so, in recognition of the inherent right of the people of the States to be heard in a matter

affecting both the Princes and the people which combined form the States.

- (1) Diwan Bahadur Mr. Ramchandra Rao.
- (2) Prof. G. R. Abhyankar.
- (3) Mr. A. D. Shet.

It was also proposed that Mr. P. L. Chudgar who was willing to go to England at his own expense should be coopted as a member of this deputation."

In compliance with this resolution Prof. G. R. Abhyankar and Mr. P. L. Chudgar sailed for England on the 26th September by the Italian Steamer Cracovia. On the eve of their departure Prof. Abhyankar was entertained to a tea-party under the auspices of the Hyderabad Political Conference at the Servants of India Society on Tuesday evening. Prof. Abhyankar thanked the organisers for the reception given to him and said that he would spare no efforts to place their case before the Butler Committee. What the State subject's wanted was that the Indian Princes in their own interest should concede to them the ordinary rights of citizenship. The state of things now obtaining was that all the Indian Princes enjoyed the powers of absolute monarchs and many of them abused these powers. The state subjects were indebted to the Neharu Report in which the relations of the states to British India were clearly defined. But he warned them not to rest contented with that but to carry on vigorous agitation for their political rights. He hoped the Indian Princes would recognise the fundamental rights of the state subjects and would secure constitutional liberties to them. Another reception was accorded to Prof. Abhyankar at the Hira Bag the same night when Mr. Amritlal Shet and several others wished him bon voyage

We two members of the deputation got down at Aden when the steamer reached that port. They were given a warm welcome by Indian States subjects belonging to Kathiawar. They purchased nearly fifteen copies of the memorandum as a contribution towards

the fund of this deputation. Mr. H. J. Khanderia B. A. LL. B. pleader, Aden had organised this function.

We then returned to the Steamer and proceeded to Suez. We landed and went to Cairo and took the steamer at Portsaid. We finally reached Venice on 11th October. After staying there for a day to see the picturesque town, Mosaic Glass Works, the splendid Duke's Castle and the vast and well laid out Saint Marc's Square we started for Paris next morning and reached it on 13th. After breaking journey for a day we left for London on 14th and reached Victoria Station in the evening. Mr. Pollock was kind enough to receive us and arranged to send us to the Arya Bhuvan 30 Bellsiz Park N. W. 3. But as there was room only for one of us we had to shift to Shantiniketan which was close by and stayed there for about a week and then we were accommodated in the Arya Bhuvan and both of us lived there till 20th December when Prof. Abhyankar left for the continent.

On 15th we learnt that the Butler Committee was resuming its sittings and was giving a hearing to Sir Leslie Scott, the counsel of the Princes. Thinking that it was a quasi judicial and open inquiry we went to Montagu House where the Committee was to meet. The keeper of the place told us that only a limited number of men and women were to be admitted and that the hearing was not open to the public or the press. As there was hardly time to approach the authorities for permission we returned home. Some representatives of the press who had assembled outside the place of meeting for the snap-shots of some of the Princes, saw us and inquired as to why we were there. We told them that we were members of a deputation sent by the people of the Indian States to represent their case to the Committee. But as we now find that the meeting was strictly private and as there was not sufficient time to seek admission we do not want to make any demonstration. The report cabled to India that we were refused admission is not correct. We were unable to see any of the authorities at that time; we could not apply for permission and therefore none was refused. Mr. Chudgar made a statement to a representative of the Yorkshire Observer who was

present there and which was published in the issue of 16th October. It was to this effect. "The Princes are spending 67 p. c. of their revenues on personal pleasures and if the real facts of the misrule and oppression which are existing under the Union Jack were told it would cause a very great sensation. The deputation represented the Indian State people's Conference which consisted of representatives of some 70 States. They were desirous of placing before the Committee the people's side of the Case. "Our case is that the Princes' view is not the view of the people of the States. The British Govt. is the paramount power and is responsible for good Government of the States, as well. The Princes do not want any interference in the affairs of the States but at the same time they want the British Government's protection against their people's agitation." Next day we saw Mr. Pollock, Major Graham Pole and Mr. Fenner Brokway. On the 17th Mr. Bakhale of the Servants of India Society introduced Prof. Abhyankar to Mr. Gillis of the labour party. He had a long discussion with him on this subject. He shrewdly asked if the Indian Princes did not listen to the advice of the future Government of India what the remedy was. If the British Indian army is to be sent to coerce the Indian Rulers would this not be resented by the Indian people. He inquired whether the consent of the Princes was necessary for their transfer to the control of the future Government. He agreed that Civil List should be limited and that there should be proper safeguards to ensure the same. He also was of opinion that the Indian Princes should maintain a recognised form of Government. On the 18th Mr. Bakhale took Prof. Abhyankar to Mr. George Lansbury. He explained the objects of the deputation and Mr. Lansbury promised every help and also to arrange meetings with parliamentary labour party and Imperial Parliamentary League. On the 19th both of us went to the foreign editor of Sunday Express, 8 Shoe Lane, E. C. 4 and explained to him the whole situation. He said he would consider the same as it was a very intricate subject. We however found to our great surprise the same paper publishing the letter of the Maharaja of Patiala on 21st in which His Highness stated "We are not nearly as rich as you think and we have to work pretty hard for our living." This pitious letter of the Maharaja was published with a

bust photo of His Highness who had put on jewellery worth a million pounds. We do not know if the editor wanted to insinuate the grim humour about the Maharaja's statement by the display of this picture. On 16th, we had written a letter to Col. Ogilve, the secretary of the Committee, in which we had asked permission to hear the proceedings as mere spectators. The secretary had not the courtesy to send a written reply but in a private interview which Prof. Abhyankar had with him on the 20th Col. Ogilve told him that the Chairman had declined permission to the deputation to be present at the hearing. Diwan Bahadur Ramchandra Rao had arrived and we met him at Mr. Pollock's house on 21st. Next day Prof. Abhyankar saw Mr. Brown of the East India Association and the editor of Asiatic Quarterly Review and explained to them both, the problem of the Indian State's people. On the night of 23rd both of us (Mr. Chidgar and Prof. Abhyankar) addressed a meeting of the Independent labour party. A lecture of Major Graham Pole was arranged in the Autumn series on behalf of the party at the Italian Cafe. Frith Street W. I. Major Graham Pole desired that instead of his speaking he thought it proper to give the opportunity to us to address the meeting. Major Graham Pole presided on the occasion. Prof. Abhyankar said that there were nearly seventy millions of people living in nearly 700 Indian States. There is personal rule in almost all the Indian States. The people in the States do not enjoy even the elementary right of citizenship. Liberty of person, security of property, liberty of the Press, freedom of discussion, are denied to the people. Arbitrary powers are exercised by the executive, there is no independent judiciary. The resources of the States are exploited by the Ruler for his private use. The Budget estimates are not published. They are not open to criticism or discussion by the people. There is no independent audit and the subjects of a State are not associated with the Government in any shape or form. This is generally the position of almost all States, except a few States in South India like Mysore. The people of the Indian States are now becoming politically conscious of their rights. The stir in British India has affected Indian States. Hopes and aspirations have crossed the frontier. The Indian States people are not given any form of con-

stitutional Government or self Government, and they do not even enjoy the ordinary privileges of good government. The Indian Princes are complaining about the violation of treaty rights by the Paramount Power. It is necessary to bear in mind that there are two aspects of this grievance, one political and the other economical. On the political side Indian Princes cannot complain about the interference of the political department because interference has taken place only when misrule has become flagrant in character. As a matter of fact the subjects of Indian States complain that the interference in this respect has not been prompt and frequent. The Government interferes only when misrule becomes unbearable or long, gross, and flagrant. If we, however, look to the treaties concluded with the Princes, it will clearly show that there are express treaty obligations by which the Indian Rulers have undertaken to maintain good government, to secure the contentment of the people, to improve cultivation, and to ensure proper justice to the people of the States. These treaty obligations have not been fulfilled by the Indian Princes. The paramount Power is not enforcing, these treaty obligations. It is necessary to see how the Indian Princes have been carrying on their trusteeship of these States. Not only on treaty grounds but by reason of their position as a Paramount Power with the ultimate responsibility of securing the welfare of the subjects of the States entrusted to them, the British Government must exercise greater vigilance over the Indian States to see that good government is maintained in every one of them. The present laissez faire policy is deplorable and some reform is absolutely needed by the exigencies of the present times. The British Government has declared responsible government as the goal of their policy in India. It is significant to note that none of the Princes has, during these eleven years since the pronouncement of August 1917, ever declared his unequivocal acceptance of this goal, and none of them is endeavouring to bring about a progressive realisation of the same. What the Indian States people desire is that either the British Government should change its policy and exercise greater authority to improve the conditions of the people of Indian States, or that they should require the Indian Rulers to adopt a constitutional form of government. Unless either of these courses is

adopted, the discontent in the Indian States would grow acute and would become serious in character. There is no Press, and there is no liberty of speech in the Indian States and this is the reason why discontent is not articulate and vociferous. Autocracy in the Indian States is driving it underground. It is, therefore, better in the interest of the Rulers and the Ruled that remedial measures should be adopted in time. There is no desire on the part of the Indian States people that the Indian States should disappear; the people are anxious that the Princes and their Houses should be maintained firmly, and should be provided adequately to maintain their prestige and their high position; but they only wish that the princes should rule as constitutional monarchs and not as despots. The Indian Princes are professing loyalty to the Crown. What greater example could they find to emulate than that of His Majesty the King Emperor of India, who is a perfectly constitutional monarch. The subjects of the Indian States desire that these Rulers should faithfully follow the gracious example of His Majesty, and should abandon autocratic powers and establish constitutional government in their States. Let them give the elementary rights of citizenship to their people, let them enable their people to enjoy the blessings of the rule of law; let them be satisfied with a definite civil list; and let them entrust their administration to their people to be carried on under their supervision; contentment would then reign in the Indian States. This in short is the case of the Indian States people.

An inquiry of an exhaustive character is necessary to ascertain both the alleged violation of the treaty rights of the Princes and the non-fulfilment of the treaty obligations by them. The inquiry conducted by the Butler Committee is most unsatisfactory since it excludes the subjects of the States whose interests are vitally affected by it. The misrule prevailing in the India States has forced some people to confess that Lord Dalhousie committed a great error in not painting the whole of India red. This caused a loud outburst in the audience who understood by the expression "red" as the spread of Communism throughout India. Major Graham Pole asked what was the meaning of the expression 'red India.' Prof. Abhyankar

explained that British India was painted in the map in red colour while as Indian India meaning thereby the Indian States was painted in yellow colour. The bitter critics of Indian States despaired of reforms thought that if Indian States had been absorbed into British India it would have been better. There was no distant suggestion of the spread of Soviet principles in India.

Mr. Chudgar dwelt upon the condition of the non-jurisdictional States in Kathiawar and deplored that even under the direct control of the political Department there was gross misrule. There were forms of slavery still prevailing in some of the Kathiawar States and urged the British Government to uproot this evil. After the two short addresses questions and answers followed and two of them were very interesting. A member of the audience pointedly asked that if there was such misrule in the Indian States how is it that they have not heard of any agitation against misrule till now? It was pointed out that there was no liberty of the press, no freedom of discussion, no permission for public meetings and no representative institutions in almost all the Indian States. Discontent was driven underground and suppressed under autocratic rule. Since the new era of reforms agitation about the political rights was carried on by Indian States' people in British India and political meetings were held in some few States. Another gentleman asked that as the Congress has been in existence for over 40 years how is it that this question of Indian States was not taken up in right earnest by this premier national organisation. It was explained that for a long time the British Indian people did not like to intervene in the affairs of the Indian States. The steam roller of British imperialism was pressing over all people suppressing tall poppies. The policy of the British Govt. towards the Indian States was not fully understood. It was feared that if the misrule of the Princes was thoroughly exposed such a course may provide a handle to the bureaucracy to absorb the States into British India. So long as the British Indian people were under the grip of a foreign domination they did not think it advisable to strengthen the hold of this rule over the Indian Princes who were equally helpless and who in addition were immersed in deep ignorance and not

keenly alive to their own interests and who were obsessed with the latitude given by the Political Department to indulge in any misrule by reason of the non-intervention policy. Indian Princes were deprived of their military strength and with a view to secure their complete acquiescence in their humiliating position of submission, the policy of non-intervention was resorted to. Since the era of reforms and since the promise of responsible govt. the whole outlook has been changed. The British Indians feel that they would be the masters in their mother land in due course and that a living interest has been created in them to bring up the level of Indian States with that in British India with a view to fit them eventually in a federal constitution. It was therefore pointed out that the attitude of indifference of the national Congress towards the Indian States was justified till the era of reforms and self-determination was ushered into existence in India. But during the last 10 years we find references in the presidential addresses and in the proceedings also to the problems of Indian States. Major Graham Pole appealed to his hearers to assist the deputation with the support and sympathy of the independent labour party. On the 25th the three members of the deputation attended the Imperialism Committee of the independent labour party in the office of the Newleader. D. B. Ramchandra Rao and Mr. Chudgar explained the objects of the deputation and the Committee promised every help. The deputation discussed this question with Mr. Brown and Mr. Andrews at a luncheon in the National Liberal club on 26th. Next day they met Mr. Pollock and Dr. Williams at the N. L. Club and talked over the problem of Indian States. Mr. Chadgar and Prof. Abhyankar were invited the same evening to tea by Mr. Grubbs who is the London correspondent of the Hindu and the Tribune. The whole situation of the Indian States' people was explained to him. Mr. Grubbs also remarked that discontent in Indian States was not articulate and sufficiently loud. He desired that we should approach members of Parliament with a brief and lucid statement of our case. On 29th Mr. Fenner Brokway had come to lunch with the deputation at the Club on 30th and 31st. Prof. Abhyankar saw the foreign editor of the Daily Herald and brought to his notice the mischievous propaganda carried on by the Maharaja of Patiala and his paid agents and con-

vinced him of the necessity of giving publicity to the views of the States' delegation; and accordingly an interview was published in the Daily Herald of Prof. Abhyankar. On the 1st November Mr. Pollock had arranged a meeting of the members of the deputation and of Dr. Williams Col. Haksar and Sir Manubhai Metha. It was a private meeting and brought about solely to understand each other's views. A free discussion ensued and each party was able to appreciate the views of the other and it appeared that there were many points of agreement between these two parties. On the 4th Prof. Abhyankar was invited to Cambridge to address the Indian Majlis. Prof. Abhyankar was the principal speaker at the debate. The motion was to the effect that "this house has no sympathy with the present aspirations of the Indian Princes since they desire that the British Government should retain the control of the army in India and of the political department for their safety and protection and as these aspirations are prejudicial to the growth and development of any national Government in India which may be established in the future". Prof. Abhyankar showed how treaty obligations were not carried out by the Indian Princes and how the Paramount Power did not enforce these obligations and how there was absence of what is called in constitutional law as rule of law in almost all the Indian States and how the people were not at all associated with the govt. in all the States with very few exceptions. A very heated discussion took place. Some members espoused the cause of the Princes as patrons of literature, science, industries, fine arts and sports. The hollowness of this view was clearly brought home. One member pointedly asked that if such was the deplorable condition of the Indian States how is it that the people have not revolted or breaches of peace have not occurred to remove gross, long and flagrant misrule. It was made clear that the cause of it was obvious on the face of it. It was argued that the same reasons namely ignorance, disunion and the mighty strength of the British power which prevented British Indians from rising in revolt against the alien rule for the helpless and miserable plight in which British India is placed, actuated the subjects of Indian States not resorting to violence and direct action. Prof. Abhyankar explained

at considerable length that the question of removal of misrule did not rest with the people and the Prince of any State but there was an important third party to it namely the Paramount power. If it had not been so the people of any State would have put an end to misrule in no time and would have brought about a change of govt. of their own liking. Since it is a fact that almost all the Indian rulers are not possessed of any military strength and cannot withstand the opposition of their discontented people. And even in the case of some states which maintain forces, in a conflict between the people and their ruler these forces would prove of no avail. But the real difficulty is that the Indian States people are under a double despotism ; one of their own ruler and the other of the Paramount Power. The Paramount Power is bound to protect the ruler against foreign invasion or internal revolt. Any attempt on the part of any people of any State to rise in revolt against any ruler for oppression would be crushed in no time by this paramount power. It is however a matter of intense regret that this paramount power is not alive to its duty of enforcing correlative obligations on the Indian Princes to secure good govt. in their States with a view to prevent people from being goaded to desparation. A third objection was to the effect that for the Indian States' people as they were under subjection for a very long time representative institutions are not suitable to them. It was retorted that there was absolutely no difference between the physical, intellectual and moral equipment and aptitudes of British Indians and Indian States people to justify such an invidious distinction. As a matter of fact, historically speaking, before the British rule both were parts of the same Govt. in various States. The stir in British India has affected equally the Indian States ; a perceptible process of infiltration has been going on since a very long time ; and it is no longer possible to stem the tide of democracy and self-determination spreading over Indian India along with British India. Mr. Lad I. C. S. who presided over this meeting in a very intelligent and graceful speech brought it to a close and the motion was carried by an overwhelming majority. The deputation had the privilege of witnessing the Kings procession on the occasion of opening the last Parliament on the 6th. Prof. Abhyankar on the 8th saw Sir

R. E. Holland, member India Council and Chairman of the Political Committee. He patiently listened to a brief statement of the case of the Indian States people, he said he generally agreed with it. He added that the Government of India will consider all this although they have decided not to hear the people. He was furnished with the copy of the exhaustive memorandum and the problem of the Indian States. Sir R. E. Holland promised that he would go through them.

The same afternoon Commander Kenworthy invited the deputation to lunch at Parliament House. He inquired about the representative character of the deputation and asked us what our immediate demand was. In view of the conflicting views of the Princes and of the Indian States people about the conditions prevailing in the States, Prof. Abhyankar suggested that a Royal Commission should be appointed to go thoroughly into this question. Commander Kenworthy approved of this idea. In the evening the deputation was entertained at tea at the Pinoli Restanrant at 17th Wardour Street W. I. by the London Indian Majlis. All of us spoke on the various aspects of the problem. Comrade Saklatwala was present on this occasion and said that the Congress did not represent the views of the people. He further added that the peasants and labourers of England sympathised with our movement. Skin did not make my difference and he advised us to take the right course and there was yet time to remedy past mistakes. Mr. Chudgar gave a crushing retort to Mr. Saklatwala in a humourous speech. The leader of the deputation wound up and said we have our own limitations. Mrs. Sen spoke very briefly but pointedly and asked if Indian States were proving Ulsters. On 9th we had another meeting at Mr. Pollock's with Col. Haksar and we discussed the effects of direct relations in practice. On 11th November Prof. Abhyankar went to Stock Port near Manchester at the desire of Major Graham Pole to address Labour Fellowship Club. He said that 80 per cent of the population of India was agriculturist but they were in an abject state of poverty owing to famine-year in and year out. They have no sustaining power. The Government is not spending adequate money on irrigation and is

allowing the mighty rivers to exhaust themselves into the sea. If all of them are harnessed India would be a garden of the East. The Government is spending more than half of its net income on the Army. But if a fraction of it is spent in imparting industrial education to the people the problem of unemployment in India would be solved in no time. Why should countries other than England dump Indian markets by their goods and why should not the people be educated in such arts, crafts and industries.

As regards the States the people have no constitutional government and there is no rule of law. That under the protection of the mighty British Government, they should be in such a hopelessly backward condition is discreditable. It is still more audacious on the part of the princes to claim greater independence to keep their people in subjection. Unless the rulers vouchsafe constitutional government to their subjects, their demand should be treated with contempt which it deserves. The Paramount Power should enforce the treaty obligations of the rulers to maintain good government in the States. The present policy of non-intervention is causing intense hardship to the people of the States, and it requires to be altered immediately.

On the 12th Mr. Chudgar and Prof. Abhyankar were present in the gallery of the House of Commons when questions on Indian States were replied. On 13th all of us were asked to take tea with Mr. George Lansbury at the office of Major Graham Pole at Westminster Palace Chambers. Mr. Lansbury enthusiastically took up the suggestion of a Royal Commission and said that after the general election he would interest himself in this question. On the 14th Prof. Abhyankar had an interview with Her Highness the Maha Rani Saheb of Gaikwar. In this week the deputation prepared a statement and submitted it to the Butler Committee, to all the members of Parliament and to the press in England. It was a summary of the exhaustive memorandum which was printed and published in India containing the case for the Indian States people. This memorandum was favourably reviewed by the Manchester Guardian, Mr. Rushbrook Williams, the foreign minister of Patiala rushed into print and criticised the motives and the lines of the

agitation carried on by the deputation. The attack on the deputation was promptly retorted in the Manchester Guardian and the New Leader. This controversy is published in detail in supplement No. II of this report. It will conclusively prove the hollow character of the agitation carried on behalf of the Indian Princes. Dr. Rushbrook Williams also published an article in the influential labour monthly, the Clarion in its November issue. This article will show the mischievous and dangerous character of the agitation which the Indian Princes are carrying on to mislead the British public about the internal conditions of the administration existing in the Indian States. Prof. Abhyankar sent a crushing reply to this letter exposing the fallacies of Dr. Williams. These letters are published in detail in the supplement. This controversy will bring home the fact how necessary it is to maintain a vigorous agitation in England to counteract the evil effects of the propaganda of the princes and to disprove the utter falsehoods sedulously propagated by the organisation of the Indian Princes through their paid agents in England.

On 16th the deputation met Mr. Lionel Curtis at the National Liberal Club. Mr. Curtis advised that small pamphlets written in lucid and homely language should be distributed to enlighten the British public about the problem of the Indian States people. Mr. Curtis further expressed his view that the Indian Princes must adopt the ideal of responsible Govt. if they wish to come within the orbit of the Indian Constitution. On 18th Prof. Abhyankar was invited to lunch by Dr. Rutherford. He seemed to be keenly interested in our problem and had carefully read the memorandum. He expressed a wish to come to India and study this problem of Indian States. On 19th the deputation met Sir Prabhashankar Pattani and talked with him on Indian States problem. The same evening Prof. Abhyankar met Sir Stanley Reed by appointment at the Savile Club 69 Brook street. He was of opinion that the Civil list of every ruler must be fixed and that an independent judiciary must be established in the States. In his opinion these were the great needs of the Indian States at the present moment. He also introduced Prof. Abhyankar to the Secretary of the Royal Institute of international affairs. On 20th

November the deputation met Lord Olivier and explained to him the whole situation. His Lordship suggested as a result of this discussion that he would himself raise a debate in the House of Lords. He further wished to discuss this question again with the deputation shortly. In the same evening we met Sir James Meston at the National Liberal Club. He desired that a vigorous agitation must be maintained and pertinently remarked 'he who cries aloud is heard best.' On the 21st night we met the Imperial advisory Sub-Committee of the labour party in the Committee room of the House of Commons. All three of us spoke on the problem before this committee. We pressed for a Royal Commission of inquiry and the adoption of the policy of responsible govt. in the States. On 23rd we met Lord Olivier again about the coming debate, and Lord Olivier asked for some information which we undertook to supply immediately. The deputation had invited the Indian majlis to tea at the National Liberal Club the same evening. On 24th a short statement of the Indian States' peoples, regarding the constitutional position of the States was submitted to Lord Olivier. On 25th certain literature and a further note about the internal conditions of the states were submitted to His Lordship.

On 27th the Maharaja of Baradwan spoke about the Indian States at the London University Union. Prof. Abyankar gave a smashing reply to the strange theories of this Jamindar of Baradwan. Prof. Abhyankar said that there was no parliamentary govt. of any character in the Indian States with few exceptions and that there was no rule of law. He further remarked that not only there was no real Swaraj in the Indian States but that there was unadulterated autocracy and the people in the States did not even enjoy ordinary civic rights of citizenship. He concluded that unless the ideal of responsible govt. is accepted by the Indian rulers there was no possibility of any federation being established in India. On 28th the deputation entertained at lunch prominent members of the labour party at Hotel Metropole. Among the present were Lord Olivier, George Lansbury, Major Graham Pole, Commander Kenworthy, Col. Wedgewood, Mr. Snell, Mr. Thurtle, Dr. Snowfield, Dr. Rutherford, Mr. Pollock, Mr. Grubbs. These leaders of the

labour party expressed their satisfaction at the timely arrival of the deputation and for the information which they gave about the Indian State's people. Some of them frankly confessed that they had no idea that there was any conflict between the Princes and their people. They were till now relying upon the exparte statements of the Princes and those who advocated their cause. They further stated that they saw the other side of the shield and that whenever any question affecting the Indian States would come before them hereafter they would take special care to see what the peoples' point of view was on that particular question. They would no longer form their judgements on one sided statements coming from the Princes.

This was undoubtedly a great gain to the cause of the Indian States' people. The labour party though they are not in power are likely to come into power at the next election. If they do not succeed they would undoubtedly occupy the position of a strong and influential opposition. In any case the sympathy and support of the prominent leaders of the labour party would go a long way in helping the cause of the Indian States' people. Diwan Bahadur Ramchandra Rao before his departure had an interview with Mr. Ramsay Macdonald. He observed that there was a strong case for a Royal Commission to go into the whole question of Indian States. He remarked that the resident system was the worst possible and that it deserved to be abolished and that one with more effective control should be substituted. D. B. Ramchandra Rao on the eve of his departure for India had an interview with Lord Peel, the secretary of State for India. Lord Peel assured him that he would give careful consideration to the memorandum submitted by the deputation. On 29th Diwan Bahadur Ramchandra Rao left for India. On the 3rd December Prof. Abhyankar addressed the labour Commonwealth group in the rooms of the Empire parliamentary association in Westminster Hall. Mr. George Lansbury had taken the chair. Prof. Abhyankar spoke about the constitutional relations of Indian States with British India. He also described the internal condition in the Indian States. He briefly stated that there was no parliamentary govt. or real representative govt. in any of the Indian States except the three Southern States and that there was no rule

of law as understood in the British constitution. He further added that the Indian Princes and their paid agents are carrying on a counter propaganda and alleging that there is contentment and happiness in the Indian States. In view of this conflict he suggested that a Royal Commission should be appointed to investigate into this question. He urged that the commission should inquire about (1) the form of govt. existing in each state ; (2) the association of the people with the administration ; (3) the existence of real representative institutions ; (4) whether the powers of legislation and taxation were shared with the people ; (5) whether the budget was submitted to the criticism of the people ; (6) whether there was any public control over the finances of the State ; (7) whether the civil list was fixed and if so what was its proportion to the gross revenue of the State ; (8) if there was independent audit of the State budget ; (9) if the administration was subject to the criticism of the people ; (10) whether executive was in any way responsible to the people ; (11) whether there was any remedy provided to the people against the arbitrary acts of the executive ; (12) whether the ordinary rights of citizenship were guaranteed to the people such as liberty of person, security of property, freedom of conscience, liberty of the press, liberty of speech and meeting ; (13) and whether there was independent judiciary in the State. Such a commission would elicit the necessary facts and leave no shadow of doubt about the existing situation. At present there seems to be a dispute about the factum of good govt. or constitutional govt. or self-govt. existing in the States. A Royal Commission with such wide terms of reference will satisfy all doubts and collect reliable data about the actual conditions in the State. It would then be possible to discuss and suggest remedial measures in consultation with all the parties concerned. Prof. Abhyankar also stated that since the Paramount Power has guaranteed protection to the Indian Princes, it is obligatory upon this power to secure good govt. to the people. It is the birth right of every people to remove misrule and to secure good govt. The British Govt. would not tolerate any direct action on the part of the people. It is therefore necessary that the Paramount Power should abandon its *laissez faire* policy and be alive to its duty of securing enlightened rule to the people of the Indian States. A lively discussion followed

Commander Kenworthy asked if such a Commission would be boycotted by the Indian States, people. Prof. Abhyankar assured his hearers that so long as the commission was only investigating facts, a purely Parliamentary Commission would be also welcome provided the proceedings are open to the people and adequate facilities are given to them to test the evidence of the Princes and to adduce their own. He however added that when the question of remedial measures shall be under consideration it must be decided in consultation with the representatives of the Princes and the people of Indian States and of British India and the Indian Govt. If one Commission can discharge all these functions so much the better. If not he suggested that two commissions should be appointed for these distinct functions if it was thought necessary. This suggestion of Prof. Abhyankar provoked adverse comment in the *Times of India*. He sent a reply to the same from Berlin and it was published in the same paper. The discussion in the labour commonwealth group showed that the idea of a commission was acceptable to all the members who were present on the occasion. A member of this meeting asked a curious question that if the political department is in charge of the Indian States how is it that it does not take any cognisance of misrule existing in the Indian States and take prompt measures to remove the same. Prof. Abhyankar replied that the Political Department is always sitting on the fence and would not take any timely action until a ruler makes himself odious to the people and to the Govt. The Political Department intervenes only when misrule becomes gross, long and flagrant. They however do not realise the intense sufferings of the people until misrule reaches its maximum standard of unbearableness. This indifferent policy of Govt. must be abandoned and radical changes ought to be introduced to make it obligatory upon a ruler to establish constitutional govt in the State. The respected leader and Chairman Mr. Lansbury paid a graceful Compliment to the speaker and requested the members of the Commonwealth group to lend their support to the righteous cause of the helpless people. On the 4th Prof. Abhyankar saw Mr. Snell in the House of Commons who promised to circulate all literature bearing on Indian States problem to members of the Commonwealth group

and to ask such questions as may be sent to him. He discussed the feasibility about a labour deputation going to India inquiring into the conditions of Indian States. It appeared that some of the Indian Princes had made such a proposal to some prominent leaders of the labour party inviting them in a non-official capacity to come and see things for themselves, about the States. Prof. Abhyankar told Mr. Snell that he felt very doubtful as to how far the Princes were serious in making this offer. He feared that if the labour members decide to come the Princes at the eleventh hour may back out on the excuse that the Political Department may not view with favour such an attempt. He however assured Mr. Snell that the leaders of public opinion in the Indian States would do their best to cooperate with such a body and give them all possible assistance. He also informed him that the Princes would resent the association of State subjects with such a deputation and would be reluctant to supply them with any information or to allow scrutiny of any evidence in their presence or discuss any problem with their consultation. Prof. Abhyankar supplied Mr. Snell with copies of Jamnagar pamphlet and of the exhaustive memorandum of the Indian States' people for free distribution amongst the Commonwealth group. On the 5th Lord Olivier raised a debate in the House of Lords. His motion was to call attention to questions arising in respect of the Govt. of Indian States not forming part of British India and to ask His Majesty's Govt. whether they have in view any scheme for dealing with such questions concurrently and consistently with any amendments to the constitution of British India and that may commend themselves to Parliament in the outcome of the inquiry now being made by the Commission which has been appointed under the Govt. of India Act and to move for papers. The whole debate has been published as supplement No. 1 ; and it is of immense value to the subjects of Indian States. Lord Olivier clearly pointed out that the question of constitutional reform in the Indian States did not come within the purview of the Simon Commission or of the Butler inquiry. He asked that when reconstructing the framework of Indian constitution whether the autocratic powers of the Princes should not in some degree be restricted ; whether there is some way when dealing with constitutional advance of putting for-

ward reasonable representations in favour of such reforms in Indian States ; whether there was any scheme by which the States can be brought into any federation. He also pertinently asked whether it is possible to maintain in its fulness the present absolute autocracy of the Indian States in the future, and whether there is any kind of suggestion or recommendation made to the Princes with regard to their own constitution. He described how the States were absolute monarchies existing under the protection of the Paramount Power. This debate provoked some ex-Viceroy to pronounce their views on this important aspect of the Indian problem. Lord Hardinge made a long speech but it is to be regretted that it was thoroughly irrelevant to the issue as pertinently remarked by Lord Olivier. It was equally disappointing to see that Lord Reading was trying to explain away his dictum contained in the famous letter to His Exalted Highness. Lord Reading reiterated the stock argument of bureaucrats that reform must come from within and should not be forced upon the Princes. We however find that the Paramount Powers have imposed various policies on the Indian rulers to advance Imperial interest though such policies have caused serious loss to the Indian States and though the actions of the Paramount Power have been assailed by the Princes as violations of treaty rights. If the Paramount Power took initiative and brought diplomatic pressure upon the Indian Princes to advance their own interest what prevents them from bringing pressure on the Indian rulers to raise their own governments to standards of efficiency approved by enlightened public opinion elsewhere. Lord Peel, the Secretary of State stated that such a discussion was premature as the reports of the Butler Committee and the Simon Commission are not yet published. Lord Peel however made a statement that the introduction of changes in the machinery or methods of govt. in the States are far reaching and do not come directly within the purview of the paramount power. With due deference to His Lordship it is submitted that this is not a correct position. If the paramount power has the ultimate responsibility to secure good govt. to the people of the Indian States is it not necessary for the same power to devise measures and induce the Princes to adopt the same with a view to discharge this responsibility. Lord Peel however stated that the

questions must be present to the minds of those who want to look ahead. Lord Olivier after eliciting official pronouncement on this important question withdrew his motion. But the debate has a most important moral value. The Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India were not prepared to discuss this question openly with the leaders of public opinion in the States. By his motion Lord Olivier forced the Secretary of State to make an official pronouncement on the subject. Lord Peel's reply was non-committal and this debate has paved the way for further agitating this question on the floor of both the Houses openly and in an authoritative manner. The deputation therefore honestly felt that it had served its purpose in inducing Lord Olivier to raise this debate. Both members of the deputation were present in the visitors' gallery admission to which was secured for them by Lord Olivier himself. Prof. Abhyankar on behalf of the deputation published a statement about this debate in the *Manchester Guardian*. On the 10th Prof. Abhyankar delivered a lecture on the problems of the Indian States before the Royal Institute of international affairs. Some members of India Office such as Mr. Wheeler, Mr. Mallik, Dr. Paranjape were present on this occasion. Mr. Pollock and Dr. Williams also were there. Dr. Williams spoke on the other side. It was here that a free and open discussion took place between the representative of the people and the representative of Princes. This discussion however was very useful in conveying to the meeting the outlines of the people's problem in the States. On the 16th Prof. Abhyankar visited Oxford, the famous University town in England. On the 17th he saw the editor of the *Clarion* and through his courtesy was able to see the reply of Dr. Williams to the article of Prof. Abhyankar published in the issue of December. A rejoinder to the same was sent by him to the paper on the 18th. Prof. Abhyankar left England on 20th for the Continent. Diwan Bahadur Ramchandra Rao had left by the end of November and the departure of Prof. Abhyankar practically brought to a close the work of the deputation in England during its first stage. It is necessary briefly to review the experience during this short stay of two months in England.

The members of the labour party to whom the deputation was introduced were very sympathetic. They gave a patient hear-

ing, acquainted themselves with the facts and tried to help the deputation in every possible way. As a matter of fact they were not aware of the acute discontent existing in the Indian States' people and the worst phases of autocratic rule prevailing in the Indian States. They did not know of the conflict of interest between the rulers and the ruled in the States. They had not heard of the political agitation in the Indian States. The arrival of the deputation was very opportune and it served to enlighten the labour party of the real conditions prevailing in the Indian States. They would no longer rely upon the exparte statements of the Indian Princes, or of their paid agents or of those who are working on their behalf. The prominent labour daily 'Daily Herald' their weekly 'New Leader' and their monthly 'Clarion' helped the deputation in the publicity of their views. Prominent members of Parliament of this party asked several questions about the Indian States. The questions and answers are published in the supplement No. I. They would clearly show how each question caused considerable embarrassment to the official spokesman namely the Under Secretary of State for India. At times Earl Winterton was scrappy, even rude, often irrelevant and some times even misleading. But one thing is quite clear that the most effective way of drawing the attention of the Paramount Power to the grievances of the people of the Indian States was putting on incessantly questions in both the Houses about the States. It is the easiest way of getting redress against an irresponsible Govt. The members of the labour party in Parliament were quite willing to ask the questions when they were supplied with proper information. Through the kindness of Major Graham Pole, Prof. Abhyankar was able to address few labour meetings. And the debate of Lord Oliver, the ex-Secretary of State in the labour govt. did signal service to the deputation. Important members of the labour party arranged to hear the deputation before the Commonwealth group and before the advisory Committee. Experience also shows that if systematic efforts are made to keep in touch with sympathetic members of Parliament and enlighten them on this question, the cause of Indian States' people would undoubtedly be considerably advanced. It was also found out that there was a lamentable ignorance about the conditions of Indian States even in

quarters which are considered generally well informed. It is necessary to circulate short pamphlets bearing on various questions relating to the Indian States' people. It is necessary to maintain an active propaganda of supplying authentic information about the Indian States contained in pamphlets very brief and short in size and written in a homely style. It is this literature which is catching and it is absolutely necessary to spread this literature among the enlightened British public.

The necessity for this has become all the greater by reason of the mischievous propaganda carried on by the Indian Princes to show that the conditions in the Indian States are quite satisfactory and the people there are living in contentment and happiness. A cursory glance at the letters written by Dr. Williams to the British Press and by the Maharaja of Patiala would convince any one how dangerous the agitation of the Princes is if it is allowed to remain unchallenged. Dr. Williams in his letters has clearly stated that the people in the States do not want representative institutions; that they are happy with their lot; that they are associated with the govt. in the work of legislation and taxation; that through their religious sabhas, guilds and panchayats they bring pressure upon the ruler and get redress for their wrongs; that they are very lightly taxed; that they have a very efficient judiciary, cheap, simple and less cumbrous; that they are respected by the rulers; that they are attached to their rulers; that they are permitted to bear arms freely and so on and so forth. This correspondence is specially published to convey the gravity of the evil which is likely to be done to the cause of Indian States' people if these statements remained uncontroverted. It is therefore necessary to maintain a vigilant propaganda to counteract this campaign of lies and falsehood sedulously propagated by some of the Indian Princes. Any one who has the slightest acquaintance with the Indian States will at once perceive that all the statements made by Dr. Williams and the Maharaja of Patiala are untrue in fact and devoid of any foundation.

