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FOREWORD.

I and the Bombay Delegates present at the ninth session of the Liberal Federation held at Akola in December 1926 had the privilege to invite the next session to Bombay. In due course, I moved the Council of the Western India National Liberal Association to organise a Reception Committee which was able through its several Sub-Committees to carry out all the necessary details of the sessions successfully including the raising of funds for that purpose.

The City of Bombay was the birth place of the Indian National Congress in 1885. It was also at Bombay in 1915 that the Congress under the presidency of Lord Sinha laid the foundation of the Reforms which culminated in the passing of the Government of India Act of 1919. It was again in the City of Bombay that the first session of what is now known as the National Liberal Federation was organised when, owing to the exigencies of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, the Liberal Party had to secede from the Special Session of the Congress in 1918. It was, therefore, appropriate that, at the next critical juncture in the constitutional history of India, the tenth sessions of the Federation was held in Bombay in order to give a correct lead to the country.

This session was invested with special significance owing to the recent announcement of the constitution and scheme of the Indian Statutory Commission, the necessity of solving the problem of Hindu-Moslms Unity and giving effect to the recommendations of the Indian Sandhurst Committee. The occasion demanded firm, wise and sagacious guidance and it was fortunate that we were able to secure an eminent publicist like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapro, as the President of the Session.

The report and the proceedings of the Federation published herein will indicate that the task before the Federation was satisfactorily performed. The response from all over the country was good and the number of delegates was about 400 representing all interests and communities in the country. As regards the finances, I am thankful to the numerous members and friends of the Liberal Party for the generous assistance they rendered to us. I hope and trust that the success of this Session will help in the further organisation and consolidation of the Liberal Party whose importance and responsibility is bound to increase as the country advances further towards its goal of full responsible government.

I cannot conclude without tendering my thanks on behalf of the Reception Committee to Rao Bahadur Manaji Rajooji for the generous help he has given which alone has made it possible for our Committee to publish this report in such a short time and to Mr. D. S. Yande, the Proprietor of Indu Prakash Press for printing the report so expeditiously.

Bombay February 9, 1928.

C. H. SETALVAD.

Chairman of the Reception Committee.

The National Liberal Federation of India.

[TENTH SESSION]

OFFICE BEARERS.

[*Chairman of the Reception Committee.*

Sir Chimanlal H. Setalwad. K. C. I. E., LL. D.,

Vice-Chairmen.

The Hon'ble Sir Phiroze C. Sethna, Kt. O. B. E.,

Sir Byramjee Jeejeebhoy, Kt., J. P.

Mr. Faiz B. Tyabji, Bar-at-Law.

Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai, M. A. LL, B. Advocate.

Mr. N. V. Gokhale, B. A. LL. B.,

Hon. Secretaries.

Mr. D. G. Dalvi, M. A. LL. B.

Mr. Amiruddin S. Tyebjee.

Mr. Manu Subedar B. Sc.,

Mr. Fazal I. Rahimtoolah, M. I. A.

Mr. N. M. Joshi, M. L. A.

Mr. J. R. B. Jeejeebhoy,

Dr. J. Alban De'Souza, L. M. & S.

Mr. S. N. Gamadia, M. A.,

Mr. Shanker S. Persha.

Dr. Miss. Kashibai, Nowrange, B. A., L. M. & S.

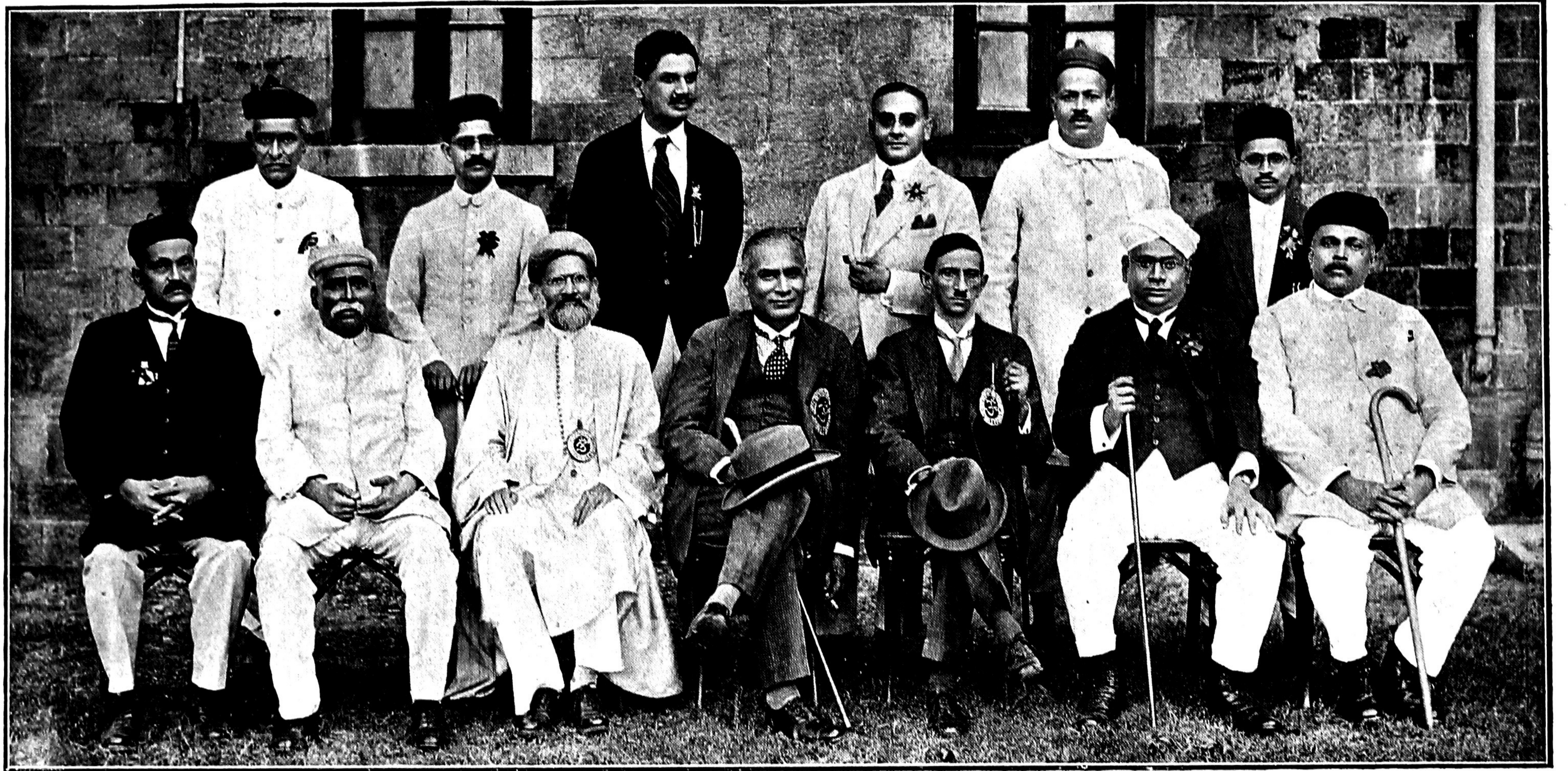
Hon. Treasurer.

Mr. Vasantao S. Ravut.

Assistant Secretary.

Mr. V. R. Bhende.

A few of the
Office-Bearers of the National Liberal Federation of India.



Sitting (from left to right) are : Mr. D. G. Dalvi; Rao Bahadur Manaji Rajuji; Mr. Falz B. Tyabji; Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru (President); Sir Chimanlal Setalvad; Mr. C. Y. Chintamani and Mr. R. S. Navalkar.
Standing (from left to right) are: Mr. Vasant Rao S. Ravut; Pandit H. N. Kunzru; Mr. J. R. B. Jeejeebhoy; Mr. Manu Subedar; Mr. N. M. Joshi and Mr. V. R. Bhonde.

The National Liberal Federation of India.

TENTH SESSION.

December, 27, 28 & 29, 1927.

RESOLUTIONS.

1.—The Statutory Commission.

(a) The National Liberal Federation is strongly of opinion that the official announcement made about the constitution of the Statutory Commission and the functions of the Committees of the Indian Legislatures is unacceptable as it flagrantly denies the right of the Indian people to participate on equal terms in framing the future constitution of the country and that the Legislatures and Indians throughout the country should have nothing to do with the Commission at any stage or in any form.

(b) That the Council of the Federation be authorised to take all necessary steps to give effect to this resolution.

Proposed by Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer, (Madras).

Seconded by Sir Moropant Joshi, (Berar).

Supported by Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai (Bombay).

Pandit Hardaya Nath Kunzru, M.L.A. (U. P.)

Rao Bahadur K. G. Damale, (Berar)

Rao Krishna Pal Singh of Avagadh,
M. L. C. (U. P.)

Babu Bhagavati Saran Singh, M.L.C. (Behar).

Mr. Chunilal M. Gandhi, (Surat)

Mr. M. B. Marathe, (Belgaum)

Mr. N. B. Karnekar, (Sholapur)

Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, M.L.C. (U. P.)

2. Indian Representation on International Bodies.

The National Liberal Federation strongly urges that Indian representation on the League of Nations and other International or Imperial Conferences should be by a delegation predominantly Indian in its composition and led by an Indian.

Proposed by The Hon. Sir Phiroze C. Sethna, K.T., O.B.E.

Seconded by Mr. N. M. Joshi M.L.A.

3. A Constitution for India.

This Federation resolves that a Committee of the under-mentioned persons, with power to add to their number, be constituted in order to formulate, as far as may be in co-operation with similar Committees of other political organisations in the country, a scheme of constitutional advance towards Swaraj, and that the Committee do submit its report to the Council of the Federation as early as practicable.

Proposed by Rao Bahadur R. R. Kale, M.L.C., (Satara)

Seconded by Rai Bahadur Thakur Hanuman Singh, M.L.C.
(Lucknow).

Supported by Mr. G. K. Gadgil, Bar-at-law, (Poona)

Members of the Committee.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru (Chairman)

Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyer.

Sir Chimanlal H. Setalvad.

Sir Moropant Joshi.

Babu Jotindra Nath Basu.

Mr. Faiz B. Tyabji

M. C. Y. Chintamani.

Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai.

Rao Bahadur K. V. Brahma.

Rao Bahadur V. M. Keikar.

Rao Bahadur R. R. Kale.

Mr. C. M. Gandhi.

Babu Bhagavati Saran Singh.

Mr. Manu Subedar.

Pandit Hardaya Nath Kunzru (Secretary)
and Messrs Surendra Nath Varma and Vishwanath Prasad (Hon. Asstt. Secretaries).

4. Improvement of the Masses.

(i) This Federation affirms its conviction that the condition of the masses in India is deplorable owing to their poverty, low physical stamina and lack of education;

(ii) This Federation strongly urges upon the Government and the people of India the urgent need for initiating adequate and suitable measures for the improvement of their moral, material and physical condition and for this purpose it earnestly

recommends (a) the promotion of free and compulsory education among boys and girls alike (b) the development of agriculture, (c) the expansion of the co-operative movement and other schemes for debt-redemption, (d) the initiation of schemes for rural re-construction. (e) the improvement of village sanitation by a systematic propaganda for spreading the knowledge of the laws of health, (f) and by introduction of organisations like the village-panchayats.