Furthermore with a view to prove the falsity of these statements the deputation tried, through the members of Parliament, by means of interpellations, to elicit correct information from the India office. The

replies of Earl Winterton will bear out that the India office does not possess necessary information about the Indian States. The administration reports of the Indian States are not open to the public. Their budget estimates are not published for general information. Statistical information about moral and material progress of the states is not officially collected. And in view of the aggressive attitude of some of the Indian Princes and their protagonists the necessity of a Royal Commission to ascertain the real conditions prevailing in the Indian States has become most urgent.

So far as the general press in England was concerned it was not at all sympathetic and seemed to be considerably influenced by the princes. But it is to be candidly admitted that there was a conspicuous exception in the Manchester Guardian. The deputation is under a deep debt of gratitude to the Manchester Guardian for the warm reception it gave to the views of the deputation by promptly publishing everything sent to that most influential paper in England. It is a matter of intense pride that this service to the Indian states people of the Manchester Guardian was thoroughly disinterested and quite in keeping with its past and noble traditions. Professor Abhyankar spent a week in Paris and saw Monsieur Marcel Levie and discussed with him this problem of Indian States. In the leading republican paper *La 'Jenue Republique'* one interview and one article of Prof. Abhyankar have appeared bearing on this problem. He went to Geneva and his interview was published in '*Journal De Genive.*' In Geneva he saw the international labour organisation and the office of the League of Nations. When discussing this problem of Indian States with some Indian friends there, he realised that there was a great opportunity for workers in this cause to awaken the international conscience about the helpless condition of the Indian States and thus to utilise it to influence the British Govt. All independent nations with international status and participating in these organisations are very sensitive about any criticism levelled against them in these two influential bodies. If therefore systematic efforts are made to acquaint the members of these organisations with labour conditions in the States and the helpless subjection of the States' people this would serve as a great lever and force John Bull to look to these grievances to save at least

his international repute. Mr. Abhyankar then proceed to Berlin. With the help of Dr. Zacharias, the real catholic friend of India Prof. Abhyankar discussed the problem of Indian States with the editor of Germania which is the principal organ of the Centre party in German politics, and a very sympathetic review of our problem has appeared in that paper. All that appeared in the continental paper has been published in the supplement. Prof. Abhyankar returned home via Rome and Brindizi and landed in Bombay on 4th February 1929. His interviews in the Bombay Chronicle, Indian Daily Mail and the National Herald are published in the supplement. This in short is the report of the work done during the first stage by the members of the deputation.

Before concluding we have to express our sincere thanks for the kind assistance given to us by Major Graham Pole, Mr. Fenner Brockway, Mr. George Lansbury, Mr. Snell, Mr. Gilis, Mr. Thurtle, Commander Kenworthy of the labour party, Mr. Pollock, Mr. Lad I. C. S. of Cambridge, Lord Olivier, Mr. V. K. Krishnamenon of the London majlis, Mr. F. B. Bourdillon of the Royal Institute of Imperial affairs, Mr. Arthur Peacock, Mr. Walter Flant of Stockport, Mr. R. R. Bakhale of the Servants of India Society, Dr. Zacharias of Louvain, Mr. Raghunathrao of Geneva.

Work of the Delegation.

It is, necessary to take stock of what the movement of the Delegation has achieved during these five months. The problem of Indian States has two aspects, one internal and the other external. The internal problem relates to the condition of affairs in the Indian States and the civic rights the citizens enjoy. As a rule barring few Southern Indian States elementary rights of citizenship are not enjoyed by the people. There is no liberty of the person, security of property, independent judiciary, freedom of speech and discussion, restriction on the arbitrary powers of the executive and there is no real association of the people with the Government of each State. The British public had no idea about the grievances which the Indian State's people are suffering under the autocratic rule of Princes. Responsible statesmen do not seem to be aware of the acute discontent of the dumb seventyeight millions of the Indian States. The

subjects of Indian States had not till now approached British public and explained their position to them. The Indian Princes on the other hand by their frequent visits to Europe, by their charm of manners, by their sumptuous hospitality and by their efforts to appeal to the British public for the betterment of their position and by their *ex parte* statements about good administration prevailing in the Indian States, had made some impressions upon the people in England who count. They had also with their unlimited resources succeeded in influencing a considerable portion of the British Press. The Deputation of the people went in the nick of time. They saw various responsible people more especially, the leaders of the Labour Party, addressed the meetings of members of Parliament interested in the Empire Commonwealth, and placed before them how there was a total lack of Good Government and complete absence of self-Government in the Indian States. And it is found that this agitation has been successful in exposing the *ex parte* character of the allegations of Indian Princes. The leaders of the Labour Party have appreciated the difficulties and the disabilities of the Indian States' people and the magnitude of this problem which affects 78 millions of the State people. They further assured that the interest of the Indian States' people will receive their earnest attention in any questions which they may have to deal with hereafter relating to Indian States. This is undoubtedly a great asset and it has given a set-back to the activities of the Indian Princes.

The protagonists of the Princes were sedulously maintaining in England, a campaign of distorting facts about the conditions in Indian States. It was stated on their behalf that there is contentment in the Indian States, that the people do not like representative forms of Government, that they are lightly taxed, that the administration of justice is cheap and efficient, that they are allowed to bear arms freely and that they are generally consulted through village panchayats and the caste Sabhas. Any one who has the slightest acquaintance with the Indian States can clearly see that it is sheer camouflage. Through the assistance of the Manchester Guardian, The daily Herald, New Leader and the Clarion, the Deputation was able to expose the hollowness of these views and to prove that reverse was the case. It was apparent that there were absolutely no means to definitely ascer-

tain the facts about the real condition of affairs in the Indian States. There were no moral and material Reports, no Administration Reports, no publications about Budgets and no Statistical information about the States. The ordinary Britisher was bewildered by statements and counter statements. With a view, therefore, to remove all doubts about facts and about conditions actually existing in the States, the Deputation suggested that a Commission of Enquiry should be appointed to consider the form of Government in each State, the association of the people with the Government, the influence which they exercise over the administration, the extent of civic rights enjoyed by the people and the manner in which the resources of the State are utilised for public benefit. Such an inquiry will leave no shadow of doubt about facts. The question of remedial measures may then be solved with ease. This suggestion of the Deputation was welcomed by the Labour Leaders and they appreciated the necessity of the same. It is, therefore, very likely that if persistent efforts are made by the people of Indian States, the proposal of the Commission of Enquiry would materialise in the near future and would largely help the advancement of the interests of the people. This activity, therefore, of the Deputation was very useful and is sure to prove of lasting benefit.

The second aspect of the Indian problem deals with the relation of Indian States with British India. It bears upon the constitutional position of the Indian States in the body politic of British India. Under the Constitution of 1858 modified subsequently upto 1919 the Indian States are subordinate to the Governor—General in Council and are under the control of the Political Department of the Government of India. The Indian Princes with their inordinate desire to cling to autocratic powers and with intense distrust about their brethren in British India and with their open hostility to democratic developments have begun to set up a theory of direct relations. By spending unnecessarily and lavishly a huge amount of money at the cost of their poor subjects they engaged the services of an English Counsel and prepared a scheme which had for its object the dismemberment of the Indian States from British India and the establishment of a permanent diarchy in India. This scheme was suicidal and most dangerous to the growth of self-governing in-

stitutions in British India. The mischievous character of this scheme was severely exposed by the Indian States' people in newspapers, in their exhaustive memorandum and the Nehru Committee also expressed unqualified condemnation of this fantastic and preposterous scheme. The agitation against this scheme vigorously carried on had a salutary effect. The Princes abandoned this scheme and did not muster courage to put forward any other scheme instead. The bottom of the Princes' case was thus knocked down and this is due entirely to the efforts of the Indian States' people who were the first in the field to expose the hideous character of Sir Leslie Scott's scheme.

The Deputation and the means adopted by the same brought home to the Indian Princes the absurdity of the theory of direct relations. The Indian Princes realised that the expression "Crown" does not mean the dynasty of King George V. but the King in Parliament. This expression "Crown" is merely colloquial and is not generally used in State documents. The correct phrase is 'the King in Parliament'. If direct relations are introduced the Princes would be directly under the influence of Parliament. They have also understood how intolerable their lot would be if matters relating to their States are every now and then made the subject of frequent interpellations and debates are raised about the mal-administration prevailing in the States. The Princes would stand thoroughly discredited not only in the eyes of Parliament but of the whole civilized world. Some of the Princes also saw the necessity of approaching the Labour leaders and winning their approbation by sumptuous hospitality. Under direct relations the Princes would be obliged to appeal to every man and woman in the United Kingdom who may be entitled to a vote. How difficult it would be, in these days, when the waves of socialism and communism are spreading very rapidly over the continent to receive any support for the obsolete institution of autocrat monarchy. Under the present constitution of the Government of India without the previous sanction of the Governor-General it is not permissible to move any resolution affecting the Indian States or ask any question. These restrictions do not apply to the mother of Parliaments. Therein, any member can ask any question about the

Indian States, about the vagaries of the Princes and about misrule prevailing in the Indian States. The change therefore from the Government of India to the direct authority of Parliament would be like that from the frying pan to a burning furnace. The leading lights of the Chamber, therefore, have ceased to talk vociferously about direct relations since their return to India. The interpellations in Parliament which the deputation tried to introduce and the motion of Lord Olivier have opened the eyes of the Princes to the grave danger which awaits them in case this fantastic claim of direct relations is ever conceded. No Englishman with any constitutional instinct would ever set at nought the organic connection between the States and the Government of India.

In matters of Common concerns it has also become apparent that unless the princes take their own people into their confidence it is not likely that the Princes would get any relief. The policies pursued in relation to these matters are causing serious loss primarily to the consumers viz. the State subjects. Unless guarantees are given that any relief or contribution made by the Paramount Power would go to the people of the States, the Princes would loose in every respect. Besides the attitude of some of the British Indian Statesmen like Sir Siwaswami Ayyar clearly proves that this claim for contribution would not be easily conceded by the British Indian Statesmen. Unless the demands of these Princes are enthusiastically supported by 78 millions of their subjects, they would fail to influence the growing forces of democracy in India. If the central Legislature is not convinced of the equity and justice of the claim of the Indian States in matters of common concern it will not be possible to force this concession on the Indian Legislature, if it is unwilling and obdurate. The support of the 78 Millions of the States' people would give inherent strength to this cause and induce their brethren in British India to do justice to them. Besides Indian Princes cannot fight so vigorously and courageously about the violation of treaty rights and breaches of promises as the subjects of the States would naturally be able to do. The Princes have begun to talk that they would earmark the relief if given by the Paramount Power to the public utility Departments in the States. But the demands of the Princes voiced in camera and behind the back of their people would

hardly be effective unless they are made with the open and enthusiastic support of the people of the States. It is not yet too late to mend and we hope and trust that the Princes would be well advised in seeking the co-operation of their own people in advancing their claim in this respect. The deputation impressed this aspect upon influential officials of the States.

The Maharaja of Patiala while in England, spoke about a federal ideal for India. We however doubted whether the implications of a federal ideal were clearly understood by the Maharaja. In the debate which ensued, the hollowness of the claim of the Maharaja was fully exposed. In all federations which are at present functioning in the world, there are two constituent bodies in each federation, one representing the units of the federation and the other representing all the people living under that federation. Now so far as India is concerned, unless the people in the States and the people in British India are represented in one chamber in proportion to their numbers and enjoy equal rights of citizenship no federal system of Government is likely to be established in this country. Until the Princes are prepared to enfranchise their people, to confer upon them elementary civic rights, and constitutional Government it is impossible to establish a federation of autocratic rulers and democratic representatives of British India. The Indian Princes ought to have realised this from the agitation which has been carried on by this deputation in England.

A member of the deputation travelled over the continent and understood the potentialities which the international movements possess in influencing the Indian States. If the system of forced labour and the forms of slavery prevailing in the States are authoritatively placed before the International Labour Conference it will create sensation in that body and the hands of Government would be forced to inquire into this grievance and to redress the same. The Government would be obliged to give up their non-interfering attitude and would be required to bring pressure to bear upon the Indian Princes to improve labour conditions in States. A member of the Indian aristocracy annually attends the session of the League of Nations. If authentic and concise information

about the autocratic character of the Princes and the utter indifference of the Government of India is conveyed to the members of the League of Nations it will have a telling effect upon that august body. The Prince representing the Rulers would be ashamed of his position and members of the British delegation shall have to look small, before the illustrious gathering for their stolid apathy and their unjust policy towards the people of the Indian states. Experience has shown that John Bull detests his dirty linen being washed before the international public. If therefore the people of the Indian States can carry on a vigorous propaganda in relation to the international Labour Conference and the League of Nations they would effectively succeed in bringing pressure upon the Government of India for the betterment of the conditions in the Indian States. Labour Members in England and Germany have promised support to take up this cause about the labour conditions of the States if they are properly and adequately instructed. It is also possible to approach the members of the League of Nations, if energetic and sustained efforts are made to enlighten them about the miserable conditions under which the Indian States' people are labouring. The notices of the problem of Indian States in the continental papers in Paris, in Geneva and in Germany point out the same moral. This outlook was presented to the delegation because one of the members travelled over the continent and came in touch with some influential people.

Appendix A

INDIAN STATES IN PARLIAMENT.

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Part I

Debate in the House of Lords.

Wednesday, 5th December, 1928.

The House met at a quarter before four of the clock. The LORD CHANCELLOR on the Woolsack.

Government of Indian States.

Lord Olivier had given Notice to call attention to questions arising in regard to the government of Indian States not forming parts of any Provinces of British India; to ask His Majesty's Government whether they have in view any scheme for dealing with such questions concurrently and consistently with any amendments of the Constitution of British Indian Government that may commend themselves to Parliament in the outcome of the Inquiry now being made by the Commission which has been appointed under the Government of India Act; and to move for Papers.

The noble Lord said: My Lords, yesterday evening the noble Earl the Leader of the Liberal Party, looking towards this Bench expressed his apprehensions that questions were put down on the Paper for the purpose of airing the knowledge of the noble Lords who put them down. I should like to assure the noble Earl that I do not rise to-day for the purpose of arising any knowledge I possess on the subject of the government of India, and it is unnecessary to do so, because at the right hand of the noble Earl sits the noble Marquis [Lord Reading], and on the other side another noble Lord, both of whom have much greater knowledge than I have of Indian affairs and of the matters to which I desire to call attention, which are matters, in my opinion, of public importance.

Even before the last Government of India Act was drawn up it had become evident that developments would arise, and were likely in the future further to arise, out of that Constitution, which would

lead to the necessity of reconsidering the relations of Indian States to the Indian Government, and I think I am right in saying that, arising out of the views of the Government of India, my noble friend Lord Chelmsford almost immediately took up the policy of some-what altering the relations of certain Indian Rulers with the Indian Government. That is to say, they began to substitute direct relations for the relationship of the Indian Princes and the Provincial Governments, and in a considerable number of States that alteration has been made and I imagine that alteration of relations is still in consideration with regard to the others. It was obviously a reasonable and necessary development because the more the Provincial Governments became constitutional Governments resting upon an elective basis and having Ministers and Cabinets responsible to the electors, the more difficult would it be for the Indian States to accept the position of reporting to Provincial Governments, especially if the responsibilities of the Governor of the Province itself were transferred in any respect to the Councils. That beginning of the alteration of the relations has been set on foot.

Further, it became obvious that if the purposes and the ideas with which the Statutory Commission was set up—namely, of a further division of the Indian Government—were pursued in the direction in which almost all those in India who advocate constitutional reform desire, that is, of delegating a good deal of the responsibility of the Secretary of State and some of the responsibility of the Governor-General to the Council, in that case, again the position of the Rulers of Indian States with regard to the Government of India would be materially changed, and as regards many of their interests—interests of defence, interests of customs and of railways, all those matters which are now dealt with by negotiation between the Viceroy and the Indian States—it would become a question, assuming that there were responsibilities in the Assembly, of an Assembly responsible not to the Indian States but to a totally different constituency. The India Rulers have shown themselves to be very keenly aware of that. They have moved in the matter and indicated their view that in any development of the Constitution of India they must not be placed in any respect under the control of an elected Assembly to which they did not contribute and that they did not desire any alteration of their present relations and responsibilities as between themselves and the Crown.

Arising out of that the Government of India would give considerable consideration to what, after all, is a necessary development. There is one step in those developments. A Committee was sitting under Sir Harcourt Butler, which too the very necessary first step of

ascertaining what were the treaty and constitutional relations between the principal Indian States and His Majesty's Government. That Committee has been sitting for some time and the question of the constitutional position which was first given to be cleared up, the constitutional position of those Indian rulers in relation to His Majesty's Government in India, has been studied and indeed argued by Counsel with very great ability. That part of the necessary preparation is proceeding, but I submit to your Lordships that in my opinion it is a very small part of the preparation that is required for the consideration of this very grave subject. It is going to be a very great subject and no one can conceal from himself the recognition of the fact that now that we have embarked upon the path of Indian constitutional reform this country, with all its responsibilities has embarked upon a course involving responsibilities which are perhaps very much wider than many of the public recognise.

Sir Harcourt Butler's Committee deals only with about 105 directly-represented States and about another 120 of indirectly-represented States. But, as your Lordships know, there are about 560 States altogether, and the position and the future relations of those States with any future Government of India has yet to be determined. So far as I am aware no steps have been taken for dealing either with the problem of the future relations of the States represented in the Chamber of Princes or with the problem of the relations of the other States with the Indian Government. What I am asking His Majesty's Government is whether they have in view any scheme for dealing with those questions, with which we ought to be in some measure prepared to deal, I submit, in anticipation of any finding that may be made by Sir John Simon's Commission. If we are not beforehand in the matter any consideration of the future Indian Constitution must again suffer very considerable delay while those difficult problems of fitting in the Indian States into that Constitution are being considered.

I am not going to advocate any views or opinions of my own upon the subject. I would like to quote Sir Malcolm Hailey, an Indian public servant, for whose ability and intelligence every one who knows him has the highest possible respect. During the discussions in the Legislative Assembly on the subject of Dominion Self-government for India, Sir Malcolm Hailey said that the Government of India would like to know.

"Whether the States would continue as heretofore to deal with the Governor-General in Council who is responsible to the British Parliament or with the Executive Government responsible to the Indian Legislature."

That is the sort of question which necessarily arises, and, so far as I am aware, we are taking no steps to inform Parliament or to inform public opinion, either in India or here, as to what lines might possibly be taken in regard to the matter.

Very great questions are involved. First of all, there are directly the feelings and honour of the Indian Rulers themselves and their own determination as to what they will agree to. Then there are questions with regard to the subsidiary States, whether, and if so how, the Indian Princes and the other States could be fitted as regards all India Interests into any kind of federation, and in regard to what interests they would continue not to have direct relations with the Assembly but would continue, possibly, to have direct relations with His Majesty through the Secretary of State for India. I apprehend it would not or it might not, be possible for them to continue to have those relations which they now have with the Viceroy through a constitutionally responsible Governor-General or the Secretary of State for India in Council as at present constituted. Some alteration, it seems to me, will have to be made with regard to those relations. That is a general constitutional question, and I want to know what steps His Majesty's Government are taking to set on foot the consideration of those questions either in consultation with the Government of India or by a reference to such a Committee as my noble friend has been induced to promise to set up. I think that the general consideration of such a question might be suitable for such a Committee to undertake. It is analogous to the question of the constitutional changes that may be recommended by the Simon Commission which it has been said, would be referred to such a Joint Select Committee.

Beyond that there are very wide questions with regard, if I may say so, to the internal constitutions of the States; whether and how you are going to fit States constituted as at present into an Indian Government in which the whole of British India is governed on representative constitutional lines. Many of the Indian Princes are extremely able and extremely patriotic men and we have the highest admiration for them; but on occasions there have been very strong reasons for thinking that Indian States were not in all respects well governed, and in a minority of cases we can point to certain instances where it has been the definite opinion of the Viceroy that the States were not well governed and some slight intervention has had to be made. That arises from the responsibility which the Government of India has for the good government of the States. That responsibility is acknowledged and cannot be denied.

I would like to quote from a very important Despatch of my noble friend Lord Reading, in which he very pertinently set forth his own views with regard to the obligations of His Majesty's Government and their rights with regard to Indian Rulers. He said :—

“The right of the British Government to intervene in the internal affairs of Indian States is another instance of the consequences necessarily involved in the supremacy of the British Crown..... But the internal no less than the external security which the Ruling Princes enjoy is due ultimately to the protecting Power of the British Government, and where Imperial interests are concerned or the general welfare of the people of a State is seriously and grievously affected by the action of its Government it is with the Paramount Power that the ultimate responsibility of taking remedial action, if necessary, must lie. The varying degrees of internal sovereignty which the Rulers enjoy are all subject to the due exercise by the Paramount Power of this responsibility”.

That was a clear statement on the part of my noble friend the Marquis of Reading and it implies that His Majesty's Government did not, on account of the sovereignty of the Princes, waive their responsibility for the internal affairs of a State.

Most, if not all of these Principalities are arbitrary and absolute Governments. Everything depends upon the autocratic will of the Sovereign. With regard to the laws, with regard to the administration of revenues, with regard to the appointment of justices and with regard to many matters which in our own Constitution have been taken out of the power of the Sovereign—those matters are there absolutely within the power of the Sovereign, and are liable and sometimes subject, to abuse. That is a position which is very keenly recognised by a great number of the Indian subjects of those Princes, and we have recently had in England a Deputation headed by Ramchandra Rao, a very distinguished Indian servant, which put forward in a temperate manner some of the criticisms which they have to make upon the present Constitutions of Indian States which render misgovernment always possible and sometimes inevitable. When you are reconstituting the whole framework of Indian government and are considering the question how far the government of the Indian States can be fitted into that framework, I think it will be found impossible to disregard the question as to whether the autocratic power of the Princes should not in some degree be restricted and delegated. That question will arise, and I do not express any opinion upon it myself.

Throughout the whole of the British Indian States that is the opinion of those who are advocating constitutional reform, and unquestionably it is the view of many who are advocating constitutional reform in the Indian States themselves. A question was asked in another place the other day on this subject, to which Lord Winterton, the Under-Secretary of State for India, gave a reply. Questions were being asked as to how was it possible for the subjects of Indian States to make their wishes known to the Governor-General, and Lord Winterton gave a reply which I shall quote. I do not wish to criticise the reply too severely. It was given at the end of long string of supplementary questions and possibly was given not with great consideration. Lord Winterton said :—

“They can make their position known by writing to the newspapers, by having political meetings, and in various other ways. That is a question quite distinct from whether or not they should be able to give evidence before this Committee.”

The noble Marquis (the Marquis of Reading) will admit that that was a sketcy answer.

It is not quite open to the subjects of Indian States to write to the newspapers. We have certainly established considerable protection for the Princes against writing in newspapers. The question of whether an article is appropriate or not is a difficult subject for decision by a Judge who is the servant of an Indian Prince, for his decision might possibly be against the Prince. As regards the holding of meetings and agitations for constitutional reform in India, I do not know what would happen in the more liberal States, but I have a very strong opinion, founded upon certain incidents which have occurred, that in some public meetings for constitutional agitation would be repressed with some severity. Lord Winterton's reply was really in its nature, rather derisory and did not deal with the question at all. There ought to be, and no doubt there is in so far as the Government of India exercises its responsibility for good government, some way, when dealing with questions of constitutional reform, of getting put forward reasonable presentations in favour of such reform in the Indian States.

I hope I do not put the matter too strongly. I want to have some means of getting into public consideration reasonable proposals for constitutional reform in the Indian States. If those States are to be brought into any kind of federation with the rest of India, you may be sure that matter will arise. It has already arisen in India and is being strongly agitated by persons there. On that ground, therefore, I also ask the noble Lord whether His Majesty's

Government have in view any scheme for dealing with these questions which are likely to arise? The questions briefly are these: First of all, what is to be the relation of the Indian States to the Indian Princes in any revised Constitution with an Indian Assembly or with His Majesty the King? Secondly, in any such federated constitution will it be possible for His Majesty's Government to maintain in its fulness the present absolute autocracy of the Indian Princes? It is a very difficult question, but it will have to be considered. I think those are the two main points—what is to be the relation between the Indian States and the Government, and whether there is to be any kind of suggestion or recommendation made to Indian Princes with regard to their own Constitution? That is a question on which I express no opinion at the present time and I ask for no opinion, but I hope the noble Viscount recognises—I am sure he does recognise—that those are questions which have to be dealt with. All I ask now is this: Has His Majesty's Government any scheme in contemplation for setting up an appropriate authority or Committee to consider these questions in advance, so that we may have some kind of guidance to help us in dealing with the matter when the Report of the Simon Commission comes before Parliament? I beg to move for Papers.

Lord Hardinge of Penshurst; My Lords, I cannot help thinking that the Motion which has been put before your Lordships by the noble Lord is somewhat premature in view of the fact that it is made before the publication of the Simon and Butler Reports. I do not propose to enter into abstruse questions of the constitutional reform of the Indian States, but in view of what has been said by the noble Lord I should like to say a few words upon the position of the Ruling Princes. In the first place I would like to emphasise the fact that the Ruling Princes are one of the most loyal and devoted elements in India. Their loyalty to the King and to the Government is unsurpassed. Although memories are short nowadays I would like to remind your Lordships of the offers made by the Ruling Princes at the outbreak of the War—offers of men, money, hospital ships, aeroplanes and every conceivable thing that might be needed. These offers were made spontaneously and they were all fulfilled. I may even mention that there was to my knowledge one of the Maharajahs who offered to sell all his jewels to provide money for the War. These offers, when reported by the Secretary of State, evoked great enthusiasm in both Houses of Parliament. Heavy sacrifices of men and money were made and no help that was ever asked of them was refused. Several of the Ruling Princes led their own contingents to the seat of War.

Since those days, what were in my time in India merely meetings of a certain number of Princes under the *aegis* of the Viceroy to discuss educational and other questions and questions affecting themselves, have developed into the creation of a Chamber of Princes where such questions and their general policy come under discussion. They are now a corporate body with definite policies of their own and form an integral part of the machinery of the Government in India. Formerly the affairs of the Ruling Princes were dealt with by the Government of India or in the Department. The absurdity of this arrangement induced the creation of a separate Political Department dealing exclusively with the affairs of the Ruling Princes and under the direct supervision of the Viceroy. Moreover in recent years control of the Ruling Princes has been gradually withdrawn from the Provincial Governments and concentrated under the Political Department of the Government of India. I recount these facts to show that while rapid constitutional progress has been made in British India the Ruling Princes have been slowly developing into a corporate body alongside of British India but practically independent of it.

It cannot be denied that the forms of government in British India are more advanced than in the Indian States, but nevertheless the tendency in these states is towards progress, not unwisely rapid, and in spite of the criticisms of the noble Lord these states as a whole are well governed and meet the needs of the population. There are some states such as Mysore, which really serves as a model and could not be better administered. Of course there must be, and will always be, questions at issue between the Ruling Princes and the Government of India, and these questions can well be settled by conferences and by arbitral or other tribunals, but I can conceive no step that would be more of a step backwards, or that would be more resented by the Ruling Princes, than any scheme by which they might be placed in a position of subservience to, or at the mercy of, the Legislative Assembly of even a Central Government or of a Provincial Government. The Government of India, as your Lordships are aware, has treaties of alliance and otherwise with the Ruling Princes. I look forward to the day when these treaties with a very loyal patriotic and devoted body may be developed and strengthened to the mutual advantage of this country and of India.

The Marquis of Reading: My Lords, the subject which has been introduced by my noble friend is undoubtedly of the utmost importance, but I confess that I am a little perplexed as to the object

of raising it at this moment when we have the Harcourt Butler Committee dealing especially with some points affecting the Ruling Princes and the Simon Commission, at present in India, whose Report we shall all of course await with the greatest interest. One wonders at the suggestion that some scheme should be put forward by the Government at this moment. I presume it is only intended to be for private discussion and not in any way for public debate when we have not yet the Report of the Commission before us. I should have thought it quite unnecessary to intervene in this debate but for some observations which fall from my noble friend, I imagine that he had no intention whatever of reflecting in any way upon the Ruling Princes as a body.

Lord Olivier: Hear, hear,

The Marquis of Reading: Certain observations made by him gave his view of the good government in a great many states but on the other hand he did give indications which might disturb the Ruling Princes very much. My noble friend Lord Hardinge, who has just addressed your Lordships, has dealt with some aspects of the Ruling Princes' constitutional positions. I would take the opportunity of saying that during the whole of my experience in India, no more loyal body could be found than the Ruling Princes. Lord Hardinge spoke of the services they rendered in the War and their desire to help in every way. During my period of office such questions did not arise, but nevertheless there are numbers of considerations that constantly arise in which the Ruling Princes might make difficult objections, and I desire to state emphatically that I have never found the Princes, speaking of them as a body—there may be individual cases, of course—slow to recognise the necessity of making any concession or falling in with any view that might be put by the Government of India, founded upon the desire to protect or strengthen India or in any way to help Indian interests.

There are, of course, questions affecting their own states which are discussed with the Viceroy, and the Government of India. Your Lordships are aware that under the present Constitution the affairs of the Princes are dealt with by the Governor-General in Council—that is, by the Viceroy with the assistance of the Executive Council. There is no Minister for the Political Department, but their affairs are dealt with entirely by the Viceroy himself with the assistance of the Political Secretary. Those of your Lordships who may not be familiar with the constitutional position may need to be reminded that the Departments have their members of the Council who meet in what is the equivalent of a Cabinet with the Viceroy, but the political

affairs that relate to the Princes are dealt with entirely by the Viceroy himself—that is to say, he has charge of them, instead of their being in the charge of any particular member. It is on account of this procedure that some difficulties suggested themselves to the Princes in view of an extension of the reforms.

There is no doubt, as my noble friend truly said, that they are alarmed at the motion that they may find themselves dealing with the Governor-General in a Council composed of the Governor-General and Ministers responsible to the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State, or in other words to the Central Indian Legislature, and that they would thus find a change in the position that they occupy at present. Strictly speaking of course, this would not be so, because they would still be in relation with Governor-General in Council but at the same time the position of the Governor-General would have been very materially changed. As your Lordships are aware, the members of the Council are appointed by His Majesty and are responsible to the King and the British Parliament.

What changes, if any, will be made, and whether any recommendation is to be made by the Simon Commission which will affect indirectly the position of the Princes, nobody can tell, and I do not at the moment intend to speculate upon the Report which will in due course be presented. But I do desire to emphasise that the Princes themselves, so far as I am aware—and I think I understand their views in this matter—wish to maintain as closely as they can relations with the Viceroy as the representative of the King. They take their stand upon their treaties and they claim that they should have access, as they have always had, to the Viceroy, in order to put before him any facts that they desire. I can imagine very well that if a change were to be made in the appointment of the members of the Council, this would very materially affect the position of the Princes, and indeed no one gainsay that they would have to consult upon their affairs with the Governor-General and Ministers who would be responsible to the Legislative Assembly. In other words, they would then be subject to the Legislative Assembly, and at present they are not. It is true that under the Constitution there are restrictions upon the legislation that can be proposed in the Legislative Assembly and very definite limitation upon the matters that the Assembly can raise.

There is one other point which I think I must touch upon. I refer to the question of the relation of the Princes to the Paramount

Power, in other words to the Crown, which is, of course, of the utmost importance. I do not wish in any way to travel outside the scope of this question by dilating upon the difficulties that present themselves, and apparently, to some extent at any rate, may be agitating the minds of the Princes, but in the Despatch that I sent containing the answer to a letter of the Nizam of Hyderabad I did attempt, in conjunction with the Secretary of State, to define the exact position. I think that one special consideration must always be borne in mind. The Crown is the Paramount Power, and the Princes have their different degrees of sovereignty which vary among their numbers. When you proceed to those that have no internal sovereignty, you find many more restrictions and limitations but with regard to those 90 or 100 Princes that have undoubted internal sovereignty their position is that they administer their own affairs. They do not of course deal with foreign affairs. Those are dealt with by the Governor-General in Council, and they include all matters which affect the military position of India or even her position in relation to the air. Here there can be no question that the Paramount Power is supreme, and the relations that have been laid down and are well understood, and were the subject of very close search and study before the Despatch was made, are now pretty clearly defined.

There are, however, some questions which have never been settled and are now being discussed before the Committee over which Sir Harcourt Butler presides. Sir Harcourt Butler is specially qualified to preside over that Committee, in that he was at one time during his service in India a very able Political Secretary and has also been Governor of the United Provinces. The relations are very definite. We do not interfere with the internal administration of a State unless there is what is termed gross maladministration. I think it would be unwise to attempt to define more closely what is meant by that term. It is sufficient to enable the Governor-General in Council to intervene when there is a condition of affairs in the State under a ruling Prince which is one of maladministration, not merely in one particular instance, but of such a character that it can be described as gross. All these matters are, as it seems to me, very clearly understood at the present moment, but there are questions which have agitated the Princes, in relation, for example, to tariffs, which have been imposed in India and which have made certain difficulties.

I am not going to discuss them, however, because they are the subject of consideration, but I must draw attention to what Lord

Hardinge said with regard to the Princes and the rights that they have in their Chamber of Princes. To talk of them as a corporate body, in the sense in which he used the term is, I think, going a little further than is justified by the Constitution. The Chamber of Princes has the power, and indeed the duty, of discussing certain matters, but there are limits, and one must always remember that some of the most powerful and important Princes do not attend the Chamber of Princes. They make a practice of not attending, and consequently one can hardly say that you have the views of all the Princes in any resolution passed by the Chamber of Princes. Whatever the Princes may do, I feel sure that they will not desire to be placed under the Legislative Assembly. My impression is that they have never hesitated to make that clear, and anyone at all familiar with the subject will understand that. Indeed, it would abrogate the rights which they have by reason of the internal sovereignty which they now enjoy, quite apart from British India. Their relations to British India are simply those to which I have referred, and there is no intervention in the internal affairs of the States except when there is what is termed gross mal-administration. My view of the matter is that if the Government was in fact at this moment considering any scheme, I should imagine that they would not make these preliminary discussions or considerations public at the present moment. To do so would be a grievous mistake and I think a departure from constitutional practice, when you have the Commission of Sir John Simon actually in India at the present moment.

I feel a little anxiety aroused by the observations made by the noble Lord, who certainly did not commit himself to any specific reform but who seemed to indicate sympathy with the view that the internal sovereignty of the Princes must be placed in some way, by the British Government through the Government of India, upon a constitutional basis. That is a very grave departure to take, and it involves the changing of the sovereignty which the Princes at present enjoy. It may be right or wrong—I am not going to discuss it at the present moment—but I hope that it will not be thought, from anything which may be said in this debate, that there is a desire on the part of the Government, or at any rate of the Party to which I belong, to change the system of sovereignty under which the Ruling Prince rules. What we have always aimed at in India, as I have understood, and what was meant in the various discussions which took place before the Government of India Act was passed, was that gradually there should be a reform of the Indian States from within the States, and not in any way forced upon them by the

Government of India or the British Crown; that in due course of time, no doubt, as what we term wider ideas and broader views prevailed, there might be a greater desire for a more constitutional form of government within the ruling States.

What I do wish to emphasise is that I cannot myself conceive that any Government would seek to force that upon the sovereign States, and indeed it may be a question whether they would have right to do so under the treaties which exist between the Crown and the Princes, which gave the Princes their rights of internal sovereignty. My main purpose in intervening in this debate was to make it clear that the Party to which I belong have no idea of forcing in any way upon the States a different Constitution from the one which they at present enjoy. That, however, is a different thing from saying that there may not be discussions in the future between the Princes and the Government of India, as the constitutional movement develops in India, for the purpose of arriving at some changes, but those are matters which must be left to, and which, I think, must depend upon the consent of, the Princes themselves.

Certain steps have already been taken. It is very difficult indeed to find a State which is better administered than Mysore which is always regarded as a model. As Lord Hardinge said there are others—it would be invidious to single them out—but equally, for the sake of truth, it must be said that there are some, where it is very desirable that a more liberal form of government should be introduced, if it were possible. No one would suggest for a moment that all these States are excellently governed—there are exceptions—but even with regard to any question of intervention your Lordships may be aware that an elaborate system was devised by which a Prince, before any of his powers can be either taken from him or be reduced or modified in any way, or before any deposition can be resorted to, may be heard by a Commission on which there must be at least two Princes, a Judge of the High Court, and two other selected persons, so that you have a tribunal of five. That system already exists for the purpose of preventing what I will call drastic measures in relation to the affairs of any Prince, without giving him an opportunity of being heard before a Commission which was agreed with the Princes at the time when we were discussing the Reforms.