Proposed by Mr. G. K. Devadhar, M. A., C. I. E.

Seconded by Dr. P. N. Daruwala, Bar-at-law.

Supported by Mr. R. S. Saterkar (in Marathi)

5. Inter-Communal Unity.

(a) This Federation places on record its deep conviction that in the interest of the general progress of the country, and, in particular for the early attainment by India of responsible government, it is of paramount importance that unfortunate differences of a communal character should be composed; and in order to remove this serious menace to the progress of the country, this Federation calls upon all its members to promote and actively support every movement calculated to bring about a better understanding between the Hindus and the Muslims and to place the relations of the two communities upon an honourable footing of toleration in religious matters and on a basis of unity in political matters by the just representation of the minorities in the Legislatures and with due regard to efficiency in the public services of the country.

(b) This Federation cordially appreciates the earnestness of the distinguished Muslim leaders who have put forward the scheme for the settlement of outstanding differences between the Hindu and Muslim communities and suggests that various items of the proposed settlement should be discussed at an early date by duly elected representatives of the communities in a spirit of such genuine cooperation as will lead to complete agreement;

(c) This Federation affirms that national patriotism should be the foundation of representative institutions and that such patriotism can best be developed by a system of joint electorates qualified by a reservation of seats for important minorities until such time as it may be possible with the goodwill of the communities concerned to dispense with the reservation of seats.

Proposed by Mr. Faiz. B. Tyabji, BAR-AT-LAW, (Bombay)

Seconded by Lala Kesho Ram, M. L. C. (Punjab)

Supported by Rai Bahadur Thakur Hanuman Singh, M. L. C.
(U. P)

„ Mr. Prakash Narayn Sapru (U. P.)

„ Mr. R. H. Kelker, (Poona).

„ Mr. Madan Mohan Nath Raina, (U. P.)

„ Mr. Jafferbhoy Hajibhoy (Bombay)

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Rao Bahadur K. V. Brahma.

Rao Bahadur V. M. Kelkar.

Rao Bahadur R. R. Kale.

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„ Mr. Madan Mohan Nath Raina, (U. P.)

„ Mr. Jafferbhoy Hajibhoy (Bombay)

6. Military Policy

(a) While recognising that the recommendations of the Indian Sandhurst Committee do not satisfy Indian aspirations, this Federation deplors the delay and unwillingness of the Government to give effect to them, as they mark a beginning in the Indianisation of the higher ranks of the army in India and urges that no time should be lost in carrying them out;

(b) This Federation further urges that progressive reduction should be carried out in the ratio of British to Indian troops till the army in India is completely Indianised.

Proposed by Mr. Manu Subedar (Bombay)

Seconded by Mr. P. Andrews Dube (U. P)

Supported by—Prof. B. G. Sapre (Sangli)

Industrial Labour.

(a) This Federation recommends to the Government of India to appoint a Committee to enquire into the condition of Industrial Labour such as wages, hours of work, unemployment, and unprovided for sickness and to suggest remedial legislative measures when found necessary, such as establishing machinery for fixing minimum wages, for reduction of hours of work, for establishing machinery for settling industrial disputes;

(b) This Federation recommends to all Liberals in the country to help the working classes to organise themselves into Unions for protecting their interests and for mutually helping themselves by co-operative efforts.

Proposed by Mr. N. M. Joshi, M. L. A. (Bombay)

Seconded by Mr. P. S. Bakhale (Bombay)

Supported by Mr. R. R. Bakhale (Bombay)

8. Problems of Indian States.

This Federation notes with satisfaction that certain Indian States have made a beginning in the direction of introducing representative institutions in their territories and hopes that all the Indian States will take early steps to bring their administration into accord with modern ideas of progressive government. (From the chair)

9. Indian Mercantile Marine.

(a) This Federation while welcoming the establishment of the Training-Ship "Dufferin" in Bombay, strongly urges upon the Government of India, with a view to make the Training-Ship a success, the necessity for taking legislative action to ensure the compulsory employment on coastalships of Indians as officers and engineers in accordance with the recommendations of the Indian Mercantile Marine Committee.

(b) This Federation, moreover, endorses the finding of the Committee that something more is required beyond the provision of training facilities in order to develop an Indian Mercantile Marine and strongly urges the Government of India to give effect to the recommendation of the Committee that the Indian Coastal Trade should be reserved to ships, the ownership and controlling interests of which are predominantly Indian;

(c) This Federation further urges the Government of India to (i) help ships, owned and managed by Indians, to participate in the Overseas Trade of India (ii) adopt effective measures to develop the ship-building industry of India. (iii) legislate for the abolishment of the deferred Rebate system. (From the Chair)

10. The East African Problems

(a) This Federation views with grave concern the declaration of policy contained in the recent White Paper entitled "Future Policy in Regard to Eastern Africa (Comd. 2904), which, in the Constitutional changes likely to be introduced under the guise of Federation, threatens to place the Indian residents, as well as the African natives under the domination of the European settlers, in complete reversal of the policy laid down in the White Paper of 1223 (Cond. 1922.) This Federation is opposed to the new policy of "associating the immigrant communities in the responsibilities and trustee ship of Government and urges His Majesty's Government to retain all political power in its own hands and not to advance the political status of either immigrant community till a fair proportion of the natives attain the franchise on a common property and educational qualification and can obtain an effective share in representation by election on a common register;

(b) This Federation further protests against the non-inclusion of a single Indian Member in the East African Commission.

Proposed by Mr. S. G. Vaze (Poona)

Seconded by Mr. V. N. Tiwari, M. L. C., (U.P.)

11. Improvement of Untouchables.

(a) This Federation notes with satisfaction the general awakening in favour of urgently removing the evil of untouchability and declares its emphatic opinion that unless and until the equal status of depressed classes in political and social matters is recognised, there can be no real progress in the country;

(b) This Federation impresses upon all Provincial Governments and local bodies the necessity of allotting annually an adequate sum for the award of scholarships to the children

of the depressed classes and of making their education—primary secondary and higher as well as technical-free. The Federation further urges that the Provincial Governments should at once open the door of all services under them for the admission of fit candidates belonging to these classes and give them preference for employment when fully qualified candidates are available.

Proposed by Mr. V. N Chandavarkar, (Bombay)

Seconded by Rai Bahadur Thakur Hanuman Singh, M.L.C.
(U. P.)

Supported by Mrs. Gunabai Waghmare, (Berar)

12 The Late Hakim Ajmal Khan.

This Federation has just learnt with deep sorrow of the sudden death of Hakim Ajmal Khan Saheb of Delhi and places on record its tribute to his memory. In his death Delhi loses its premier citizen, the Unani system of medicine its most commanding exponent and Indian nationalism a leader of rare personal charm whose memory will be always cherished as that of a devoted servant of the country and one whose constant effort was by his personal example and great influence to establish peace and harmony between the Hindus and his co-religionists. (From the Chair.)

13 Assessment of Land.

This Federation Protests against the inordinate delay made by nearly every provincial government in carrying into effect the recommendation of the Joint Select Committee of Parliament that the general principles of Land Revenue Assessment should be embodied in a legislation and the Federation urges that this should be done without delay. (From the Chair)

14 Bengal Internments.

(a) This Federation strongly reiterates its protest against the continued detention of many persons in Bengal under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1925, and urges that all of them should be either set free or tried under the ordinary Criminal Law. (From the Chair)

15. Constitution of the Federation.

(a) The following be inserted at the end of Rule 3.

“The Council of the National Liberal Federation shall be styled as “the National Liberal Council of India,” and

(b) the words “and such number, if any, of Assistant Secretaries, as may be appointed.” (From the Chair.)

16 Council and Office-Bearers for 1928

This Federation re-elects Mr. C. Y. Chintamani and Pandit Hardaya Nath Kunzru as the Hon. General Secretaries and elects Messrs Surendra Nath Varma and Vishwanath Prasad as Hon. Assistant Secretaries for the year 1928, and directs that the all-India Council for the next year should be constituted in accordance with the lists submitted by the provincial Liberal organisations (From the Chair.)

17. Next Session of the Federation.

Resolved that the Eleventh Annual Session of the National Liberal Federation of India be held at Allahabad at such time in the year 1928 as may hereafter be decided. (From the Chair)

Vote of Thanks to the President.

Proposed by The Hon'ble Sir Phiroze C. Sethna, Kt, O.B.E.

Seconded by Mr. D. G. Dalvi.

National Liberal Federation of India.

[TENTH SESSION]



A few of the Delegates and Volunteers with the President.

The National Liberal Federation of India.

THE TENTH ANNUAL SESSION.

Tuesday 27th December, 1927.

Opening day.

The tenth session of the National Liberal Federation of India assembled in Bombay in the spacious Sir Cowasji Jehangir Public Hall, on Tuesday, December 27th, 1927 at 1.30 p. m. The hall was tastefully decorated with flags and buntings. There was a very large and representative gathering of both delegates and visitors among whom were a large number of ladies. Among those seated on the platform were Sir P. S. Shivaswamy Aiyar, (Madras), Sir Moropant Joshi, ex-Home Member, Central Provinces Government, the Hon'ble Sir Phiroze C. Sethna, Member of the Council of State, the Hon'ble Mr. G. B. Pradhan (Excise Minister, Bombay) the Hon'ble Mr. Justice G. D. Madgaonkar, Sir Prabhashankar D. Pattani, Mr. B. S. Kamat, Member of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, Mr. Faiz B. Tyabaji, Ex-Judge, Madras High Court, Mr. Bepin Chandra Pal of Calcutta, the Hon'ble Mr. S. B. Tambe, Home Member Central Provinces Government, the Hon'ble Sir Shankarrao Chitnavis, President of the Central Provinces Legislative Council, Mr. G. K. Devdhar, President of the Servants of India Society, Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, General Secretary of the National Liberal Federation, Mr. Bhulabhai, J. Desai, Pandit Hirdaya Nath Kunzru, Vice President of the Servants of India Society, Rao Bahadur K. G. Damale of Akola, Sir Jugmohandas Vurjivandas, Mr. Bhaskarrao V. Jadhav, Ex-Minister of Education, Bombay, Lala Keshao Ram of Amritsar, Pandit Krishna Ram Mehta, Editor of the "Leader," Rai Bahadur Thakur Hanuman Singh of Lucknow, Rao Bahadur R. R. Kale of Satara, Rao Krishna Pal Singh. M.L.C. of Avagadh, Rao Bahadur R. V. Mahajani of Berar, Mr. Chunilal M. Gandhi of Surat, Rao Bahadur Manaji Rajooji, leader of the Telgu Community of Bombay, Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtoolah. M.L.A., of Bombay, Mr. Amiruddin S. Tyebjee, Messrs. Manu Subedar, V. N. Chandavarkar, J. R. B. Jeejeebhoy, N. M. Joshi and D. G. Dalvi.

The proceedings commenced with the national and welcome songs by the girl students of the School of Indian Music under the direction of Prof. B. R. Devadhar.

Sir Chimanlal H. Setalvad, K. C. I. E., Chairman of the Reception Committee, then welcomed the delegates assembled in the following speech. He said:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Welcome Speech
Sir Chimanlal H.
Setalvad.

It is my privilege to welcome the Federation to this city which is the city of its birth. It was in the year 1918 that the Liberal party decided to have its separate organization and the first meeting of the National Liberal Federation was held under the presidency of Bengal's great patriot the late Sir Surendranath Banerji. The Liberals always stood for constitutional progress by constitutional methods and they in the events that had happened had no alternative but to organise separately on Liberal principles. Civil disobedience and non-co-operation were in the air and the Congress was drawn into the vortex. Prominent Liberals who had built up and reared by many years of patient work the great national institution had to adopt the painful course of leaving that institution and seeing it taken by people who were carried away by the frenzy of the moment to paths which Liberals were convinced were not in the best interests of the country. The Liberals have kept aloft their banner of constitutional progress by constitutional methods in spite of misrepresentations and abuse and they would always continue to follow their creed which they believe to be right. To-day, we are meeting under circumstances of a very exceptional character. The whole country has been moved in a manner it has never been moved before and a feeling of solidarity and unity in upholding national self-respect and national rights has exhibited itself in a marvellous manner. Under the Government of India Act, it is necessary to appoint a Commission to enquire into the working of the Act since 1921 and to make recommendations for future developments. This Commission has been recently constituted and its procedure defined. The announcement in respect thereof has evoked throughout the country deep and universal dissatisfaction and people of all shades of political opinion have raised their protest. The membership of this Commission has been confined only to British Members of Parliament and no Indians have found a place on it. The reasons advanced for the total exclusion of Indians from the Commission which is to determine the political future of India are altogether unconvincing. The Secretary of State for India must indeed have a desperate case to support when he was driven to arguing that the framers of the Government of India Act of 1919 had in their minds the appointment of a purely Parliamentary Commission although the Section as worded does not impose any such restriction. An equally desperate attempt to justify the present composition of the Commission is made by an Anglo Indian Newspaper in Bombay, when it says that the device of investigation by a Royal Commission is the special product of British genius and that, therefore, in order to achieve

the best results, its composition should be exclusively British. It is said that as India is divided into many creeds and groups it is impossible to give on the Commission representation to all interests. Those who know real India and Indian conditions and are not carried away by exaggerated pictures painted by interested parties, know that there is no insuperable difficulty of this character. As his Highness the Aga Khan observed, it is not difficult to name twenty Indians belonging to different creeds or political organisations who will command the confidence of the entire Indian community. The large mass of illiterate India is put forward as an objection to the inclusion of Indians on the Commission. It is astounding to be told that the millions who have been allowed to remain illiterate during the British Administration of the last 150 years, will have their interests better safeguarded by Britishers who have no knowledge of the country and its people and their manners and ways of thinking than by their own people. We are told, however, that the scheme proposes to give us something much better than membership of the Commission. It is proposed that the Central as well as the Provincial Legislatures should appoint committees and such committees would collaborate first with the Commission and later on the Committee of the Central Legislature will collaborate with the joint Parliamentary Committee and apologists of the scheme say that these committees of the Legislatures or at any rate the Committee of the Central Legislature will have equal rights and status with the Parliamentary Commission. Labour leaders like Lord Olivier and Mr. Macdonald spoke of two Commissions, one appointed by Parliament and other by the Central Legislature in India, sitting side by side with equal status and powers and submitting their reports to the Joint Committee of Parliament. But we are not to be carried away by the suggestions and the pious hopes of Labour leaders or by the honeyed words used by the Prime Minister that Indians would be approached as friends and equals. We must examine the realities and the implications and limitations of the scheme as explained by the responsible minister, the Secretary of State and his under-secretary and on such an examination there can only be one verdict that the scheme does not secure to the Committee of the Central Legislature any equality of status or rights in the remotest degree. The Secretary of State clearly defined the functions of the Committee of the Central Legislature. That Committee will "prepare their own proposals and come before the Commission and say these are our suggestions, and the Commission will then by itself analyse and criticise the proposals of the Committee and accept them or reject them." When the Commission goes to the Provinces, the Committee of the Central Legislature will lose touch with it and provincial Committees will "discharge the same consultative functions as the Committee of the Central Legislature". The Commission will arrive at its own conclusions and present its re-

Welcome Speech
Sir Chimanlal H.
Setalvad.

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Sir Chimanlal H.
Setalvad.

port to Parliament and the Secretary of State makes it clear that there cannot be two reports. After the Commission has made its report, the Committee of the Central Indian Legislature would be allowed to put forward its criticism on the proposals of the Commission and may appear before the joint Parliamentary Committee to support its criticisms. In this scheme, there is nothing conceded to the Indian Legislatures beyond what would be perfectly open to them to do without the scheme mentioning the procedure above referred to. The Legislatures or their Committees have no more status and no more power than that of submitting their views like any other witness which can be accepted or rejected. It is argued, however, that Sir John Simon has been given a free hand and that the Prime Minister said that within the frame-work, the Commission would be free to deal with the various suggestions that were made in the Houses of Parliament during the discussion of the Motion for the appointment of the Commission. Let there be no delusion about this matter. All the freedom which Sir John Simon and his colleagues can have would be to liberalise the procedure as much as they can but they cannot create equal status or confer equal rights on the Committee of the Indian Legislature. These Committees in effect can only be and will always be under the frame-work which the Commission cannot touch, in the position of witnesses, although they may be treated as honoured witnesses specially invited and may be received with great courtesy and consideration and be given every facility and opportunity of stating their views. Ladies and Gentlemen, this being the real nature of the association offered to India in the work of determining her political future, can India with any self respect agree to accept the position offered to her? It is for the Federation speaking for the Liberal party to give the answer. The answer that I venture to suggest is an emphatic negative. It is a very encouraging sign that the determination to refuse to have anything to do with the Commission at any stage or in any form is receiving such universal acceptance from all parties and organizations and all sections of the people. If Government have any political wisdom they ought to read correctly the great significance of the phenomenon that the last month has revealed. It is not merely the fire-eaters and irreconcilables who are resisting the Commission as announced. The foremost in the opposition are many distinguished Indians who undeterred by any popular clamour and at considerable personal sacrifice came forward to work the Reforms Act at a very critical period and steadfastly pursued that policy because they conscientiously believed it to be in the best interests of the country. If those people are now firmly against the announcement of the Parliamentary Commission and feel that they cannot conscientiously have anything to do with it, those in authority must pause and think and think wisely instead of deluding themselves with the belief that the action of these people is dictated either by stupidity or unworthy

motives which the apologists of Government are too ready to attribute to them. Our position is plain. The scheme as announced is unacceptable and we cannot take any part in it. If fresh proposals or modifications are made, we are prepared to consider them with an open mind. We have raised our voice in warning and the responsibility lies heavily on Government and they have to make up their minds and the quicker they do it the better, either to retrace their steps and rectify the great blunder they have committed or to persist in their mistaken course and work everlasting harm both to India and to England. (Loud applause).

Welcome Speech
Sir Chimanlal H.
Setalvad.

Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer (Madras) in formally proposing that Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru do take the chair said:—

Election of President.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sir P. S. Siwaswamy Aiyer.

I have been entrusted with the very pleasant task of proposing to you for acceptance the name of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru as President of this session of the Indian National Liberal Federation. (Applause). This is not the first time that Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has been invited to preside over the deliberations of the National Liberal Federation. He is no stranger to the people of this country and much less is he a stranger to Liberal politicians. If I make any remarks at all in support of this resolution, it is more to remind you of his many claims and qualifications than to inform you of them. It is not necessary for me to dwell upon his brilliant academic career or his distinguished attainments as a lawyer which have secured for him the foremost position in the Allahabad bar. He is, as we all know, an ornament of the legal profession and commands the highest respect as a lawyer not merely in Allahabad but throughout India.

It is more pertinent to refer to the many public services which he has rendered almost from the day that he entered the bar. His public life began, I believe, as early as 1896. He has sat at the feet of our old masters, the great leaders of the Congress in the early days. He was himself a member of the Legislative Council of the United Provinces for over three years. He was also a member of the Imperial Legislative Council in the pre-reform days. He was selected as a member of the Southborough Committee which inquired into the subject of the franchise in pursuance of the recommendation in the Montagu-Chelmsford report on reforms. Subsequently he was invited to fill the high office of Member of the Executive Council of the Governor-General. Of his performances on the stage of the Legislature as a member of the Cabinet, the public are well aware. Of what he did behind the scenes the public may not be aware, but when he gives the public his memoirs at some later date—as I hope he will—following the recent fashion of English statesmen of divulging State secrets, I am sure we shall

know what an important and valuable a part Sir Tej Bahadur has played as a member of the cabinet of the Government of India.

He found that the atmosphere of the Executive Council of the Viceroy was not quite congenial, any more than the atmosphere of Simla was in regard to his health. Shortly after he resigned his office he was chosen as a representative of India at the Imperial Conference. How ably he discharged his duties as a Member of the Imperial Conference and how hard he fought for the cause of India are well-known to all of us. Since his return from the Imperial Conference he has paid another visit to England and that quite recently. He has collected a great amount of first-hand knowledge about conditions there, about the poisoned political atmosphere that is now prevalent in England, an atmosphere charged with prejudice against Indians, as the result of a publication which is suspected to be largely due to the influence of those who are enemies of India.

He has a distinguished record of experience, legal, administrative and political. I doubt whether we could possibly find another politician of the same large experience of politics and of administration as Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. His various services to the country, his public spirit and his sterling independence of character entitle him to your acceptance. Let me also add that he has not cultivated the language of a courtier. He is a hard fighter. If there is any man who never minces words and who can talk straight to the enemy at the gate and whom we now require to preside over our deliberations, it is Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. (Hear hear). I have, therefore, great pleasure in recommending the name of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru for the presidency. (Applause).

Election of
President.
Sir M. V. Joshi.

Sir M. V. Joshi (Berars), seconding the proposition, said: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen.—You have heard several merits of our would-be president catalogued already. I have very little to add to it myself, but I would remind you at this critical juncture we could not get a wiser guidance than in our president. The time has arrived when we might be strongly suspected and even charged with having abandoned Liberal principles and Liberal traditions, and our enemies have not sat quiet—they have already done so. At this juncture, particularly, therefore, we want a man of whom it can be said that he is a sturdy Liberal. He has never given up his principles and traditions of Liberalism. He has not deflected one hair's breadth at any time from the Liberal expression of views or Liberal actions expected of Liberals. Such a man we want at this juncture and we have him.

I would remind you also that on his return from England he was the first man to speak out his mind about the apprehensions in connection with the Statutory Commission, and he was the first to criticise, and to criticise fearlessly as a sturdy Liberal should do, Government's scheme in this behalf, and this is just the sort of man we want at the present moment.