It is now a part of the Constitution, or at least a part of the agreement arrived at with the Princes. Even that is limited. It only applies when it is intended to take away or restrict in any way

some of the powers which a Prince enjoys. In all other matters it is of the essence that the Crown is the Paramount Power and the Ruling Princes with their internal sovereignty have that limitation placed upon them, that they are subject and must remain subject, to the Paramount Power, which is in itself the best means for the protection of the Princes both from aggression from the sea—if that were contemplated—and upon land. The security which the Princes enjoy, and have now for a very considerable time enjoyed is due to the fact that the Paramount Power takes charge and directs them. I think that it is very necessary that we should always remember that. That is naturally regarded as the key of the whole position, and it was largely in order to make that clear that the Despatch was written to which my noble friend has referred. In relation to the matter under debate at the present moment, I can only express the hope, which I fancy will be realised, that the Government will not be drawn into any premature disclosure of what it may do, given certain considerations which no one yet knows and assuming certain things to happen of which no one has at present the remotest idea.

Lord Lamington : My Lords, if the Princes of India can feel at all aggrieved by any of the remarks made by the noble Lord, who put down this Motion, they certainly ought to feel well satisfied with the terms in which they have been alluded to by the two noble Lords who have just spoken, both ex-Viceroy's of India, as to the attitude of the Princes, and as to the general excellency of their administration. The subject-matter of the question raised by the noble Lord, Lord Olivier, is very far-reaching, but there is one point which he is quite justified in raising, and that is in regard to the subordinate States in India. I understood the noble Marquis who has just sat down to say it was essential, in carrying out the reforms adumbrated, that any class of people in India who might think themselves adversely affected should be listened to.

I have given the noble Viscount [Lord Peel] private notice of a question which I am going to mention relating to the many hundreds of subsidiary states scattered throughout India. Of course, I am not going to refer to all of them. What I am concerned with are the feudatory States which exist in the Bombay Presidency, and which, when I had the privilege of being the Governor of Bombay, directly came under the control of the Government of Bombay. These subsidiary, or feudatory States, chiefly lie in the state of Kolapore. Rightly or wrongly, they think that of late they have suffered some degree of injustice at the hands of their Paramount

State. These feudatories, I may say, all have their *sanads*, or agreements, recognised by the Paramount Power, and they are very much afraid that in the readjustment of the various constitutional rights of the people of India they may be neglected. They are not allowed to appear before the Simon Commission—they have no *locus* there: and they were not able to be represented before the Committee presided over by Sir Harcourt Butler. I therefore wrote to the noble Viscount to ask whether their position is being considered by the Government of India. They feel that they may be harmed if their position is not now taken stock of, and they would be glad to think that no definite change will be made in regard to the Indian Princes generally and their relation to the Government of India without a recognition of these various agreements and guarantees which have been given by the Paramount Power to the feudatory states. It is a most complicated question; there are always differences of opinion between the Kolapore state and these feudatories, and they require very nice adjustment, and therefore I think I am quite entitled to ask whether, or how, these feudatories are to be given some chance of having their views attended to. Not for a moment do I say whether they are justified in thinking that they are being ill-treated, but I think it is quite reasonable for them to ask that their views should be ascertained before any decisions are come to as to the future government of India.

Viscount Peel: My Lords, the Questions which have been placed upon the Paper by the noble Lord, Lord Olivier, are very far-reaching, and touch very difficult and profound questions affecting the Government of India. The Motion of the noble Lord, however, would be fully justified, I think, if only by the fact that it has produced two such very important and very interesting statements as those we have had from two noble Lords who speak with very great authority and full knowledge of Indian problems, and especially on questions connected with the Ruling Princes. Under most of these questions raised by the noble Lord there is the problem of the relationship between the Paramount Power and the States and this problem is at present, as the noble Marquis has said under reference to the Committee presided over by Sir Harcourt Butler.

Perhaps I may remind the House of the terms of reference to that Committee. They are as follows:—

- “(1) To report upon the relationship between the Paramount Power and the States with particular reference to the rights and obligations arising from.

(a) Treaties, engagements, and *sanads*, and

(b) Usage, sufferance and other causes, and—”

this does not so directly bear on the point mentioned by the noble Lord—

- (2) To inquire into the financial and economic relations between British India and the States, and to make any recommendations that they may consider desirable or necessary for their more satisfactory adjustment.”

When this Committee reports, His Majesty's Government will have, so far as the States' side of the matter is concerned, the material upon which to proceed to whatever further consideration may be necessary of questions either as to the relations between the Paramount Power and the State or as to the relations between the States and British India. But until the Report of the Committee is received it is undesirable to enter into a discussion of such questions on merely speculative or hypothetical lines; and in that respect I think the noble Marquis was right in his divination of the attitude I should be obliged to take up.

The noble Lord's reference to future amendments of the Constitution of British India is at present equally speculative or hypothetical, and when he asks whether His Majesty's Government have in view any scheme for dealing with questions arising in regard to the Indian States, concurrently and consistently with any such amendments I can only say that they have not, and that any definite scheme would at this stage clearly be premature. Of course I do not wish to say that His Majesty's Government will not use their best endeavours to look ahead into the future and to examine into these very complex and difficult questions. But their solution can only be approached stage by stage, and with a full appreciation of the necessity for caution and deliberation.

What I have said hitherto must be understood as referring to questions coming under the head of relations either between the States and the Paramount Power or between the States and British India, but the noble Lord has devoted some portion of his remarks to questions which, though obviously connected with the problem which I have been discussing, must be recognised in the first place as coming in a different category—namely, that of constitutional or administrative arrangements within the States themselves. Unless this question had been raised I should have thought it undesirable, if not improper, for me to enter upon it now; but one is anxious to avoid any misunderstanding, and I cannot let the noble Lord's observations pass without some reference to them. I must

however, limit myself to some very general observations and I cannot, of course, enter upon any question of their particular or precise and actual application. I might remind your Lordships—it is familiar, of course, to the noble Lord opposite—that the term “Indian States” is of very wide application. There are 500 or 600 of them, varying to the greatest possible extent in size and importance. At one end of the scale is the great State of Hyderabad, with an area of over 82,000 square miles and a population of 12,500,000. At the other end, where we deal with what are more properly described as estates rather than states, we have small areas of less than a square mile with a hundred or two hundred inhabitants. It is obvious that very different consideration must apply to the States at these different ends of the scale. With that reservation perhaps I can now speak in rather more general terms.

First let me remind the House—though I do not say that my observation bears a very close application to what has been stated by the noble Lord opposite—of the well-known passage to which he has referred in the statement of the noble Marquis, Lord Reading. He read a portion of it, and I think I should also like to read it because it is a very important and, as the noble Marquis said, a very carefully considered statement. As he also said, it was written to His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad. The passage is as follows:—

“The right of the British Government to intervene in the internal affairs of Indian States is another instance of the consequences necessarily involved in the supremacy of the British Crown. The British Government have indeed shown again and again that they have no desire to exercise the right without grave reason. But the internal, no less than the external, security which the Ruling Princes enjoy is due ultimately to the protecting power of the British Government and where Imperial interests are concerned, or the general welfare of the people of a State is seriously and grievously affected by the action of its Government, it is with the Paramount Power that the ultimate responsibility for taking remedial action if necessary, must lie. The varying degrees of internal sovereignty which the Rulers enjoy are all subject to the due exercise by the Paramount Power of this responsibility”.

This is a general statement, of course, of the rights and duties of the Paramount Power. But, in regard to such questions as those of the introduction of changes in the machinery or methods of

government in the States, I must point out that, however important and far-reaching these questions are, they are primarily questions of internal administration which, as such, cannot, generally speaking, be regarded as coming very directly within the purview of the Paramount Power.

I do not think I can with very great advantage pursue this question much further at the present moment. But it is obvious that questions of internal administration must be present to the minds of all who endeavour, from the point of view either of the British Government or of the Indian Rulers themselves, to look ahead into the future of India as a whole or of the States individually. At a time when constitutional changes are under consideration in British India, it is inevitable that much attention should be directed, both in the Press and on the public platform, to the States. Conditions in the States vary greatly, and what might be appropriate and timely in one might well be inappropriate or premature in another. But I need hardly say that the Rulers of many of the States have already shown that they appreciate modern ideals of good administration and strive within the resources at their disposal to attain to them. The Viceroy, in his speech announcing the appointment of the Indian States Committee, took the opportunity of reminding the Princes that, in his view, the more their administration approximated to the standards of efficiency demanded by enlightened public opinion elsewhere, the easier it would be to find a just and permanent solution of the problem of the future relations between the States and British India. Many of the leading Princes themselves are, as I know, very much alive to the importance of this subject; and I know that some of them have of their own initiative taken up the question of reviewing their administration with a view to inaugurating, where they do not already exist, such measures as the promulgation of a definite code of law to be administered by a Judiciary independent of the Executive, and the settlement upon a reasonable basis of the purely personal expenditure of the Ruler as distinguished from the public charges of administration. The two noble Lords who have spoken have paid very just tributes to the loyalty and devotion of the Princes of India, and I should like very respectfully to associate myself with what has been said by those two noble Lords upon that subject.

There is only one question that was raised by the noble Lord, Lord Lamington, who has changed his place though not his point of view, as I understand, in the House. He was good enough to give me private notice of it, though perhaps he will excuse my saying

that the notice was received a very short time before this discussion and so I must answer him rather more briefly than I might otherwise have done. I am not sure that the Government, I am not in fact aware that the Government of India have received any recommendations from the feudatory nobles of the Indian States. I thought possibly the noble Lord was referring to the case of the guaranteed Thakurs in the Gwalior State. As regards that case, I may say, that the British Government at the beginning of the nineteenth century, in effecting a settlement in Central India, mediated and guaranteed the relations between the Rulers and the petty chieftains under them. In view of improvements gradually effected in the Gwalior administration there no longer existed the same justification for intervention between the Durbar and the Chiefs; and in 1921 the Government of India made new arrangements under which the Political Department of the Government of India withdrew from direct interference between the Durbar and the Thakurs, and fresh *sansads* in perpetuity were issued to the Chiefs in question by the Gwalior Durbar. It was, however, explicitly laid down that the pledges originally given by the British Government must remain inviolable. Representations from some of the feudatories in connection with this new arrangement came before me as Secretary of State for India in 1924, and questions raised by others are, I believe, at present before the Government of India.

Then, as regards the question whether the feudatories would have an opportunity to make representations during the discussion on reforms, if any feudatory is apprehensive as to how changes in British India may react upon his own position he could no doubt express his feelings to his Ruler. If the reference is to any grievance which a feudatory might have against his Ruler, it is open to the feudatory who may consider himself unjustly treated, as to other subjects of an Indian state, to seek redress from the Government of India. Perhaps the noble Lord will content himself with that rather brief answer to the question which he asked. As to the noble Lord opposite (Lord Olivier), though I do not charge him with wishing to air his knowledge on the subject—he has raised very important questions—I am sure he will agree that they are so speculative and depending upon such hypothetical considerations in the future that he will be satisfied if I have not given him a more definite answer than I have been able to do to-day.

Lord Lamington: I should like to ask the noble Viscount whether he will consider how these feudatory chiefs may make a representation.

Viscount Peel : Yes, certainly.

Lord Olivier : Winding up the debates my Lords, I shall have the satisfaction, as the noble Viscount expressed it, that my humble Motion has elicited very interesting and important speeches from Lord Hardinge and the noble Marquis, Lord Reading. I also can congratulate myself in having elicited from the noble Viscount [Viscount Peel] a very interesting and carefully considered statement upon some of the questions I raised, and I thank him for it. I think the debate has been of great interest, but there are some slight misunderstandings which I should like to clear away arising out of the speeches that have been made. In the first place the noble Lord, Lord Hardinge, seemed to think that it was relevant to my Question that he should set forth what we none of us for a moment disagree with—namely, the great value of the services and the great loyalty of the Princes, and the admirable character of many of them. We all agree with that, but that was not relevant to my Motion. My Motion was relevant to consideration of the question dealt with by the noble Marquis.

It is obvious that in any constitutional development we shall have to consider the position of the Rulers, who number something like six hundred. I ask : Are the Government not prepared with a scheme for dealing with the question ? That is to say, are they not prepared to set up a further body of Inquiry ? I do not ask them to consider a scheme immediately. I ask them to set up a tribunal or a Committee for dealing with the matter. The noble Marquis and the noble Viscount said that was premature. I cannot deny that the noble Viscount has given a very good official answer to me and I should not have expected any other answer; probably if I had been in his place I should not have made any other answer.

Viscount Peel : You would have been more careful than I have been.

Lord Olivier : I might have had to be more careful. I accept the noble Viscount's official answer and I shall not press for Paper if the House will allow me to withdraw my motion. The noble Lord, Lord Lamington, made one of my points in his reference to the Harcourt Butler Committee. That Committee does not in the slightest degree have within its terms of reference any thing which enables them to deal with the interests of the four hundred odd States. I ask, what means are the Government taking to deal with this question? With regard to the Committee reference which the noble Viscount was good enough to read to us, it is limited and does not deal with the constitutional questions which arise. I go further

and I say that the reference to the Simon Commission also does not deal with any of these questions. There is nothing in the reference to the Simon Commission that would enable us to imagine that any question of the Indian States was at all involved. I must perforce accept the view of the noble Viscount, who agrees with the noble Marquis, Lord Reading, that until the Simon Commission has reported you cannot go into those questions. That is not my own view of what is possible, but I have to accept the statement.

Finally, there seems to be some suggestions that I made criticisms of the Indian Princes. The noble Lord, Lord Hardinge, seems to think I had attacked them. I certainly did not attack them. I gave credit, I hope, to what I know of the admirable rule of many of them, though I said, incidentally, that some of them have not been good Rulers. My point was that, generally speaking, they are all absolute monarchs. The noble Marquis and the noble Viscount seemed to approve of absolute monarchy, but personally I do not. I do not think absolute monarchy is a good institution. That was the sole extent of my criticism of the Princes. I now beg leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

House adjourned at twentyfive minutes past five o'clock.

House of Commons

Monday 12th November, 1928.

ORAL ANSWERS.

INDIA.

Ruling Princes (Depositions and Abdications).

11. **Mr. Thurtle** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the number of cases in the last 10 years in which Indian ruling princes have been deposed at the instance of the paramount power or have abdicated.

Earl Winterton : During the period mentioned, one Ruler of an Indian State has been deposed—namely the Maharaja of Nabha. Four have abdicated—the Maharaja of Indore, the Rana of Bilaspur, the Nawab of Loharu and the Jam of Las Bela.

Mr. Beckett : Can the Noble Lord give any idea of the reasons which lead the Government to take action in these cases ?

Earl Winterton : I do not think that that arises out of the question ; the question refers to the number of rulers who had been deposed or abdicated.

Mr. Saklatvala : Does the Maharajah of Bharatpur fall within this category ?

Earl Winterton : No, Sir, he does not.

Domestic and Personal Servants.

12. **Mr. Thurtle** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that in certain states in Rajputana and Kathiawar a system of slavery in respect of domestic and personal servants prevails, and that such persons are transferred, exchanged, and sold like chattels ; and whether any representations have been made by the paramount power to the feudatories concerned regarding the continued existence of this system ?

Earl Winterton : I would refer the Hon. Member to the reply given to the Hon. Member for Bristol, East (Mr. W. Baker), who asked a similar question on 14th November last.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

INDIA.

Compulsory Labour.

Mr. Gardner asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether compulsory labour prevails in any of the Indian States subject to the paramountcy of His Majesty's Government ?

Earl Winterton : The information in the possession of my Noble Friend points to the existence of some kinds of compulsory labour. Since the conclusion at Geneva in 1926 of the Slavery Convention, one of the articles of which prescribes certain limitations on the resort to compulsory labour, the attention of the Darbars of Indian States has been called to these provisions, which have been accepted on behalf of British India, with a view to their endeavouring to work steadily towards the same standard.

Indian States Committee.

Mr. Gardner asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether any treaties or other obligations exist between His Majesty's Government as the paramount Power and any of the Indian States, providing for the protection of a feudatory by the British Government from the rebellion of his subjects against misrule or oppression ?

Earl Winterton : I hope that the Hon. Member will excuse me from making a statement on this subject at the present moment, when the relationship between the Paramount Power and the States is under investigation by the Indian States Committee.

Mr. Gardner asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the representatives of the peoples of the Indian States have been refused permission either to hear the arguments of the counsel for the Indian princes or to give evidence before the Committee ; and whether he will inform the House of the reasons for this course, in view of the fact that there are treaty obligations by which the Indian princes have agreed to secure the contentment of their peoples and to ensure justice in administration ?

Earl Winterton : The procedure to be adopted in regard to the taking and hearing of evidence is a matter for the Committee itself and my Noble Friend is not prepared to interfere with their discretion.

Mr. Rennie Smith asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Report of the Indian States inquiry will be sub-

mitted to the Government of India or to His Majesty's Government; whether the Report and the evidence given before the Committee will be published; and whether the recommendations of the Committee concerning the economic and financial relations between the Government of India and the States will be placed before the Indian legislature for its consideration and opinion?

Earl Winterton: The Report of the Committee will be submitted to the Secretary of State. I am not at present in a position to make any statement in regard to the other matters mentioned in this question.

Western India States Agency.

7. Mr. Saklatwala asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what is the location, area, and total population of territories placed under the direct administration of the Western India States Agency; are the people in these territories considered British subjects purely or do they owe allegiance to any other sovereign authority; what rights of representation do these people possess as British subjects; what voice have they in the matter of taxation and general administration conducted by British officials; and to whom are these British officials responsible for their policy and conduct of affairs?

Earl Winterton: The total area of the territories included in the Western India States Agency is about 35,000 square miles and the population about 3½ millions. The people of these territories are not considered British subjects, but owe allegiance to the Rulers of the various States, and no question arises therefore of their having rights of representation as British subjects. The British officials employed in the Agency are responsible, through the Agent to the Governor-General, to the Government of India. If the Hon. Member's question is intended to be limited to petty estates or other areas in which the functions of the officers of the Agency may for various reasons be more directly administrative, I regret that I have not the detailed information that would be required to answer the question.

Mr. Saklatwala: Will the Right Hon. Gentleman make it clear, if the British political agents are responsible to the Governor-General, the British Viceroy, what right the people in these Agencies have to approach the same officer with regard to their grievances or to mal-administration?

Earl Winterton: I think that I have answered the question on the Paper fairly fully in my original answer. It is impossible

within the compass of a Parliamentary answer to explain the divergent and varying conditions in this Agency.

Indian States.

Mr. Thurtle asked the Under-Secretary of State for India, if the Government is taking any steps to ascertain the condition of government in the Native States of India before committing this country to any fresh obligations regarding the future of these states?

Earl Winterton: Information on this subject is obtained in the ordinary course, through Political Officers.

Mr. Thurtle: Does the Noble Lord think that the present means of obtaining information are sufficient? Is he aware that citizens of these Native States have not any means of getting their grievances before the responsible authorities?

Earl Winterton: That really deals with an entirely different matter. As the Hon. Gentleman's colleague, the Hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil (Mr. Walhead), is not present to ask his question—I am not complaining of it, but only referring to it—I have not had the opportunity of explaining what is the exact position of these States vis-a-vis the Indian Government. I do not think that the particular point which the Hon. Gentleman asks arises out of this case.

Mr. Crawford: Can the Noble Lord give any further explanation of the position in this case?

Earl Winterton: I think the Hon. Gentleman is aware that I always endeavour to give all the information there is in answer to questions, but I rather deprecate attempting to answer questions on matters of high constitutional importance in reply to a supplementary question. The answer which I had prepared in reply to the Hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil's question which was not asked deals with the matter.

Mr. Rennie Smith (*for Mr. Wallhead*) asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the number of Indian States in which representative institutions for the enactment of laws exists: in which liberty of person and freedom of speech, meeting and association exist; and the number in which there is a fixed civil list, subject to independent audit, for the rulers and their families?

Earl Winterton: In the absence of fuller information than is available here, I regret that I cannot give the figures for which the Hon. Member asks.

Mr. Rennie Smith (*for Mr. Wallhead*) asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he will inform the House of the nature of the responsibility of the Paramount Power for the good government of the Indian States and the conditions of intervention by the Paramount Power in the internal administration of the States; and whether machinery exists in any of the States whereby grievances of the peoples of a State may be made known by them to the Paramount Power or whereby, in case of necessity, they may invoke intervention to obtain the redress of such grievances?

Earl Winterton: As regards the first part of the question I would refer the Hon. Member to the explanation of the rights and duties of the Paramount Power given in the letter from the Viceroy to His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad of the 27th March, 1926, of which a copy was included in the papers presented to Parliament at the time (Command Paper No. 2621 of 1926). As regards the second part, the Political Officers appointed to the various States or groups of States are responsible for keeping the Paramount Power supplied with whatever local information is necessary for the proper discharge of its functions.

Mr. Thurtle: Are we to understand from that answer that a citizen of one of these States has the right to approach the Political Officer with a grievance which he may have against the Ruler of that State?

Earl Winterton: It is really impossible, within the limits of an answer to a Parliamentary question, to explain exactly what the position is. It is a matter of the highest importance, as it affects the relations of the Crown with these States. If the Hon. Gentleman wants information on a specific point, he must put a question down. If he will read this letter from the late Viceroy to which I have referred, he will find the case stated there.

Indian States.

Lieut.-Commander Kenworthy asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is now able to state whether the evidence given before the Indian States inquiry will be laid before Parliament; and whether the Report will be published?

The Under-Secretary of State for India (Earl Winterton): No, Sir. My Noble Friend cannot pledge himself in regard to publication before he has seen either the Report or the evidence.

Lieut.-Commander Kenworthy: Surely the Noble Lord has not overlooked the responsibility of this House for such matters?

Is it suggested that we should not have the full information that is gathered by this important Committee?

Earl Winterton : No. The object of the Committee or inquiry is to advise my Noble Friend on such matters, and it is impossible, until the Report has been given to my Noble Friend, to answer the question put by the Hon. and gallant Gentleman, who will appreciate that, for example, there might be evidence given by some of Their Highnesses that they themselves ask might not be made public.

Colonel Wedgwood : But surely it is not to be supposed that the Report itself shall not be published, a Report affecting 80,000,000 people?

Earl Winterton : That is exactly what I said. My Noble Friend cannot pledge himself regarding publication before he has seen the Report.

Lieut.-Commander Kenworthy . But does not the Noble Lord think it is unfair to the parties to this inquiry not to publish the evidence? Is he not aware that charges are made against these rulers?

Earl Winterton : If the Hon. and gallant Gentleman is not satisfied, when the Report is received by my Noble Friend, of which notice will be given, with the decision then taken, he can address a question to me on that occasion.

Colonel Wedgwood : I am not concerned so much with the evidence, but is it not reasonable that the Report itself shall be published?

Earl Winterton : No. There have been a very large number of Committees' Reports to various authorities and to Ministers representing both Departments in this country and Departments overseas, where the Report and the evidence have both alike not been published.

Mr. Wellock asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if it is the intention of His Majesty's Government or the Government of India to grant the same facilities to the subjects in the Indian States as to their princes to express their views on the future relations of the Indian States with British India?

Earl Winterton : The question of the relations between British India and the Indian States is primarily a constitutional question and can only be discussed between the duly constituted Governments concerned. But I have no doubt that any States'

subjects who wish to express views on this matter will find means to make them known.

Colonel Wedgwood: Seeing that this Commission's Report affects far more than the British Government, is there not some means whereby the Commission should hear the views of the people who live in these States?

Earl Winterton: The Right Hon. and gallant Gentleman is mistaken. In the first place, this is not a Commission—if it was a Commission, it would be in an entirely different position—but a Committee. I have already said, in reply to a question asked by an Hon. Member opposite the other day, that the question of the procedure of the Committee is one for the Committee itself to consider, and the Committee has already decided not to hear the evidence of the representatives, or the so-called representatives, of the Indian States.

Colonel Wedgwood: Cannot the Government make representations to this Committee that the people themselves are those most interested in the Report of this Committee?

Earl Winterton: It is too long a question to go into in reply to a supplementary question, but I cannot accept the premise of the right Hon. and gallant Gentleman that these people have any right to make their case known to this Committee. In any case, the procedure, as the Right Hon. and gallant Gentleman, from his own administrative experience, must be well aware, is always a matter for the Chairman of the Committee.

Mr. Wellock: Have not these 70,000,000 people a right to make their position known?

Earl Winterton: They can make their position known by writing to the newspapers, by having political meetings, and in various other ways. That is a question quite distinct from whether or not they should be able to give evidence before this Committee.

Mr. Thurtle asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he is in a position to state when he expects to receive the Report of the Butler Commission dealing with the position of the India States?

Earl Winterton: No, Sir; I am not at present in a position to give any date.

Monday, 3rd December, 1923.

" ARMS "

Mr. Thurtle asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he is in a position to give the names of the Indian States in which laws similar to the Indian Arms Act have not been enacted, and also the names of the states in which the carrying of arms without licence is permitted to the states subjects ?

Earl Winterton : I regret that the detailed information desired by the Hon. Member is not available in this country.

Appendix B.

Press Propaganda.

BEFORE DEPARTURE.

States Subjects' Proposed Deputation to England.

Bombay September 4.

Dewan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao, C. I. E., gave an exclusive interview to a representative of "The Indian Daily Mail" on the position of the Indian States' subjects in relation to the Butler Enquiry Committee. At the outset he expressed his surprise at the statements made in the "Manchester Guardian" recently about the report of the Indian States Committee and said that in his opinion the English Journal was not right in saying that the report would be submitted to Lord Birkenhead without its publication in India and its discussion in this country. At any rate, he thought the financial adjustments claimed by the Indian princes would affect the Indian revenues, and if the Butler Committee made any recommendations either partially or wholly meeting the demands of the Indian princes the whole subject must be discussed in the Indian legislature before any decision could be arrived at by the Government. It was unthinkable, he added, that either Parliament or the Secretary of State could dispose of a matter of this kind without a full public discussion in India. The Indian princes were not the only persons that would be affected by the report as suggested by the "Manchester Guardian."

An Extraordinary Position.

The Dewan Bahadur then adverted to the sittings of the Butler Committee "in camera" and complained that it had so far deprived both the people of British India and the Indian States of knowing

what exactly was the position of the Indian princes in regard to matters now under enquiry. On the strength of the opinion of their lawyers the Indian princes maintained that the Government of India had no legal powers to perform the various functions which it had been in practice performing so far as the States were concerned. This, the Dewan Bahadur thought was a most extraordinary position and it was not known whether the Government of India were formally appearing before the Butler Committee to contest this position or whether they were preparing their case in answer to this contention of the princes. He emphasised that a matter such as this should not be decided on the ex-parte statements of Sir Leslie Scott and his colleagues made in private before the Butler Committee.

Grievances of the Princes.

On the subject of the grievances of the Princes in regard to constitutional and political practice, and the violation of treaty rights, Dewan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao stated that the people of the States would like to point out that under these very treaties and the usage that has been established all these years, the princes had expressly given undertakings to promote the welfare and happiness of their subjects in the States. He invited the attention of the Press to a pamphlet prepared on the "treaties and political practice" by Professor Abhyankar, General Secretary of the Indian States Peoples' Conference, which summarises the clauses in the treaties and political practice established since the treaties were concluded, which clearly indicated the position established under these treaties. As an example the Dewan Bahadur pointed out that in the treaties entered into between the Government and the Punjab States, like Patiala, Nabha, Kapurthala and Jind, there was an express undertaking given by the then rulers to the Government that they would exert themselves by every possible means in promoting the welfare and happiness of their subjects and redressing the grievances of the oppressed and the injured in the proper way and that the sanads in several cases were confirmed on the expressed undertaking of good Government in the states. In these circumstances the people of the states felt that the British Government had failed in the discharge of their duty by not making any enquiries as to whether these expressed obligations for the promotion of the welfare and happiness of their subjects had been adequately discharged by the princes. The subjects wished to place these and other facts before the Butler Committee if an opportunity was given to them.

Theory of Direct Relations.

Dewan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao also alluded to Sir Leslie Scott's theory of direct relations with the Crown, and stated that both Pundit Motilal Nehru and his colleagues and Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer had demolished the extraordinary theories of Sir Leslie. As pointed out by the Nehru Committee the expression "the Crown" really meant in constitutional law the Government-in-Parliament, which really meant the British democracy, and in view of this fact it was a matter of great surprise that the Indian princes should have such tremendous faith in the British democracy which, in the existing conditions, consisted mostly of labour men and their wives, and it was still more surprising that their pacific faith in the British democracy should be such as to entirely ignore and distrust a British Indian democracy which, after all, were their kith and kin. He said it was a wonder to him how a man like His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner had failed to see the implications of Sir Leslie Scott's proposals, and he sincerely trusted that the Indian princes would at least now realise where they are being led to.

Fiscal Policy of India.

The "Manchester Guardian" made a reference to the fiscal policy of India by the Government of India and that the princes were urging that their interests were in many ways injured by protection. The Dewan Bahadur said this gave away the Princes' case and it was clear that there were other persons who were interested in free trade behind the princes who were using them for this purpose. While Great Britain was slowly drifting to a policy of protection and taking very rigorous steps for the safeguarding of their own industries, this protest against the policy of the Government of India in the name of the Indian princes would deceive nobody.

Federation of British India.

The last subject Dewan Bahadur Rao referred to was the question of the federation of British India with the Indian States. Since the Conference of Indian States' peoples in Bombay last December the whole subject of federal machinery had received very adequate attention both here and in Great Britain, but when the Maharaja of Patiala spoke of a federation in the paper which he read before the East India Association it was doubtful, the Dewan Bahadur said, whether the Maharaja was really referring to the

federal constitution for the whole of India. It was clear that there were many undoubted difficulties in bringing about a federal constitution, but it was equally clear that, whenever that might happen, temporary expedients for the discussion of matters of common interest between the states and British India would have to be devised.

A Serious Handicap.

Questioned as regards the deputation of representatives of the Indian States subjects to England, Dewan Bahadur Ramchandra Rao stated that the people of the states were handicapped in several ways in the preparation of their case, as they had neither the resources nor the materials available to the Princes. There was a very keen desire on the part of the people of the states to send a deputation to England and it was likely to be materialised very soon. Much would however, depend upon the attitude of the Butler Committee towards the deputation. He said that steps were being taken to ascertain the exact position. Dewan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao is leaving to-night for Simla.

Indian State Subjects.

THEIR RIGHTS.

Disabilities of state subjects.

Simla Sept. 13.

Dewan Bahadur M. Ramchandra Rao, President, All India States People's Conference, Professor Abhayankar, General Secretary of the Conference and Mr. Manilal Kothari who have been here during the last week in connection with the problems relating to Indian States, are leaving Simla to-morrow. Before their departure from Simla, they have issued the following statement to the Press:—

Since the Conferences of Indian State Peoples were held in Bombay and Madras in December last the problems of States, both in regard to their internal administration and their place in the future policy of India have received considerable attention from various political organisations and eminent leaders throughout the country, and on behalf of the people of Indian States, we feel bound to express our grateful thanks to all of them and our appreciation of the labours of the Nehru Committee and the All Parties Conference.

Position of Indian States.

The chapter in the report on the Indian States is a masterly exposition of the exact position of the Indian States in their relations to the possible constitutional developments in India. The theory of direct relations of States with the British Crown put forward by some of the prominent chiefs with the advice of their legal adviser Sir Leslie Scott and the hypocrisy and cant underlying the claim that whatever may be the political developments in British India, the British Government will have to remain in India with the necessary military and naval forces to enable it to discharge its obligations to the Indian States, have been thoroughly exposed by the Nehru Committee. The general principles contained in the report, so far as the relations of the States with the future Government of India are concerned, have been affirmed at the All Parties Conference in the resolution moved by Mr. Manilal Kothari and supported by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and other leaders and have, we believe, met with general approval of the people of Indian States.

We fully recognise the limitations and difficulties of the Nehru Committee in dealing with the fundamental problems, relating to the internal administration of the States. We think that these fundamental problems require most serious and earnest consideration of all those interested in the welfare, both of the princes and the peoples of the Indian States.

No Rule of Law.

There is no rule of law based on an approved constitution in most of the Indian States and people are labouring under all sorts of disabilities and hardships under the present autocratic sway of their rulers in view of the present deplorable state of things, it must be said that most of the rulers have failed in their obligations to their people and that the Paramount Power has also failed to discharge its obligations which entail on it, the specific duty of looking after the welfare of the people of the States. The people are sorely disappointed and discontented and if nothing is done either by the princes or by the Paramount Power, there is no knowing where the present ever-increasing discontent will lead to.

We gratefully appreciate the sound advice and sincere exhortations which His Excellency Lord Irwin has been giving to the rulers whenever there was an occasion for it but we regret to find there are no signs whatsoever of the advice being given effect to by the princes concerned. Things are drifting as usual.

To add to this, the Indian State Enquiry Committee has deliberately declined to hear the case of the people in relation to and along with the cases of princes as put forward by Sir Leslie in England. We maintain that the princes have undertaken definite obligations, that they will omit no exertion to promote the welfare and happiness of their people and even apart from the express treaty obligations, princes are bound to look after the welfare of their subjects and the Paramount Power has failed so far properly to discharge their obligations to the people as stated above.

Grievances of Princes

We also feel that if the Butler Committee can go into the grievances of Indian princes and that the Government of India have extended their jurisdiction over them in an arbitrary manner, the people of the States are equally entitled to ask the committee to enquire into the question as to how far the princes have fulfilled their obligations to their own people and also as to whether the Paramount Power has not failed in its duty in seeing that these obligations have been carried out by the princes. If the committee makes its report without giving an opportunity to the people of the States to urge their views on these matters the report will be of no value whatever and will be repudiated by the people of the States. This was pointed out in a resolution passed at Bombay in December last at the Indian States People's Conference. The people of States are equally entitled to be heard apart from the princes in regard to the financial adjustments between the States and British India.

We are also of opinion that the present policy of the Paramount Power in waiting till misrule becomes so intolerable as to require their intervention is altogether unsuited to the existing conditions and that the only remedy is the development of representative institutions in the State for criticism of the day to day administration so far as to prevent this misrule of princes. The conferences held in Bombay and Madras put forward the demands of the people of the States for the establishment of responsible Government in the States, for replacing the present autocratic rule of the princes. We venture to say that real peace and welfare of princes lies in their honourably and earnestly co-operating with the people in establishing representative institutions and full responsible Government in the States and not in altogether ignoring them.

Hindustan Times (15 Sept. 28)

Prof. Abhyankar on future of States.

As Prof. G. R. Abhyankar is proceeding to England as a member of the Deputation on behalf of the Indian States' people he gave an interview to the Press on the eve of his departure. Prof. Abhyankar had gone to Simla with Dewan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao. Asked as to what they did in Simla, Prof. Abhyankar said,—

“Our object was to discuss the present policy of the Government of India towards the Indian States and to gauge opinion about the Butler Committee. The present policy of the Political Department is not to interfere in the internal affairs of the States till misrule becomes long, gross and continuous. This causes intolerable suffering to the subjects of the Indian States. The Paramount Power has taken away the common law rights of the people to depose or to dethrone a Prince when he rebels against the laws of the State or the rights of the people. The Paramount Power is ultimately responsible to secure the welfare of the people and to take remedial measures. It is not therefore fair that the Paramount Power should sit on the fence and allow misrule to reach the maximum standard of intolerance and unbearableness. Misrule should be nipped in the bud and prompt measures must be taken in good times before a ruler goes headlong on the path of misgovernment.

Do you mean that the Paramount Power should interfere always? Are you not aware that this interference is resented and the actions of Government are often criticised and motives are attributed to Government, which have no foundation?

Control of Paramount Power or People

Answer:—As regards your question about interference I am firmly of opinion that so long as the Princes want to rule in an autocratic manner there must be interference in their internal affairs. If the Princes introduce responsible Governments in their States then there would be no occasion for interference, and Government should not interfere. But so long as autocratic rule prevails there is no opportunity of redress for the people. The Indian Princes cannot hope to be independent of any control. They must submit either to the control of the Paramount Power and their interference or to the control of a constitution or in other words to the control of the people. Unbridled autocracy would not any longer be allowed to have its way.

As regards to your second question of public criticism the Political Department is to thank itself for this. They do not publish the his-

tory of the causes which lead to interference or to voluntary or involuntary abdications. They only publish the result. The public have absolutely no information to judge the propriety or otherwise of this result and Government expose their conduct by their mysterious procedure and secrecy to all sorts of motives. If however they supply the antecedent history it would leave no room for improper criticism and further it shall have a moral value in deterring their Princes from similar predicaments.

Question:—Princes have been claiming treaty rights and are clamouring that their treaty rights had been violated. It is necessary to distinguish the two aspects of the Indian States' problem. One is Political and the other fiscal or economical. As regards political interference it must be borne in mind that many States have express treaty obligations to secure contentment and happiness of the people, good administration of justice and good Government. Is it not the duty of the Paramount Power to enforce these treaty obligations? The Indian States Conference have issued a pamphlet on Treaty obligations about all the 108 members of the Chamber of Princes. The most important and shining lights of the Chamber of Princes are under treaty obligations to secure the contentment of their people. What justification have they to complain that there has been any interference if treaty obligations are not fulfilled. Similarly whenever there are disputes about succession, whenever there is minority, whenever there is financial embarrassment or gross misrule, Government interferes to secure good Government and this also is perfectly legitimate. As regard fiscal matters and matters of joint concern the British Government to secure the uniformity of practice and to safeguard their own interests have forced policies upon the Indian States which have caused serious prejudice to the States and have entailed indirect taxation on the States. This interference is unjustified. Justice and equity demand that the Government should try to make amends to the States for the loss caused to them. So far as this question is concerned there is complete unanimity between the Rulers and the ruled. The people of the Indian States however, maintain that if any relief is given on this score there should be guarantees given to the people that it will be appropriated for the public utility departments in the States. This relief should not go to swell the private expenditure of the Rulers.

Asked as to opinion about the Nehru Committee and the agitation which is being carried on in the Southern States against this report he said.

Plea for Equitable Relief

“As regards the Nehru Committee I have expressed my opinion already publicly. As regards the constitutional position of the States with the Government of India the report has taken the correct attitude, it has knocked down the theory of direct relations so mischievously and sedulously propagated. The report maintains that there would be no change in the relations with the States even under Swaraj Government. This does not however, go far enough so far as the people of the States are concerned. The authors of the Swaraj constitution could have recommended the proclamation of 1917, to the Indian Rulers. They could have given them friendly advice to surrender autocracy and rule as constitutional monarchs. They have hesitated to speak frankly about this. Unless the Indian States' people have the same political rights as those of the British Indian people no federal form of Government can function in India. The authors of the report have not made this position quite clear. Furthermore we expect the Commonwealth Government to give equitable relief to the people of Indian States and not to exploit advantages which have been acquired by superior diplomacy and dominant position. There is reason to apprehend that the people of the Indian States may not get fair treatment. We are quite surprised that a British Indian Statesman such as Sir Shivaswami Iyer should deny the claim of the Indian States' people for contribution in custom, salt and other monopolies and matters of common interest. So judicious a writer as Sir Shivswami Iyer, we are amazed to find, takes his stand upon agreements concluded with the States. We put it to him whether there was freedom of action on the part of the States when they were concluded? Abolition of inter-state barriers, abolition of the manufacture of salt and opium, mints, jurisdiction over Railways and such other items of joint concern which formed part of the agreement were forced upon the States by diplomatic pressure. If the Commonwealth insists on sitting tight on these agreements of what avail is that Commonwealth to us? It may mean only a change in the colour of the bureaucracy instead of being white it may be brown. The Indian States' people claim equal political rights so far as fiscal and economic matters are concerned and we want further assurance of the same. Mere assurances in respect of treaties is nothing. So long as the Commonwealth Government of the future is the King's Government treaties do remain solemnly intact and binding 'ipso facto.' The assurance which the people want is that the undue advantage taken of the States by the bureaucratic Government would be abandoned and equal political

rights would be vouchsafed. Similarly also responsible Government under the aegis of the rulers should be promised to the people of the States. The Nehru Committee has failed to do this and there is just complaint about its omission. We however acknowledge gratefully what is conceded. We have to complain for what is omitted."

Q.—What about the speech of the Maharaja of Bikaner?

A.—I am not surprised with the speech as he had delivered a similar oration some four months before. The Maharaja's political ideal is that of benevolent despotism and not that of constitutional monarchy. With all his overflowing loyalty ostentatiously paraded he has not stated in an unequivocal manner his acceptance of the gracious proclamation of His Majesty of 1917. Even in the fifteen column speech he does not say one word that he is willing to confer the blessings of responsible Government upon his people. We fail to see how rule of law can be successfully established without Parliamentary Government. The Maharaja has published a review of his achievement during 30 years rule and how he has increased the revenue of his State during these years. He has however studiously omitted to give the expenditure of State income during 30 years. With all the admiration of His Highness for Mr. Gokhale 13 years after his death and 25 years after he earnestly appealed to the alien Government for free and compulsory primary education the necessity of this elementary reform dawns upon this enlightened Maharaja to-day after 30 years of wise administration? Is this sincerity or is this incapacity to rule? Is there any Press worth the name in Bikaner? Political memories may no doubt be very short. The people no doubt have very strong memories of injustice done to them. We do remember how a great patriot Sjt. Jammalal Bajaj was summarily deported from Bikaner, placed into the Railway train and bodily expelled from the State territory. Is there any liberty of speech and freedom of discussion in Bikaner? Is there any Press worth the name in Bikaner? Is there equality in the eyes of law in Bikaner? Did the Maharaja make any decent effort to protest against the conduct of his esteemed friend the Maharaja of Alwar when martial law was proclaimed at Nemuchana and innocent people were done to death? Is there any real and substantial control of the people over the budget of Bikaner? Is the Executive in Bikaner responsible to the people? Is the Maharaja willing to submit his budget to any independent audit? So long as the Maharaja is not prepared to do any of these things his pompous oration is sheer camouflage. One simple question we put to the Maharaja. What political rights he is prepared to give to his subject? Is he

willing to declare responsible Government as his aim? No one need be taken in by what the Maharaja says about the fiscal affairs. But even in this the Maharaja does not say that he will give a guarantee to the people that he will utilise this relief for the benefit of the people. The Maharaja's exhibition of loyalty is simply ridiculous. Every citizen under this British Empire and even the citizens of the future Commonwealth will be bound to be loyal to the King's Government. Is there any special merit in this? Can the Maharaja afford to live even for a minute without being loyal? The threat of the Maharaja to the British Indian people is very harmful. That a responsible ruler like him should administer it is still more discreditable. We can state one simple fact, the British Indian people have to fight against 3 or 4 lacs of aliens. The addition of 700 more to this rank would not make such an unequal difference in this fight. We can assure the Maharaja of the one fact that the seven crores of the Indian States people are permanently wedded to their brethren in British India. As they are sons of the same mother land they have attachment for one another. The Maharaja's pronouncement that he will fight against his brethren British India out of his loyalty to the throne is indeed a sentiment which will convey home the sincerity of his sympathy with the aspirations in British India which is repeated 'ad nauseam' by the Maharaja and his brother Princes. No man therefore will attach much value to the fulminations of the Maharaja of Bikaner.

Q.—Is the Butler Committee going to give you a hearing?

A.—We see no reason why it should not. We are entitled to a hearing which came within the terms of reference. Even though the Committee declines to give us a hearing we shall place the case of the people of the Indian States before the British public and try to counteract the effect produced by the agitation which the Indian Princes have been carrying on latterly in England.

“ At Home ” to Prof. G. R. Abhyankar

BOMBAY, Wednesday.

Prof. G. R. Abhyankar of Sangli, Secretary of the “ All-India State Subjects' Conference ” was given an “ At Home,” under the auspices of the Hyderabad Political Conference at the Servants of India Society's Home, Sandhurst Road, Bombay, on Tuesday evening, on the eve of his departure for England to meet the Butler Committee on behalf of the Indian States subjects. Prof. Abhyankar

kar is one of the best informed persons on Indian States and their administration and he is well equipped to place before the Committee the case of the State subjects. He described his mission as one of presenting to the Butler Committee and the British public the other side of the picture of the Indian States which had become imperative in the face of the strong propaganda carried on by the Princes to secure their autocratic powers. Incidentally, he touched on the claims put forth by some Indian Princes and characterised them as fantastic and declared that the Indian Princes in their own interest should come into line with British India in constitutional and political advancements. The Professor said that even in the future Commonwealth, of India, under the Swaraj regime, the subjects of Indian States must be placed on equal political and civic status with their British Indian compatriots and the Indian Princes must give constitutional and democratic Government to their subjects.

Dewan Bahadur M. Ramchandra Rao, President, All India States People's Conference, left to-day for England by the P. and O. Mail Steamer "Kaiser-i-Hind." A representative of the press interviewed him before his departure. Asked as to the object of the deputation which he was leading, Mr. Ramachandra Rao said that their main object was to undertake a survey of the situation in England as it has developed on account of the intensive propaganda carried on by the Princes during the last 18 months. Some of our friends in England who wish to understand the problems of the Indian States have suggested that a small delegation for the purpose should go there even if the Butler Enquiry Committee did not afford the necessary facilities to placing the case of the people of the States before them.

"If the necessary facilities are afforded we shall, submit a memorandum explaining the present position of the people of the States and lead evidence in support of it. Apart from this many unfounded allegations have been made in the British Press from time to time in regard to the movement represented by our delegation. As an instance I may mention that Dr. Rushbrook Williams has stated in a recent communication in the "Nation and Athenaeum" that "he did not know what claim the so-called State Subjects' Conference has to speak for the subjects of the States," and that his information was that the Conference was composed of British Indians, Lawyers and Journalists who conceive that the existence of the Indian States is an obstacle to the realisation of the National ambitions in British India." The good doctor has apparently no hesitation whatever to make in the interest of his employer's state-

ments which are so obviously inaccurate. He evidently thinks that he and his master are better exponents of the rights and privileges of the people of the States than a Conference at which the people of nearly 100 States were represented by delegates. I do not know of a single responsible British Indian politician who holds the view or who has firm expression to the view that Indian States are an obstacle to the National Ambitions of British India. The Nehru Report is a sufficient refutation of the scandalous charge. On the other hand it has been plain to all those who can see that the Indian States are being used to suggest the insurmountable barriers against the evolution of India as a whole as a single world state. The political aims and ideals of the people of the States and of British India have been seriously misrepresented in the British Press for some time now. Wherever possible the Delegation will endeavour to dispel these misrepresentations in the Press and elsewhere. The Deputation is fully aware of the extent to which Press propaganda has been undertaken on behalf of the Princes and the difficulty of combating these activities. Our Committee is arranging for the next session of the Conference in February next in Delhi. In view of the Butler Enquiry Committee's report, the session will be a most important and momentous one and we feel a study of the situation both in England and in India, will be of help to the Conference in coming to well-considered decisions. Mr. Rao said that the Committee anxiously considered the question of the Deputation and came to the conclusion that even if no tangible results are achieved the Deputation will be useful in the directions above indicated.

Public Opinion in the States.

Mr. Ramchandra Rao expressed great satisfaction that the volume of public opinion in the States is rapidly increasing day by day. After all he said that the solutions of the many problems of internal reforms in the States and the introduction of responsible Government in the States depends on the strength of the public opinion in each State. He was glad to find that Baroda is holding a state congress. Travancore and Mysore are holding similar congresses and I suggest that the Public men in each important State should convene conferences as early as convenient and discuss the problems relating to the States both in their internal and external aspects as far as possible before the All-India States People's Conference meets at Delhi in Feb. next. I also suggest that all leading men in the States should strengthen the central organisation in

Bombay in every possible way, and make the next conference as representative as possible. The problem of the Indian States has now become a live issue in India and British Indian Politics and has now reached a definite stage in the public discussions of the day. This is all to the good.

Finally he said that the Nehru Committee report relating to the Indian States is not the last word on the subject. It has been attacked from both sides. The people of the South Indian States think that the Committee did not go far enough in not recommending Responsible Government in the States. On the other hand the Indian Princes, complain that the Committee's proposals have done them serious injustice. A reconciliation of these conflicting views must be brought about, and I suggest that a Conference between the Rulers of the Indian States, and their people's and British Indian leaders must be arranged without any avoidable delay. His Highness the Maharajah of Bikaner's speech holds out some hope that such a conference may not be a fiasco.

Mr. Ramchandra Rao also desired to call attention to two or three important statements made by His Highness the Maharajah of Bikaner in the notable speech, that he made a few days ago. One is that the Princes are prepared to make all reasonable sacrifices for the good of India as a whole, provided the integrity of the States is maintained. That is exactly what the Nehru Committee intended to do and their proposals were not meant to be anything less. The second statement is that at this critical juncture, it will be a great misfortune if British India, and the Indian States are divided and he holds out the hand of good fellowship, and co-operation in the evolution of a United India, a sentiment which every responsible man in British India and the States will reciprocate. The Maharajah asks that judgment should be suspended till the final schemes of the Princes are published. I earnestly suggest that our leaders in British India should take very early steps to bring about a Conference between the Maharajah of Bikaner and other Princes and other representatives for the discussion of the scheme and the Nehru proposals and all causes of misunderstanding can be removed. I fully support the proposals made by Mr. R. H. Gandhi that the All-India Congress Committee would request the All-Parties Committee at Calcutta to arrange for such a Conference. I sincerely hope that the proposal will be accepted and Pandit Motilal Nehru, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya will do their best to bring about this Conference.

In answer to a question as to when he was returning to India Mr. Rao said that he expected to be back by the middle of December next.

Indian Daily Mail 10-Oct. 28.

Indian Princes and Peoples

DEPUTATION TO THE BUTLER COMMITTEE.

INTERVIEW WITH LEADER.

RULERS' OBLIGATIONS.

Manchester Guardian. (23rd-10-28).

A deputation representing peoples of Indian States has just arrived in London. Its object is to attempt to place before the Butler Committee, which is now hearing the case of the Indian Princes, the point of view of the peoples of the States. It has been reported in India that the Committee has already refused to allow the deputation to attend the sittings. This is said to have caused widespread resentment. Leader of the deputation—the other members are Prof. Abhyankar and Mr. P. L. Chudgar—explained to the *Manchester Guardian* representative to-day that although they had been informed that the terms of reference of the Committee do not permit of the peoples being heard, the matter was not finally settled. It is hoped that when the Committee meets on Thursday, permission will be given.

M. Ramchandrarao explained that the deputation was appointed by the Indian States peoples' Conference which met in Bombay last December, at which seventy-eight of the more important States were represented by 5 or 6 hundred delegates. He pointed out that some of the leading States such as Mysore, Hyderabad, Travancore and (he thought) Baroda were not supporting the representations made by the Princes to the Committee. It was certainly untrue, as the Maharaja of Patiala had stated that the people of the States were contented and had no grievances, and that they had enemies in British India. No one in British India had taken up an attitude of hostility to the States or the Princes.

The Personal Rule

What they desired, and what the peoples of the States wished to see was that the system of administration in the States was

brought up to the standard made necessary by the constitutional developments which were taking place in British India. "We contend" said Mr. Ramchandrarao, "that the Princes have definite obligations for the good government of their States. While some of the States are well governed, in the large majority rulers rely on the old system of personal rule.

"At the Bombay Conference resolutions were adopted in favour of the establishment of representative institutions on an elective basis both for self-government, and for the purposes of legislation, taxation, and control of general administration. The budgets of the States should be submitted to popular assemblies, and their revenues separated from the personal expenditure of the Princes, whose civil list should be submitted to the vote of popular assembly. There should also be an independent judiciary in each of the independent States.

"In most of the States there is no civil list limiting the personal expenditure of the Princes, and in many of them no representative assembly of the type that exists in British India. The people also complain that in several of the States the elementary rights of citizenship, such as the right of association and meeting, free speech and a free press and security of person have not been conceded to the people.

"The result is that the people of the States are entirely dependent on the whim and caprice of the ruler for the time being, and they want to see the development of machinery by which the inhabitants should be definitely associated with the Government of the States."

Relations with British India

"On the wider question of the relations of the Paramount Power with the States there is no desire on the part of British Indian politicians, or the peoples of the States to interfere with the integrity of the States. The fact that the inquiry has been held in camera has caused much resentment in India, and we are at a disadvantage in not knowing exactly what the grievances of the Princes are.

"We contend, however, that the people of the States are equally interested with the Princes in any suggested changes in these relations. So far as the financial adjustments claimed by the Princes are known to us I do not see any conflict of interest between

the peoples and their rulers, and any equitable arrangement made to remove existing grievances will have the support of the people of the States.

"I gather from the press that the attempt to evolve a scheme for bringing the States into constitutional relations with British India has been given up, and that the Princes are confining themselves to a general statement of their difficulties. At the Bombay Conference it was agreed that for the speedy attainment of Home Rule for India as a whole the States should be brought into constitutional relations with British India, and that the people should be assigned a definite place and an effective voice in all matters of common concern in any new constitution devised for the whole of India.

"We recognise the difficulty of fitting the States into a common constitution, but there is no doubt that there is a general desire both in the States and British India that this should be done. The only way the whole problem can be solved is by the Princes and the people of the States, the leaders of British India, and the Government of India meeting to-gether at a conference with a view to evolving a constitution for the whole of India

"The problems of internal reform in the government of the States are being insistently pressed in the conferences of the subjects of each State and also in the all India conference in which the separate movements are linked up. I trust that the Princes will realise the significance of these conferences, and anticipate events by making a declaration of their policy on the whole question of the future of the States. Several of the Princes are acquainted with the general movement of world politics, and are cognisant of the reaction of the world affairs in India. They have taken part in the financial, economic, and political reconstruction of many countries as members of the League of Nations.

"They cannot refuse to co-operate in the political reconstruction of their own mother land. They have surveyed the political conditions of their country as a whole and are realising, I trust, that the monarchical order has to undergo changes to make it suitable to the conditions of the present day. They cannot expect it to continue in their own States on the old basis. I sincerely trust that they will have sufficient statemanship to initiate such changes in the government of their States as to give full play to the democratic aspirations of their people."

Princes or People ?

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PROBLEM OF THE INDIAN STATES.

DESPOTISMS.

Rights and Obligations Under Treaties.

"We have come to England," said Professor Abhyankar, of the deputation from the Indian States peoples, to a DAILY HERALD representative yesterday, "because we feel that the case of the peoples of the Indian States ought to be heard during the inquiry which is now in progress.

"We feel that the future of those States and their relation to the rest of India is not a question which can or should be settled with the Princes alone, as if it concerned them only and not their 72,000,000 subjects.

"It is being suggested that the Butler Committee cannot consider questions of the internal administration of the states. But that is surely absurd. For one of its chief tasks is to consider the treaties which now regulate the relations of the Princes with the Paramount Powers.

"And those treaties in many cases lay definite obligations on the Princes to govern their States properly.

"In the case of Patiala, for example, there is a clause in the 'sanad' of 1860 which requires the Maharaja to

'exert himself by every possible means in promoting the welfare of his people and the happiness of his subjects and redressing the grievances of the oppressed and injured in the proper way.'

"Now if the Princes claim the rights guaranteed them by treaties, they can only do so if they carry out the obligations laid on them.

Reactionary States.

"And surely one of the tasks of the Committee must be to inquire whether or not those obligations have been fulfilled.

"Our case is that in most cases they have not been fulfilled that the Governments of the Indian States, with a few honourable

exceptions, are reactionary in political matters and hopelessly backward in social matters.

"With three or four exceptions they are absolute despotisms. There is no kind of constitution, no representative system. The Prince has absolute control of administration and of legislation; and the states revenues are his own private property.

"Such a state of things in the twentieth century is intolerable, and to increase the independence of the Princes would be to make it worse. In the past the peoples of the States have had one safeguard against oppression—the right which the Government of India claimed, and often used, to intervene in cases of gross misgovernment.

"If that safeguard is taken away without any obligation being laid on the Princes to establish constitutional governments and to guarantee their subjects the elementary rights of citizenship, the British Government in the twentieth century will be deliberately placing 72,000,000 people under the rule of uncontrolled despotisms."

In connexion with the Indian States inquiry a delegation from an organization known as the Indian States People's Conference has come to this country. The secretary is Professor G. R. Abhyankar of the Law College, Poona, a subject of the Sangli State, and he is accompanied by Mr. Papatlal Chudgar Dewan Bahadur M. Ramchandra Rao has since arrived and is giving his assistance. He has long taken an active part in British Indian politics, having been a member of the Moderate deputation to this country when the Act of 1919 was under consideration, and also a member of the first Legislative Assembly.

The organization had some correspondence with the Buttler Committee before its departure from India, and asked to be allowed to submit its views. It was intimated by Colonel Ogilvie, the Secretary of the Committee, that the terms of reference do not include investigation of the relations between the rulers of the States and their subjects. The Committee was set up to report on the relationship between the Paramount Power and the States as affected by treaties and other engagements, and to inquire into the financial and economic relations between British India and the States. It was understood that a general memorandum indicating the point of view of the organization might be sent in, but that any delegation sent here could not be given access to the inquiry or tender any oral evidence.

The delegation has come to this country partly to inform public opinion of its views on aspects of the question of the future polity of the States, which it suggests, ought to be kept in view when political changes of great importance are being advocated on behalf of the Princes. On the question of relevancy, Professor Abhyankar argues that since the treaties and engagements made with the British authorities in many cases expressly provide for the good administration of the States the matter should be dealt with. Relevant questions, in his view, are how far the Princes have fulfilled these treaty obligations: whether the Paramount Power has taken adequate steps to ensure reasonable protection to the subjects, and the practical effect, in respect to these obligations, of changes modifying the powers of intervention in case of misrule residing in the Paramount Power. It is also argued that the people of the States are entitled to be heard as well as the Princes on the second part of the inquiry—that of the financial and economic relations between British India and the States.

Indian States.

THEIR RELATION TO THE PROBLEM OF REFORM

By Dewan Bahadur M. Ramchandra Rao.

The position of the ruling princes in India in relation to the Paramount Power, their exact place in a scheme of self-government, and their constitutional relations to the future Government of India have of late been frequently discussed in the British Press. The discussion, I venture to think, has been somewhat one sided, and there are other aspects of the question which have not as yet received consideration. It is unthinkable that the Indian States should remain untouched by any scheme of constitutional reform that may be devised for British India in the near future, and it is obvious that the position of the princes in relation to their own people must necessarily undergo a profound change.

The problem naturally falls under two heads; the first embraces the group of questions relating to the reforms required in the internal administration of the Indian States, and under the second head may be placed the problem of the creation of a suitable machinery for bringing the Indian States into constitutional relations with British India.

Present Position in the States

Taking the first of these questions, the position remains as summarised ten years ago by the authors of the Montagu-Chelmsford

Report: "The characteristic feature of all the States, including the most advanced, is the personal rule of the prince and his control over legislation, administration, and justice." The States are in all stages of development, patriarchal, feudal, or more advanced, while in a very few States representative institutions which have been described as the dim, colourless copies of those prevailing in British India have been established. In the discussions in this country it has been too readily assumed that the Indian States have full rights of internal sovereignty, making impossible the introduction of reforms to bring the States into line with the constitutional developments in India, such as they are. In regard to this it is enough to refer to the high authority of Sir William Lee Warner that "the British Government has drawn to itself the exercise of the entire external sovereignty of the Indian States, and it has also gathered into its hands some of the internal sovereignty of even important States." The true position is that the States have been in the enjoyment of varying degrees of internal sovereignty. They complain that their position as sovereign States has been adversely affected by the action of the Paramount Power in derogation of treaty rights. As the inquiry before the Indian States Committee is being held in camera we do not know at present the precise nature of their complaints but we may assume that some of them are well founded. While, however, the princes are complaining of encroachments by the Paramount Power, the people of the States also complain that the princes are under definite obligations, both by treaties and otherwise, to provide good government for their subjects and to promote their well-being and happiness. The Government of India and the Viceroy of India have frequently given public expression to the fact that the ultimate responsibility for securing to the people of the Indian States freedom from misrule lies in the Paramount Power. This duty has never been performed satisfactorily, and no inquiry has ever been held as to how far the princes have discharged their obligations to their people. The best way of securing good government to the people of the Indian States is not by the accumulation of acts of misgovernment and misrule to such a degree as to merit interference by the Paramount Power, but to establish institutions and to provide a machinery for the active association of the people with the administration so as to prevent misrule by the princes. The princes must definitely and once for all recognise the principle of responsibility of the Administration of the State to its own people. The present policy of giving the longest rope entails needless hardship both to the princes and the people. Reference has been made to the ancient ideals of kingship in India as a guiding factor in

favour of good government in the States. The sanctions behind these ideals have ceased to operate long ago, and at the present time it will not be unjust to say that the princes are more conscious of their rights than of their obligations to their own people. Moreover, since the introduction of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms the dynamic forces operating in British India for the establishment of democratic institutions have reacted on the Indian States. It would be foolish to ignore these signs of the growth of public opinion in the States. To think of ruling the States in the old time-honoured way would therefore be disastrous both to the princes and to India as a whole. The All-India States People's Conference, held in Bombay in December last, where representatives of 70 of the more important States were present, adopted resolutions which give full expression to the aspirations of the people of the States to come into line with modern developments in the machinery of government in British India. There is therefore a need for a new policy in regard to the questions of internal reform,

Suggested Reforms.

Akbar was a great ruler, but it was impossible even for him to provide that he should be succeeded by another Akbar. A settled Constitution which recognises the responsibility of the Administration to the people and containing all the essential elements of popular government is the only safe-guard for the protection of the people. The reforms suggested by the Conference include

(a) Representative institutions in the States on an elective basis in the sphere of local self-government and also for the purpose of legislation, taxation, and control of general administration;

(b) The submission of the Budgets of the States to the votes of popular assemblies;

(c) The separation of the revenues of the States from the personal expenditure of the Princes and the sanction by the popular assemblies of the civil list of the ruler;

(d) An independent judiciary, and the separation of the judicial functions from the executive in every State; and the entire cessation of the personal intervention of the princes in the administration of justice.

They also demand that the elementary rights of citizenship, such as the right of association and public meeting, right of free speech, right of a free press, and security of person and property, which have hitherto been denied to the people in a great many States, should be conceded without delay, and that these rights should

be publicly acknowledged by the princes in a proclamation duly promulgated and further secured by suitable laws.

To those accustomed to free institutions in this country these reforms would appear to be so axiomatic and fundamental as a means for securing good government that it will surprise many who are ignorant of the present conditions in the Indian States that these rights and privileges are not now possessed by the people in most of them.

Unless the administration of the Indian States is modernised in these respects so as to bring them into line with modern ideas of government there will be a great popular upheaval in the States. It would be wise for the rulers to anticipate events and for the Paramount Power to give its moral support to the initiation of these reforms. It cannot avoid its responsibility. If the spirit of the times has committed Great Britain to the establishment of self-governing institutions in British India, it is equally necessary to recognise the growth of nationalism and the yearning for self-government in Indian India. The Indian princes are great sportsmen. Will they now play the game ?

Manchester Guardian.

The Indian States and their People.

FACTS BRITISH PEOPLE OUGHT TO KNOW.

By Dewan Bahadur M. Ramchandra Rao

(Chairman of the Peoples Deputation from the Indian States).

The propaganda on behalf of the Princes of the Indian States has spread far and wide, and every important section of the Press has dealt with the subject. For the present, I should like to set out briefly a few salient points which would enable the average the British worker and his wife to realise fully the present political, social, and economic conditions of the people of the states, and the administration under which they are living. The Indian States represent about one-fourth of the area of the whole continent of India and approximately one-fifth of the people of India live in them. Some of the States are as big as some of the larger countries in Europe.

An attempt has been made in some quarters to make out that "Indian" India and "British" India are two separate entities. They are so unlike each other, it has been said, that it is impossible to bring them under a common Constitution. This is, however, entirely inaccurate.

No Artificial Boundaries.

The historical, religious, sociological, and economic affinities which exist between the people of "British" India and the people of the States are so obvious that it is not possible to erect artificial boundaries between the two. In the words of the authors of the Indian All-Parties Conference Report "It is inconceivable that the people of the States, who are fired by the same ambitions and aspirations as the people of "British" India, will quietly submit to existing conditions for ever or that the people of the British India, bound by the closest ties of family, race, and religion to their brethren on the other side of an imaginary line, will never make common cause with them,"

Workers' Conditions.

In British India the conditions of the peasants and workmen are bad enough. Their economic and social conditions and their staying power are matters of constant anxiety, both to the various Governments and to the public men. As a result of the constant vigilance of men like Mr. N. M. Joshi, secretary of the Indian Trades Union Congress, inspired by the ideals of the Labour organisations in this country, and the International Labour organisations in Europe and America, there have been some ameliorating movements and certain social legislation for their uplift. The improvement of the conditions of the industrial workers, the fixation of hours of work, the settlement of industrial and labour disputes, maternity benefit, child welfare schemes, these and other matters are now occupying some amount of attention.

Compulsory Labour.

The position of the average working man and labourer is very much worse in the Indian States. The Governments of the States, so far as I am aware, remain unmoved and unaffected by the world-movements for the amelioration of the condition of the working classes. I do not know of any State which has yet undertaken industrial legislation, or of any other action in the above directions. On the other hand, the practice of compulsory labour prevails in many States.

The All India States Peoples Conference adopted a resolution, in December last, protesting against this practice, which was described as inhuman and barbarous, and demanded its abolition forthwith. The resolution also condemned the customs and practices analogous

to slavery prevailing in some of the States. It will be worth while to enquire whether any action has been taken by any of the States in these directions.

I have been asked questions on the incidence of taxation in Indian States. Most of them either do not care to compile statistics or else to publish them. I have, however, the authority of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, who stated publicly a short time ago that the incidence of taxation in the States was twice as much as in British India.

People Taxed Without Their Consent.

In referring to these facts I should not be understood as condemning wholesale the condition of things in all the States, nor as ignoring other compensatory advantages which exist in some States as against those prevailing in British India. My whole point is that the system of administration prevailing in the Indian States depends on the capacity, goodwill, and initiative of the Ruler himself. It is, after all, the personal rule of a single individual. All legislation flows from him: excepting in four or five States, there are no legislatures constituted on an elective basis.

The Ruler is the final authority in the administration of civil and criminal justice, and there is nothing like an independent judiciary. All taxation is imposed on the sole authority of the ruler and the principle of "no taxation without representation" is unknown in the States. His Highness the Maharaja of Nawanagar claims that this principle should be applied to the paramount power in its relations with the Indian States, but he does not want its application to himself in relation to his own people. He wants to impose all taxes on his sole authority without the consent of his people. The public revenues of the State are not separated from the private expenditure of the Ruler, with the result that the people have no definite guarantees that the taxes raised from them will be spent for their benefit.

Restriction of Civil Liberties.

Under such a system, the Ruler's first concern, naturally, is to look after himself and his family, and then think of the people and a very large proportion of the revenues of the state is spent on themselves, very little being left for works of public utility. The usual facilities for the public discussion of administrative measure do not exist. The Press in all countries is the great instrument for the ventilation of public opinion. This does not exist in most of the states and where it does exist, it is placed under licensing laws.

The rights of public meeting and association either do not exist, or are allowed to be exercised in some States under very great and vexatious restrictions. In these circumstances, it will be obvious that most elementary safeguards against maladministration are absent in most of the States. Can there be any wonder that in these circumstances the administration of the States does not provide any principles of progress, and the condition of the seventy millions of people remains stagnant?

Our Deputation is here to press this aspect of the present state of things in the Indian States. While the people of British India are looking forward to Dominion Status and the free play of their national aspirations and opportunities for self-development, what steps are the Princes prepared to guarantee to elevate their people from this primitive condition? What will the *people* of Great Britain do to help the *people* of the States in the realisation of their hopes and aspirations?

Labour Weekly

“Princes and People”

Will you permit me to supplement the information contained in the note bearing the above title, which appeared in your issue of November 2?

The Indian Princes are in no way responsible for the decision of the Butler Committee not to bear the three gentlemen who have come to England to represent the Indian States Subjects' Conference. Their desire from the first has been for an open inquiry; and if the Butler Committee has decided otherwise, it is not the fault of the Princes, who believe they have a good case which has nothing to fear from publicity.

I assure you it is far from true to say that there is no freedom of speech, that there is burdensome taxation, and that there are no legal rights, in the states. The States people are under the Government of their own countrymen; and, being by tradition Conservative, insist upon enjoying the rights and liberties, hallowed by custom, which their forefathers have enjoyed from time immemorial. These rights and liberties are quite as definite as and considerably more extensive than (they include, *e. g.* the right to carry arms) those which prevail in British India. Taxation is fixed by custom is unvarying in amount, and lighter than in British India. Minor differences there may be in some of the five hundred or so Indian States, between the Ruler and his people. But the Princes know that their sole source of strength is really their people; and they are fully prepared to stand or fall by their people's judgment. Steadily

and surely the people in every state are making the Government just what they want it to be.

It is a mistake to represent the states as refuges of reaction. Some are still oldfashioned; but the majority have advanced beyond recognition in the last ten years. And after having lived both in British India and in the Indian State, I can say quite definitely that I believe the "underdog" has a better time in the states. The two great oppressors in British India, namely, the moneylender and the petty official, are kept in checks in the states; where the humblest citizen, when dissatisfied with the findings of the ordinary courts, has the right to demand and receive the redress of his grievances at the hands of the Ruler.

By all means let the people of Britain assure themselves that the Rulers of those states who are bound by treaty to govern well, are fulfilling their obligations. But let us not forget that the Princes claim that they have observed the treaties while Britain has broken them!

It is not better to suspend judgment until we know all the facts?

L. F. RUSHBROOK WILLIAMS,
Foreign of Minister of Patiala.

(We have invited Mr. Ramchandra Rao, Chairman of the People's Deputation to reply to this letter next week. Further letters on many subjects will be found on pages 11 and 14—Editor.)

People and Princes.

A Reply to Last Week's Letter from the Foreign Minister of Patiala.

The statement of Dr. Rushbrock Williams that Indian Princes are in no way responsible for the decision of the Butler Committee not to hear the Peoples' Deputation from the Indian States is perfectly true. Nobody has charged them with the responsibility of this decision. Nevertheless; the fact remains that the Counsel of the Princes has had a very long hearing from the Committee, and none others had any opportunity to address them. The value of the report must naturally be very much discounted on this ground.

Dr. Rushbrock Williams assures the readers of the New Leader that "it is far from true to say that there is no freedom of speech in the States." I must express my surprise at this statement. It is a

notorious fact that the political conferences of the various States have now to be held outside their territories and in British India for want of sanction from the States. If permission is granted, it is done under very vexatious conditions. Everybody in India knows that the Rt. Hon. V. E. S. Sastry was prevented from delivering a lecture some years ago in Bangalore City. The same treatment was accorded to Mr. Jinnah in Hyderabad. The "State Gazette" of Nawanagar State contains an order in the following terms :—

"All are hereby informed that no person, association, or gathering should address a public meeting in political matters without the permission of the Political Secretary, which should be secured in advance. Further, no political meeting of any kind should be held. Those who would act otherwise would be legally proceeded against." Similar orders can be produced from other States.

The Question of Taxation.

Dr. Williams also contends that taxation is lighter in the states than in British India. This is, at present, purely a matter of individual opinion. There are others, like Sir Michael O'Dwyer, with no bias whatever against the States, who publicly stated in this country a few months ago that taxation in Indian States is double that of British India. So far as I know, no inquiry has been made as to the relative incidence of taxation in British India and the States. If Dr. Rushbrook Williams has any materials for his assertion, it will be interesting to look into them.

He also says that from his experience of British India and the States, "he is quite definite that the 'under-dog' has a better time in the States." Perhaps he is not aware of the fact that impressment of labour is still resorted to in some of the States. As regards the moneylender and the petty official Dr. Williams claims that "they are kept in better check in the States than in British India." I should like to know the means by which this is done. The Co-operative movement has made good progress in British India, but it has hardly touched the fringe of the problem of rural indebtedness. Will Dr. Williams admit that this movement has not made any progress at all in the States as a whole? The petty official is ubiquitous, and there is nothing to choose between British India and the States.

An Impartial Tribunal.

Dr. Williams would, however, concede that the organisation of public services in British India is much better than in the States. It is very strange that he should approve of the present method of over-

ruling the decisions of ordinary courts by an appeal to the personal intervention of the Ruler after once a decision has been given; Persons dissatisfied with the findings of the judicial tribunals should not be permitted to get round them by an appeal to the Ruler. This method of administration of justice, as now admitted by Dr. Williams, is the strongest condemnation of the present system.

There is, therefore no Rule of Law in the states. This is exactly our contention. Finally, Dr. Williams says that the Princes are "fully prepared to stand or fall by their people's judgment" of the present system of administration. I am indeed very glad that the Princes are prepared to face an inquiry to ascertain what their own people think of their rule. Would he also indicate how this is to be done? Would he advocate the appointment of an impartial body like a Royal Commission? There is no doubt whatever that such an inquiry would be of great benefit for future developments.

After having carried on an intensive propaganda for over a year on behalf of the Princes, Dr. Williams asks the people of Great Britain to suspend judgment till the facts are known. I shall also join in this request and ask the British people to forget everything that has been said on behalf of the Princes till they know the facts through the medium of an impartial tribunal.

M. RAMCHANDRA RAO

(Chairman of the People's Delegation.)

Princes Versus People

On another page we print the reply of the chairman of the Indian People's Delegation to the letter which appeared in our columns last week from the Englishman who acts as Foreign Secretary in the State of Patiala. The delegation has this week presented a masterly statement of its case to the Commission which is reviewing the relations of the British Government to the Indian States. It is a scandal that the Commission should have refused to give the deputation a hearing in person. The Princes have put their case at great length through highly-paid counsel, and the peoples should have had similar opportunities.

New Leader 23-12-28.

Summary.

THE PEOPLES IN THE NATIVE STATES.

Memorandum to the Butler Commission.

London, 19th Nov. 1928.

The deputation representing the Indian States People's conference has to-day presented a long memorandum to the Indian

States Committee on behalf of the subjects of the Princes. The memorandum is signed by Dewan Bahadur M. Ramchandra Rao, Prof. G. R. Abhyankar and Mr, P. L. Chudgar.

The memorandum points out that the deputation represents a conference held in Bombay last December attended by 700 delegates representing the people of 70 Indian States. It protests against the decision of the committee not to hear oral evidence from the deputation and the fact that the proceedings are being held *in Camera*. It argues that the use of the words "States" in the terms of reference should apply to the peoples as well as the rulers, and that the

peoples are affected equally with if not more vitally than, the princes by the policies of the Government of India and the Paramount Power. The deputation contends that the present relations of the Paramount Power with the rulers of the States cannot be modified without the consent of the peoples.

Sir Leslie Scott, the memorandum continues, has apparently contended that the Paramount Power should cease to intervene between the Princes and their subjects. Under present conditions, a subject of a state can be put into prison under the orders of a ruler without any legal way of getting him out. Sometimes release has been secured through diplomatic action of the Government of India. In a number of cases, property has been confiscated by the rulers. The only present remedy is to appeal to the Government of India. If the Paramount Power desists from taking remedial action, the subjects will be entirely at the mercy of their rulers.