As I said, we want wise guidance. We want it to be shown to the world that Liberal principles and traditions are alone being followed in the particular line of conduct we may adopt at this Federation. I cannot say that I have been a friend of the President-elect, but I have always held him up as an ideal of a sturdy Liberal and of what a Liberal should be. He has always been my ideal of a sturdy Liberal. I have, therefore, very great pleasure in supporting this proposition as a member from one of the provinces, namely, Berars. The support is merely technical and formal, but I do so with very great pleasure.

Mr. B. J. Desai (Bombay), in supporting the proposition said: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of the province to which I belong, I have the honour to commend to your acceptance the name of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru as the president of the tenth session of the Liberal Federation. It is not a mere commonplace observation to say that of all the sessions which have taken place before this session, perhaps the most important of all is being held at a time of the gravest national concern. Momentous decisions will have to be taken, and they will have to be followed up by action in collaboration with persons of various shades of political opinions in this country. We have now arrived at a stage and time of political action in this country when neither the Liberals nor the extremists, neither the Congressmen nor the radical, nor again the independent, can stand as different castes in the country. The time has now arrived when there can be only two schools of political thought in this country; those who oppose the advance to freedom of this land and those who hope to achieve it. It is at this juncture that the Liberal Federation is meeting in this city. It is at this juncture that it is necessary to look for one who is not only wise and sagacious but who is farseeing and decisive.

Sir Tej Bahadur is not a Liberal in the sense in which that term has been used—as unfortunately a term of contempt—but he is a truly broadminded Liberal in that wherever patriotic and national interests are concerned it will not prevent him or his party or all of us to work for the common good. (Applause). Time has also arrived when while accepting the constitutional theory of the supremacy of Parliament we should consider how far, to what extent and how long we as a subject race propose to continue to be so, or modify that condition. And it is for these reasons that we look for a leader who will lead not only this particular body but the whole country in the great patriotic work that lies ahead and it is with that sense of hopeful confidence that I commend to you the name of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.

Pandit Hirdaynath Kunzru (U. P) in further supporting the proposition said: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen: On behalf of the United Provinces, I give my cordial support to the

Election of
President.

Mr. B. J. Desai.

Election of
President.

Pandit H. N.
Kunzru.

Election of President.
Pandit H. N. Kunzru.

proposal placed before you. We have today to deal not merely with the bureaucracy or with the party in power in England but with the mind of a united England. At the present juncture we see that whatever may be the internal differences between the Conservatives, Liberals and Labourites, so far as we are concerned, they have shown that they occupy almost the same position. At such a juncture, our president ought to possess exceptional qualifications and these are possessed in an eminent degree by our president-elect. We have today to reply to the arrogance of Lord Birkenhead and Mr. Baldwin, to the poisonous speech of Lord Reading who till the other day was our Viceroy and to the disingenuous statements made by Mr. Ramsay Macdonald to delude us into the belief that we are being treated on a footing of equality with Englishmen.

I think it would have been difficult to find a better spokesman of our party at this juncture than our President-elect. He was for two years a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council and has, therefore, an inner knowledge of the working of the Government which will enable him to turn our responsible administrators inside out. He has besides that freedom from communal bias which make all sections in this country, whether Hindu or Mahomedan, place complete faith in their impartiality. I have known people differing from Sir Tej Bahadur in regard to his political opinions, but I have still to meet a politician who doubts his absolute sincerity and his entire freedom from all trace of communal prejudice.

He has besides another faculty which is not the less important. Whatever his previous opinions or prepossessions might be, he can without giving up his principles at a juncture like this rise above purely or party considerations and give the best that is in him for the service of the country. He belongs not merely to our party but to all parties in this country, whatever label might be attached to them.

Mr. Baldwin said the other day in the House of Commons that when God wants a hard thing done he simply tells it to his Englishmen. Therefore, the Commission which is now coming to India is not merely a Royal Commission, but it is a divine Commission, and our president-elect with his constitutional knowledge will tell you what he thinks of the theory of divine right in politics. He will, I am sure, tell the country that she ought to give it a decent, though perhaps a quieter, burial than was given to that theory in England itself.

He has already made his opinion clear in no uncertain terms. He was perhaps the first man in the country who led the agitation against the appointment of the Simon Commission which is a direct insult and challenge to our self-respect and it is right that such a man who has given the lead not merely to our party but, if I may say so, speaking in all humility, to the

whole country, should be chosen to preside over our deliberations today.

The proposition was then carried with acclamation and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru took the chair after being garlanded. He then delivered the presidential address.

Sir Tej Bahadur, who on rising received a great ovation, said:-

Presidential Address.

MR. CHAIRMAN, FELLOW-LIBERALS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I deeply appreciate the honour that you have conferred on me by asking me to preside over this session of the Liberal Federation and I thank you for it, but while I so much value this mark of confidence I feel that the responsibility attaching to my position is one of uncommon difficulty. I derive, however, courage from the thought that you will not stint me support and assistance and that the trusted leaders of our party, who are assembled here on this occasion will give us all the benefit of their considered judgment and ripe experience.

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Address.
Sir Tej Bahadur
Sapru.

It is not my intention--and the occasion scarcely permits it--to give you a general survey of the Indian situation or to enter into a minute discussion of some of those problems which have engaged during the last twelve months the attention of our representatives in the Indian Legislature or of the public at large. I have no doubt that in the course of our proceedings resolutions will be moved on some of them and I leave the task of formulating and expressing the opinion of our party on those questions to others. What overshadows every other question at the present moment in India is the Statutory Commission and our attitude towards it. This is absolutely the first occasion since the announcement made by His Excellency the Viceroy when our party is meeting and I sincerely hope and trust that we may be able to define our position unequivocally and declare it in no hesitating terms. It is true that some of us including myself have declared their opinions on their own responsibility, but it is for the party now to declare its opinion in its collective capacity and I sincerely hope and trust that in arriving at your decision you will give the matter your best consideration.

Warning and Caveats.

For nearly six months before the historic announcement was made by His Excellency the Viceroy and by His Majesty's Government in Parliament, the Press in India had taken the keenest possible interest in the question of the Statutory Commission which was said to be under the consideration of government. Speculation was rife as to its composition and character. Barring perhaps two Anglo-Indian papers the rest of them were constantly urging that the Commission should be exclusively British in its composition. European opinion in India--whether

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expressed in the Press or on certain platforms--was clear and emphatic as to the exclusion of Indians. It is somewhat remarkable that some newspapers and public men should have several months ago so vividly anticipated the decision of government. Indeed one newspaper went the length of suggesting the appointment of Indians as assessors—a proposal which it now appears was seriously entertained at one time by government and was subsequently dropped in favour of the committees to be associated with the Commission. When surprise was expressed at what was supposed to be a premature disclosure of the names of the members of the Commission, Lord Birkenhead admitted in the House of Lords that “he necessarily had to take into his confidence a large number of persons in England, in both Houses of Parliament, and also equally necessarily had to take most directly into his confidence and in some respects even had to invite counsel from leaders of other parties.” Whether similarly a large number of Europeans in India were also taken into confidence and whether their counsel was invited can at best be a matter of speculation. But one cannot help pointing to the remarkable coincidence that while the subject was a matter of confidential discussion between Simla and Whitehall there should have been some newspapers and public men of a certain class in India who should have had such an intelligent anticipation of the decisions to be announced a few months later. Be that as it may, the fact remains that whoever else may have been taken into confidence no Indian barring those officially associated with Government were ever taken into confidence. While this was going on behind the scenes and not until certain Anglo-Indian papers opened a discussion of this question in their newspapers, I decided to write to the press sounding a note of warning. It was not that I refused to believe in the possibility of such a step being taken by Government in India or in England, but I still hoped and trusted that the Government might rise equal to the occasion. If I may be permitted to quote from what I wrote to the Press so far back as June last I said: “Indian view-point or view-points must be represented for obvious reasons on such a Commission and if you can have on a Commission like this a certain number of good, honest, broad-minded Englishmen with no previous association with India so that they can approach the the problem from a fresh point of view and contribute their experience of the working of democratic constitutions, I can see no reason why such a Commission should not in the end achieve success. I do not write as a party politician, but as one who feels that the task of endowing India with a permanent constitution worthy of her place in the Empire and commensurate with her legitimate aspirations should not be approached in the narrow spirit of party politics or actuated by the exigencies of the hour and coloured by old time prejudices. It is for this reason in particular that I have ventured to sound a note of warning.

against the view entertained in certain quarters that an exclusively Parliamentary Commission should be appointed." I also ventured to point out "that an exclusively Parliamentary Commission with no Indian element in it can make no appeal to any section of Indian opinion and it might start on its work with the very serious handicap that it will not carry with it Indian confidence and support. It is true that Parliament has reserved to itself the right to determine the time and manner of each advance, a position which has for many years been stoutly contested by certain political parties in India, but there is nothing in the words of the statute to show that Parliament cannot appoint Indians to such a Commission or that it is bound to appoint those who happen to be its members." In the expression of these views at that time I did not stand alone, for I had the support of several leading public men and particularly the whole of the Indian Press.

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During my recent visit to England—short as my stay was there—it became abundantly plain to me that the mind of government had already been made up; that India could not hope for any support for its view-point from the Conservatives or the Liberals and that, at any rate, so far as some of the Labour leaders were concerned they had placed serious limitations upon their liberty of action. The English Press could not or would not tolerate the expression of a different opinion on the subject and when in a leading article the 'Times' wrote that the personnel of the Statutory Commission must be exclusively British, it left no room in my mind that the Rubicon had been crossed. The fiat had gone forth and it could no longer be revoked.

It is impossible to believe that an all-wise and far-seeing government could not or would not anticipate the repercussions of such a policy on Indian mind. No doubt it reconciled itself to its decision in the hope and belief that the outburst of indignation and discontent in India would be a short-lived one, that the Swarajists were more interested in nursing grievances than in having them removed and that, therefore, they could easily be disposed of as the irreconcilables in Indian politics; that the Liberals would be amenable to *ipso facto* reasoning and persuasion that in any case they were not a serious factor in Indian politics; that the cleavage between the Hindus and the Mohamedans was so wide that even under the pressure of a common grievance they could not join hands and, lastly, there were the depressed classes who were bound to raise their piteous cry for protection against the evil designs of the more powerful upper classes and that it was clearly the duty of government to firmly refuse to listen to the demand for Indian representation and to do their duty by the weak and the oppressed.

It was apparently in such circumstances and under the influence of such ideas that this Commission was conceived.

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Sapru.

Small wonder then if the announcement of the appointment of this Commission has instead of giving rise to a spirit of hopefulness and confidence aroused the strongest feelings on such a large scale and in such different quarters.

Why the Commission has been Anticipated.