Under the treaties upon which the Princes rely and by the development of political usage, they have undertaken definite obligations, including continued good government and the promotion of the happiness and welfare of their people. The Princes who complain of encroachments on the part of the Paramount Power have themselves failed adequately to discharge their own responsibilities to their people. In olden days the remedy available to the people suffering oppression in a state without constitutional liberties was open rebellion. The Paramount Power has taken away this right. The Princes feel that in a conflict between the rulers and the ruled the Paramount Power is certain to side with them on the alleged ground of the preservation of peace and order. This has resulted in the neglect by the Princes of their duty to their own people. There is no rule of law in the states, with a few exceptions. There is no liberty of person, property, association, public meeting or the press. There is no independent judiciary.

The Indian Princes have been some of the strongest advocates of Home Rule for India. The advocacy of Self-governing institutions for British India and the continuance of unmitigated autocratic rule in their own States are not reconcilable. The peoples of the Indian States demand the establishment of representative institutions, the submission of the budgets of the States to the votes of popular administration and the institution of an independent, judiciary. There should be a constitutional agency for intervention by the Paramount Power in place of the present method of dealing with these questions by the agency of officers under the control of the Political Department of the Government of India. The mandate system of the League of Nations should serve as a model.

The deputation resists the view of the Princes that their relations as established by the Treaties are with the Crown of England and not with the Government of British India. This plea means that the past and present Governments of India, which have so far exercised the power, said to be delegated from the Crown, were acceptable because they were essentially foreign in their composition and not responsible to the Indian electorate, and that the future responsible Government of India would not be acceptable to the Indian Princes because it will consist of their own countrymen and be responsible to an electorate of their own countrymen.

The deputation asks for a thorough public inquiry into the adjustment of the financial and economic relations of British India and the States and that the peoples should have an effective voice in these matters.

The Indian States Inquiry.

DEPUTATION FROM "PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE."

A deputation claiming to speak for the Indian States People's Conference has submitted a memorandum to the Indian States Inquiry Committee, which is resuming its sittings in London on Thursday. The signatories are Dewan Bahadur M. Ramchandra Rao, Professor G. R. Abhyankar, and Mr. P. L. Chudgar. They intimate that a permanent organization, known as the Indian States People's Conference, was brought into existence last December at a meeting in Bombay. Seventy of the States whose rulers receive salutes were represented. The organization has the purpose of "influencing the Governments of the States as a whole to initiate the necessary reforms in their administration by the force of the collective public opinion of the people of the States."

Regret is expressed that there has been no opportunity to submit oral evidence. The general secretary was informed in February last that the Committee was not empowered by its terms of reference to deal with the relations of the Indian States and their subjects. Later, it was intimated that the Committee would be willing to receive a memorandum from the conference on matters coming within the terms of reference. Complaint is made that members of the deputation have not been admitted to the sitting at which the Committee have been addressed by counsel for the Princes. It is remarked that the report of any Committee whose deliberations are not held in the open "is always looked upon with suspicion in any country, and much more so in India.

The advocacy of self-governing institutions for British India by some of the Princes and the continuance of unmitigated autocratic rule in their own States "are not reconcilable courses of conduct." The relations between the rulers and their subjects are discussed at length, and finally the signatories submit that their object "is to secure fundamental changes in the present system of administration in the States as a whole. It is not our intention or desire to cast any reflections on any individual Prince or on their order, but we fully believe that personal rule as a system of government must now be modified in the States by the introduction of the democratic principle. In our opinion the consequences of delay in this respect will be most serious. His Highness the Chancellor has himself stated publicly that no Indian ruler can resist, or would dream of resisting, the public opinion of his people. We therefore have some hope that the changes for which we are contending have been accepted in principle, and their practical application without delay would remove considerable discontent and dissatisfaction that now prevails in the States. The labours of this Committee offer a unique opportunity to initiate the uplift of a vast mass of people of the States from the condition of political submission to the status of Imperial citizenship."

London Times. 20-11-28.

Indian Princes Subjects.

THEIR DEMAND TO BE HEARD.

Protest Against Secret Inquiry.

The deputation appointed by the Executive Committee of the Indian States people's Conference have issued a memorandum on the

inquiry which is being held in London into the relations between the Imperial Government and the Indian princes. A protest is made that the proceedings of the Committee are private.

"The manner in which this inquiry is being held has given rise to the belief that neither the paramount Power nor the princes desire to take the public into their confidence," states the memorandum, "or at least to let the people of the States who are vitally affected by the results of the inquiry know fully its nature or purpose. The procedure adopted in the cognate inquiry relating to British India under the presidency of Sir John Simon and the open invitation which the Royal Commission have extended to all interests and classes to come and help them with an expression of their views, as contrasted with the procedure adopted by your Committee, have produced a very unfavourable impression regarding the latter throughout the Indian States and also in British India."

The memorandum states that the princes who complained "of encroachment on the part of the Paramount Power upon the treaty position have themselves failed adequately to discharge their own responsibilities to their people definitely laid upon them by those very treaties on which they now rely."

The constructive proposals put forward by the Indian States People's Conference are :—

That representative institutions be established in the States on an elective basis in the sphere of local self-government and also for the purpose of legislation, taxation, and control of general administration ;

The Budgets of the States should be submitted to the vote of the popular assemblies :

The revenues of the States should be separated from the personal expenditure of the princes, and that the civil list should be also submitted to the vote of the popular assemblies ;

An independent judiciary ; that the judicial functions be separated entirely from the executive in every State, and that the personal intervention of the princes in the administration of justice should cease absolutely.

Case for the Peoples.

The memorandum argues that the use of the word "States" in the terms of reference should apply to the peoples as well as the rulers, and that the peoples are affected equally with, if not more vitally than, the princes. The deputation contends that the present

relations of the paramount Power with the rulers of the States cannot be modified without the consent of the peoples.

Sir Leslie Scott, the memorandum continues, has apparently contended that the paramount Power should cease to intervene between the princes and their subjects. Under present conditions a subject of a State can be put into prison under the orders of a ruler without any legal way of getting him out. Sometimes release has been secured through diplomatic action of the Government of India. In a number of cases property has been confiscated by the rulers. The only present remedy is to appeal to the Government of India. If the paramount Power desists from taking remedial action the subjects will be entirely at the mercy of their rulers.

Under the treaties upon which the princes rely and by the development of political usage they have undertaken definite obligations, including continued good government and the promotion of the happiness and welfare of their people. The princes who complain of encroachments on the part of the paramount Power have themselves failed adequately to discharge their own responsibilities to their people. In olden days the remedy available to the people suffering oppression in a State without constitutional liberties was open rebellion. The paramount Power has taken away this right. The princes feel that in a conflict between the rulers and the ruled the paramount Power is certain to side with them on the alleged ground of the preservation of peace and order. This has resulted in the neglect by the princes of their duty to their own people. There is no rule of law in the States, with a few exceptions. There is no liberty of person, property, association, public meeting, or the press. There is no independent judiciary.

The deputation resists the view of the princes that their relations as established by the treaties are with the Crown of England and not with the Government of British India. It also asks for a through public inquiry into the adjustment of the financial and economic relations of British India and the States, and that the peoples should have an effective voice in these matters.

Manchester Guardian 21-4-28.

The Problem of the Indian States.

Manchester Guardian.

There has recently arrived in England a deputation which aims at making the British public acquainted with the point of view of the subjects of the Indian States. Before considering the represen-

tations made by this deputation it is only right to examine the position of the Princes in the light of an able and illuminating speech recently delivered by the Maharajah of Bikaner. The Maharajah is not satisfied with the footing on which he now stands, because his relations with the Government of India are regulated not only by the provisions of a treaty but also by ill-defined usages and precedents of doubtful applicability. In case of dispute the Government of India's decision has to be accepted, unless of its own free will that Government choose to submit to arbitration. Again, at any moment the vague doctrine of the paramount Power may be invoked to justify action based neither on the terms of any treaty nor on usage or precedent. Further, the policy of the Government of India in regard to tariffs, currency, and many other matters may seriously affect the interests of a State, yet the ruler has no voice in determining the Government of India's policy. Having regard to the circumstances of India, it may probably have been impossible for the Central Government to put its relations with the States on a more definite and equitable basis, but it is easy to see that the uncertainty and insecurity of his position must often seem all but intolerable to an active and capable ruler. To such a one the outlook for the future must seem still worse. Hitherto Government action in regard to the states has been the action of the Viceroy, a British aristocrat naturally inclined to sympathise with a prince. But the Swaraj Constitution, drafted by the All-Parties Committee, provide that the powers now exercised in relation to the states by the Viceroy shall in future be exercised by a cabinet of British Indian politicians responsible to a British-Indian Legislature. Such a prospect is in the highest degree alarming to the best not less than to the worst of the princes. British-Indian politics are dominated by the town-bred intellectuals, lawyers, journalists, and schoolmasters, reinforced by the host of university students who are failing to find employment. This class has great virtues. Among its failings is an overweening confidence that it alone is capable of serving and of ruling India. But an intelligentsia is almost certainly incapable of governing unaided, at least through Parliamentary institutions. What seems to make Parliamentary government a practicable proposition in British India is the fact that the large landholders, the well-to-do farmers, and the merchants are now beginning to take part in politics. This is not yet the case in any of the Indian States. Yet in almost all these states the town bred intelligentsia is already in being, already impatient of the existing autocratic or bureaucratic regime, already eager to seize power for itself in the name of democracy. The princes may therefore rea-

sonably fear that a Central Cabinet of British-Indian politicians will be far too sympathetic with the claims advanced by the town-bred intelligentsia in the states and will permit or encourage it to make things impossible for the rulers' administration.

The Maharajah of Bikaner sees that the greatest danger to the cause of the princes is the existence of vicious or incompetent members of their order. He claims, however, that such rulers are few, that the body of the princes are willing to see their excesses restrained that there is a continuous improvement in the administration of the States. The seed of democracy has been sown, but he asks for patience. We must not expect the tree to shoot up suddenly or to stand alone without shelter and support. No doubt it would be impossible for many years to establish, anything like Parliamentary government in the States except by the crude expedient of wiping them out and amalgamating them with British India. There are feather-headed politicians in British India who talk about steam-rolling the States, but the more intelligent leaders know that there is enough local patriotism to make such an undertaking unsafe, and, further, they recognise that the States, with all their defects, have played and may continue to play a useful part in encouraging initiative and originality and in breaking the monotony of British India. We believe that the best Indian thinkers will agree with the Maharajah of Bikaner in holding that constitutional development in the States should be allowed to proceed naturally without undue pressure from external forces. It follows that, if democracy is now to be established in British India, autocracy or bureaucracy must continue for many years to subsist side by side with it in the States, and a plan is needed to make this possible.

Not much can be expected from codifying usage and precedent and from empowering a supreme court to adjudicate on these and on the treaties. Conditions are changing rapidly in India, and there is more need for elasticity and new adjustments than for a strict instance on treaties, usage, and precedent. The most important part of the constructive scheme which the princes have had under consideration is the proposal to place the affairs of the States under a separate Executive Council consisting of the Viceroy, two Englishmen, and two representatives of the States and to require that all matters affecting both the States and British India should be decided by joint sittings of this Council with the Cabinet responsible for the affairs of British India. Such an arrangement would no doubt assure the States of more equitable treatment than they now receive. It might also be effective in raising the standard

of administration. None-the-less, we think the objections raised by British-Indian politicians are fully justified. The scheme would certainly induce in Indian States the habit of thinking and acting as an alliance having interests opposed to those of the British Indian democracy, and the British Government might be required for all eternity to arbitrate between the two opposing parties. An alternative method is to induce the larger Indian States to come as separate entities into an all-Indian federation side by side with the provinces, and to share in forming the Central Government. This would mean that the Central Government must be restricted in its functions to matters of common concern, and the Central Executive would have to be controlled by a body composed of deputies nominated by the provincial and States Governments, not by directly elected representatives of the people. There are grave objections to such a plan, but it is not easy to see how otherwise the Indian States can develop peaceably under Swaraj.

"The Problem of the Indian States"

To the Editor of the Manchester Guardian,

Sir,—While tendering you my appreciation of your most illuminating leader of November 19, may I offer one respectful comment?

You remark: "What seems to make Parliamentary government a practicable proposition in British India is the fact that the large landholders, the well-to-do farmers, and the merchants are now beginning to take part in politics. This is not yet the case in any of the Indian States. Yet in almost all the states the town-bred intelligentsia is already impatient of the existing autocratic or bureaucratic regime: already eager to seize power for itself in the name of democracy."

So far as my experience extends—I live in one Indian State and my work requires me to be familiar with conditions prevailing in many others—this does not present quite an accurate picture. My own observation is that the "large landholders, the well-to-do, farmers, and the merchants" are precisely the people who are most actively associated with every branch of the state administration. They are, in fact, the class which, according to the tradition of Indian kingship, the ruler must consult, and whose support he must enlist when any act of state is contemplated. Unless he is anxious to run his head against a brick wall of the most unyielding type, he invariably carries them with him.

As I see it, the whole trouble with the class of people for whom the Indian states subjects' Deputation are professing to speak is this: while the traditional politics of the Indian states give full weight to the opinions of the landholders, farmers and merchants, they have so far found no place at all for the landless, moneyless middle class intellectual with "no stake in the country" *Hinc illæ lacrimæ* !
Yours &c.

L. F. RUSHBROOK WILLIAMS.

Foreign Minister of Patiala State.

London November, 21,

[Perhaps. But we believe there are few Indian States in which landlords, farmers, and merchants can get much attention paid to their views when these do not happen to be agreeable to the ruler or the state officials. Just because they have a stake in the country, landlords, farmers, and merchants are apt to be timid and submissive. They need the middleclass intellectuals to encourage them to resist official oppression, which, in most states, is at least as prevalent as it was in British India twenty years ago. The intellectuals are also useful because they have a more modern outlook, which gives them some idea of the possibilities of sanitation, education, &c. They ought probably to have larger opportunities of influencing the state Governments. Certainly their criticisms on the internal administration of the states and their views on the relations between the states and the Government of India deserve consideration, even if some allowance should be made for disappointed ambitions.—ED. "GUARD".]

The Indian States.

To the Editor of the Manchester Guardian,

Sir,—You have very rightly pointed out the services which the middle-class intellectuals are rendering to landlords, farmers, and merchants, in the Indian States. I am, however, surprised to find Dr. Rushbrook Williams, the Foreign Minister of Patiala, is dissatisfied with the town-bred intelligentsia for their impatience to reform the existing autocratic and bureaucratic regime. If, however, Dr. Williams surveys the position of the so-called leaders of the princely order, it will be found that they also are open to the same charge. Out of nearly 700 Indian States, only eighty-eight are represented by the Standing Committee. What right have they to speak for all the other 500 and odd Indian States? How many of them would muster courage to say that the treaty rights have been violated by the Paramount Power? Very few, indeed, would be prepared to confess that undue influence has been used against them in concluding certain agreements which are now being repudiated on behalf

of these princes by the Maharajah of Patiala and his colleagues. As a matter of fact, so far as the princely order is concerned, the leaders of the Chamber of Princes occupy the same position towards the other princes as the middle-class intelligentsia occupy towards landlords, farmers, and merchants, in the States. The Maharajah and his friends are giving expression to the views which they desire should be advocated by the rest of their class and for their interest. The intelligentsia is speaking for the people and advocating reforms which the landlords, farmers, and tenants are unable to express, but of which they feel great need.

We would ask Dr. Williams in how many States the rulers consult their people when any act of State is contemplated, and what is the form of this consultation? Even if we take Patiala, is there a single newspaper in that State? Is there any representative body, or even an advisory body, for consultation? Are any laws in Patiala passed after consulting the people; if so, in what way is this consultation brought about? Dr. Williams seems to think that if a ruler does not consult his people "he is sure to run his head against a brick wall of the most unyielding type." Unfortunately, this is far from truth. In almost every State, with very few exceptions, the Indian princes are ruling in an autocratic manner, and they never consult the people either in matters of taxation, legislation, or administration. They are doing so with impunity. The real cause of it is that the princes are enjoying the protection of the British bayonets behind their thrones. This fact is conveniently forgotten by the Indian rulers. Before the establishment of the British Government a removal of a ruler for mal-administration was the birthright of the people. This is now taken away by the Paramount Power, which is responsible for peace and order in the States. This position has been authoritatively stated by Lord Salisbury, Lord Lytton, Lord Cranbrook, and many other eminent statesmen. The main grievance of the people is that they are not at all associated in any form or at any stage with the administration of the States. They further complain that the Paramount Power, which has deprived them of their common law rights of deposing a ruler for misrule, is following a policy of nonintervention, to the serious prejudice of the people. Except the three South Indian States, even advisory councils do not exist in more than 25 states out of the whole 700.

Similarly, although the Governments in the states are manned by local people, the whole initiative, direction, and control rests entirely with the ruler. Every servant holds his office during the

pleasure of the ruler, He is liable to be removed at the sweet will of the ruler. Of what avail is such machinery in bringing about any reform in the state? Has it got any freedom of action?
Yours. &c.,

G. R. ABHYANKAR,
Member of the Indian States' Peoples' Deputation.
30, Belsize Park, London, N. W. 3,
November 30,

The Indian States.

To the Editor of the Manchester Guardian.

Sir,—I fear that Mr. Abhyankar misunderstands me. I have no grievance against the urban intelligentsia; nor am I surprised that they desire a political influence within the Indian States somewhat more proportionate to their own conception of their abilities than that which is at present available to them. I do not admit, however, that they are the only class to be considered; nor do I join with Mr. Abhyankar in condemning the traditional policy of the states because it gives a larger prominence to other elements in a population which is predominantly rural and agricultural.

To be frank, the real trouble seems to me to lie in the fact that the population of the Indian States do not at present consider that Mr. Abhyankar and his friends are entitled to speak for them. I cannot acquit Mr. Abhyankar of a certain intention of confusing the issue in this respect. In writing for English readers he should in all fairness point out that there are in India other systems of representation than those known to Western democracy. The village panchayat is truly representative of the village; the heads of the caste are truly representative of the caste-brethren. Yet the recording of votes plays no part in such selection. The religious sabhas which flourish in so many States are far more representative of popular feeling than many elected Legislatures in British India. But unfortunately Mr. Abhyankar dares not admit that a consultative body comprising heads of the village communities, heads of the caste communities, and office-bearers on the Sabhas, with a sprinkling of nobles, landholders, and officials, can be representative; for to do so would give away his whole case. He and his friends can only rise to power under a Western system of representation. Therefore, he sees no good in the Indian system. I sympathise with him, but do not share his views.

His letter is so full of elementary mistakes of fact that it is plainly written without reference-books, while his figures are pure guesswork. There are only 445 States in India which are officially

recognised. Of these, 108 are members of the Chamber of Princes in their own right, and 88 out of the 108 are represented by the Standing Committee. Of the remainder, the Standing Committee has been authorised to speak for just 20. His figures about advisory councils are still more wild. As it happens, I am just examining the returns of a group of 58 States, large and small. Of these 58, no fewer than 38 have advisory councils for legislative purposes. If Mr. Abhyankar is interested in Patiala, I will give him full information. The form of his questions shows that he knows little about conditions in any States save, perhaps, those of the Bombay Presidency.

I do not agree with Mr. Abhyankar's "opinion" that the princes are enjoying the protection of the British baynotes behind their thrones." No ruler, let me repeat, can rest secure unless he rests upon the loyalty and affection of his people. Recent history plainly shows that British intervention becomes necessary only if and when the people are alienated from the ruler. Mr. Abhyankar confuses cause and effect. To say that the states' are earthly paradises would be absurd; and I have no intention of emulating Mr. Abhyankar's errors by imitating his rashness. Quite probably I have access to information where he has to rely upon hearsay. For example, it is untrue to say that "the people, are not at all associated in any form or at any stage with the administration of the states." "The people" are not only associated, but nothing vitally affecting them can be done unless they are agreed. They can at any time make the life of their ruler intolerable. Look at the recent case of Miraj. What a perfect example of "direct action"! If Mr. Abhyankar differs from this opinion, it can only be because he differs from me in what he regards as "the people." By "the people" I mean the nobles, the landlords, the cultivators and the tenant-farmers, besides the city fathers (who are mainly merchants) and the municipal voters, I do not mean Mr. Abhyankar, although I have no doubt that his advice would be very valuable.—Yours, &c.

L. F. RUSHBROOK WILLIAMS.

London December 6.

The Indian States.

To the Editor of the Manchester Guardian

Sir,—I regret that Dr. Williams, instead of answering my argument, has tried to attribute motives. He says that we want the Western system of representation with a view to coveting power, and therefore do not like to support the Indian system. This is not

only rash but extremely unfair. Dr. Williams refers to the village Panchayat, caste Panchayat, and religious Sabhas. But is there a single institution in any State of this type which is invested with any power of advising the ruler in matters of legislation, taxation, or administration? The old autonomous village communities ceased to exist in India even before the Moghul period. Generally speaking, Panchayats and religious Sabhas deal only with religious matters and some social questions. They never deal with political questions, and they are not permitted to do so. The intelligentsia in the States is extremely anxious that all these bodies should be given representation. Let them speak for the grievances of the people. Let them be associated with government and be consulted on all matters affecting administration, taxation, and legislation.

Official statistics relating to Indian States give their number as 611. The Montford report gives the same figure. Dr. Williams wants to exclude non-jurisdictional States; but they are equally misgoverned, and their population is labouring under acute disabilities. The pertinent question is: In how many Indian States do newspapers exist? In how many is there freedom of discussion? In how many do popular institutions of whatever type exist and are consulted by the rulers in matters of legislation, taxation and administration? How many States offer their budgets for public criticism, and how many have a fixed civil list accompanied by independent audit, and how many permit the people freely to bear arms?

Dr. Williams doubts the statement that the Indian Princes are secure in their autocratic rule by reason of the protection of the Paramount Power. We know, however, the eminent British statesmen have recognised this fact. He has referred to the recent incident at Miraj. I come from that State, and I have first-hand information about it. The facts are very interesting. The old ruler of the State revised the assessment system, and the burden on the soil was increased from 60 to 70 per cent. The people complained against this exorbitant settlement. The leaders of the Rayots (peasants) requested permission to wait upon the ruler and to place their grievances before him. He declined to see them, even if they went to his place of residence. The agriculturists numbering some 2,000, then approached the ruler, sat outside his palace, and begged for an interview. The Chief declined to see them and sent word that they should disperse. They insisted, however, on seeing the ruler. Ultimately the ruler came out and promised the people that he would hold an inquiry with a representative of the people about the revised rates and then levy them. Satisfied with this, the

poor cultivators went home. Within ten days' time the Chiefs went back on his promise. After this became known some 4,000 agriculturists came from distant places in the State and assembled outside the palace. For four days they sat day and night, in heat and cold, in the open space. The ruler was obdurate and did not give them any hearing. On the fifth day he issued notices on the leaders of the people under the Criminal Procedure Code and asked the assembled people to disperse on pain of their being dealt with as an unlawful assembly under the criminal law. The helpless agriculturists dispersed. They did not commit any breach of the order or of the peace.

The Chief will persist in his demand of this unjust levy. Non-payment of assessment would follow. Forfeiture would result. What then? What are the people to do? To whom should they appeal when the ruler is so obstinate and recalcitrant? Should they resort to direct action? Would they be justified in asking the ruler to abdicate or to depose him and bring about a peaceful revolution? It is not very difficult for the people to accomplish this if the Paramount Power keeps quiet and does not interfere. The fact is, the Paramount Power will never allow the people to exercise their natural right of removing misrule. It is not so much an autocratic ruler but the mighty Paramount Power behind him that will paralyse such efforts in no time. And it is solely for this reason that the people of the States appeal to the Paramount Power to come to their assistance and redress their grievances before it is too late.—Yours, &c.

G. R. ABHYANKAR, Member Indian
States People's Delegation.
30, Belsize Park, London, N. W. 5
December 13.

The Indian Princes.

By Dr. RUSHBROOK WILLIAMS,
(Foreign Minister to the Maharajah of Patiala)

The Labour Party has done much for British India, and, when in power, will doubtless do more. The demand of the British Indian leaders for self-determination is one which the Party, by its own fundamental principles, cannot ignore. But British India is not the only part of India which claims the rights of self-determination. It is merely a little more than half India. The rest of India is composed of autonomous States, who also call upon us not to decide their destiny without asking what they have to say.

It is easy to assert that the States are mediæval anachronisms and ought to disappear. But the people who live in them—seventy millions—do not share this view. These people are not governed by Britain or by British India, but by their own government, and these governments are what the people have made them. In the States the people walk about with a swagger, they look one straight in the face. If they have a grievance against their government they say so in unmistakable terms; and if the grievance is not redressed, trouble arises of a kind which brings the government to its knees. You cannot suppress a people in arms—and in the Indian States the people carry arms—a right denied to them in British India. The people of the State do not believe in too much government; they expect their administrations to keep within rigid limits and not to interfere too often with the ordinary citizen. Public opinion is the supreme factor in these small autonomous States, and the Ruler must act according to the advice of the elders and of the leaders of the community. Taxation is rigidly fixed, and is generally low. Woe to the Ruler or Minister who tries to increase it! A bad Ruler—for there are good and bad Princes just as there are good and bad politicians—may spend more than he ought upon his own pleasures; but he cannot take from his people more than the fixed quota they are accustomed to pay. If he tried, he would not be ruler very long. No legislation is possible without the consent of those affected by it, and the unit of administration is the self-governing village community, independent and largely self-sufficing. The village headmen, chosen by the villages, have to be consulted before the law or the custom can be changed; in the towns the heads of the craft and trade guilds chosen by the members, exercise the same right. Tradition and custom are very powerful, and innovations are thoroughly discussed before the people will accept them. The masses can always bring direct pressure upon the administration. Thus there is very little disturbance in the Indian States, and a virtual absence of those distressing Hindu-Muslim riots which convulse British India, where the government is far away and not closely linked with the people. Some States are backward, as compared with British India, in adopting Western methods of administration. On the other hand, some are far in advance of it. Education is very general, and in many States both free and compulsory. The only free first-grade college in India is in a State in Northern India, where a boy (or girl) can go from the bottom to top of the educational ladder—from the elementary school to the university—without paying a penny in fees. Further, all the larger States have their agricultural departments, which distribute good seed and improved implements to the farmers;

and since the government and the people are one and the same race, progress is solid, not superficial. Justice tends to be more rough and ready than in British India, but it is cheaper and quicker, and there is less chicanery and the long purse, so the States are bad places for money-lenders. Life and limb are quite as safe as in the territory Britain rules; and crime is suppressed promptly and sternly.

The people of the States say that British India has no right to rule them. If they are not satisfied with their own governments they will change them; but they do not want to be ruled by outsiders—whether brown or white. They say that the British Indian Government has been interfering too much, and making the States Governments do things which are not in their own interests, but in the interests of British India. They point out that India has recently adopted high tariffs because the British Indian manufacturers and politicians want protection and the British Indian Finance Department wanted a surplus budget. The States were not consulted: the people have to pay the duties, although they are mainly agriculturists and want cheap commodities; and every penny of the duties goes to British India and not to the States. They point out many other ways in which British India is controlling their interests unfairly; and they say that Britain is to blame for not remembering that India is a two piece country. The States Governments have a remedy to suggest—federation for India, which will make self-government possible both for British India and for the States, but will reserve matters of common concern to British India and to the States for settlement by a joint body in which both sides are represented.

If self-determination is right for British India, it must also be right for the Indian States, whose people hope that the Labour Party will remember this when considering the claims put forward by British India.

—*Clarion Nov. 1928.*

Self-Determination for the Indian States People.

A Reply to Dr. Rushbrook Williams.

By Professor G. R. ABHYANKAR, B. A., LL. B.

(a Member of the Indian States People's Delegation).

[Readers will remember that in our last issue we published an article by Dr. Rushbrook Williams, Foreign Minister to the Maha-

rajah of Patiala, in which he dealt with the question of the Indian States. In the following article Prof. G. R. Abhyankar, the general secretary of the Indian States People's Conference, Bombay, and a member of the States People's Deputation, which has lately been visiting this country, replies to the arguments of Dr. Williams and states the views of the Indian people.— E. D.]

The problem of Indian States has two aspects, one internal and the other external. The internal problem relates solely to the conditions of the people, and deals exclusively as to what civil rights the people enjoy, what constitutional liberties exist, and what form of government obtains in almost all of the States. This side of the problem is altogether ignored by the Indian princes, and it appears deliberate attempts are made to mislead the people in this country. It is said that the governments in the State are made by the people; that they walk erect and show manliness in their department; that the people have the right to ventilate their grievances in an unmistakable manner; and if there is no redress the people have the power to bring the administration to a standstill; that the people have the power to bear arms; that it is not possible to suppress the people should they rise in revolt; that public opinion is supreme in almost all the States; that the Ruler has to accept the advice of the elders; that taxation is comparatively low in the States, and that if this burden is tried to be increased the Ruler would be deposed; that no legislation is enacted without the consent of the people, and that the administrations consist of units which are formed of independent and self-sufficing village communities. We take the liberty of categorically denying all these statements.

The Governments in the Indian States, though generally manned by the subjects, are composed entirely by the sweet will of the Ruler. Every initiative, every direction, and every control, is centralised in the Ruler, who knows no checks. The people of the State have absolutely no voice in the administration. Demoralisation following from autocratic rule is writ large on the face of the people. The people are not permitted to ventilate their grievances, there is no Press or freedom of discussion; the people are clamouring for redress, but the Ruler is indifferent and the Paramount Power does not interfere. The people had a right to depose a ruler for maladministration before the establishment of the British power but they are deprived of this power by the British Government, and, secure in the sheltered position of protection by the Paramount Power, these princes are carrying on administration in a high-handed manner, and in opposition to the wishes of the people.

Except in one or two States there is no liberty to carry arms to the people. Public opinion is stifled in the State, and people are not associated in any form or at any stage in the Governments of the States. In addition to the British Indian taxation, which the States subjects are paying indirectly, the direct taxation in the States is extremely heavy, and the people in the States are oppressed by the weight of the burdens which they have to bear. People are never consulted in matters of legislation, taxation, and administration. Village communities are no longer in existence as they were in the ancient past, and the units of administration consist of villages whose population is deeply immersed in ignorance, and who have got no corporate or political existence. This is the condition of almost every State except a few, and they are situated in Southern India.

If we take Patiala, whose Ruler is the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, and which may be taken as typical of the foremost of the Indian States, what do we find? The whole service is appointed by the sweet will of the Ruler, and the subjects can hardly claim on the strength of their education and birthright to occupy the highest places. All the important offices are held by the nominees of the Ruler, and many of them are outsiders or relations of the Ruler. The condition of the people is one of abject poverty. There is not a single newspaper in the State, and there is no opportunity given to the people to ventilate their grievances. There is no right of discussion to the people. We are afraid that the people in that States cannot bear arms without a license, as is the case in British India. Public opinion is stifled in Patiala; there is no advisory or other representative institutions consisting of the people in the State and the people are not consulted in matters of taxation and legislation. The Budget estimates of the Maharaja are not open to the criticism of the people, there is no independent audit, and there is no check to control the vast personal expenditure of the Ruler. The people have no means to bring any direct pressure on the administration. Will Dr. Williams, the Foreign Minister of Patiala, explain these facts? We are ready amazed to find that he has described the condition of the people in the Indian States, in your paper, which does not find any corroboration in any of the Indian States. Is there free and primary education in Patiala, and what is the proportion of the expenditure on education of general means of the State? Will Dr. Williams show what the incidence of taxation in Patiala is, and now it compares with that in British India? What also, is the condition of the indebtedness of agriculturists in that State?

We only request him to mention how many States there exist to whom the description given by him, in your paper, really applies and would he enlighten us with their names?

The Indian States people are denied entirely the right of self-determination by their rulers. Will Dr. Williams state how many of the princes who are now carrying on a agitation in this country, have allowed their subjects to express their views on matters which form part of the enquiry before the Butler Committee? It is only the intelligentsia, which is so much despised by Dr. Williams, that has expressed views complaining about the indirect taxation levied upon the people by the policies pursued in British India. Such people the Indian Princes do not want to take into their confidence. When the princes are talking of federation are they alive to the fact that it is the people of every States who must have a voice in any scheme of federation? How many Indian Princes are willing to give their subjects a legitimate voice in any federation? It is, however, a matter of intense regret that when the princes are claiming self-determination, they want to suppress the voices of their own subjects and, to add insult to injury, one of the Ministers is describing the conditions of their people in a manner which has no foundation in fact, but which exists in imagination only. The Indian States people, therefore, demand the right of self-determination along with the subjects of British India, not only in matters of common interest, but also in matters of their internal administration. They do not want the Indian Princes to rule in an autocratic manner. They further claim that responsible governments must be established in the States and the Indian Rulers must be made to rule as constitutional monarchs

Sir,

"Self-Determination for the Indian States People".

I have read with interest the statement made by Professor Abhyankar in the article which you recently published. I fear that Professor Abhyankar represents a very small urban class of would be bureaucrats who resent the long-established dominance of the rural population in the Indian States.

In attacking Patiala-which I doubt if he has ever visited he has laid himself open to damaging comments upon his ignorance of facts. The administrative and technical services are recruited by a Selection Board: the Civil Service Regulations are on the lines of British India: the posts are incremental, permanent, and pensionable. The more important posts are gazetted 'by command of

the Ruler, just as here Commissions are signed by the King: but this imports no element of the Ruler's "sweet will." Ninety-five per cent of the appointments, high and low, are filled by State Subjects: the only outsiders are those who possess qualifications not locally available and their numbers are rapidly diminishing. There is no "abject poverty": the land is fertile and thanks to the foresight of previous Ruler, largely canal-irrigated. Taxation is so low that in some parts of the State the cultivators pay four units whereas just across the British border eight units is paid for the same kind of land. The educational budget is 8 p. c. of the total revenue: and the educational structure culminates in an entirely free first-grade college of 450 students—75 p. c. of whom are now State subjects. Education is compulsory in Municipal areas. Arms licences are issued for revenue purposes only: and the fees are so low that anyone can pay them: there is no policy of general disarmament. The people can at any time bring pressure to bear upon the administration, not merely by mass-meetings, but also by approaching the Ruler direct. In the Municipalities there is an electoral system: but elsewhere the people are represented by their own village councils, caste-committees, and craft and trade guilds.

I believe that Mr. Abhyankar's description of other Indian States is as wide of the mark as his erroneous assumptions about Patiala.

If the States are as he represents them to be; how is it that disturbances are so rare, and that the various religions live together in friendly fashion—which unfortunately they do not do in British India? And above all, how is it that as many people come every year from British India to live in the States as go from the States to live in British India?

Save for the fact that Mr. Abhyankar, by making personal attacks in the Indian Press upon some of the most popular and most enlightened Princes, has incurred the resentment of the subjects of these Princes. I really do not know what claim he has to be in touch with the population of the majority of the States at all. The "Indian States Subjects Conference" which he represents is mainly British Indian in its composition: and the leading member of his own delegation is himself a British Indian. Considering that British India now dominates the States, and desires to do so in future, these facts are significant. I can tell Mr. Abhyankar that of late resolutions have been passed in legislatures, advisory councils, and public meetings in various States to the effect that the people

prefer to settle any differences that may arise direct with their own governments without outside intervention. So far as relations with British India are concerned, the people want their governments to take a strong line.

Yours, etc.

15-12-28
The Editor,
"The Clarion".

(Sd.) L. F. RUSHBROOK WILLIAMS.

From

Professor G. R. ABHYANKAR, B. A., LL. B.

By the courtesy of the Editor I was enabled to read Dr. Williams letter and to send a reply as I am about to leave this country tomorrow.

Sir,

Dr. Williams makes out the defects of his case by attributing personal motives. According to his statement I have displeased the so-called enlightened and popular princes by my severe exposure of their administration and I have therefore incurred the resentment of the subjects of these princes. I cannot, therefore, under any circumstances hope to be a bureaucrat. Dr. Williams is a highly paid official and a real bureaucrat. I fail, therefore, to see what claim he has to speak for the rural population, or, generally, the people in the Indian States. I have however, to state that instead of there being a "long-established dominance of the rural population" there is a suppression of this population and they are struggling in poverty and misery. Dr. Williams evades plain answers to the questions, whether there is any press; or any recognised institution which is consulted in matters of taxation, administration and legislation; whether the budget of the State is open to criticism; whether there is a civil list checked by an independent audit so far as Patiala is concerned. Definite information of these vital points is studiously not supplied. On the other hand he is airily talking of his Civil Service, but it is to be noted that there is a Selection Board and not an open competitive system. In the case of a State Service 95 p. c. no doubt consist of menials, peons, clerks and other subordinates. The higher and the highly paid Service is not more than 5 p. c. and it is this which counts. Dr. Williams, however, does not say how many of this Service are State subjects, what qualifications they have, how many are the relations of the Rulers, and how

many are outsiders, and whether they are appointed by an open competitive test. Many of the Indian princes have adopted the pompous forms and nomenclature of the British system and the formula 'by command of the Ruler' is a part of the same. But Dr. Williams shows his ignorance that in British India the appointments are by command, of the King no doubt, but they are always in accordance with the wishes of the constitutional advisers of His Majesty. Are there any such constitutional advisers whose opinion is binding upon the Ruler of Patiala? We know that there is none. Similarly, about land tax. If Dr. Williams had given the area under the plough and the assessment recovered by the State, and the average percentage of unencumbered estates in every village, that would have been useful. Also, if he had given the percentage of the school-going children to the population and the amount of money spent over it; and the total extent of expenditure incurred by Municipalities in the State, that would have convinced anyone how hollow and how unreal the progress is. Can Dr. Williams state what caste committees, crafts and trade guilds, and village councils are vested with any political power; are there any laws passed enfranchising and empowering these bodies, have they exercised any power of advising the ruler in matters of legislation, taxation and administration? We request Dr. Williams to supply this information publicly or refer to any sources from which it can be had in an authoritative manner, and then it would be possible to reply upon the vague and unmeaning generalisations that he has made. Village councils, caste committees, and trade guilds only deal with the religious or quasi religious questions. They never discuss political matters and they are not permitted to do so. In the inquiry which was held about disputes between Patiala and Nabha, considerable evidence has been recorded and findings have been given by a judicial Officer. Leaving aside Nabha, if the Foreign Minister of Patiala can publish the remarks of the Officer so far as they relate to Patiala, everyone will know the condition of the administration in that State.