It is interesting to note the reasons for the appointment of this Commission at this particular time. "So long as the unwise counsels of political non-co-operation prevailed", thus runs the statement in His Excellency's announcement of November 8th, "it was evident that the conditions required for calm appraisal of the complicated constitutional problem were lacking, and that an earlier enquiry would have been likely only to crystalize in opposition two points of view, between which it must be the aim and the duty of statesmanship to effect a reconciliation. But there have been signs latterly that while those who have been foremost in advancing the claims of India to full self-government have in no way abandoned the principles they have felt it their duty to assert, yet there is in many quarters a greater disposition to deal with the actual facts of the situation, to appreciate what I believe to be most indubitably true, namely, that the differences which exist on these matters are differences of method or pace and not differences of principle or disagreements as to the goal which we all alike desire to reach." I desire to speak of His Excellency with the utmost possible respect, but I venture to think that the differences of method or pace are apt at times to be not less important than differences of principle and that if a calm appraisal of a complicated constitutional problem could not be made so long as the unwise counsels of political non-co-operation prevailed, there seems to be scarcely any justification for the hope that this task could be achieved by penalizing co-operation, for I maintain that non-co-operators who have co-operated during the last few years and co-operators who have always co-operated cannot legitimately feel proud of a situation which compels them to realize that in a conflict that may arise between the European view of method and pace and the Indian view of method and pace, the former must necessarily prevail and the latter can only claim to be sane and reasonable if it is prepared to accept the former. Another reason assigned for the anticipation of the date of this Commission is that the Legislative Assmebly has passed five resolutions calling for the appointment of a Commission. Lord Winterton was repeatedly challenged in the House of Commons to produce those resolutions but he simply fenced with the challenge. The fact is that the Assembly has never asked for *such* a Commission though it has repeatedly urged its views on the question of advance. Not only Col. Wedgwood but several other members of the Labour Party have correctly expressed our view that the appointment of such a Commission at a time when public opinion in England about India has been poisoned by the publication of 'Mother

India' was to say the least not playing the game. There is need for some more convincing reason for this sudden fit of responsiveness on the part of government.

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Reasons for the Exclusion of Indians Examined.

Sir Tej Bahadur
Sapru.

I shall now ask you to examine carefully the reasons for the exclusion of Indians from this Commission and the nature of the palliatives that have been adopted in the shape of committees. One reason which has been assigned for the appointment of a purely Parliamentary Commission is "that the framers of the original and determining Act, when they spoke of the Commission contemplated a Parliamentary Commission. It is true that they did not so state in terms but I (that is to say Lord Birkenhead) draw the inference that they did not so state it because they thought it so obvious." He then appealed to Lord Chelmsford and the latter observed: "He was deeply committed to the belief that the enquiry should be through the medium of a Parliamentary Commission". Now no one doubts that the machinery provided by section 84 (a) is a Commission. Section 84 (a) runs as follows:—

"At the expiration of ten years after the passing of the Government of India Act of 1919, the Secretary of State with the concurrence of both Houses of Parliament shall submit for the approval of His Majesty the names of persons to act as a commission for the purposes of this section."

The point scarcely requires any further labouring. The Secretary of State, speaking as a constitutional lawyer, has conceded that the framers of the Act did not in terms state that the Commission to be appointed under this Section was to be a purely Parliamentary Commission, that is to say, a Commission consisting of members of Parliament only, but he has drawn the inference that they did not state so because it was so obvious. The difficulty of any lawyer controverting an interpretation like this by a lawyer of the eminence of Lord Birkenhead who has occupied the highest judicial position in the Empire would be at any time very great. But still I make bold to say that an interpretation of an Act, founded upon the belief as to the intention of its framers, on the floor of a political body is not the same as its interpretation in a court of law. Now, without in the slightest degree challenging Lord Chelmsford's belief, it may be asked whether there is anything in the language of the section quoted above to warrant the conclusion upon a dispassionate examination of it that Parliament intended in 1919 that the Commission to be appointed under that section shall consist wholly and entirely of its members. It was only fair to India that this intention which was so obvious to the framers of the Act should have been made equally obvious at that time to Indians also. At any rate so far as this constitutional argument is concerned no one ever heard of it until Lord Birkenhead put

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it forward with all the authority attaching to his name. We Indians are entitled to take our stand upon the plain words of the statute. We were no parties to the beliefs which might have been entertained as to the intentions of the framers of the Act in high quarters and I venture to think that if this view had been put forward bluntly in the year 1919, many of us would have had even at that time to revise our attitude. On the one hand there are those amongst us who have always quarrelled with the preamble of the Government of India Act which provides that the time and manner of each advance can be determined only by Parliament. On the other, there are those who have maintained that the sovereignty of Parliament, having regard to the British constitution, is beyond challenge but that it should by no means be impossible to reconcile the provisions of that preamble with the fairness of the Indian demand that Indians should be allowed an effective share in the shaping of their own constitution. The credit for giving a rude shock to the political faith of us, Liberals, must undoubtedly belong to Lord Birkenhead.

Political Reasons.

I shall now leave the constitutional reasons and ask your attention for a little while to the political reasons. Lord Birkenhead took shelter behind the speech of Mr. Goswami in which he is reported to have said that there was no organization which could speak in the name of the Hindu community. Now, I do not know what Mr. Goswami really meant by it. But I cannot understand that an all-knowing Secretary of State and a vigilant India Office can be unaware of the existence of a Hindu organization which has not been particularly inarticulate or inactive during the last few years. I believe there are scores of Hindus who without being members of the Hindu Mahasabha could have adequately protected Hindu interests but I cannot understand how government would have sacrificed the Hindu cause by selecting a representative of the Hindus from among the leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha nor can I understand that the task of selecting a non-Brahman Hindu or a Sikh was equally impossible. As regards the depressed classes whose condition Lord Birkenhead describes to be "terrible and poignant," was it wholly impossible to select some one to represent them? And here let me point out to you that the portion in which he deals with the depressed classes scarcely reads like the speech of a statesman bent on the high purpose of unifying a distracted India, of elevating those who deserved to be uplifted from their fallen condition. It reads like a sensational paragraph from a certain class of newspapers in India or in England or a page from a book of a cold weather tourist. It is not my purpose to deny the existence of the problem in certain parts of India, but I must in your name enter a protest against mischievous statements which are at times made by statesmen, journalists

and tourists alike, the effect of which can only be to represent to the outside world that the problem is an all-pervasive one and that no attempts have been made by the educated classes anywhere to tackle it or to reduce the proportions of its evils. It may suit the purposes of our critics to exploit the misfortunes or the degraded condition of the 'depressed' classes in relation to a definite political issue, but they cannot feel proud of their record of work in the amelioration of the condition of these classes until the commencement of the reforms. If the Secretary of State was solicitous of the depressed classes and the aborigines, he was equally solicitous of the Indian Civil Service which "has a deep-rooted interest in India" and he argued that "if you admitted other than Parliamentary representatives you could not exclude members of the Indian Civil Service." Well, assuming that the Civil Service has deep-rooted interest in India of a personal or impersonal character and that like other castes this governing caste should also have been represented on the Commission in defiance of the well-established constitutional principle that permanent services ought not to have anything to do with the determination of policy, could not government find a distinguished member of that service to be on that Commission? The answer, however, given by the Secretary of State is that if Parliament had proceeded on those lines they should have found themselves with a Commission of 18 or 20 people and the result might have been chaotic. Now it might be that a Commission of 18 or 20 people would be very unwieldy but one cannot understand why a Commission of 12 could not be fairly representative of all sections of the people and why it could not be trusted to deal with the problem in a spirit of reasonableness.

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Sapru.

Unanimous Report.

It is said that an unwieldy Commission of 18 or 20 and *a fortiori* of 12 could not have produced an unanimous report. "There may not be an unanimous report now" said Lord Birkenhead, "but at any rate we shall have a report which proceeds upon the same general point of view and principle." He was afraid that there would be a very strong partizan Hindu report, a very strong Muslim report and 3 or 4 other dissenting reports from various sections deeply interested in the decisions which are taken and that Parliament could not be assisted by a disclosure of dissenting views of this kind. For arguments like these, I say in all humility, that there is only one word—they are the arguments of an advocate, not the arguments of a statesman. The one immediate effect of arguments of this character must be to give an impetus to class consciousness and to stimulate those differences which it should be the object of the statesman to allay, and, if possible, to eradicate. Now I am not one of those who would like to deny or even to minimise the gravity of the communal strife that has sprung up unfortunately in this country during the last few years. I have publicly raised

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my voice against it and as one who is not in the slightest degree identified with any communal cause I venture to think that the picture painted of the Hindu and the Mohamedan politicians writing separate strong partizan reports and the representatives of the depressed classes writing equally partizan reports oblivious of all considerations of the future and forgetful of their responsibility on a supreme occasion of that character may be pleasing to the self-complacence of those who have already made up their mind that Indians being possessed of a double dose of the original sin can on no occasion act with sanity, wisdom or patriotism but it is a picture which is very far from being true. I shall assume, however, that if 2 or 3 communalists had been appointed to the Commission they would have submitted dissenting reports; but on what question? Taking the worst view of the matter on what question could they have dissented from each other? They could have dissented only on the question of communal representation in public bodies or the public services of the country. If they had, would Parliament, aided no doubt as it would be at any time by the report of the English members of the Commission, the advice of the Government of India and the India Office and His Majesty's Government have found it really difficult to come to a just conclusion? If it really be the fact that the position in India is so hopeless as the Secretary of State in the House of Lords and Lord Winterton in the House of Commons have made it out to be, then in the name of commonsense and fairness I ask what is the good of appointing a Commission? Why entertain any talk of Reforms? Why not then follow the advice of a distinguished member of the European community in Calcutta who had the frankness and courage to say not many days ago that "the time had come for the Viceroy to sit down with his selected district officers who knew the real people of India and evolve a decent system for governing the country forgetting all democracy and all such discredited systems."

The Scheme of the Commission.

Now let me draw your attention to the scheme of the Commission. The Commission, as you all know, is to consist of seven members including its Chairman who represents the Liberal Party. There are two representatives of Labour and four representatives of the Conservatives. I do not wish to say anything in my own words of the personnel of the Commission. I shall venture to quote on this point what the London "Times" wrote in one of its leading articles: "What has presumably happened" says the "Times", "is that the Government have found it impossible in practice to divert from England any of those leaders on whose presence the complexion of the future Parliament may be thought to depend. And for the moment and in view of the character of the Commission as *rapporateurs* (in the Geneva phrase and not as constitution makers) the

absence of the political leaders may not be altogether a disadvantage.....All that is a little surprising in the circumstances is that none of the recognised front bench leaders, either Conservative or Labour, should have seized the opportunity to take part in an inquiry so incomparably more attractive and more far-reaching in its consequences than the common round of politics in England. The fact that the rank and file of the Commission are composed, broadly speaking, *of men in the second flight* (the italics are mine) has the further effect of adding greatly both to the responsibilities of the Chairman and to his reputation for self-sacrificing public service." Bluntly put, barring Sir John Simon who is undoubtedly a front rank statesman, England could not spare for this great mission any of its first rate men and India must go content with men in the second flight. That is the value that is attached to this great mission. We are asked to console ourselves with the belief that "a body of men who can concentrate on this task without too much pre-occupation with the next general election is likely to be more valuable than a constellation of distracted stars. The capacity to work as a team is certainly more important than individual brilliance." In other words, men of ideas are at a discount. The obsession for an unanimous report or a nearly unanimous report makes it incumbent that the men to be appointed must be what are called safe men who must be prepared to be guided by their Chairman, and must not allow their own individual ideas to interfere with their utility as a team. The irony of it all is that we are invited to rejoice in such a team and to believe that these six worthies in the *second* *fight* can take good care of the present interests and of the future of three hundred millions of this country.

"It is our purpose" said Lord Birkenhead, "that the Commission, when it visits India, should establish contact with the committee appointed for that purpose by the Central Legislature." But what is going to be the function of this committee? Here again, let me quote the the Secretary of state. "It has been most irrationally assumed" said Lord Birkenhead, "that they are merely to appear as a witness before the commission. This is not the case. They are invited in a spirit of great sincerity to co operate as colleagues with the Commission. It is contemplated that they shall prepare, in advance of the Commission's arrival, or if they find themselves within that limited period unable to do it, a year later, their own proposals and come before the Commission and say, *these are our suggestions*. We claim and they claim that the West cannot devise a constitution for the East, that you cannot put eastern wines into western bottles Well, if there be behind that claim, and I do not doubt it, the sincerity of real feeling, we afford them an opportunity of confronting our Commission with their own proposals, which can be analysed and criticised and can be accepted or rejected after that analysis and criticism."

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Further on we are told that "the Commission will develop in its activities and while they will retain contact with the committee of the Central Legislature as long as their deliberations extend to matters with which the Central Legislature is principally concerned, they will temporarily lose contact when they are journeying the provinces, but even here they will not be deprived of the constant refreshment of Indian opinion, for it is proposed—I see no recognition of this fact in any of the Indian papers—that in every province in which they journey there will be created committees of the Provincial Legislatures which will discharge the same consultative function with the Commission as is discharged at the centre of the Government by the committee of the Central Legislature. At no point, therefore, will the representatives of Indian Legislatures be deprived of an opportunity of influencing the views of the Commission." Let us pause here and ask what all this comes to. Stripped of all superfluous verbiage, it comes to nothing more than this that the Central Legislature will be asked to appoint committees to prepare their own proposals and to place them before the Commission. Hitherto in the passages that I have quoted above there is not even an indication that these committees will take part in the examination of witnesses or documents or that they will be at liberty even to submit any report. They are to place their proposals and try to persuade the Commission to accept them which will analyse and criticise those proposals and in the end may accept or reject them. They cannot vote at any stage of their contact with the Commission. They are simply there to plead, to persuade, to urge and then to withdraw, and yet we are told that these committees will be the colleagues of the Commission. If an advocate can be a colleague of a Judge, if a person who is put on his trial can be the colleague of a jury, then no doubt these committees will be the colleagues of the Commission.

If this is what Lord Birkenhead said about these committees and the scope of their work, let us for a few brief moments consider whether we can find anything more encouraging from the statements made by other statesmen on the subject. In the statement issued by His Excellency the Viceroy, we are told that the Central Legislature would "appoint a joint Select Committee, chosen from its elected and nominated unofficial members which would draw up its views and proposals in writing and lay them before the Commission for examination in such manner as the latter may decide." You will thus see that so far as the statements of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State are concerned, the position of the committees is definitely stated to be that they would draw up their views and proposals and lay them before the Commission for examination. It was left to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the leader of the opposition, to wax eloquent about the scope of these committees. He talked about the

Indian Legislative Assembly as the Parliament of India and at one place in his speech, he observed that the Parliament of England was saying to the Parliament of India "we are going to regard you as the representative of Indian opinion, we are going to recognize you as having an authority, sanction and position like unto our own in your country and when we want to know what is going to be the constitution of India in future, when we want to know what the opinion of political India is, we appoint a Commission, you appoint a similar body and the two Commissions working together in harmonious co-operation with each other are going to report to the House of Commons what the lines of the new constitution should be." This he says is not insulting to India but paying her the greatest compliment. One should have thought after this eloquent description of the position that the Indian Committee would really occupy a position of equality and would in truth be able to submit a report to the House of Commons, but the rhetoric of this passage begins to appear in its true proportions when we read another portion of his speech towards the end. For later on Mr. Ramsay MacDonald himself observed, "his position and he thought the position of his friends was the quite sound constitutional position so far as the House of Commons was concerned, that they could not give the Commission of the Indian Legislature any right to make a report." Mr. Ramsay MacDonald then argues that the Indian Committee "was not our Commission and we were not responsible for it. It was not responsible to us and, therefore, what objection was there to letting it be known that as far as the Indian Commission was concerned it could make a report as it liked and it could refrain from making a report if it liked. The body from which it owed its origin could deal with that report with exactly the same freedom as we would deal with our own report". He flattered himself with the belief that "if that position was known another large rock of suspicion would be removed." Now it may be asked what is all this if it is not absolutely confounding eloquence. The Indian committee may report to its own Legislature and its Legislature can deal with its report exactly with the same freedom as Parliament will deal with the report of *its Commission*. But is not Parliament the ultimate authority and what is the good of the Indian Legislature enjoying the liberty of dealing with the report of its own committee when it knows that its decision are to be of no greater value than mere proposals and that its report cannot have the same constitutional authority attaching to it as will belong to the report of the Commission in the eyes of Parliament. Now let us consider what Mr. Baldwin had to say on the subject. "Let Indians" said the Prime Minister, "dismiss from their minds any thought of inferiority. They will be approached as friends, as equals, but responsibility cannot formally be shared with the representatives of another

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Parliament." In other words, the difficulty that he felt was a constitutional difficulty based probably upon the interpretation of section 84 (a) by Lord Birkenhead. I have quoted these distinguished statesmen at length only because I am anxious to avoid any misunderstanding of their position. But I cannot help feeling that they were either carried away by their own eloquence or they felt that the assurances of equality couched in appealing terms and flattering as they are to our vanity will be sufficient to allay our fears and to assuage our feelings. Hitherto it has been customary with English statesmen to repudiate any claim on the part of the Indian Legislature representing as it does about 2 per cent. of the population that it can speak for the teeming millions of India. Now a superficial view of Mr. MacDonald's speech and the speeches of some other statesmen would make us believe that they have at last discovered what was not hitherto so obvious to them that the Indian Legislature can truly be said to represent the teeming millions of India. There is, however, at least one British statesman who had the courage of his conviction and who was not prepared to endorse this flattering view of the Indian Legislature taken by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and that statesman is no less a distinguished person than Lord Winterton, the Under-Secretary of State for India. "It was perfectly possible" said Lord Winterton, "to be a realist without abating a jot or tittle from the consideration for or sympathy with the ideals of Indians in public life." He asked, "whether Parliament was not to listen to millions of people outside the electoral system in India by obtaining their views directly through its chosen representatives, which the members of the Commission would be, and also whether Mr. Walsh and Major Attlee were less likely to be sympathetic to the Muslim minority or the millions of untouchables than to the Brahmins or the members of the Hindu majority." One may not agree with the sentiment of Earl Winterton but one is bound to observe that it is refreshing to come across a frank and realistic statement like this in the midst of the torrent of eloquence and rhetoric that flowed in the House of Commons only with the object of convincing us that *our Parliament* was equal to *their* Parliament; that *our* Committee was going to occupy the same status and position as *their* Commission and that we Indians in public life could have no legitimate grievance. The fact of the matter is that when once you closely examine these speeches, the conviction is forced on you that having decided to take this step, His Majesty's Government and statesmen of the other parties could only defend that position by an exuberance of language.

There is yet another palliative provided and we are asked to reconcile ourselves to this scheme by remembering that at the next stage "after the Commission has presented its report the proposals of the Government on it will be sent according to

precedent, to both Houses of Parliament." "Your Lordships, or those who are interested in Indian affairs at that time," said Lord Birkenhead, "will not have forgotten how considerable was the contribution, how unremitting the industry of the Joint Committee which reported upon the Montagu-Chelmsford proposals. It is our intention to create a similar body." I have distinct recollection of the work of the Joint Select Committee in the year 1919. I was examined by it and so were many of other Indian friends of mine. Constitutionally, the creation of such a committee is perfectly understandable and defensible, but constitutionally again I ask how is it possible for any Indian delegation whether of the committees of the Indian Legislatures or any other class of persons to claim equality with the Select Committee of Parliament or to share responsibility with that Select Committee? Let not, therefore, the Indian position be misunderstood. At any rate the position of our party is and has been that while constitutionally the ultimate decision lies with Parliament, there is nothing in the Act to prevent Parliament from taking in Indians into the Statutory Commission and giving them the right of participating in the recommendations of that Commission. A true spirit of co-operation and broad-minded statesmanship required that Indians should have been taken into the Commission and the creation of this cumbrous machinery of Committees with all the bombastic claims for equality can be no substitute either for a mixed commission or for a real round table conference.

I do not know where these proposals originated, whether at Delhi or Simla or at Whitehall, but I cannot help feeling that those who were responsible for these proposals were either wholly out of touch with Indian views on this question or they deliberately adopted these proposals in the hope and belief that Indian opinion would reconcile itself to them after some struggle.

When Lord Birkenhead and Lord Winterton referred to the Hindu-Mohamedan differences in India in justification of the exclusion of Indians from this Commission, I wonder whether they had forgotten the state of things that prevailed in another Dominion when a great statesman whose name in constitutional history has become immortal, described in his inimitable language the differences that rent the public life of that country. Writing so far back as 1838 about Canada, Lord Durham wrote in one of despatches as follows:— "The first point to which I would draw your attention being one with which all others are more or less connected, is the existence of a most bitter animosity between the Canadians and the British, not as two parties holding different opinions and seeking different objects in respect to Government but as different races engaged in a national contest..... What may be the immediate subject of dispute seems to be of no consequence; so surely as there is a dispute on any subject, the great bulk of the Canadians and the great bulk of the British appear ranged against each other. In the next place, the

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mutual dislike of the two classes extends beyond politics into social life, where, with some trifling exceptions again, all intercourse is confined to persons of the same origin. Grown up persons of a different origin seldom or never meet in private societies, and even the children, when they quarrel, divide themselves into French and English like their parents. In the schools and the streets of Montreal, the real capital of the Province, this is commonly the case.....Such a sentiment is naturally evinced rather by trifles than by acts of intrinsic importance. There has been no solemn or formal declaration of national hostility, but not a day nor scarcely an hour passes without some petty insult, some provoking language, or even some serious mutual affront, occurring between persons of French and British descent." But let us not forget that India is not Canada, and that these are not the spacious days of a Durham.

To exclude Indians on the ground that they are deeply interested persons, that many of their public men have publicly expressed their views on constitutional questions, that there was not a single Indian (to use Earl Winterton's phrase) whose appointment could give satisfaction to all classes of people, to suggest the appointment of committees of the very same public men (who are excluded from the commission because they have committed themselves to certain opinions) by Indian Legislatures, the representative character of which is admitted by one statesman and denied by others, to ask these committees to place their proposals before the Statutory Commission without exercising the equal rights of members of that Commission in examining evidence or official documents or voting at the final stage of its work and to tell us that our representatives will occupy a position of equality and then to express your surprise at the attitude which Indian politicians have adopted towards those proposals and blame them for rejecting a constitutional precedent the like of which was never before established is to sow the wind and refuse to reap the whirlwind.