Dr. Williams is labouring under a total misapprehension about the absence of communal disturbances in the Indian States. There is despotic rule and every agitation is suppressed in no time. Where a ruler is a fanatic like His Exalted Highness the Nizam, riots like those at Gulburga have taken place. The real genesis of the frequency of the communal riots during recent years is the differential treatment and preferences shown to communities by communal representations, special electorates and special privileges they are the causes

which are these dissensions. If equality of citizenship rights and equal treatment to all is firmly established, these disturbances would be as rare as they were in the past.

As regards the objection of Dr. Williams that the Indian States Subjects Conference and its leaders are not representatives of the people, it is too childish to reply. It is a threadbare argument which the bureaucracy in British India was using against the Nationalist movement in the early days of the Congress. The British Indian leaders are far ahead of us in political education and the experience of political agitation. Leaders of Indian States people feel proud to be under their guidance. They feel that the interest of the States people and those of British India are in no way conflicting. It is really a matter of great pity that under the advice of men like Dr. Williams the Indian princes are cultivating feelings of such hostility towards British Indians, the sons of the same Motherland. How unpatriotic and ill-advised this tendency is, it is not necessary to state.

—CLARION JANUARY 29.

Ex-Viceroy and the Indian States.

Wednesday's debate on Lord Olivier's motion in the House of Lords served to illustrate the importance of the Indian State problem in its relation to Indian Swaraj. Lord Olivier, looking forward to the establishment in British India of a representative form of government responsible to the people of British India, saw that the Indian States can justly object to being controlled by a representative assembly on which they have no representation, and recognised that the State rulers naturally prefer to maintain their present relations with the British Government and the Crown. He showed, however, a wellfounded dislike for the autocratic system of government now in force in almost all the States, and he raised the question whether some steps should not be taken towards establishing a less arbitrary form of Government in the States, so that they may more easily fit in with the reconstituted Governments of British India. Two ex-Viceroy's, Lord Harding and Lord Reading, then had their say. Both complained that Lord Olivier's motion was premature; both emphasised the loyalty of the Indian Princes to the Crown and their services to the British Government. Lord Harding, admitting that the forms of government in British India were more advanced than in the States, asserted nevertheless that there was a general tendency to progress, and that as a whole the

States were well governed and met the needs of the population. Lord Reading explained that the paramount Power has the right to interfere with the internal affairs of the State in the case of gross maladministration, but not otherwise. He earnestly deprecated the suggestion that the Government of India should in some way intervene to place the government of the States on a constitutional basis. He held that we ought not to seek to force reform on these sovereign States. Our aim had been and should be to encourage reform from within.

The pronouncements of these ex-Viceroy is interesting because of the extreme anxiety which they display to avoid saying anything offensive to the Princes. In the same way we find the European members of the principal Government pronouncing, against their better judgment, in favour of the retention of communal electorates simply out of fear of giving offence to the revolutionaries. It is evident that the uncompromising attitude adopted by Indian Nationalists has already taught us to cherish the friendship of all possible allies. With all respect to certain able and public-spirited rulers who do not like the prospect of an alliance with the Indian Princes against Indian Nationalism, it is, we believe, a fact that there has been some improvement during the last twenty-five years in the administration of the typical State, but we are not sure whether this improvement has kept pace with the improvement in British India. We very much doubt the accuracy of Lord Reading's assertion that the States as a whole are well governed and that they meet the needs of their population. Is this true of Hyderabad, with its population of eleven millions? Even in the best governed States everything depends on the efficiency and integrity of a bureaucracy, checked and encouraged by an able and public-spirited ruler. Change the ruler and the efficiency and integrity of the bureaucracy may rapidly be undermined. Lord Reading suggests that constitutional reform should come from within. So it would come, and that quickly, if the Government of India were not under an obligation to aid the Prince against all effective forms of agitation. While deprecating external pressure publicly applied, Lord Reading would probably approve of the private use of all the implements a Viceroy wields. No doubt this has sometimes done good service in the past, and one may hope that it will be even more useful in the future. But it is impossible to ignore the fact that the Princes are not content with their existing relations with the Viceroy and the Government of India. They are struggling to get their sovereign rights defined and legally recognised. This would

immensely strengthen their position and render them independent of the Viceroy's goodwill, and it is difficult to imagine an autocratic ruler agreeing to surrender his authority when the Government of India protects him against undue pressure from his subjects and the law protects him from the Government of India.

There can be no true Swaraj for India unless the Indian States are included in the scheme. If they are excluded the British Government will be required to retain military control in order to protect them against the encroachments of British India. But the Princes dare not take part in a Swarajist federation, for fear that the new controlling authority would be too democratic to be willing to assist them in coercive rebellious subjects. It is easy for us to use the States as a reason for prolonging our raj in India; it is not so easy for us to offend the Princes who offer us friendship, for the sake of complying with the wishes of the Nationalists who proclaim themselves our enemies. It might be well if the Nationalists took note of the fact and considered whether their present aggressive tactics are calculated to attain their objective in the quickest time and at the least cost. But whether the generalship of the Nationalists is wise or foolish, the objective will ultimately be attained if man-power is sufficient to attain that and the Indian Princes should not dream that we can hold the trenches for ever for their sake. For their only hope of surviving lies in the support they can get from their own subjects, and they cannot do better than ponder over the words recently addressed to the Maharaja of Benaras by Mr. Malcolm Hailey. "The place which the States will occupy in the India of the future must depend less on treaties and formal articles in the Constitution than on the development they attain in their own realms. In international and inter-State relations the logic of circumstances and the living dynamic facts will always in the end be decisive against a dead document. Again, the guarantee for the permanence of the Princes' rule lies less in the protection of a sovereign Power than in the appreciation of their own subjects."

Manchester Guardian. (8-12-28).

Absolute Rulers in India.

The Question of British Responsibility.

CASE FOR THE PEOPLE.

The Indian States People's Delegation have issued a communication on the debate on the Government of the Indian States raised by Lord Oliver in the House of Lords, in which they state:

Lord Oliver expressly stated that there were two important questions at the present moment which deserve serious consideration. First, what is to be the relations of the Indian princes in any revised Constitution or with his Majesty the King? Secondly, will it be possible for his Majesty's Government to maintain in its fullness the present absolute autocracy of the Indian princes? Neither of these come within the purview either of the Simon Commission or of the Butler Committee. The Indian princes are complaining that by reason of the policies pursued in British India the interests of the Indian States are being prejudiced every day in matters of common concern, like Customs, commercial services, exchange, monopolies of salt, opium, and Excise. The Montagu-Chelmsford Report has suggested the bringing into existence of a senatorial institution consisting of the representatives of the Indian States and British Indian Legislature, but no efforts have been made to bring into existence such an organisation during these ten years, and it is doubtful whether even the Butler Committee can tackle this problem. The Butler Committee, as pointed out by Lord Olivier, does not even deal with all the Indian States, but has confined the scope of the inquiry only to 125 States. There remain 400 other States whose views are not being considered by the Butler Committee and who are not even supplied with the questionnaire. The attempt, therefore, to shelve this question until the reports of these two bodies were received by the Government was not very encouraging and was not justified.

The Point of Intervention.

Most of the States, as pointed out by Lord Oliver, are arbitrary and absolute Governments. Everything depends on the absolute will of the sovereign. This is the grave situation which is now being resented by the people of the Indian States. The Government of India has accepted responsibility for the good government of these people. Lord Reading, in his reply to the Naza, observed that the varying degrees of internal sovereignty which the Indian rulers enjoy are also subject to the due exercise by the Paramount Power of the responsibility of taking remedial action to secure the welfare of the people of the States. We, however, now find Lord Reading laying down the old doctrine that this responsibility can be exercised only when there is gross maladministration. We respectfully ask: "Why should the people be made to suffer maladministration until it reaches the maximum standard of unbearableness?" Which in political language is described as gross. Lord Reading seems to

think that interference would abrogate the right of internal sovereignty which the princes enjoy in their internal affairs. But is not this right of internal sovereignty subject to the limitation of maintaining good Government? Would the Paramount Power look on with indifference if the subjects of any ruler rise in revolt if he denies them the right of free speech and free discussion, or if he squanders the resources of the State for his personal use, or if he does not provide independent judiciary, or if the people do not enjoy security of property and liberty of person? Whatever might have been the state of things in the past, the press and platform in British India and the exercise of political rights enjoyed by the British Indian people have created aspirations in the subjects of Indian States for constitutional Government. If a prince declines to reform his administration, can the subjects force him to do so? Will the Paramount Power remain indifferent or assist the ruler in suppressing their endeavours to gain constitutional liberty? This is the main problem which has to be faced.

The noble Lords referred to the solitary example of Mysore, but we have to remember that out of 700 there are not more than half a dozen States like that of Mysore. Active efforts are necessary, and even diplomatic pressure on the part of the Paramount Power, to induce the Indian princes to make their administrations approximate to the standard of efficiency demanded by enlightened public opinion elsewhere. The Paramount Power, therefore, must lay down the policy of constitutional reform to the Indian princes. They can at least encourage it by showing their appreciation only of those who are adopting modern standards of Government. The bestowal of honours, the invitations to State functions, the selection to the Imperial Conferences or the League of Nations should only be extended to those who are actually constitutional rulers. A declaration of a policy similar to the pronouncement of 1917, and honest efforts to encourage the rulers to faithfully follow it, would bring contentment to 78 millions of the Indian States and would alone absolve the Paramount Power of its responsibilities in this respect.

Indian Princes and the Reforms.

Sir L. Scott on Treaty Rights.

Sir Leslie Scott spoke on Wednesday night at the Junior Constitutional Club on Indian constitutional reforms. Sir Montague Barlow, chairman of the Political Council of the club, was in the chair.

Sir Leslie Scott said that, having finished his work of putting the case of the Indian Prince before the Harcourt Butler Committee, he was free to speak without any of the limitations that might have attached to his position as an advocate. In British India, he continued the Nationalist movement was first promoted by able Indian, who resented their exclusion from place and power; only very gradually did it concern itself with politics; but by degree the promoters began to take of themselves as representatives of the people, which they were not! The cry for democratic institutions was largely artificial and was greatly stimulated by the Wilson cry of self-determination.

There was undoubtedly real agitation in India after the War, mainly due to high prices and economic distress; and this, coupled with Moslem suspicious about Turkey and general Post-War unease, developed into a formidable menace, the worst crisis since the Mutiny. To meet this crisis the late Mr. Montagu forced on a reluctant and even suspicious House of Commons the Montagu-Chelmsford constitutional reform in British India; but in trying to find a panacea for the troubles of British India—two-thirds of the the whole—every one forgot the native Princes, the remaining one-third.

The Indian Princes had treaty rights with the British Crown, and had been guaranteed their independence by Queen Victoria in various pronouncements. But in all the developments in British India, the native Princes had risked serious diminution of position, and even economic loss. Take the tariff which the Swarajist had recently been allowed to impose on imported cotton and steel goods coming into India. As these goods were largely not capable of production in India, the tax fell mainly on the Indian consumers by a rise in price—the third in the native States, as well as the two-thirds in British India. Yet the native Princes had no share in imposing the tariff or setting the rates; and still worse, the native States did not receive one penny of the proceeds of the high tariff now being imposed. The interests of the native States were largely identical with those of the British manufacturer and importer. ?

The British Crown and Government were bound to the native Princes by a series of treaty contracts, perpetual in character, which could not be repudiated by either side. The essence of the contract was that, in return for her paramountcy Britain had bound herself to protect the native States, and that entailed a perpetual obligation

to retain in India a force sufficient to carry out that obligation. The protection of the native States, like the protection of the 50,000,000 of untouchables, was a trust which Great Britain could not relinquish, even if she would.

The Indian Princes were loyal, but their contractual bargain was with Britain and the British Crown; they would never submit to being ruled by so-called democratic assemblies set up at Delhi. If the British Army were withdrawn, the *intelligentsia* of British India would be at once subdued by the fighting forces of the native States.

The native Princes had no desire to be obstructive; they were willing to come into any proper development on federal lines; but that would involve some impartial tribunal to see that justice was done as between the native States and British India; and also a material strengthening of the power of the British Central Government at Delhi, on the lines of the valuable report of the European associations recently submitted to the Simon Commission?

Future of Indian States

Criticism of Sir Leslie Scott's Views.

(BY G. R. ABHYANKAR.)

[A reply was sent to the above to the Times and Daily Telegraph. But it was not published. It was then sent to the Chronicle.]

Sir Leslie Scott does not seem to have shaken off the limitation which the advocacy of the Princes' cause imposed on him since he repeated the self-same arguments before the Junior Constitutional Club which he had expressed in the 'Law Quarterly Review' when he was engrossed with the Princes' case. He urges direct relations of the States with the Crown and the control of the Indian Army by Britain for the protection of the States. His scheme published in April last embodied the same views. These have been severely criticised in the All-Parties Report and the press in India. The fact that the Princes have abandoned the scheme clearly shows its fantastic character and impracticable nature.

False Charge

Sir Leslie has never mixed with educated Indians and seems quite ignorant of the work which they are doing for the masses,

Otherwise, he would never have said that they are not the representatives of the people. The Montford Report clearly states that the intelligentsia is the creation peculiarly of British rule, that the educated Indian has come to the front by hard work, that it is he who has advocated and worked for political progress. "In Municipal and University work, he has taken a useful and creditable share. We find him organising not for political end alone, but for various forms of public and social service. He has come forward and done valuable work in relieving famine and distress by floods, in keeping order at fairs, in helping pilgrims and in promoting co-operative credit. He is beginning to turn his attention more to the improvement of agriculture and industry and above all, he is active in promoting education and sanitation." Is he not, therefore, the representative of the people? Does not the Reform constitution recognize the Wilsonian cry of self-determination? The steps taken to give effect to this principle may be inadequate, but the fact remains that it is acted upon. This itself shows that the agitation for this was not artificial but genuine.

Treaty Rights of Princes

Nobody desires to violate the treaty rights of the princes. But we have to remember that there is not a single treaty which guarantees to any Prince the right to rule over his subjects as an absolute monarch. The subordinate position which every treaty imposes on the Indian rulers carries with it the obligation to secure enlightened government to the people. Many treaties expressly lay down duties on the Indian Princes to secure contentment of the people. Who is to enforce these obligations? The claim for unqualified sovereignty even in the domestic affairs of a State is untenable.

Whose is the Real Control?

The Indian States have suffered diminution of their power and even loss of revenue in the past. But this was caused by the agents of the Crown entirely British in character who controlled the Indian States. The subordinate position laid down in the Interpretation Act was brought about by the Crown. The abolition of inter-State transit duties and customs duties, the closing of mints in the States, the abolition of manufacture of salt and opium and cessation of jurisdiction over territories occupied by railway lines was all the work of the British agents of the Crown long before the reforms of 1921. The democracy had nothing to do with them.

In recent years, protective duties are levied, but they are for the development and growth of national industries. Both British and Indian States are sure to benefit by the same. The interest of Indian States are not at all indetical with those of the British manufacturer an importer.

Governor-Generals' Responsibility

Under the present constitution, the Governor-General-in-Council is responsible for the protection of the Indian States and these undertakings will be binding on the future Commonwealth of India. If Dominion Status is granted, the future Government will be invested with the power of defence. Protection of India from foreign invasion or enemy will be the first concern of the future Government and British India and Indian States shall have to be protected from this common danger. The States cannot be left out of this orbit. We fail to see why there is any nervousness on the part of the Princes on this score. Are they afraid of the British Indian people? If so, we have the assurance of this distinguished Counsel of the Princes that the fighting forces of the States would subdue them at once.

No need for Nervousness

Where then is the necessity of transferring responsibility of defence from the future Government of India to Britain? Does Sir Leslie mean that the future democratic Government should be divested of this power? Has responsible Government any meaning without the power of defence? The relations of the Indian States have never been directly with the King in Parliament. All treaties have been concluded with the Governor-General-in-Council. The executive Government of the future under Dominion Status would vest in the King and would be carried on by a constitutional Governor-General representing the Crown and assisted by responsible ministers. All the present obligations will be binding on the future constitution. With a constitutional Governor-General, and with the supreme authority of the Crown behind him, why should the Princes feel any insecurity from the future Government.

The following letter of the Maharaja of Patiala would show the nature of the agitation which the Indian princes are carrying on in England. The letter appeared in the Sunday Express along with the Photo of the Maharaja with jewellery worth a million rupees on his person. We do not know whether the Editor wished to bring home to

his readers the statement of the Maharaja "We have to work pretty hard for our living and we are not as rich as we are often represented to be."

We're Not Nearly As Rich As You Think.

By The Maharajah of Patiala.

Many people in England seem to have very curious ideas about us Indian princes—why, I do not quite know. To judge from what appears in the newspapers, we have nothing else to do except live in luxury and spend money with a shovel.

I am sure that many of us wish that we were as carefree and as rich as we are often represented to be! But like every one else in these times, we have to work pretty hard for our living; and although most of us are not exactly poor men, even our resources could scarcely survive the strain of money at the rate we are accused of doing!

Can it be that in these post-war days, when most people have not much money to spend, the editors of newspapers believe that their readers like to hear about princes who spend lavishly? Or is it that the great business houses, the hotels, the railways, the shipping companies, find that the patronage of the ruling princes attracts other wealthy persons, and are thus anxious to draw attention to our doing?

However this may be, there is no doubt of the fact that many wild stories are circulated about us. I have found by personal experience that I cannot take three or four rooms at an hotel without being accused of having engaged an entire floor, or "the millionaires suit"—whatever that may be.

If I bring with me from India the valet who looks after my clothes people say that I am accompanied by hundreds of servants; and if I give an ordinary dinner to a few friends it is alleged that the dishes are brought from India or from Egypt—upon the Magic Carpet, I suppose!

All this has its amusing side, of course, but it also has its more serious side. We ruling princes of India cannot buy a standard model motor-car without afterwards reading that it has an ivory steering wheel, or a jewelled carburetter, or a completely fitted cocktail shaker in the back axle. I am myself interested in gun-dogs, and have done what I can to popularise their breeding in India.

I also show a good deal in this country. But I cannot buy a dog at the ordinary market rate without being told, to my great surprise, that I have "given a blank cheque" for it, or that I have spent £10,000 on dogs! In all seriousness, I would ask whether this kind of thing does not amount to something like persecution. We all of us love England and the English people; but we begin to fear that the continued circulation of stories like these may make it very difficult for us to come here.

For the picture given of the life we are supposed to lead is so untrue that it really threatens to interfere with our real work, which is to govern our States in the interests of our subjects, and to strengthen the tie which binds the great Continent of India to Great Britain. Our own subjects are contented and loyal to us—we could not rule if they were not, for their devotion and their affection are the sole support of our thrones. But outside our States, in British India, we have enemies; because we stand so firmly for the connection with Great Britain, and because we and our statesmen, with centuries of experience behind us, believe that political advance must come steadily and sanely, as people are ready for it.

These stories about our lavish expenditure, and these descriptions of our goings on, which, if true, would argue that we were not merely irresponsible, but out of our senses, are a dangerous weapon in the hands of our enemies. Our people do not believe them; but our influence—which we desire to use wholeheartedly for the good of the Empire—extends far beyond our boundaries and into British India. This influence is weakened when those who do not know the facts read all these picturesque inventions.

I have already said that ruling princes these days have to work hard. We are not country gentlemen or leisured landholders, we are, the active heads of large and complicated governments. We have our cabinets, our councils, our public services, our laws and our law courts, our police and our military, our medical and our military our medical and our educational systems, are all quite distinct from those of British India—as distinct as the institutions of Belgium are from the institutions of France.

In these times, when the functions of government have been extended to cover so many of the activities of the individual citizen, is it a small thing to rule millions of people? The administrative system of all the larger States is, it is true, a smooth-running machine; but our subjects are not content to be governed by a machine;

they must have access to us personally; they must bring us their grievances; they must be assured that what they are expected to do is really our order, and that we really want them to do it. The upshot is that we have far less time to ourselves, I suppose, than any other class of people.

Will people in England try to realise what the true position is? Because if they did, things would be much easier for us, and we should be better able to pull our weight in the Empire's boat. Very few of us ever come to England merely for pleasure.

We mostly come on some Imperial mission, or very occasionally for reasons of health. We do our work as well as we can, and very hard work it is. We do not like being told in the Press that our life is "one perpetual joyride, punctuated by bouts of insane extravagance."

The Letter of the Maharaja of Patiala in the Sunday Express of the 21st October is amazing and contains a travesty of facts. The Maharaja says that he is not as rich as people think, but the grim humour lies in the photo which accompanies his letter and he wears on his person jewellery worth two million pounds. The Maharaja says that he has to work pretty hard for his living. May we know if he has earned a single farthing by sheer dint of his labour during his life. The maharaja complains about the curious stories about his lavish expenditure in this country. People here are aware of the doings of these princes during their stay here on their so called imperial mission. The stories of Mr. A are yet fresh in their memories. The best way to convince people of the modest expenditure of these princes in this country is to publish their accounts and have them independently audited. These will show what these Maharajas are spending on their motors, their valets, their German musicians, hotels, dinner parties and their pet dogs. There is absolutely no representative assembly in Patiala. The budget estimates are not published for the information of the people. They are not allowed to criticise the budget. His subjects do not know what the Maharaja has been spending for his personal use. There is no independent audit, and yet the Maharaja wants that his mere word should be believed. The Maharaja complains that he is overworked in his duties of governing the state. The Maharaja would certainly be considerably relieved if he takes his people into his confidence and shares the responsibilities of government with them. But the Maharaja wants to rule as an autocrat and does not wish to part

with his power. The Maharaja says that it is not a small thing to rule millions of his people. Every despot is doing this. The Princes under the protection of the British Government and secure in their sheltered position can rule any millions of people and hold them in sujection. The Maharaja says that his subjects are contented. Would the Maharaja allow any independent inquiry like the Butler Committee to investigate what his subjects feel about his rule and what grievances they have? The people of his state are denied elementary rights of citizenship. They do not enjoy liberty of the press or freedom of discussion. There is not a single newspaper worth the name in Patiala and still the Maharaja claims to speak as to what his people feel and think. The Maharaja says that his whole time is taken up by the engrossing duties of governing his people. Will the Maharaja consent to the publication of his report of Mr. Justice Stuart who held an inquiry about disputes between him and the ex-ruler of Nabha? And we are sure this report will convey a correct idea of the preoccupations of the Maharaja and his joy-rides. The Imperial Government has declared responsible government as the goal of British Indian administration. The Maharaja is not prepared even after the lapse of 11 years since the pronouncement of 1917 to declare his intention to whole heartedly adopt this imperial policy and try to follow it by progressive realisation in his state, and yet he is talking of pulling his weight in the Empire's boat.

(This was sent to be Sunday Express which declined to publish the same.)

Keeping Faith with Indian Princes.

Maharajah of Nawanagars views.

" The Times " 8th November 1928.

Lord Beauchamp presided at a luncheon of the National Liberal Club yesterday, when the Maharajah of Nawanager (Ranjitsinhji) spoke on " Playing the Game " and on the position and policy of the Indian Princes.

The Maharajah said he hoped he should not be disappointing them if he made no comment on recent developments in the grand old game of cricket or on the changes which time had brought since he last batted on an English ground. He wanted to talk to them of another game, which all of them who belonged to the Empire ought

to play in the true spirit of sportsmanship. He wished to appeal, not to one political party, but to the British electorate as a whole. He wanted Indian subjects to be treated on non-party lines and all to unite in seeing that the Indian States were fairly treated. He felt sure that the lesson that treaties and engagements were more than "scraps of paper," to be torn up when occasion suited, was borne in upon the Empire by the Great War. Their treaty relations were with the Crown, and it was with their help that the country now called British India became part of the Empire.

After the Mutiny, in which 99 per cent. of the Princes helped to maintain British authority, Queen Victoria acknowledged the sanctity of the treaties with the Princes and pledged her word to the preservation of their rights and privileges. The Government of India, however, was made responsible for two sets of duties: to govern British India, and to manage the everyday relationship between the Crown and the States. The former duty had been discharged in a manner of which all Englishmen could justly be proud. The servants of the Crown had been so keen to do their best for British India that the right and the interests of the States had been overlooked, with consequences which were in some respects disastrous. Pressure was brought upon them to conclude agreement in commercial and economic matters which were entirely for the benefit of British India. At the request of the Princes their representations on these subjects were now under consideration by a Committee presided over by Sir Harcourt Butler.

In this country attention seemed to be paid to the Indian Princes chiefly when one of them misbehaved himself. (Laughter.) There were flaring headlines when a Prince was deposed for alleged complicity in a murder or for seditious activities. The Princes wished justice to be done; but they felt that in these cases the action of Government would carry fuller conviction if the matters at issue were duly investigated by some impartial tribunal instead of everything being done *in camera*.

The 108 Princes who were members of the Council of Princes were quite reasonable men: after all they were human beings although they were Princes—(cheers)—and it was human beings that they wished to be approached. They sought the happiness and the welfare of their people. He wished time permitted of his telling something of the good work done by the Princes in developing the administration of the State in the last half-century, in spite of draw-

backs and handicaps—work of which they could well be proud. Economically, owing to arrangements pressed on them by the Governmen of India, they laboured under many disadvantages, as for instance, in respect to railways, Custom duties, Excise, and salt revenue. The 80,000,000 of the Indian States were indirectly taxed for the benefit of British India without reciprocal advantages. He said advisedly that they did not want India split up into two parts like Ireland. They wanted India to be one happy home, the States living side by side with British India and being allowed to breathe freely and work out their own salvation under the agis of the British Crown.

The Indian Princes asked the British public to help them by getting these questions into a right focus with a view to action thereon, should it be necessary. The Princes had hopes that by the work of the Butler Committee and the wisdom of the Governmen of India things would be put right; but if it came to the last throw they would appeal to the Houses of Parliament, which after all had the last word in the governance of India. He knew enough of Englishmen, having lived with them for so many years, to cherish the conviction that nothing but justice would be done. To that end he asked them to exert themselves to see that the word of Great Britain, which was pledged to the Princes, was not broken; that, just as they had played the game and would continue to play the game by Great Britain with unswerving loyalty and attachment to the Crown, so Britain would play the game by them in the spirit of true sportsmanship. (Cheers.)

Indian States Inquiry.

Princes' view of the Position.

NO "FRANK DISCUSSION."

At the final sitting of the Butler Committee, which took place yesterday at Montagu House, Sir Leslie Scott concluded his speech on behalf of the Indian Princes.

The Maharaja of Patiala afterwards reviewed the Princes' case.

Sir Harcourt Butler, the chairman, thanked the Princes for their help, and assured them that in preparing its report the Committee, would take the most careful cognisance of the suggestions made.

On the eve of his departure for India, the Maharaja of Patiala, Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, has given Reuter's Agency on behalf of the Princes in London a statement on the position in reply to questions asking for his opinion on the work of the Committee. He said :

" We are sorry that the Committee did not see its way to allow the sessions to be public, because the Princes are anxious that the large Imperial questions connected with their present position should be adequately discussed and indeed, appreciated by the people of Britain. So far as the Committee itself is concerned, we have had a patient hearing. But there has been nothing approaching a frank round-table discussion, and we have not had the least indication whether the Committee is disposed to accept or reject the contentions we are putting forward. Had there been such a discussion, we should have been able to meet and remove any objections which were urged.

" As it is, we are rather in the dark, and in the absence of any knowledge of the difficulties which the Committee may feel, we have not been able either to give them as much assistance as we should have wished, or to put forward our case in the fullest detail."

"Infringements of Rights."

To the question whether any new point as regards the Princes' case had been brought forward, or any striking one omitted, the Maharaja replied :

"It has been known to us, and, indeed, admitted by the Government of India, that there have been infringements of the rights secured to the States by treaties, engagements and other agreements. But we have now discovered that the range of these infringements is far greater even than we ourselves ever imagined.

" This has resulted from the consideration of evidence supplied by the large number of States who asked the Standing Committee to represent them. It has further been found that many of the subsidiary agreements, between the Government of India and the States, were not voluntary agreements on the part of the States at all. When not obtained under direct pressure, which often took the form of a threat of displeasure many of them were obtained when the Government of India were in the position of trustees for a minority administration.

"Another point that has been brought out is that the transaction of daily business between the Government and the States has not been on the basis of the strict legal rights of the parties. This we have always believed ourselves but we now know it to be a fact on the basis of the authoritative legal opinion which we have obtained from some of the most distinguished counsel in Britain. Indeed, it may be doubted whether the Government of India have ever realised the limitations on their power imposed by those rights of the States the existence of which has now been established on a legal basis."

To the question, "Would you have preferred the Government of India to have been represented at this stage?" He replied:

"Most certainly: partly because we could then have dealt with any difficulties or objections, and partly because we would then have had the opportunity of knowing what their own records contain. We asked for access to these records, but were denied it."

"Are there any points," the Maharaja was asked, "as regards the Princes' case that have not been submitted?" To this he replied:

"Subject to the transactions just explained, we think we have covered a good deal of ground. But we have not put forward any definite proposals for new constitutional machinery designed to remedy the grievances of which we complain. We have not done so because we realise that the Indian States Committee is not authorised to negotiate with us. When the time comes to put forward these proposals to the body authorised to entertain them and discuss them with us, we shall do so."

Round-table Conference.

"As regards the next step, we shall ask for a round-table conference with His Majesty's Government for the purpose of the new machinery which is called for, and which will have to be set up by both parties in agreement. But if the Indian States Committee does not admit our contentions as regards the new constitutional position, our next step must necessarily be to ask for an authoritative decision upon that issue, and particularly as the Government of India and ourselves are parties equally interested."

In reply to the question, "What have you to say about the position of the Indian States People's Delegation, their status, and their exclusion from the Committee?" the Maharaja said:

"While the Standing Committee represents eighty-eight full-powered States and a large number of smaller States, it is impossible to say how many States or their subjects this delegation represents. Intellectually and socially its members belong to the class which supplies the political ranks of British India; but we are unable to say what claim they possess to represent any single Indian State. Otherwise, we are sorry that the members of the deputation, like other members of the public, were excluded."

Daily Telegraph 28-11-28.

Treat Indian States as Mandated Territories.

Prof. Abhyankar's Views in Geneva Newspaper.

One is aware that British India is composed of two altogether different kinds of territories. One part of India, the largest, containing about two-thirds of the population, is directly governed by England; but there remain other territories, containing about 80 million inhabitants which are under the direct rule of their ancient Princes. Some of these States are of considerable size: the Nizam for instance has a population equal to that of France. England's traditional policy has been to leave to these Princes entire domestic liberty, provided only that they are loyal to the protecting power. England, having deprived them of all their military forces, implicitly assures the Princes of her protection against all inner and outer dangers which may beset them. The result is that these sovereigns feel themselves entirely free in regard to their subjects and that some abuse this freedom.

This at least is what we are told by the General-Secretary of the people subject to the independent Princes of India. Prof. Abhyankar, who has recently passed through Geneva on his way home from London, where he had gone to explain to the members of the British Parliament the position of the people for whom he speaks.

Position of Indian States.

The Indian States, he told us, are in a very backward position. Everywhere the monarchy is still absolute. The people are denied the most elementary rights of a citizen. There exist neither personal liberty, nor security of property, nor an independent judiciary nor freedom of press or speech, nor representative institution, nor

responsible government; and all the resources of the State, are without any check, at the disposal of the Prince. The Protecting Power looks upon the States merely as a means to further its own interests. She has deprived the Rajahs completely of their military forces and by way of compensation gives them an unlimited indulgence to use or abuse their autocratic power over their own people. She interferes in no manner in the internal affairs of the States nor does she permit the people of the States to resort to any direct action. As a result the people are powerless subject to the double despotism of their own sovereigns and of the protecting power.

In British India the people receive education. They have gained their political rights and are demanding their full-self determination. As a consequence of Great War the policy of the British Government was radically modified. Responsible government has been promised to British India and the first steps in that direction have already been taken. The British Indian people, however, are not satisfied with the measure of progress made and demand the immediate grant of Dominion Status.

Demands of States Subjects.

What we demand is that the Indian States should be treated, as is the British India under the British administration. No democratic constitution can in this latter part of the Empire normally function, if an identical policy is not applied to both parts of India. For this reason we demand that the protecting power should force the Indian Princes to give up their autocratic form of government and adopt the form of responsible government. If the States' people obtain the same political rights as those of British India, a federal organization of both would become possible. If however, the protecting power does not wish to take any initiative in this sense, we demand at least, that she should not interfere in the domestic affairs of the States and that she should let the people force their Princes to grant them their political rights. The people of these States are all the more fitter for these rights since a great number of them have been educated in the schools of British India. The members of the League of Nations can help us in this respect since we merely ask that the British Government should treat the Indian States as mandated territories and moral pressure in this sense on the part of the member of the League of Nations would be extremely helpful.

[This has appeared in "Journal de Genève," a well known daily paper of Geneva, much read in the League of Nations circles.]

—*Continental Press.*

La Jeune-Republicque.

(*Paris, January 18th 1929.*)

An Indian Professor tells us the political Misery of the people of India bent under an archaic autocracy.

A robust looking man, past fifty, with a complexion of bronze and engaging features which bespeak energy an Indian Professor, he has come to Europe and made a point to visit the *Jeune-Republicque* which he knows for its devotion to all ideas of Justice, freedom and Peace.....

He wishes to interest us in the Indian cause, that British India, where one can already descry a development towards political freedom: but especially in the cause of the Indian States, still bent under the crushing weight of a suspicious and avaricious autocracy.

We ask at once Prof. G. R. Abhyankar.

Q. What is the condition of the Indian States ?

A. The Indian states, replies Prof. G. R. Abhyankar, are in a desparate condition, as regards recognition of Political rights; in an altogether backward condition, viz. that of an absolute Monarchy, where no one possesses even the most elementary rights of citizenship; no security of property; no independent Judiciary: no libetry of press or assembly; no form of representative government; and the revenues of the States are seized by their Rulers.

Q. Does the British government not interfere ?

A. It uses the Indian States for its own purposes. It has deprived the Rulers of their military forces, but in return given them license to rule the people in the most autoocratic manner. It does not interfere in the domestic affairs of the States.

A. question comes involuntarily to our lips :

Q. How do you explain that the people do not rebel against such autocracy and force the government to establish a constitutional regime?

Sadly, our Professor replies :

A. The people have no means of turning to direct action. The Central Government has promised the Rulers protection both against invasion from without and revolution from within. Thus the people are powerless and suffering under the double despotism of its Rulers and of the British.

Q. But is the position in British India any better?

A. In British India the means for education exist. People there have claimed their political rights long ago. The consequences of the Great War and the propaganda of Liberal Party have enabled British Indians to modify radically the policy of the British Government. Responsible government is already promised and British India will never rest content, until it is granted Dominion Status, i. e. a status, as enjoyed by the other Dominions of the British Empire.

Q. And for the States, what is your demand?

A. We wish that the Indian States should be administered like British India. We, therefore, insist that the Central Government ought to force the Indian Rulers to give up the autocratic form of their Government and adopt that of responsible government. If Indian States' People were granted the same political rights, as possessed by the citizens of British India, a federation of the whole of India would become feasible.

The Professor pauses for a moment and with a most serious expression declares :

If the British Government will not undertake to act, nothing remains but for the Indian State subjects to be allowed to obtain their political rights themselves.

The words of the Professor are spoken in a most moving tone.

Q. Your situation seems to be very mournful indeed, we reply.

A. Yes : for we have got four different kinds of opposition to deal with. The officials do not want to lose any of their preroga-

tives in controlling the Indian States. The Ruling Princes are jealous of their absolute power. British Indians desire that the States should remain in this State of inferiority, even if a democratic constitution were forced upon them, whilst the Indian States' subjects desire that each State should have the same form of government and claim the same political status as that which the citizens of British India enjoy or will enjoy.

We put a last question to the Professor :

Q. What can other countries do for the Indian States ?

A. The League of Nations can certainly help us. The right of people to self-determination is now-a-days recognised. We demand that the British Government should treat us as mandated territories and that it should enquire from time to time into the political and administrative conditions of our States. The moral pressure, which the members of the League of Nations could exert, would materially help to liberate the 78 million States' subjects which today still find themselves in a political servitude incompatible with civilization

Marcel Levie.

[La Jeune Republique is a leading republican paper in Paris]

The International Life.

THE COMPLAINT OF THE INDIAN STATES' PEOPLE.

It is almost constantly that we received from India the echoes of complaints of the masses not only against the attitude of the Sovereign Power towards the subjects but also against the autocracy of local despots.

What is precise aim of these complaints ?

To this question Mr. G.R. Abhyankar, an Indian Professor now travelling in Europe, whose interview we have already published in our issue of 18th January, replies in the following article: It constitutes a direct evidence the value of which would not be missed by our readers. N. D. L. R.

The Indian States are subject to British Government, which however does not interfere in the internal affairs of these States. It pursues a policy of nonintervention. But experience has shown that England does not pursue this policy except when there is a

question of ameliorating the material and moral condition of the people. For when the Imperial interests are jeopardised Central Government interferes even to the extent of misconstruing the existing treaties. The Indian Princes complain bitterly that the Central Government (British Government) had violated, in its own interest, many of their solemn obligations. The title of the Emperor of India was taken by the King of England without consent of India Rulers simply in order to affirm his supremacy; further by a decree of Parliament, the Indian Rulers who, upto this time, were considered as friends or allies of the King of England, are reduced to the position of vassals to the English Crown. This change also was accomplished without the consent of these rulers. The States possess the right of levying interior transit and other taxes from which they receive considerable revenue. The Central Government under the pretext of free-trade ordered these States to abolish these taxes. Then the Central Government actually levies very heavy taxes—which are a source of huge profits to it—and this too without the consent, either of the people of the rulers of these States. The people do not derive any advantages from these taxes imposed upon them. The Central Government ordered the States to abandon the salt trade, and it has taken a monopoly, on which there is now a very heavy tax. The States have thus lost the monopoly and in addition pay heavy taxes on it. It is certain that Railways, Posts and Telegraph have been constructed by the Central Power over the vast extent of the State; but it has thus acquired the jurisdiction over these lands of the Railway companies. The Indians work for the profits of the Company of which all benefit goes to the Exchequer of British India. The States do not participate in these profits.

It is thus apparent that to advance their proper interests, the Central Government enjoy the big revenue which belonged to these States to the great disadvantage of the people and the States. In all these affairs the Central Government has worked to the detriment of Indian States' People.

On the contrary the attitude of the Central Government is one of indifference when it concerns itself with ameliorating the condition of the people of the States, of securing for them good government and of establishing constitutional laws. This is non-intervention.

It is not difficult to imagine how much this policy has been troublesome and unjust. If the Central Government interferes without scruples in the affairs of the State why should it hesitate to

protect the interests of the people in requiring the Rulers to adopt a constitutional form of Government?

The Central Government has deprived the subjects of Indian States of their natural rights in order to give a free hand to their rulers.

Is it not the duty of the Central British Government to honour its promise and to endeavour to emancipate 78 millions of citizens who suffer under the despotism of these small tyrants?

Prof. G. R. ABHYANKAR.

From La Jenue Republique,
(Paris) of Friday 8th Feb. 1929.

—*Sanstani Swarajya*, 29-3-29.

From Germania of January 10th 1929

The Berlin Daily of the German "Center Party"

The future of the Indian States.

Let us bear in mind that 311 million inhabitants of India 78 millions live under the rule of Princes, of whom there are more than 600. The size and importance of these states vary considerably the biggest, Hyderabad, is in area the equal of Great Britain though with a population of only 11¼ millions. Others like Mysore, of about the size of Portugal and Bulgaria, have similar number of inhabitants too—about 5 millions. Smaller states like Travancore carry on half the area of Denmark an equal population (3½ millions). But in addition there are many small and smallest dwarf states, comprising but a few villages. One thing however is common to them all that they are strewn full well all over India and geographically are as little to be disentangled from British India, as used to be the case with our little Thuringian States and Prussia.

In the British parts there exists to-day at least in theory a democratic, parliamentary constitution: the citizen's liberties are guaranteed of speech, assembly, press; an active political life exists and aims at the elimination of what still remains of the alien British rule and to carry out in their entirety the principles of self determination of the people, in practice as well as in theory. Is it then surprising, that similar aspirations should be felt by the subjects of Indian States, who are so closely connected with the other population of India? The Indian autocrats combine in their own persons the supreme judicial, police and revenue functions and

against their orders no appeal is possible. The Judges are creatures of the Princes; besides, there is no Court before which an administrative measure could be brought. The people have neither liberty of speech, nor of press nor of assembly and are politically powerless, they have no share in the Government; the budget is treated as if it formed part of the private amounts of the Prince, who usually wastes most of the revenues on his own expenses and naturally never dreams of accounting for them to any body. Such is the state of these subjects in 99 p. c. of the Indian States: only perhaps half a dozen of them possess a modern form of Government.

Naturally, it is not probable that the Princes will of their own accord limit their autocratic powers. Such can only be the result of pressure exercised upon them by public opinion and the Suzerain Power. The latter has more and more clearly expressed its opinion that the Princes would be well advised, if they introduced of their own accord necessary reforms. When the Viceroy Lord Chelmsford in 1921 opened the first Parliament of British India under the new constitution, he said *inter alia*: "For the first time we have broken completely with the principle of autocracy. Former reforms had never given up the benevolent despotism of the British Government; to-day this has been replaced by guiding authority whose vote consists in guiding India's steps along the road leading to complete self-government with the British Empire." It is obvious that, when the greater part, i. e. three quarters, of India make such a break with the past, the remaining quarter cannot remain uninfluenced thereby. At all events, that what formerly was deemed "seditious" (to substitute democracy for autocracy) is to-day an accomplished fact: why then should the government of British India still persist to-day in deeming democracy as not permissible in the Indian States?

The external problem of the Indian states consists in their relation to British India. Originally these states were designated "Territories of Princes in alliance with His Majesty. But since the Government of India in 1851 passed from the East India Company to British Crown, the interpretation has been radically changed into the relationship of vassals to their suzerain. Although the Princes during the mutiny of 1857 had stood loyally to England, the latter took away immediately all still existing military privileges, disarmed the Princes and forbade them to maintain contact amongst themselves. In return England promised them complete non-interference in the domestic affairs of their states and armed help in case of rebellion on the part of their subjects. England guaranteed the Princes within and without, in return it demanded their

complete military importance and political isolation. A few decades of such policy produced the desired results; the Indian Princes became a *quantite negligeeable* and the mere marionettes of England. When Lord Beconsfield in 1871 made Queen Victoria the gift of the title "Empress of India", it was defined in the act, that the Kaiser-i-Hind exercised sovereign power throughout India and the Indian Princes, are his vassals. To-day the Princes would like to get back to their previous position as "friends and allies"; but as not a single Indian Prince in 1878 (and since then, until after the war) protested against the new title and its interpretation it must be held in law that they silently accepted the innovation and that therefore their successor of to-day are precluded from going back to the position as it existed in 1851.

The constitution of 1919 for British India transfers control over the Indian Princes, including the right of interfering in the internal affairs of their states in case of gross misgovernment, to the Governor-General in Council, the members of which are nominated by the British Crown. The Constitution of 1919 however is but a preliminary to the goal which in principle has already been conceded—of Dominion status, i. e. of a constitution like that of Canada. As soon as that goal has been reached (the quarrel now is but over the time still to lapse), the Viceroy's Council will be transformed into a Cabinet, entirely subject to the Indian Parliament and presided over no longer by the Viceroy but by its own Prime Minister; and the Viceroy's position will become then purely ornamental one of a representative of the King of England as Emperor of India. But whilst the Princes seem to consider it quite alright to obey an autocratic Viceroy, the thought of being controlled by an Indian democracy seems to be maddening them.

One counter proposal of the Princes now suggests that the control should be exercised not by the Indian Cabinet but by the British Crown direct; which means the erection within the future Dominion of an *imperium in imperio* which would render illusory its self-government. Geographically, economically, postally, militarily, financially. The States and British India are so intimately connected, that a double sovereignty is out of question. One of two things would in practice be inevitable either the British Crown would subordinate itself as regards the State to the policy of Indian Dominion or else the Dominion would have to dance entirely to England's tune. In the first case the interpellation of the British Crown would be superfluous; in the latter. India would not have status of a Dominion an eventually which already is becoming untenable.

Another idea with which more vaguely, the Princes are to-day coquetting, is that the future Indian Dominion should be a Federation, in which the Indian States would figure as federal component parts and thus have the power of veto through a federal Council in which they would have their representatives. But there are only about a dozen natural "Provinces" of India: how could 600 princedom be federated with these? That would immediately demand that many of these States should be combined to enable a federation with any pretence of balance. But which prince is ready to resign—voluntarily for the benefit of others? On paper it is of course easy to draw up all kinds of plans; in fact only Dominion Status is feasible for India's future, which Dominion would necessarily be the successor of all power now vested in the Government of British India, including that over the Indian States. The future development of these States, whether by transformation into constitutional monarchies or by mediatization will and can only be decided thereafter, in and by India herself.

—*Sansthami Swarajya,*

On Arrival.

Indian States and their Critics.

There used to be a time when the appointment of a commission to inquire into any subject was regarded as a convenient and decorous way of side-tracking an awkward problem: the commission's report need not necessarily lead to any action, and there was always the chance—Oh! rapturous thought—that if left alone for a sufficiently long time the awkward problem would be forgotten, in much the same way as letters in the process of time answer themselves. But commissions nowadays are looked upon with far more serious eyes and find advocates in most unexpected quarters. Thus we find Professor Abhyankar, a member of the Indian States' Peoples' Delegation now in London, urging upon Labour members of Parliament the appointment of an independent commission to investigate the present system of government in Indian States, and yet a second commission to suggest "remedial measures." The proposal is not of a kind to win the sympathy of any of the Indian Princes who would, we imagine, stoutly resist an inquiry of the kind suggested, if only because the delegation to which Professor Abhyankar belongs has adopted a standpoint that is violently opposed to that of the Princes. We are reminded of that hostility by a recent

pamphlet which appears to be the first of a series entitled "Indian Princes as their people see them" to be published by the Indian States' Peoples' Conference. The nature of the pamphlet may be inferred from the fact that the following note appears on the cover:--

All the extravagance, inequities, and maladministration that would be seen depicted in the following pages are the outcome of protection, shield and encouragement, direct or indirect, that the mighty British Empire is extending to the princes of India. With motives far deep and methods far from honest or honourable, British Imperialists wish these princes—and sometimes do render active help to them—to develop into tyrannical autocrats of the worst administered States. It is the Britisher in particular who is responsible to man and God for all the miseries of the dumb seventy millions of humanity in Indian States.

Here, it will be seen, "the Britisher" is saddled with the blame for all those shortcomings which Professor Abhyankar would like one commission to detect and for which in his view another commission should provide the remedy. We are to assume that, if there was no British protection, the peoples of the Indian States would be perfectly happy and free from care. That is not a view generally held—certainly not the view held by the Indian Princes themselves for on the contrary, as their joint representation before the Harcourt Butler Committee has shown, they would welcome less protection if that meant less interference in their internal affairs than they are now receiving. But the Indian States' Peoples' Conference, having set out on a campaign of propaganda against the Princes, do not seem to mind very much whom they attack in the course of that campaign: they are spoiling their case by the intemperance of their language and indiscriminate nature of their attack.

Times of India 6-12-28.

The Indian States.

Case for Commission.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE TIMES OF INDIA."

Sir,—Your note on "Indian States and their Critics" of the 6th December was received by me while I am touring on the continent. It contains some statements which require an explanation.

I suggested the appointment of a Royal Commission before the Commonwealth Labour group of Parliament as such a step has become inevitable by the attitude of the Princes. Dr. Rushbrook Williams of Patiala has been openly preaching in the British press that the people of Indian States are less heavily taxed than those in British India; that they are contended; that they are consulted through village and caste panchayats and religious sabbas; that they exercise a strong power over their rulers; that a ruler cannot go against the wishes of his people; that they do not want modern representative Government; that justice is done in an admirably cheap manner; that they are able to bear arms and so on.

Anyone acquainted with the conditions of the States will very easily know how unfounded these allegations are. The subject of the Indian States on the other hand are stating that except the three States in Southern India there is no representative Government worth the name in any of these States and that there is no rule of law as understood in constitutional law. The administration reports of the States are not available to the public, no statistical information is collected and published and no moral and material progress reports are issued. Under these circumstances there are statements and counter statements. It has become very difficult for British statesmen who are not familiar with the conditions in the States to form an independent judgment by reason of the absence of authoritative information. I found that distinguished Labour leaders have appreciated the necessity of this inquiry. A Royal Commission with wide terms of reference as to what form of Government exists in the States, in what manner people are associated with the administration, what power or influence they exercise, whether the resources of the States are utilised for public purposes or are exploited by the rulers for their personal comforts, whether people have a voice in matters of administration, taxation and legislation, whether there is liberty of person, security of property, independent judiciary, freedom of speech and discussion and control over arbitrary acts of the executive and any sense of responsibility to the people—such a Commission is urgently needed.

I do not see why the Princes should object to such an inquiry. Ever since the transfer of Government to the Crown the conditions of administration of these States by these trustees of the British Government have not been investigated. I know that some of the prominent Indian Princes while in England made a request to Labor leaders to come and see things for themselves in an unofficial man-

ner. I fail to see what is objectionable in such a demand as I have made.

Some of the labour leaders inquired whether, like the Simon Commission, such a Commission would be boycotted. I suggested that the first Commission would be purely to ascertain fact and a parliamentary independent commission would be quite welcome. The people of the States will support it if they are allowed free scope to appear before the Commission, lead evidence and criticise the evidence of the Princes and any other evidence coming before it. When this data is collected and when remedial measures are to be suggested the personnel of the Commission should be composed of the four parties to this problem, the Government, the Princes, the people of States and British India. The propriety of the second commission would be obvious from the above statement.

You assume that the people of the States would be happy without British protection. I am afraid you have completely misunderstood our standpoint. The British Government has by treaties guaranteed protection to the Princes from foreign enemy and from internal unrest. So the Princes are quite safe. The paramount power however is responsible for securing good Government to the people. But it exercises this power only when misrule is long, gross and continuous. Why should the people suffer misrule until it reaches the maximum standard of unbearableness. We therefore desire that the interference should be more frequent than it is now. If the British Government would abstain from interfering in any conflict between the rulers and the ruled in the States the people would exercise their natural rights of removing misrule. The paramount power has deprived the people of these birthrights. This view is supported by Lord Cranbrook, Lord Salisbury and Lord Northbrook. The Government should protect the Princes on their thrones and also the people from misrule. The price of protection is the right to interfere in the affairs of the States to ensure good Government to the people.

The Princes are chafing at the interference of Government even when it is so sparingly resorted to. If this power of the paramount Government is to be relaxed to what other control the Princes are willing to submit? Are they willing to adopt responsible form of Government? If not, are they to be made more autocratic than they are at present? And this for what reason?

G. R. ABHYANKAR.

Member, State Peoples' Delegation. Berlin, 9th January, 1929.

Butler Committee and Government of India.**A Secret Memorandum****INDIAN STATES PEOPLE'S DELEGATION.****Prof. Abhyankar's Complaint Against British Press.**

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Prof. G. R. Abhyankar, Member, Indian States People's Delegation, returned to India on Monday morning. He was received by his friends on arrival. In an interview asked about the Delegation's work M. Abhyankar, said :—

Looking to the time at our disposal and our resources we are not dissatisfied with what we are able to do. The criticism in this country of the Princes' proposal had a salutary effect. The fantastic scheme of Sir Leslie Scott was abandoned by the Princes and they did not hazard to put forward any scheme in its stead. They ought to have been disillusioned about direct relations with the Crown which phrase, they learnt, means direct relations with Parliament and that they would be placed in a worse position.

No Encouragement from British Press.

Q : Did you get any encouragement ?

A : "The Press did not give us any encouragement as it was probably indifferent. The Liberal paper "Manchester Guardian" and the Labour papers "Daily Herald," "New Leader", the "Clarion" rendered us great service and were very sympathetic. We approached the Labour leaders of Parliament and they gave us all possible assistance. Distinguished members of the party frankly admitted that they were not aware of this aspect of the problem of Indian States and assured us that the question would not be effectively dealt with unless considering the position of the people of the States. This is not a small gain. We were also able to induce some Labour Members to ask interpellation in Parliament. Although the Under-Secretary of State for India tried to evade answering these questions straight still they made him feel our existence in England. The House of Commons is now too much engrossed with its own domestic affairs and the impending general election leaves very little time to be devoted to other matters. However, through the kindness and sympathy of Lord Olivier our question was officially brought before the public."

Q . But Lord Olivier withdrew the motion.

A : "Yes No other result was expected from the most reactionary body as the House of Lords. The value of the Lords' debate has in the fact that the problem of the States was fully and authoritatively stated and the Government was on the defence. Lord Peel's reply also is not quite disappointing. If we succeed in asking constant further interpellations, raising debates and enlightening the members with facts I think this will bring about a great change in the indifferent attitude of the Government of India.

Policy of Non-Interference.

Q : But what about the policy of non-interference ?

Yes. The Government is wedded to that policy. It however, interferes when British interests are to be advanced. In fact the Princes are bitterly complaining that the Government has violated Treaty Rights. But when the question of interfering for the interests of the people they resort to the policy of non-interference. This is highly unjust and arbitrary."

Asked about the Butler Committee, Mr. Abhyankar said:—
 "The Princes do not seem very enthusiastic about its recommendations. They are complaining about holding the inquiry in camera. Yet the Government is anxious to keep everything secret. The Princes are making serious allegations against Government of breach of Treaty Rights. They do not seem to have allowed to see the memorandum of Government. This is highly injudicious. The Committee without giving us a hearing and without knowing what we were going to say decided that our case did not come within the terms of reference. The discourtesy of the Committee in not allowing us even to hear the Princes' Counsel was even resented by many Englishmen. The Report of the Committee based on exparte and fractional evidence would hardly be acceptable. None but the Princes seemed to take the Committee seriously in England. We are not the worse for being denied a hearing. It is our outstanding grievance and it only strengthens the view that the scope of the Committee is too narrow and its procedure will conceived and illiberal.

Sympathy of Continental Press.

Yes. I saw some French papers and some in Geneva and some in Berlin. The "Republic De Journal" in Paris. "Journal De Geneva" and the most influential paper of the Central Party in Berlin "Germania", have written about our problem. One thing, I learnt, was that we could bring our problem before the International Labour

Committee and the League of Nations. The labour conditions in the States, and system of forced labour and some forms of slavery prevailing in some States would attract serious notice of the International Labour Conference. Some leaders of Trade Union Organisations in Berlin seemed very keen about this and pressed me to supply information in the way we can have some of our grievance agitated. If we place the conditions prevailing in Indian States before the members of the League of Nations and the neglect of the Government of India in improving the same our problem would immediately attract official notice. Because John Bull is ashamed of his dirty linen being washed before the International leaders in places like Geneva."

Summing up his general impressions of the visit, Mr Abhyankar said :

"I was asked that there was no strong agitation in the States and this was true to a large extent. Unless we carry on vigorous and sustained intensive agitation in the States the foreign propaganda alone would not be of much use. An eminent British statesman observed to me, "He who cries loud gets a hearing" and this applies with greater force to our cause. We have got to create strong public opinion in the State.

The Indian States.

NEED OF A ROYAL COMMISSION TO ENQUIRE INTO THE CONDITIONS.

Professor G. R. Abhyankar's Views.

Bombay Monday

Prof. G. R. Abhyankar, member of the Indian States People's Delegation, returned to India this morning. In an interview he said :—

Why do you want a Royal Commission to investigate condition in Indian States ?—The agitation carried on by the Princes has necessitated this demand. The Princes are freely circulating the report that there is contentment in the States, that the people do not want representative institutions, that the taxation is lower than in British India, that the people are consulted on all matters, that the Ruler cannot go against their wishes, that the present agitation is engineered by the educated few, that justice is very efficiently administered and that the people are allowed to bear arms freely. Any one acquainted with the conditions in Indian States would at once see that this is a distorted picture. There is no rule of law and

no Parliamentary Government in any of these 700 States except the States in Southern India. Elementary rights of citizenship, such as liberty of person, security of property, independent judiciary, liberty of the press and freedom of discussion, association with Government or control over finances is denied to the people. The administration reports are not open to the public. The budget estimation is not collected. There are no means to form correct judgment about the conditions prevailing in Indian States. There are statements and counter statements. Hence I found it necessary to urge for a Royal Commission to investigate into the conditions of Indian States. Efforts were made to elicit information from Government but even Government were unable to supply information and hence the suggestion.

No Use of Parliamentary Commission

Why do you want two Commissions? one to collect information and another to formulate remedial measures?—I don't want two. If one Commission can do this so much the better. It would save time and money. But I made this suggestion to satisfy some doubts. Certain members of the Commonwealth group frankly asked me if such a Commission would be boycotted like the Simon Commission. I suggested that so far as the first part of holding exhaustive inquiry of the conditions prevailing in the States was concerned, it can be done even by a purely Parliamentary Commission, provided the people are allowed the fullest opportunity to lead evidence and criticise the evidence of the Princes or that tendered on behalf of Government and provided the terms of Government and provided the terms of reference are sufficiently wide. The task of suggesting remedial measures would require the joint consultation of all the parties to this problem, namely the Princes, the people of the States, representatives of British India and the Government. A mere Parliamentary Commission would be of no use in this case. If, however, one Commission representing the several interests is appointed to consider both the questions it will undoubtedly be better and more useful.

Is not this question covered by the terms of the Butler Inquiry or the Simon Commission?—No. Lord Olivier has pointed out that both these bodies have nothing to do with it. He therefore, suggested that a new machinery should be set up to consider this problem.

Nature of Inquiry Suggested.'

What do you want the Commission to investigate?—We want the Commission to ascertain the form of Government in each state

whether the people are associated with the same, what influence they are permitted to exercise in matters of legislation, taxation, and administration, whether they are allowed to exercise elementary rights of citizenship, whether the resources of the state are utilised for public purpose or exploited by the Ruler for his own use, whether there is independent judiciary and whether people have means of redress against the arbitrary acts of the Executive.

Do you think the suggestion would materialise?—The important leaders of the Labour Party have appreciated this proposal. After the election if they come into power it will be worth while to press this on their attention. Even if they occupy the position of opposition they would certainly lend their support to this proposal.

Do you think the Princes would favour this proposal?—I don't see why they should not. On the contrary some prominent Indian Rulers who were in England actually invited some Labour leaders to come and unofficially see things for themselves. I fail to see why they should shrink from such an inquiry. They are trustees of the British Government for the good Government in the States and since the transfer of the Government to the Crown during the last 70 years no such inquiry is held. It is therefore, imperative that such be held.

In British India there have been various inquiries and numerous precautions and moral and material progress reports bearing on the same. None such exists so far as Indian States are concerned.

Indian Princes Thwart Growth of Swaraj.

THEY WOULD RATHER TRUST ALIEN VOTERS THAN THEIR OWN COUNTRYMEN.

Prof. Abhyankar Gives a Lesson to Princes in English Constitution.

"The agitation of Indian Princes on their claim of direct relations with the British Crown, is suicidal and will stifle the growth of Swaraj in India" declared Mr. G. R. Abhyankar, a member of the Indian States Peoples' Delegation to England, when interviewed by a representative of this paper soon after his return to Bombay, by the Italian boat on Monday.

Explaining his attitude on this matter Mr. Abhyankar said:—

"It has two dangerous aspects. The Princes claim direct relations with the Crown. This means that they want to be dismembered

from British India. They entertain this feeling out of sheer distrust of British Indian people. Desire for Union is the basic principle of every Federal Constitution and this theory of direct relation strikes at the very root of any idea of federated India.

King and Parliament.

Asked if the Princes would profit by a recognition of this claim Mr. Abhyankar answered in the negative and added that the Crown was a colloquial expression for King in Parliament. The Princes seemed to have been labouring under some misapprehension about this expression. They thought Crown meant King George and his family ruling over them as to autocratic Emperor. This was a total mistake. If direct relations were established, the Princes would come under the direct control of the Parliament. By frequent interpellations and debates and motions their maladministration would be constantly exposed. His Majesty's opposition would exploit the misrule in the Indian States to discredit the party in Power. The Princes would have to appeal to every man and woman in United Kingdom—the British voters for redress of their grievances. It passed comprehension how the Princes would trust these alien voters rather than their own countrymen who had always a soft conner for them. Besides as the wave of Socialism was spreading rapidly it was impossible to believe that the British electors would ever support unbridled autocracy.

Proceeding, Mr. Abhyankar stated that the princes wanted the British Government to retain control over the Indian army for their safety and for their protection against British Indians.

Government without the control of the army would be sheer camouflage. Sir Leslie Scott, the legal advisor of the Princes would rush the States people in any conflict. They wanted protection against British Indians and for this they desired that the British Government should for ever control the Indian army. Was not this sentiment detrimental to British Indian interest? The professions of the Princes that they were not opposed to British Indian aspirations were meaningless and not genuine in view of that claim.

When questioned about the proposed round table conference between the British Indian People and the Princes, Mr. Abhyankar replied :—

“ I don't know about it. When in England I had made it plain to my friends here that if the leaders of the States people are not invited to such a Conference we should have nothing to do with it.

Unless the sentiments described above are repudiated by the Princes I don't think any parleying with them would be of much use. "

Princes thwarting growth of Swarajya.

Question : " Will this agitation of the Princes affect the further instalment or Reforms ? "

Answer : Yes certainly. The Princes appear to be playing into the hands of the interested people who are opposed to Reforms. The Anglo-Indian and the British reactionaries have begun to cry that unless the position of Princes is strengthened no further advance should be made. The Princes are thus driving an obstacle in the path of progressive realisation of a responsible Government in British India. A shrewd observer pertinently observed to me in Berlin that the imperialism of the autocratic Princes is thwarting the growth of Swaraj and this must be first brought to an end. The Princes must be made to surrender autocratic powers and consent to rule as Constitutional Monarchs. Swaraj would never thrive in India until this is accomplished."

Question : " What do you think they should do ? "

Answer : "The Princes should trust their people and take them into their confidence ; their position would then be quite secure. Unless they are backed up by their people, even in matters of common interests they would get no relief. They should follow the profoundly wise advice of that most distinguished Indian statesman Sir Vishveshwarayya that for their own safety the Princes should establish responsible Government in their States and desire for a Federal Union with British India. "

—*The Indian National Herald, 6-2-22*

Last Letter to Nation

Dr. Rushbrook Williams had before the arrival of the deputation in England written a letter to the Nation and questioned its representative character. The following reply was sent to the Nation

On my arrival here I have noticed the letter of Dr. Rushbrook Williams questioning the claim of the Indian States peoples' Conference to speak for the subjects of the Indian States. I think it necessary to send this reply. You are perfectly right when you remark that the case of the Indian Princes is shrouded in mystery. To begin with the Princes are claiming direct relations with the Crown. This word "Crown",

is misunderstood. It is a colloquial expression for King in Parliament, Parliament has never dealt with Princes directly. Mr. Williams states that the Princes acknowledge the right of the Paramount Power to interfere in cases of gross injustice and flagrant misrule. We however maintain that the Paramount Power is responsible for the welfare of the subjects of the Indian States. So long as the Indian Princes enjoy protection of the Paramount Power it has the right to interfere not only when misrule is gross, but also to remove it its very inception and to secure good government to the people of the States. It is this position which is not conceded by the Princes. Mr. Williams is not accurate when he says that Britain unwittingly placed the Indian States under the influence and even control of the British Indian Legislature in 1919. As a matter of fact the Act of 1915 contains the same provision and the Indian States are under the control of the Governor-General in Council since 1858 up till now. Mr. Williams is not right when he asks why British India should claim to rule the Indian States. After seventy five years of acquiescence it is not permissible for the Indian Princes to question the right of the Government of India to superintend, direct and control the Indian States. The future Government will succeed to all the rights of the present Government of India. The claim of Mr. Williams that the Princes have subjects behind them is unfounded. The subjects do not enjoy even the elementary rights of citizenship, and they are not associated in any form with the Governments of the States. The princes are agitating for greater independence in their domestic affairs but they are not prepared to establish constitutional government in their States. Mr. Williams doubts the right of the States Subjects Conference to speak for the people of the States. The Conference was attended by 1500 people, and had representatives of seventy States. We put it to Mr. Williams, what claim had the Indian Princes to speak even for their own subjects, when they are denied liberty of the Press and freedom of discussion, and when their constitutional existence is completely ignored by these very Princes within the limits of their States. Mr. Williams says that the Princes are willing to abide by the judgement of their own subjects. We only ask if any opportunity has been given to these subjects to freely express their views.

G. R. ABHYANKAR.

Memorandum of the Indian States People's Conference.

To the President and Members of the Indian States Committee.

SIRS,—We have been appointed by the Executive Committee of the Indian States People's Conference to place their views before you on the matters referred to you for investigation.

OUR QUALIFICATIONS

2. Before we proceed to state our views on the questions referred to you for elucidation, we should like to clear the ground by making some reference to our claim to speak on behalf of the people of the Indian States. We have seen statements in the Press questioning the representative character of our deputation, and perhaps similar representations may have been made to your Committee. We should like to remark at the outset that the national movement in the States has been growing for some years, and problems of the Indian States and the reforms required in the internal administration of the States have been discussed for some years by the people of the various States in Conference held from time to time. The Kathiawar Political Conference, the Baroda Praja Makedal, the Idar Praja Mandal, the Hyderabad State People's Conference, the Jamnagar and Bhavnagar Praja Mandal, and various other similar organisations of the subjects of the States have met to discuss questions relating to the present administrative and political conditions of the people of the States. It had been felt that a central organisation to represent the views of the people of the Indian States generally and to speak on their behalf was urgently needed, and a permanent organisation known as the Indian States People's Conference was brought into existence in December last. The Conference at which this All-India organisation was formed was attended by 700 delegates from all the important States, and seventy of the Salute State were represented at the Conference. The names of the States so represented at the Conference will be found in Annexation appended hereto. It will be seen from the above that there is absolutely no justification for the suggestion that has

been made that our delegation, which has been appointed by the Executive Committee of the All India States People's Conference has no representative character, and that the All India States People's Conference, has no claim whatever to speak on behalf of the people of the Indian States. We submit that our Conference occupies the same position to the people of the Indian States as the Indian National Congress and other political organisations in relation to the people of British India.

The people of the Indian States (Indian India) have organised themselves for the common purpose of influencing the governments of the States as a whole to initiate the necessary reforms in their administration by the force of the collective public opinion of the people of the States.

COMMITTEE'S REFUSAL TO HEAR EVIDENCE

3. We should also refer at the outset to two matters of procedure which have caused considerable embarrassment to us in formulating a statement of our case to the Committee.

Early in February last the General Secretary of the Conference addressed a communication to the Secretary of your Committee requesting a copy of the questionnaire issued by your Committee to the States, and also made inquiries whether any public bodies or private individuals would be permitted to give evidence before the Committee. In reply, he was informed that the questionnaire could not be supplied, that the Committee was not empowered by its terms of reference to deal with the relations of the Indian States and their subjects, and that they were therefore, not in a position to accept the evidence of public bodies and private individuals, either written or oral, in regard to this subject. Thereafter, the Secretary of the Conference addressed a long communication to the Committee explaining the whole position of the people of the Indian States in relation to the their rulers, and urged that your Committee should afford facilities for the people to place their views before it on the matters under inquiry by the Committee. In modification of its previous decision referred to above, the Committee came to the conclusion that it would consider the views which the Conference, of which we are the representatives, wished to put forward. It was stated, however, that, owing to numerous applications, the committee would not be able to hear oral evidence, but that they would be willing to receive from the Conference a memorandum on all matters within the terms of reference. (*Vide* letter No. D 320 I.S.C., dated March 9, 1928.) We have made a request for a reconsideration of the decision above referred to. This request has not been complied with.

INQUIRY IN CAMERA.

4. In this connection we should also like to refer to another important feature of the inquiry. We were officially informed that the inquiry that is now being held would not be public in the sense that the public would be admitted to its deliberations. Neither the memoranda of the Princes represented by Sir Leslie Scott and other counsel, nor the memoranda submitted directly to the Committee by other States, have been made public, and the Press have not been admitted to hear the evidence tendered on behalf of the Princes and the arguments adduced by their counsel. Two members of this deputation applied for permission to be present at the time of arguments of the counsel, and even this request was not complied with. We are not aware of the exact grounds on which it was decided by the Committee to hold its sittings *in Camera*. We believe, although we have no authentic information on the subject, that the Princes did not desire that the proceedings of the Committee should be held *in camera*, and the request for a private inquiry therefore, could not have proceeded from that quarter. The Government of India, with whose concurrence this Committee was appointed, is not likely to have made the suggestion that the deliberations of the Committee should be held behind closed doors, but we are not in a position to know at whose instance or at whose request the deviation from ordinary practice has been made. We need hardly point out that the report of any Committee whose deliberations are not held in the open is always looked upon with suspicion in any country, and much more so in India. The necessity or desirability of the appointment of this Committee was not discussed in the Central Legislature, and the Secretary of State for India and the Government of India have taken the full responsibility for the appointment of the Committee. The fact that the inquiry is not open to the public has still further accentuated the general suspicion prevailing as regards the purposes for which it is being made.

REFUSAL OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

5. The Government of the States as at present functioning is, we venture to think, a valuable prerogative of the rulers of these States, whose business it is to see that their own powers and privileges are secure against the challenging agitation of their people for an effective voice in their administration. The manner in which this inquiry is being held has given rise to the belief that neither the Paramount Power nor the Princes desire to take the public into their confidence or at least, to let the people of the States, who are vitally affected by the results of this inquiry, know fully its nature or purpose. The procedure

adopted in the congate inquiry relating to British India under the presidency of Sir John Simon and the open invitation which the Royal Commission have extended to all interests and classes to come and help them with an expression of their views; as contrasted with the procedure adopted by your Committee have produced a very unfavourable impression regarding the latter throughout the Indian States, and also in British India.

“ STATE ” INCLUDES THE PEOPLE

6. In submitting this memorandum we have, therefore, been considerably embarrassed by these two circumstances. Apart from these considerations, we might also mention that the questionnaire issued by the Committee to the States would have given us an opportunity of acquainting ourselves with the full scope of this inquiry. This has been, however, denied us, with the result that we are not in a position to make an effective representation to the Committee on all points raised by the Princes. The interests of the people of the States are of the minor feudatories are not, and cannot be, in some of the matters now under discussion, identical with those of the rulers. The fact that opportunity to supplement our case by oral representations in support of our memorandum has been denied us has, therefore, placed us at a very serious disadvantage. If such an opportunity had been afforded us, we should have been in a position to elucidate the points mentioned in this memorandum by such explanations as might have been desired by the members of the Committee. The Committee would thus have been in a better position to appreciate and understand our points of view. We regret that the procedure adopted has given room for the complaint that an unnecessary and invidious distinction has been drawn between the people of the States and the Princes in the matter of presenting their case to the Committee.

PEOPLE AFFECTED BY MODIFICATION OF THE PRESENT RELATIONS

7. Having made these preliminary observations, we shall now proceed to state our case arising on the terms of reference to your Committee. At the outset we venture to express the opinion that, without straining the meaning of any word or phrase and without deviating from the natural course of interpretation, it is possible for the Committee under the terms of reference to deal with all material issues concerning the progress and welfare of the people of the Indian States. Though we are not satisfied with the terms of reference, which might have been much wider in their scope, we submit that the Committee should not either expand them or restrict them by an unwarranted interpretation of the language. It has been suggested in the

Press and elsewhere that the people of the States have no *locus standi* in this inquiry. It is possible that, during the course of the inquiry similar representations may have been made to this Committee. In fact, at a very early stage of its proceedings, the Committee took the view that it was not empowered "to deal with the relations between the Indian States and their subjects." This view has since been modified, and the Committee has permitted us to express our views on all matters arising within their terms of reference. By the first terms of reference the Committee is required to report on the relations between the Paramount Power and the Indian States arising from treaties, engagements, Sanads usage, sufferance and other causes. It has been contended that the word "States" refers only to the rulers and not to the people of the States, and that this Committee can only hear the rulers in their own right or as representing the Government of their respective States. There is no justification for this restricted interpretation of the terms, and we desire to deal with this matter at once. The conception of a State as consisting only of the ruler for the time being is so opposed to all political theories that it is unnecessary to dilate at any length on the subject. The misunderstanding created in the States by the formulation of this view became so serious that His Highness the Maharajah of Bikaner found it necessary to repudiate this suggestion in a recent public pronouncement. Speaking in June and September last, he said "that the term 'State' includes not the ruler alone, but the ruler, his Government and his subjects, which are all component parts of and all go to comprise the State." According to him, "if the independence of a State goes the subjects of that State forthwith lose their integrity and individuality. If the State gains fiscally, it is not only the Prince, but the Government and the subjects of the State gain most. If the State loses in such matters, such loss is shared by the subjects with the Prince and the Government."

The people of the States are affected equally with, if not more vitally than, the Princes by the policies of the Government of India and the Paramount Power initiated without consultation and discussion with the States. The imposition of excise duties, the prohibition of the manufacture of opium, the restrictions on the exploitation of industrial resources and on the importation of arms, and the manufacture of salt by private individuals, the restrictive conditions in regard to the manufacture and sale of liquor; these and other matters vitally affect the interests of the people of the States. The views urged by the rulers of the States are not necessarily those of the people in all these matters, and sometimes are in conflict with them. If, therefore, the word 'State' in the first term of reference includes also the peoples of the States "as one of three component parts"

they are entitled as of right to a full hearing from this Committee on the matters within their terms of reference. The people are equally interested in the maintenance of such relations between the Paramount Power and the States as are justified or established by treaties and usage, and the integrity and independence of the States is as much their concern as that of the Princes. They are, therefore, vitally concerned in any change in these relations affecting the dignity and position of the States in the present polity of India. On this ground alone, apart from any others, we are entitled to place our views before the Committee and to be fully heard on all points raised by the Princes. We understand that the Princes now appearing before the Committee, through their counsel, contend that the relations between the Paramount Power and the States has adversely affected their position. We are not in a position, on account of the procedure adopted by the Committee, to express our views fully on the points raised by the Princes under this head. We contend that the present relations of the Paramount Power with the rulers of the States cannot be modified without the consent of the people.