The Indian Point of View.

Now, it must be a real tragedy if all of us have conspired together to deliberately misunderstand them, or to underrate their professions of helping us on towards the goal. Speaking in the House of Commons Lord Winterton assured that august assembly that "evidence was daily accumulating that the raging tearing propaganda against the Commission by *certain persons, who were always opposed to the Government of India* (the Italics are mine), as they were entitled to be, did not represent the real views of a very large number of people in India who took interest in these matters." The strident dogmatism and emphasis which are the privilege of an Under-Secretary, more particularly when he has two flying visits to India to his credit, cannot for obvious reasons accord with the serene and exalted position of a Prime Minister, and accordingly we find Mr. Baldwin speaking in a different vein.

“That there should have been any misunderstanding” said Mr. Baldwin, “is particularly regrettable, because it led to premature rejection of the proposals by the distinguished statesmen of India who worked and co-operated with the Government during some very difficult years since the Reforms came into force.” If Lord Winterton symbolises the spirit which has overcome the India Office then it is not by any means difficult to understand that he should be prepared to tell the House of Commons that the raging, tearing propaganda against the Commission is being conducted by certain persons who were *always* opposed to the Government of India. I do not wish to disclaim or disown my share in that propaganda-but it must be a remarkable comment upon the hold which Lord Winterton, or Lord Birkenhead and may I add the Government of India (I do not exclude the Indian members thereof) have upon the imagination or the political faith of men of ‘moderate’ views that such sober, staid, thoughtful and cautious ‘statesmen’ (or is it more appropriate now to call them agitators) as Sir Sivaswamy Aiyar in Madras, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad in Bombay, Sir Syed Ali Imam and Mr. Sinha in Bihar, Sir Abdur Rahim in Bengal, the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, Sahebzada Aftab Ahmad Khan and Mr. Chintamani in the United Provinces, all of whom have at one time or other held high office and have worked the Reforms and ‘co-operated with the Government during some very difficult years should in their frenzied zeal for the ‘boycott’ of this ill omened Commission forget themselves, and be false to their traditions and to those principles and convictions under the spell of which they offered to work and did work the Reforms in the midst of popular obloquy and much misunderstanding on the part of the bulk of their own countrymen and their former associates in public life. All of them could not have hoped to be appointed members of the Commission and few of them could have on personal grounds liked the idea of being taken away from their normal avocations in life for a period of two or three years. If their English critics have nothing more to say in explanation of their conduct than that they are being actuated by disappointment, chagrin or pique, then I say-and say so with confidence-that that charge will have to be brought against an overwhelmingly large number of Indian politicians barring of course the faithful few who place caste, or creed, or class above the country. But I shall not waste your time or mine any more with refuting charges of this character.

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Mr. Baldwin's Appeal.

Mr. Baldwin's appeal, however, deserves to be more seriously treated. He is the leader of the party which save for a brief space of nine months has been in power ever since the downfall of the Coalition Government. Indeed India has been under the control of a Tory Secretary of State since March or April 1922 when Mr. Montagu had to pay the penalty for his zeal for India, excepting the time that Lord Olivier held office. Of the change

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in the spirit of the bureaucracy after the death of Mr. Montagu some of the Indian Ministers spoke with candour and emphasis before the Muddiman Committee in 1924, and if Ministers could again freely speak out their minds, I have no doubt that at least some of them would own the existence of a state of affairs not quite consistent with the accepted notions of free responsible government. Again in the Central Government what has been our experience? The resort to the power of certification at least on some doubtful occasions, the dilatory tactics which have been adopted in regard to the resolutions moved so far back as 1922 by Sir Sivaswamy Aiyar on questions affecting the position of Indians *vis a vis* the army, the recent attitude of the Government towards the Sken Committee Report, the fate which has attended some of the important recommendations of the Repressive Laws Committee, the manner in which the Lee Commission was appointed and the promptitude with which action was taken on it while other matters not less pressing have still to emerge from the stage of consideration, the obstinacy which the Government have shown in the matter of the Bengal detainees, the general attitude of the Government in regard to the repeated demands of the Legislative Assembly for the revision of the constitution and the slowness with which Government have proceeded to take even limited action upon the recommendations of the majority report of the Muddiman Committee are circumstances which have tended to shake the faith of even those 'Indian statesmen' to whom Mr. Baldwin has referred in his speech. The culminating point of this process was reached when Mr. Baldwin's Government came to the decision in regard to the Statutory Commission. I do not think a worse challenge has been thrown out ever before to Indian nationalism, and notwithstanding the profuse assurances in Mr. Baldwin's speech and the yet more profuse assurances in Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's speech, Indian Nationalists of the Moderate school have been compelled to ask if the only way of recognizing the spirit of co-operation is by telling Indians that their lot is to be none other than that of petitioners, that they cannot be trusted to participate in the responsibility of making recommendations to Parliament for the future of their country, and that all that they may aspire to is to put their proposals before the Commission which may accept or reject them, and again to repeat the same process of persuasion, argument and discussion before the Joint Committee of Parliament. Now if this is what is meant by co-operation, if this is the new idea of equality of status on which we are to be fed, if our patriotism is a prejudice and if the patriotism of the seven members of Parliament is to be treated as impartial justice, then we Liberals feel justified in telling the Government here and in England, "you may do anything you like in the assertion of your right as supreme power, but we are not going to acquiesce in this method of dealing with us. Neither our self-respect nor our sense of duty to our country can permit us to go near the commission."

Then we are asked by some of our friends in England notably belonging to the upper ranks of the Labour Party to have faith in the tact and sagacity of Sir John Simon who, they say, may be depended upon to treat these committees on terms of equality and in an informal manner, to widen the scope of their utility. Those who know Sir John Simon will readily acknowledge his great personal charm of manner, but it is idle to expect that Sir John Simon can ignore his instructions or terms of reference or that he can so widen the scope of this committee as to undo the mischief which has already been done by the short-sighted and unjust policy of the Government whose chief agent in India he will be. If there are Indian politicians who think that a courteous gesture from Sir John Simon or that even a deliberate laxity of procedure on his part in allowing these committees of the Legislature a certain amount of freedom in putting questions to witnesses or discussing official documents and be at all a substitute for the straight forward recognition of the Indians' claim to be in and of the Commission then I say that they are, if not deceiving others, deceiving themselves. The broad fact is that India has not got a fair and square deal in this matter and no amount of casuistry can get over that fact.

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Col. Wedgwood's Estimate.

It seems to me that the entire position has been from the Indian point of view so well summed up by Colonel Wedgwood in his letter to Lala Lajpat Rai and it so vividly represents the feelings of many of us that I make no apology for quoting a portion here: of it "Petitioning for little scraps of liberty" says Colonel Wedgwood, "is a dirty business, and there has been too much of it. You lose your self-respect and you will get despised. I was always against non-co-operation as you know and I am so still. Take what share in governing you can; use every power and every opportunity afforded by the Government of India Act. That is not *crawling* but worthwhile fighting, and incidentally may help to wipe out some of those curses of *Mother India*. But this Commission does not require your help. There is no need to stand in the witness-box and be cross-examined by persons of no great importance who have not before shown any interest in your views or feelings. They can easily get the case up from the evidence and reports laid before the Muddiman Committee. Officials can supply all the facts and are likely to do so with more impartiality, not less, if the victims are dumb. Or if they like, they can read the newspapers. Open (or empty) minds can easily get food and they as easily forget it." I am afraid, however, there are some among our countrymen who feel that we should not allow judgment to go by default, that we should not throw away an opportunity like this of putting our case before the Commission and through it before Parliament. They feel that it is a mercy that Lord Birkenhead has not appointed one or two 'safe' or 'tame' Indians who might easily have made the position

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for us worse. Again there are those who obsessed by communal feeling hold that the Mahomedans may steal a march on the Hindus and the latter may afterwards have to regret that they did not follow the good example of the former. Those who rejoice in this decision, because they have been saved from the worse calamity of being represented by bad Indians on this Commission, probably assume that we should have been prepared to acquiesce in the appointment of such Indians or that their support of the recommendations of their European colleagues would have made the task of the Government much easier or imposed on us some sort of obligation to acquiesce in the decisions of these unpatriotic Indians. To Hindus who are afraid of the Mahomedans getting a richer share of the spoils I have only one thing to say and it is that there are no spoils to be divided. Besides, in my opinion, it is neither just nor fair to the Muslim community of India as a whole to attribute such questionable motives. When one remembers the alacrity with which distinguished Muslim leaders who have hitherto occupied such a large space in the public life of the country have denounced the exclusion of Indians from this Commission and declared in no faltering or hesitating terms their firm resolve to have nothing to do with this Commission, one should not find it difficult to reconcile oneself to the attitude of some other Muslim leaders in the Punjab or Bengal—at present the two plague-spots of Indian communalism—who have on an occasion like this placed their community above their country. So long as the Muslim community in India can boast of men like Mr Jinnah, Dr Ansari, the Maharaja of Mahmudabad Sir Saiyed Ali Imam, Mr. Hasan Imam and some others (I am not referring to those who are confirmed Swarajists or 'Extremists') to long it may be truly said that notwithstanding much of a depressing character that there may be at present in our internal situation there is hope for Indian nationalism. Holding the views that I do on the Hindu-Mahomedan question I feel that these distinguished leaders would be perfectly justified in pressing for the protection of the interests of their minority community in any scheme of constitutional advance that may seriously be considered at present. But it is all to their honour and credit that on a critical occasion like this they should not have allowed their duty to their community to prevail against their duty to their country.

The Function and the Duty of the Liberal Party.