RULERS AND THE PEOPLE.

8. As an instance of the serious consequences which would result by a modification of the existing position we should like to invite your attention to one or two points placed by the Princes before the Committee. It has been reported (the *London Times* of October 2, 1928) that Sir Leslie Scott, the counsel for the Princes, referred to cases where the Paramount Power has intervened between the Princes and his subjects, and apparently contended that this intervention should cease, hereafter, and that the action of the Paramount Power in this respect constitutes a grave violation of treaty rights. As the inquiry is being held *in camera* we are unable to deal satisfactorily with the instances to which he referred, or with the arguments advanced by him. Under the present conditions, if a subject of a State is put into prison without charge, trial, or judicial process of any kind, under the orders of the ruler, the Committee is aware that there is no legal way of getting him out. There is nothing like a writ of *Habeas corpus* for the production of the person detained before a duly constituted judicial tribunal or to compel the authorities detaining him to bring him to trial. Several instances of persons so detained in various States have been brought to light now and then. Their relatives have brought the relevant facts to the notice of the Government of India. Sometimes they have been released on account of diplomatic action taken by political agents under the orders of the Government of India.

Again, there are a number of cases where the property of private individuals has been confiscated under the orders of the

ruler, or held under attachmant for years. There is no remedy against the State, and sometimes the Jagirs and other properties of feudatories and others have been so attached and confiscated. The only remedy now available is an appeal to the Government of India, which has sometimes proved effective, and which in many cases has formed a subject of correspondence between the State and the Paramount Power. We can multiply instances where individual citizens have undergone great suffering and hardship through the unjustifiable and arbitrary acts of the rulers of the States. If as is now contended by the Princes, the Paramount Power should desist from taking any remedial action in these cases, the subjects of the States will be entirely at the mercy of the rulers. The principle that there is no wrong without a remedy has no application in most of the States. In these circumstances we venture to think that the modification of the existing relations between the Paramount Power and the Princes is not solely their concern, but also that of the people of the States who are very seriously affected thereby. On all these grounds we beg to urge that the people of the States should have the fullest possible opportunity not only of placing their views before this Committee or any other authority that may have to deal with this question, but also that they should have notice of any suggested modifications of the present relations between the Paramount Power and the States as established by treaties and the political practice of all these years, before the contemplated changes are effected.

GOOD GOVERNMENT AND TREATY RIGHTS

9. We now come to a most important aspect of this inquiry. The fundamental contention of the Princes is that the political practice superimposed upon their treaty rights has led to considerable encroachments on and frequent infringements of those rights. They look to the Paramount Power to implement the pledges, and the various rights secured to their States by treaties should be ensured to them and consistently respected. Judging from reports in the Press, they have led voluminous evidence, giving instances where the Paramount Power has encroached upon their position so as prejudicially to affect their interests. They have also referred to the initiation of large policies by the Government of India affecting the economic and financial position of their States. Your Committee has been asked to make recommendations that you may consider desirable or necessary for their more satisfactory adjustment. Apparently they wish to have the whole position reviewed with a view to a more satisfactory definition of their rights and privileges in relation to the Paramount Power. On behalf of the people of the States we are equally anxious to bring to the notice of your Committee that the Princes, under the very treaties on which they

rely, and by the constant development of political doctrine and usage, have undertaken definite obligations, the fulfilment of which is a condition precedent to the stability of their Government and the perpetuation of their dynasties. These definite obligations include the continued good government of the States by their rulers and the promotion of the happiness and welfare of their people. Some of the treaties contain express provisions to this effect. As an illustration we may mention that the treaty with Patiala State contains an undertaking by the then ruler that he will "omit no exertions to do justice and to promote the welfare and happiness of the ryots." Similar provisions are to be found in the treaties with Kolhapur, Patiala, Pratapgadh, Rampur, Kuch Bebar, Jindh, K-purthala, Nabha, Agaisgarh, Bejavar, Bilaspur, Chamba, Charkari, Chatarpur, Farid Kote, Mandi.

We may also invite your attention to Article Nine of the Treaty with Travancore, that "the ruler would pay attention to any advice that he may receive from the Paramount Power in regard to the extension of commerce, the encouragement of trade, agriculture, and industry, or any other objects connected with the advancement of the happiness of the people and the welfare of the State." Several times in the history of the States the protection of the Paramount Power was extended to them for the maintenance of peace and the suppression of rebellion. The history of the Bikanir State, where, there was more than one revolt by the Thakurs against the misgovernment of the rulers, shows that they were suppressed with the help of the British Government. Apart from, and independent of, express treaty rights, the Paramount Power has also an inherent power to intervene in the affairs of the Indian States to prevent misrule. In this connection we beg to refer to Lord Reading's letter, dated March 27, 1926, to H. E. H. the Nizam. He states: "The right of the British Government to intervene in the internal affairs of the Indian States is another instance of the consequences necessarily involved in the supremacy of the British Crown. The varying degrees of internal sovereignty which the rulers enjoy are all subject to the exercise by the Paramount Power of this responsibility."

After this authoritative statement of the present position, it is needless to dilate further on the subject. Lord Curzon once observed that the rulers of the Indian States have no right to misgovern their subjects. Similar pronouncements to the same effect were made by other Viceroy's. In the Baroda case, Lord Northbrook expressed the opinion: "Misrule on the part of the Government, which is upheld by the British Power, is misrule, in the responsibility for which the British Government becomes in a measure involved. It becomes, therefore, not only the right but the positive duty of the British Government to see that

the administration of a State in such a condition is reformed and gross abuses are removed." Lord Salisbury, in his despatch on the Geakwar case, observed, "Incorrigible misrule is of itself a sufficient disqualification for sovereign power. Her Majesty's Government have willingly accepted the opportunity of recognising in a conspicuous case the paramount obligation which lies upon them of protecting the people of India from oppression."

CHANGE OF RELATIONS AND CONSENT OF THE PEOPLE.

10. We have ventured to invite your attention to this fundamental position relating to the responsibility of the Princes for good government in their States, under the treaties as well as under the inherent rights possessed by the Paramount Power to ensure good government to the people of the States. This Committee has been asked to report upon the relationship between the Paramount Power and the "States" (which term, as has already been shown, includes the people of the (States), arising from treaties, engagements, sanads, usage, and other causes. The Princes are now attempting to show to your Committee what the true relationship should be and how that relationship has been affected by the action of the Paramount Power. The people of the States are also entitled to show how the responsibilities, thrown on the Paramount Power by virtue of their position as such, as well as by the express terms of the treaties to secure good government to them, have been discharged in the past, and what steps should be taken in the future for the maintenance of good government, and the promotion of the moral and material welfare of the people. We submit that the Princes who complain of encroachments on the part of the Paramount Power upon the treaty position, have themselves failed adequately to discharge their own responsibilities to their people, definitely laid upon them by those very treaties on which they now rely, by usage and precedent that have grown around them, and also in virtue of their position as protected Princes under the suzerainty of the Paramount Power.

THE OLD-TIME REMEDIES FOR MISRULE AND MISGOVERNMENT

11. We must invite your attention to another aspect of the problem. In olden days, the usual remedy available to the people of any State to overthrow misrule and oppression on the part of the ruler was open rebellion. This is a recognised right in every country, both Asiatic and European. The observations of Viscount Bryce on this subject are very pertinent. He says: "A sovereign *de jure* has a *prima facie* claim to obedience which can be rebutted or discharged under certain events, and one of them is, if in a State where his powers are not limited by the constitution he has so abused his legal power as to

become in fact a tyrant, a foe to the objects of peace, security, and justice for which government exists. In such a case it would be now generally held that the citizen is absolved from allegiance, and that the sacred right of insurrection which the French revolutionists and their friend Jefferson so highly prized must come into play. In case where no constitutional remedy exists the formerly *de jure* ruler, since he has made himself a tyrant or ruler against law, has created a state of war between himself and the citizen, and opposition to him becomes a duty which is of stronger or weaker obligation according to the greater or lesser enormity of his offence, and the greater or lesser prospect of success in such opposition. (Bryce's *Studies in History and Jurisprudence*, Vol. II., p. 544).

This right of the people to rebel against the misrule of the ruler for the time being, and to bring about a change of Government by dethroning him and by taking other steps, has been definitely recognised as legitimate in the political history of India. Sir Thomas Munro observed on one occasion that the "usual remedy for bad government in India is a quiet revolution or foreign conquest. The presence of British troops cuts off every chance of remedy by supporting the Prince on the throne against every foreign and domestic enemy. It renders him indolent by teaching him to trust to strangers for his security and by showing him that he has nothing to fear from the hatred of his subjects." We may also refer to the dictum of Lord Salisbury in the Gaekwar case that "the British Government, which has deprived the sardars and ryots of the power of righting themselves, would not be justified in using its supremacy to compel them to submit to a ruler whose incurable vices have been established by full experience."

A writer in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review* (Vol. X., 1895, page 209) made similar observations in regard to the remedies available in the olden days before advent of the British in India. In discussing the question as to how far the Paramount Power was justified in interfering with the internal administration of Indian States, he called pointed attention to this aspect of the case. He said, "It must always be borne in mind that since the introduction of the 'Pax Britannica', we have taken away from the people the only and time-honoured remedy of Oriental nations against a despotic and oppressive Government, *i. e.* revolt and assassination. We act as the police of India to keep the peace throughout the land, and this protection is of considerably greater benefit to the independent Princes than it is to the people under their sway. The result is that injustice is often committed and oppression is practised against which the people have no remedy; because while we prevent them from indulging in any outburst of indignation

we refuse to interfere in matters which concern the internal administration of an independent State."

The Paramount Power has taken away this right. The Princes feel that in a conflict between the rulers and the ruled the Paramount Power is certain to side with them on the alleged ground of the preservation of peace and order. This has resulted, in many cases, in the neglect by the Princes of their duty to their own people.

ABSENCE OF THE RULE OF LAW

12. Another most important matter is the absence of the Rule of Law in the States, barring a few exceptions. We need not dilate at any great length on the bundle of rights, privileges and obligations summed up under these compendious words. There is no liberty of person in the States, and if a person is put into prison there is no remedy by way of a writ of *Habeas Corpus* against the officers detaining the person concerned in prison. There is no security of property. The State in its corporate capacity cannot be sued in the municipal Courts in most of the States. A few months ago His Highness the Maharajah of Bikanir publicly stated that he had been considering the question of extending the principle of *Habeas Corpus* in the judicial administration of his State. As regards the rights of association and public meeting we should like to bring to the notice of the Committee that these rights have not been conceded to the people, and if any meetings are allowed they are held under very great restrictions. As an illustration we beg to invite the attention of the Committee to an order in the *State Gazette* of Nawanagar State in the following terms:—"All are hereby informed that no person, association or gathering should address a public meeting, in political matters, without the permission of the Political Secretary, which should be secured in advance. Further, no political meeting of any kind should be held. Those who would act otherwise would be legally proceeded against." (*State Gazette*, Volume 54, page 291, dated 16-2-21, H.O.O. No. 34.) The result is that public opinion, such as it is, is suppressed in most of the States and discontent is driven underground. It is a notorious fact that many of the conferences of the people are held outside the States on account of the restrictions placed on the holding of public meetings. There are very few newspapers in the States. The Press in all countries is one of the great instruments of good government. It does not now exist in most of the States, and where a few newspapers exist, the most stringent Press regulations have been enacted, with the result that criticism of the measures of Government in the Indian States is almost impos-

stible. British Indian newspapers criticising the administration of the States have often been proscribed and their distribution has been prohibited. The facts are so notorious that we do not wish to dilate further on the subject. We submit that there can be no good government in any State which perpetuates the denial of these fundamental rights to the people, and we beg to urge upon both the Paramount Power and the Princes that these rights should be publicly acknowledged in a Proclamation duly promulgated and secured by suitable guarantees. Even if these rights are conceded we submit that it is of the utmost importance that there should be legal machinery to enforce these rights whenever they are infringed by the ruler or by his officers. There is no such machinery now in existence capable of performing these duties without fear or favour. The constitution of an independent judiciary in the States is a fundamental reform without which the concession of the elementary rights of citizenship for which we are pressing will become a farce.

HAS THE PARAMOUNT POWER DISCHARGED ITS DUTIES TO THE PEOPLE OF THE STATES ?

13. We submit that the question for the consideration of the Committee is whether the paramount Power has discharged its duty to the people of the States as arising from treaties, engagements and sanads, and usage, sufferance and other causes, and also apart from them. If it has failed in the past, how can this duty of securing good government, happiness and well-being of the people be better discharged in future? The responsibility of the Paramount Power in this respect has never been denied and has often times been publicly acknowledged both by the Paramount Power and the Princes. We also submit that the Committee is bound under the first term of reference to find out whether the obligations laid on the princes for providing good government to their people has been discharged by them. The people of the States submit that no inquiry into these two questions has ever been made, and that the Committee is bound to record a finding on these two important questions and also to suggest ways and means by which these responsibilities and obligations can be adequately fulfilled in future.

We may in this connection perhaps draw the attention of the Committee to a recent pronouncement made by the Maharajah of Patiala about the obligations of kingship. He said "that kingship is an office which has rights and obligations. There is thus a really Indian conception of responsible government which needs to be appreciated ; the conception of a government in which every subject knows what his rights are,

since those rights are secured to him by custom and by religion ; in which public opinion is the final sanction for every act of Government, and is able at any time to bring irresistible, because direct, pressure upon the administration.

We should have liked His Highness to have developed a little further his theme about this Indian conception of "Kingship and responsible Government," but whatever may be his own conception of this matter we are glad that His Highness fully recognises the responsibility of the administration of the States to their own people. The Indian Princes have been some of the strongest advocates of Home Rule for British India and have often pleaded for a new constitutional charter for India and for the establishment of Dominion self-government. We should like to refer to the brilliant speech of the Maharajah of Alwar at the Imperial Conference, in 1923. He said : "Are we going to progress steadily and progressively, yet too slowly, towards our goal which our sister nations have been more fortunate in already achieving, the goal of having the power to govern our country as a loyal and integral part of the Empire ? Are we going to be helped affectionately and with kindly feeling to the goal which has been pronounced publicly by the British Government, and more than that we do not aspire to, of being a loyal and self-governing dominion within the Empire ? Is everything going to be done to accelerate our progress or is our progress under various pretexts to be restricted and delayed ? Have we a long number of years before us of the great furnace to pass through from which Ireland has only just emerged ? The world was not built for academic or pious assurances spread over a number of years the fulfilment of which may well pass over a life-time."

The advocacy of self-governing institutions for British India and the continuance of unmitigated autocratic rule in their own States are not reconcilable courses of conduct.

The Princes must now give practical proof of the high sentiments and the most admirable aspirations to which they have often given expression at the various world gatherings. Indeed it would look as if they are prepared to do so. His Highness the Maharajah of Patiala informed an English audience on a recent occasion that "in those States where the subjects have desired to substitute for the present system the machinery of the West, the Princes have done so, but that in most States where this substitution has not yet taken place it is because the people of the States have shown no desire to change the system under which they live." This desire for a change of the system of Government prevailing in the States has been the subject of active discussion for a number of years in the various Confer-

ences of the people of the State, and His Highness could not have been unaware of the wishes of the people in this respect.

CONSTRUCTIVE PROPOSALS.

14. We submit that the Indian States People's Conference held in Bombay expressed this desire in unmistakable terms. The Conference urged upon the rulers of the States :—

(a) That representative institutions be established in the States on an elective basis in the sphere of local self-government and also for the purpose of legislation, taxation and control of general administration ;

(b) That the budgets of the States should be submitted to the votes of popular assemblies ;

(c) That the revenues of the States should be separated from the personal expenditure of the Princes and that the civil list should also be submitted to the vote of the popular assemblies ; and

(d) That there should be an independent judiciary, that the judicial functions be separated entirely from the executive in every State, and that the personal intervention of the Princes in the administration of justice should cease absolutely.

In putting forward these proposals we should not be understood as suggesting the exact reproduction of the British Indian models without reference to the differences in local conditions. But we contend that the principle of responsibility in the administration of the Indian State to a popular legislature should be definitely recognised. Popular control over the administration should be established in the clearest manner possible, consistently with the continuance of the monarchical order.

We also submit that the responsibility of the Paramount Power for the good government and well-being of the people of the States is not discharged by waiting for an accumulation of misrule of government to such a degree as to justify its interference. This method of securing good government for the people of the States inflicts most serious hardships upon the people for a number of years before action is taken. On these broad grounds we respectfully submit that there is a need for a new policy, and that the best way of discharging their responsibilities to the people of the State is to persuade the Indian Princes to recognise the principle of the responsibility of the administration to a legislature containing the elected representatives of the people.

A proclamation coming in the august name of His Imperial Majesty to the ruling Princes, commending the ideal of respon-

sible constitutional government, is the best means for securing the permanence of their thrones, the loyalty of their peoples, and the unhampered progress of their States, and is sure to prove a fruitful step in the fulfilment of the responsibility of the Paramount Power to the people of the States. The Committee would be quite within its bounds to suggest the issue of such a Royal Proclamation,

POWERS OF INTERVENTION

15. This naturally brings us to the general question of the present powers of intervention possessed by the Paramount Power in the internal affairs of the States. The public announcement of the Marquis of Reading, contained in his letter to His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad, summarises broadly the general principles upon which this power of intervention is now exercised. Except to this extent the principles upon which these powers of intervention are now exercised are not known either to the Princes or to the people of the States. In the opinion of the Indian States People's Conference, the present policy of intervention in the internal affairs of the India States is not based on any definite principles. Its indefiniteness its illimitability, its arbitrariness, have been the means of inflicting most serious hardships on both the people of the States and their rulers. This intervention has always been exercised upon sole authority of the Government of India and upon their own initiative. Such intervention has, in our opinion, never been exercised for the promotion and safeguarding of the rights of the people, and we submit that the principles on which such intervention is made should be clearly defined, codified, and published.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Report provides in paragraph 309 for the appointment of special commissions to advise the Viceroy in cases calling for drastic intervention. But such cases are comparatively rare.

The reconstruction of the relations between the Paramount Power and the States (the rulers and the people) will be successful only if the Committee should make plain this imperative necessity for some machinery to regulate interference in the internal affairs of the States, whether on behalf of popular interests or on behalf of Imperial interests. The Committee's first finding would, we submit, have to be that, *on both grounds*, interference may have to be necessary, and that the treaties and engagements contemplate and countenance such interference, but only in such cases and in no others. We submit further that in the exercise of this limited extent of interference a constitutional procedure should be fixed; otherwise there would be no guarantee against abuse of that right. Even though the fields

and the occasions of interference are defined, such definition will be of little avail unless there is a regular and commonly accepted agency to apply the definitions and see they are not transgressed. What is objected to is not the abstract right of interference, but the actual and arbitrary methods of the operation of that right. Just as the right of interference is constitutional, so should the instruments of that right and their procedure, too, be constitutional. How this constitutional agency for regulating the intervention of the Paramount Power should be established, and how its functioning should be ordered, are questions which require careful consideration. But the need for such an agency should be made plain beyond question by the Committee. What is needed is neither a wholesale repudiation of the Paramount Power's right of interference, nor an unlimited character to its agents for interference at will, but a clear demarcation of a limited, defined, and strictly constitutional intervention. In proportion to the constitutionality and soundness of such intervention, the States will become less heavy a burden upon the Paramount Power.

THE NEED FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AGENCY

36, In concluding our observations on this part of the terms of reference we strongly condemn the present method of dealing with these questions by the agency of political officers under the control of the Political Department of the Government of India. We have no hesitation in recognising the good work of some of these officers, but we submit that the whole system is out of date and inappropriate. The present method of investigating a case requiring the intervention of the Paramount Power is altogether unsatisfactory. The inquiry is not open to the public and is undertaken behind closed doors. Neither the Princes nor the people have any opportunity of appearing and assisting in the conduct of the inquiry. In these circumstances the intervention is spasmodic and ill-regulated, and the justification for it not always apparent and seldom attempted. The result is that there has never been a case of intervention but has given rise to the suspicion that a ruler was deposed or made to abdicate or reprimanded, not really because he was oppressive to the people, but because he was not subservient enough to the British Government. The suspicion can never be dispelled, for the Government will never publicly assign any reasons for the action they have taken, and if they do will not make known all the attendant circumstances and publish evidence in support of their statements. And thus even in cases where, if all the facts were known, the justification of intervention would be complete, the

Government never receive the support of public opinion. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the policy of intervention should follow a settled course, and no action should be taken against any ruler until his misdeeds are brought home to him. For this purpose it is necessary that the present method of secretiveness should be definitely abandoned and that everything should be above board, the necessary records being made available to him. The ruler should of course have an opportunity of defending himself before a tribunal, whatever that be. We emphasise what perhaps the ruling Princes would like to relegate to the background, that the subjects of the States, in whose interest the action is avowedly taken, should have as full an opportunity of leading evidence against the Princes as the Princes have of defending themselves, and that therefore the records should be accessible to the people just as much as to the Princes.

We would suggest that the machinery for inquiry into alleged cases of misrule of the Princes and other cognate matter be modelled on the plan adopted by the League of Nations for ensuring that the terms of the mandates are not transgressed by the mandatory powers. Some modifications may be found necessary in this procedure, but broadly it appears to us to be suitable.

The essentials of the general superintendence which the League exercises over the administration of the mandated countries consist, as the Committee is no doubt aware, in the following: (1) The League calls for an annual report from every mandatory power, which is committed for critical examination to an expert body called the Mandates Commission, the majority of the members of which must belong to non-mandatory countries, and no member of which can be a servant of any Government, so that their impartiality may be ensured. (2) The Commission examines the report in the presence of a representative of the mandatory power, who is then subjected to a stiff cross-examination. (3) The Commission's report goes thereafter to the Council of the League for consideration along with such observations as the mandatory power may think fit to make. (4) The Council thereupon arrives at its own conclusions, which are debated in the Assembly in the presence of the representatives of all the Powers in the world. (5) The people in the mandated countries and even strangers have a right of petitioning the Commission, such petitions being forwarded by the mandatory powers with their own remarks to the Commission.

The British Government has, of course, behind its decisions in regard to the States far stronger sanctions than the League has behind it, and yet, on account of the system of open discuss-

sion which it has adopted, it is able to exercise a more restraining influence on the predatory instincts of the mandatory powers than the British Government has, or will ever be able to exercise on the autocracy of the Princes under the present system :—

The points to be noted in this connection are the following:—

(1) Certain essentials of good government ought to be laid down and no departure therefrom permitted. These essentials should be of the simplest character. These essentials would correspond to the stipulations of the mandates ensuring that the government of the backward peoples in the mandated countries shall not give rise to abuses and evils which have resulted in the past. (2) Every State should be required to submit a report on its administration to the Government of India, the report being drawn up with particular reference to the essentials of good government laid down. (3) The Government of India should neither pigeon-hole the report, nor proceed to take action, but refer it for detailed and partial examination to an expert body, connected neither with the Government of India nor with the States, but independent of both. (4) This body should discuss the report in the presence of the duly accredited representative of the State, who would offer any supplementary information that might be desired. (5) This body would also be in possession of the debates in the representative assembly of the State and all other relevant and useful material, and would question the representative on all this material and on any other question it may think fit. (6) The people of the State concerned and any others would have the right of laying their complaints against the State before the expert body through the State authorities, who would of course, be bound to forward them, with their own observations thereupon. (7) This tribunal, where necessary, may visit the State concerned and carry on an inquiry on the spot, and may have its own agents in the various States, as has been proposed for the Mandates Commission. (8) The relevant documents relating to the charges or alleged grievances should be made available to the authorities of the State and the people. (9) The Government should then take the report of the tribunal, into their consideration and decide on the action to be taken. (10) If the action is felt to violate, on the one hand, the rights of the Prince and, on the other, the obligations of the suzerain power, an appeal should lie to a specially constituted tribunal, and facilities for such appeal be assured to the people equally with the Prince concerned.

This procedure will be fair to all the three parties concerned, and will be to the advantages of all. But only two of them, viz. the British Government and Indian Princes, receive atten-

tion at present, and the third and most important of them, viz., the people belonging to the States, are entirely ignored. No solution, however, would be satisfactory or enduring unless the rights of the people to be heard in all these are matters definitely recognised.

THE THEORY OF DIRECT RELATIONS.

17. The last point to which we should like to refer has become the subject of acute controversy in India. We refer to the claim put forward on behalf of the Princes that their relations as established by treaties are with the Crown of England, and not with the Government of British India. This proposition has been put forward both by the Princes and their counsel Sir Leslie Scott. On the other hand, eminent lawyers in India like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Pandit Moti Lal Nehru, Sir P. S. Siva Iyer, who are all considerable authorities on the constitutional law of India, have mentoined that this position is untenable, both historically and legally. We would respectfully invite the attention to the committee to Chapter 5 of the Report of All Parties Conference, where the whole subject has been discussed, and also to Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer's book on Indian Constitutional Problems. If a decision on this question is to be taken by the Committee we are bound to express our own view on this subject. This is contained in a resolution of the Indian States People's Conference, held in Bombay, that "the plea put forward that the Indian Princes have treaty obligations to the British Crown wholly independent of the Government of India for the time being has no foundation whatever, and is detrimental to the attainment of Swarajya for India as a whole."

As pointed out by the Nehru Committee the plea put forward by the Princes suggests "that the past and present Governments of India, which have so far exercised the power, said to be delegated from the Crown, were, and are acceptable, to the Indian Princes and Indian States; but that the future Government of India, if it is to be of the dominion type, will not be so acceptable. This in plain English means that the past and present Governments of India were acceptable because they were essentially foreign in their composition and not responsible to the Indian electorate, and that the future responsible Government of India would not be acceptable to the Princes because it will consist of their own countrymen, and because it will be responsible to an electorate of their own countrymen."

Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer also has dealt with this question at considerable length. We beg to invite attention particularly to his views on one aspect of this subject. He says: "The contention that the Sovereign of a country who enters into a treaty

does so in his personal capacity and not as the Sovereign of that country is too absurd to be maintained in the twentieth century. Supposing the people of England chose to set up a republic in place of the constitutional monarchy, it cannot be contended that the treaties with the monarch would cease to be enforceable. Or again, let us suppose that the Queen of England was a despotic Sovereign at the time of treaties and she subsequently granted a parliamentary constitution to her people. Could it be said that the treaties would become unenforceable because they were entered into with the Queen, or that she had no power to change the constitution of the country except at the risk of forfeiture of the benefits of the treaties? Could it be said again that the treaties of Indian Princes were entered into with the British Sovereign in his capacity as the Sovereign of the United Kingdom divorced from his sovereignty over his Indian territories? The matters governed by treaty relate to persons and things in India, and arise out of the relations of the Princes with the Sovereign of British India, and it would be an unthinkable constitutional absurdity that the right to enforce the treaties should vest not in the authorities for the time being charged with the administration of India, but in some other authority." Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru was at one time the Law Member of the Government of India, and occupies a high place in the public life of India. Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer also holds many important position in the public life of India. He is a distinguished member of the Madras Bar, and was at one time the Advocate-General of Madras, and was subsequently appointed a Member of Council in the Government of Madras. The opinions expressed by these two eminent authorities on the constitutional aspect of the case is entitled to great weight. Apart from the legal aspect of the question, and viewing the matter also from a practical standpoint, we submit that the people of the States are as much entitled to access to the Paramount Power as the Princes in cases which such access is now permitted by usage and practice. If the theory of direct relations with the Crown as propounded by the Princes is accepted, it will be impossible for the people of the States to place their views before an authority six thousand miles away from India, and while this may be possible for the Princes the people of the States would be effectually prevented to seek the intervention of the Paramount Power whenever a case for such intervention arises.

FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS.

18. We now wish to refer to the points that arise under the second and third terms of reference to the Committee. The Governments of States are naturally in a better position than ourselves to deal with this class of questions. The rulers of the

States are in charge of the administration of the States, and are, we believe, thoroughly conversant with all aspects of the problem. But for the procedure adopted by the Committee we should have been in full possession of all the facts on which the Princes are now relying in support of their case, and we should then have been in a position to place our views before your Committee on those points. That the people of the States have a vital interest in all the problems which arise under this head and have in some cases a view different from the Governments of the States does not admit of any argument.

Taking the most important of these questions, namely, the fiscal policy of the Government of India, we submit that the Indian Fiscal Commission dealt with the whole question of the tariff policy of India, and the discrimination to be exercised in the selection of industries for protection so as to make the inevitable burden on the community as light as is consistent with the due development of industries. This policy, as now accepted, has its inevitable reactions on the Indian States, and the incidence of taxation therein is equally affected thereby.

Without making any generalisations, we submit that the people of some of the States and their rulers may differ from each other in regard to the subject of Free Trade *versus* Protection, and we are not in a position just now to deal with any representations made to the Committee by the Indian Princes in this behalf.

Then again, the Government of India are now committed in order to fulfil their international obligations in the largest measure, to a policy of reducing progressively the export of opium from India so as to extinguish them altogether within a definite period, except as regards the export of opium for strictly medical purposes. Even in respect of this matter, there are points of view in which there is room for difference of opinion between the rulers and their subjects.

The currency policy of the Government of India, which has of late been the subject of acute controversy in British India, has equally affected the financial and economic interest of the States. It is also necessary to point out that certain all-India services, such as military defence, posts and telegraphs, railway tariffs, the salt-tax—all these impose financial and economic burdens on the people of the States and also on their governments. In regard to these matters, which are of the most profound interest to the States as to British India, the States have no opportunity whatever of influencing action or policy at any stage. Where legislation is concerned, it is the Central Legislature of British India, which operates outside the States, that decides matters. And where administrative action is concerned, it is the Government of India (or its Departments), which is in no way amenable to the influence

of the States, that takes decisions. This is a constitutional anomaly which should not be allowed to continue. There are many other matters in the day to day administration of the States in their relation to British India in which the financial and economic interest of the States are in conflict with those of British India.

THE NEED FOR A THROUGH PUBLIC INQUIRY

19. We submit, therefore, that the Committee cannot have an adequate knowledge of all these matters unless a thorough public inquiry is made, with opportunities for all interest concerned to urge their views and to support these by evidence. We are at a loss to know how your Committee can make any recommendations for a more satisfactory adjustment of these financial and economical relations without undertaking a most exhaustive inquiry with the aid of financial and administrative experts. For the present we content ourselves by bringing to your notice the general features of this problem, and to emphasise the necessity of hearing not only the Princes but also their people in regard to the many points that arise for consideration in order to obtain a fair and equitable adjustment of the financial and economic relations between British India and the Indian States. It is our conviction, based upon a long review of the relations between British India and the States in these matters, that the States have been subjected to considerable financial and economic burdens in the past without any opportunity being afforded, either to the rulers or to the people of the States, of being heard. This position is not defensible. If, as a result of the labours of this Committee, the modification of the present financial and economic relations is brought about, we submit that provision should be made in the future relations for giving to the people of the States an effective voice in the formulation of all policies relating to these matters, either by the States acting individually or collectively in conjunction with the Government of India or acting by themselves. We submit that the States have a right to take part in all-India economic and financial legislation. It will not suffice that the States should receive a portion of the proceeds of such legislation. The right to a portion of these revenues is based upon the fact that the people of the States contribute materially to the proceeds, but we must make it perfectly clear that the people of the States, along with their rulers, are entitled to take part in the initiation of the economic and financial policy governing the whole of India, and to benefit fairly and equitably from its results.

INDIAN STATES AND BRITISH INDIA

20. The third term of reference raises, in our opinion, the whole question of machinery for the future adjustment of

differences between the Indian States and British India in regard to financial and economic matters. We believe that the Committee is not restricted in its choice of the machinery that it may recommend under this head, the language used is so wide that the whole question of the future constitutional relations of the Indian States with British India should now be brought under consideration. We are not aware of the exact position that the Princes have taken in this matter before your Committee, but we have noticed that they have actually, or intended to, put forward a scheme which was published in the Indian Press. We have also learnt from the Press in this country that the Princes are not now putting forward before your Committee any definite schemes providing the machinery for the future adjustment of financial and economic matters between the States and British India, but that they are contenting themselves with pointing out the difficulties under which they now labour. At the same time, statements have been made in the Press by some of the Princes and those associated with them that they advocate the creation of an organic and constitutional structure for the whole of India, including the States, in which the latter should have a legitimate place. We are generally in agreement with those views so far as they are known to us at present. We submit that the States and the British Indian authorities are already co-operating with each other constantly in matters relating to revenue and financial administration, and their co-operation in the administration of police and justice is a matter of daily occurrence. The range of matters in which the States and the British Indian Provinces are realising their mutual dependence is daily increasing, and their dealings with each other have already established, by precedent and usage, a loose kind of tie and certain rights and obligations, though they are not defined by statute or crystallised in a written constitution. In her relations with the outside world India is regarded as a single unit, and there is in her international relations no distinction between British India and the States. The disabilities suffered by Indians in the British Colonies and foreign lands extend to the subjects of the States as well as to those of British India. In these circumstances the exact position of the Indian States in an all-India policy is no longer a matter of speculation for constitutional theorists, but has already become a matter of immediate practical importance.

The Indian States People's Conference passed a resolution to the effect "that for a speedy attainment of Swarajya for India as a whole, the States should be brought into constitutional relations with British India, and that the people of the States should be assigned a definite place and an effective voice, in all matters of common concern, in any new constitution that may

be devised for the whole of India, " While the question of the future relations of British India and the States can only properly be solved in the manner suggested in the resolution referred to above, it seems to us impossible, from the procedure that has been adopted by this Committee, that such an important matter relating to the future constitution of India could be considered *in camera*. We do not also believe that the Committee, if it were empowered by the terms of the reference to frame such a Constitution, would proceed to do so without hearing the people of British India and the States. We do not, therefore, wish to trouble this Committee with a full expression of our views at this stage on this important problem. While we feel that any other method of adjustment of the relations between the States and British India will not give satisfaction, it is possible that the Committee and the Princes may have some proposals for the interim stages for securing a proper adjustment of the financial and economic relations between the two parties. As those proposals of the Princes have not been published we are not in a position to express our views thereon. We feel, however, bound to say that any concrete proposals to this end must be discussed not only with the governments of the States but also with the people thereof in constituent assemblies wherever they exist, and any representative bodies which may come into existence hereafter.

CONCLUSION

21. In conclusion we submit that our object in making these observations on the questions referred to your Committee is to secure fundamental changes in the present system of administration in the States as a whole. It is not our intention or desire to cast any reflections on any individual Prince or on their order, but we fully believe that personal rule as a system of Government must now be modified in the States by the introduction of the democratic principle. In our opinion, the consequences of delay in this respect will be most serious. His Highness the Chancellor has himself stated publicly that no Indian ruler can resist, or would dream of resisting, the public opinion of his people. We therefore have some hope that the changes for which we are contending have been accepted in principle, and their practical application without delay would remove considerable discontent and dissatisfaction that now prevails in the States.

The labours of this Committee offer a unique opportunity to initiate the uplift of a vast mass of people of the States from the condition of political submersion to the status of imperial citizenship. It can surely be no matter of credit to the paramountcy of Britain that, amid all the growing aspirations of their fellowcitizens in the other parts of India, the people of the

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States should have to rest satisfied with a dwarfed stature and a parochial outlook, or that they should continue to be prevented from aspiring to the standards of free and many-sided citizenship made accessible to their brethren in their neighbourhood.

We have the honour to be, Sirs,

Your obedient Servants,

(Signed) M. RAMACHANDRA RAO.

G. R. ABHYANKAR.

P. L. CHUDGAR.

National Liberal Club, London.

November 19, 1928.

ANNEXURE A

The following 70 States were represented in the Conference.

(1) Bhavnagar. (2) Gondal. (3) Rajkot. (4) Jamnagar. (5) Jaipur. (6) Cutch. (7) Baroda. (8) Kishangarh. (9) Muli. (10) Ratlam. (11) Bikanir. (12) Bharatpur. (13) Morvi. (14) Jetpur. (15) Limdi. (16) Balasinor. (17) Hyderabad. (18) Chuda. (19) Jamkhandi. (20) Mangrol. (21) Palitana. (22) Porbunder. (23) Radhanpur. (24) Khambat. (25) Dhrol. (26) Jesalmere. (27) Devgadh Baria. (28) Sangli. (29) Idar. (30) Janjira. (31) Dhrangadhara. (32) Lunavada. (33) Vansda. (34) Junagadh. (35) Lakhtar. (36) Rajpipla. (37) Indore. (38) Wadhwan. (39) Jodhpur. (40) Kapurthala. (41) Mysore. (42) Sayla. (43) Kotha. (44) Mansa. (45) Bagasara. (46) Loharu. (47) Bundi. (48) Nabha. (49) Savantwadi. (50) Udaipur. (51) Bhor. (52) Rampur. (53) Chamba. (54) Vadali. (55) Palanpur. (56) Danta. (57) Sirohi. (58) Gwalior. (59) Dewas (Senior). (60) Sardargadh. (61) Alwar. (62) Dewas (Junior). (63) Bhopal. (64) Kolhapur. (65) Ghodasar. (66) Vankaner. (67) Manavadar. (68) Javar. (69) Karauli. (70) Travancore.

ANNEXURE B

The report of the Indian States People's Conference, held in Bombay, in December, 1927.