In the situation created by the decision of His Majesty's Government the duty of the Liberal Party in India to my mind is absolutely plain. Through good report and evil report at the cost of much popularity and in the midst at times of public ridicule the more stinging as it was heaped on Liberals by their own countrymen it has stood up for certain principles and worked according to its lights howsoever dim they might have been in the belief and conviction that the road to India's freedom was

the road of co-operation, It treated Mr. Montagu's Act as the finger-post on that road and though it realized soon after Mr. Montagu's resignation that the journey was not going to be so smooth or even as it might have been if he had continued in office a little longer, it still hoped that the time was not distant when the collective wisdom of English statesmen and Indian public men working hand in hand in the spirit of true friendship and determined to find a solution for the big problems of India might enable India to reach the destined goal not in a far off future but within a measurable distance of time. Those hopes have been frustrated, and if the Liberal Party in India is now asked to accept the new doctrine of co-operation which means that it must always subordinate its will to the higher will not of Parliament but of its agents, then clearly the time has come when we should say that that is not our conception of co-operation. Much as the Liberal Party would like to work in an atmosphere of good-will, much as it would like to avoid all bitterness, much as it would like to help in the task of an ordered and safe development of the constitution, it cannot be a party to an arrangement which is wholly destructive of that spirit of mutual confidence which alone can beget co-operation. It cannot be a party to anything which is inconsistent with the honour and self-respect of India and its moral right to effectively participate in the determination of its constitution nor can it in its zeal for co-operation forget its duty to its country in a crisis of this character. Much as it has differed in the past and much as it differs even now from certain other parties on questions such as those of civil disobedience and other forms of direct action, it cannot compromise either its self-respect or the honour of the country. But it is not merely a question of self-respect. The larger interest of the country makes it incumbent upon the Liberal Party to say to the Government plainly and unequivocally that it must repudiate not only the Commission which has been appointed but the entire spirit in which the question of India's further advance has been conceived by Parliament and the Government of India. Whatever differences of method may divide it from other parties in India it stands united to them all in their eager demand for the fulfilment of India's legitimate aspirations and it is prepared, as indeed it should be, to take its part in the noble and patriotic work of preparing a constitution with the good-will of all and to the advantage of the country at large. It is and it should be its creed to work for and serve no particular caste, no particular class, but the country at large. If the events of the last few weeks can only help to draw political parties in India on the main issue closer to each other, then no doubt the appointment of this Statutory Commission will be a blessing in disguise. Too long it seems to me have we to the detriment of the country indulged in the pastime of throwing mud on each other, too long has each party claimed to itself the monopoly of patriotism and wisdom, too long have we allowed

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Party to usurp the place which shou'd legitimately belong to the country in our hearts. We cannot and we should not allow our energies any longer to be dissipated in the barren and thankless task of party factions and squabbles, and I honestly think that the time has come when we should make an earnest and honest endeavour to open a new chapter in our history. I do not plead for the sudden merging of one party into another; that must be left to the irresistible forces of time. But I do plead for common and joint work through the chosen representatives of each party in the preparation of a scheme of self-government to be presented to the country and to Parliament. That challenge has been thrown to us repeatedly during the last four years and we ought to accept it. I am aware of the resolutions that have been moved on various political platforms and of those that have been moved in the Legislative Assembly, but that in my humble judgment is not enough. The only serious attempt that has been made in this direction is by that venerable lady Dr. Annie Besant whose ceaseless fervour in the cause of the motherland, whose buoyant optimism and whose irrepressible faith in the justice of our cause ought to hearten us. The Commonwealth of India Bill may not be a model of perfection. You may find fault with it for its omissions, you may say that it makes no provision for the place of Indian States in the future constitution of India, you may object to individual features of it, but I do say that it does afford you a basis for work and I feel sure that no one will be more gratified than Mrs. Besant herself and those of us who were associated with her in the preparation of that Bill if you can by your common work improve it or bring it as near your ideal as you possibly can.

Hindu-Mahomedan Unity.

Remember, however, that it is not common work even in this limited sphere which will enable you to attack this problem successfully. Beyond and above the unity of political parties in India lies the greater and more difficult work of the unity of the Hindus and Mahomedans. "Human progress says a great Canadian statesman (Sir Robert Borden) "is not advanced by the segregation of races or by any influence to perpetual racial antagonism. Lord Acton has pointed out that the true ideal lies in the union of different races in one state, to the service of which each brings its own peculiar qualities." I do not know whether strictly speaking it is accurate to speak of the Hindus and the Mahomedans as belonging to two different races. But be that as it may, for centuries past we have lived in the same country and howsoever much we may be divided at the present moment and whatever new aspirations our present day nationalism may be responsible for, the broad fact cannot be gainsaid that we have had a common political history if not for many centuries at least for about two centuries.

It may pertinently be asked as to why it is that during the last three or four years particularly, some parts of India have been inflicted with a plague of communal passion and frenzy. Is it, as some of our critics say, that India has always been the cockpit of racial antagonisms and that her history is repeating itself once again? Is it, as some others say, that while we profess allegiance to democratic ideas and ideals, in truth, we are still under the sway of medieval bigotry and religious intolerance, or are our present day troubles due to the growth of a class consciousness which is asserting itself in view of impending changes likely to affect the political equilibrium of the country? Now I do not propose to answer these questions at any length, but what I would earnestly point out is that the problem of minorities is by no means peculiar to India. Even in advanced Europe minorities do exist and at any rate so far as Eastern Europe is concerned its history during the last several centuries has been and today is the history of the struggle between minorities and majorities. There the healing influence of the cultivated section of European opinion as represented in the League of Nations has attempted to provide safeguards for the minorities and recent treaties bear ample witness to the foresight and active desire of European statesmen to grapple with the problem. The struggle there between the minorities and the majorities has never been flaunted as our differences have been in Parliament and outside. It has never been exploited by any section of the Press as our differences are being exploited as arguments against the advance of India to full self-government. At the same time it is not only right and fair but imperative that we should seriously apply ourselves to put our house in order. We can never hope to do so by mere pacts or agreements unless we are prepared plainly and courageously to recognize that the minorities or those sections of the population whom we unjustly call the depressed or backward classes, are an integral part of our population and that without their co-operation and without their good-will, which must be secured by a frank recognition of their political and social equality, it is impossible to achieve any great ends. This necessarily postulates a different frame of mind from that in which the different communities have been approaching the present problem and envisaging the future. And here, permit me to say, that in a matter of this kind the responsibility of the majority community, namely, the Hindus is greater than that of the minorities. At the risk of being misunderstood and even criticised in certain quarters, I venture to say that the time has come when the Hindus and the Muslims alike should recognize that it is no longer possible in any country aspiring to possess modern institutions for one community to impose its religious ideas or principles upon the other. The freedom of the one can only be limited by the freedom of the other and unless this is boldly recognized, you cannot hope to be anywhere near the solution. We cannot afford to cherish any

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more the antiquated mummeries of a bygone age. There may be merit in the protection of animal life, but the destruction of human life cannot bring any merit in this world or the next. Similarly, I imagine that howsoever much music at certain times and at certain places may be distasteful to some, they have no right to impose their views on others. To my mind these are questions which cannot be solved by an arid discussion of legal or customary rights and if that could be done we would have to pay dearly for such solution. Their solution depends upon a healthy recognition of the equal rights of all. Shuddhi, Sangathan and Tabligh may be very good war cries for a community which is bent upon destroying its own house but they ill become a community which is at all serious about building up and edifice of a permanent character for itself and or its posterity. Far be it from me to suggest or expect that either the Hindus or the Mahomedans, who are accustomed to look upon Asia as the cradle of religion, who pride themselves upon being the custodians of the rich treasures of *spiritual* tradition left to us by our great ancestors, should in their quest for material advancement squander away those treasures but if we want to bring ourselves into line with the modern world, we should not waste those treasures in achieving ignoble ends wholly inconsistent with our professions of nationalism. The progress of all states—and particularly those comprising peoples of different races and different religions—has been towards a secularisation of the state, which does not mean the destruction of the spiritual life of their peoples. When this is recognised, I think there will be no room left in our public life for leaders of a certain type—leaders who by inflaming religious passion and letting loose the forces of bigotry and intolerance are narrowing our sympathies and paralysing generous thought and co-operative action. To Hindus and Mahomedans alike—and not merely to the one to the exclusion of the other—shall I hold up the great example of Turkey. I was there only less than three months ago and have come back with the firm conviction that Turkey has deserved to live and will live as a great nation—a nation which has adopted religious toleration as the basis of its civic life and has assigned to the priest his proper place in the national life of the country. And do not let us forget the words of the great ruler of a country whom we have hitherto been accustomed to refer to as semi-civilized—I refer to the noble sentiments to which King Amanullah gave expression in your great city. It is for the cultivation of that spirit that I plead. I know old prejudices take a long time to disappear, but it is possible for us—the educated classes—for those of us who aspire to be leaders, to create a favourable atmosphere for the reception of these ideas. It is only when we shall show some courage in this behalf that we can hope our ideas to permeate those whom we profess to lead or whom it should be our duty and privilege to lead. It is with these beliefs and convictions that I would ask the Hindus and the Mahomedans to approach these questions.

The Mahomedans may insist upon separate electorates and the Hindus on joint electorates—but the insistence on the one or other method of representation is not enough. There must be the accompanying will to co-operate and whether you adopt the one method or the other, you must not exclude the interplay of moral influences which arise when different people begin to work together. Personally I should not treat the entire question as if it were a question of the division of assets in a court of law. I should approach the whole question with the sole object of creating the will to co-operate, and I feel that any sacrifices that we may make will not be too much for the attainment of that common end.

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The specific issues which divide these two great communities are by no means numerous nor are they such that given the genuine desire to remove the differences we should find it really difficult to answer them satisfactorily. No settlement, however, can be looked for, so long each party refuses to recognize the other side of the question and so long as each party thinks that a compromise will mean the surrender of its principles or the jeopardising of its position. Speaking for myself, I maintain that the only durable basis for the settlement of 'religious' issues can be not the imposition of any restrictions upon the liberty of each—but the removal of all such restrictions. It is, I am afraid, forgotten by the opponents of this principle that once the freedom of the one is recognized by the other, moral influences are bound to come into play and there will be plenty of room for mutual accommodation. As matters stand, mutual accommodation at present appears to both as the surrender of the principle of equality, and the restrictions sought to be imposed by one community on the other's liberty of action are resented by both as the assertion of unwarranted superiority or strength. Similarly it seems to me that in the matter of political representation, if we shall dispassionately examine the position, we are bound to arrive at certain conclusions (1) that there is need for the adequate political representation of the minorities, (2) that no protection of the minorities can go the length of converting them into the majority, and (3) that in any democratic constitution of a mixed population, the minority should, subject to the limits prescribed for the protection of its special interests, be prepared to accept the decisions of the majority. Now while I would appeal to my Hindu fellow countrymen who form the vast majority of the country not to be too punctilious about numerical proportions everywhere, I would similarly urge it on my Mahomedan fellow-countrymen not to make a fetish of separate electorates. They have been tried, and they have not succeeded in putting down communal extremism. On the contrary I am afraid they have tended to accentuate it. I say so with a clear conscience as I am one of those who nearly 12 years ago publicly supported separate electorates. Experience, however, has compelled me to

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revise my ideas on the subject. At the same time I feel that it is practically impossible for the majority to impose its views on the minority in a matter of this character, and even if such a decision could be imposed on the minority, I am afraid we could not look forward to the working of the scheme of joint representation in the present circumstances without serious misgivings. My position is clear and I speak for myself and myself alone and it is that while I should do all I could to persuade the Mahomedans to agree to joint representation, I would not make it the pivot of a general settlement with them in the hope and belief that nothing is final in politics and that nothing is more common than for a succeeding generation to revise the cherished decisions of a preceding one. The constitutional and practical difficulties of working a system of responsible government on the basis of separate electorates are so obvious that it may be reasonably hope that these difficulties themselves will at no distant future compel our Mahomedan compatriots to revise their cherished ideas on the subject. I, therefore, earnestly urge that we should apply ourselves seriously to the task of reducing our ideas to writing on the question of a suitable constitution for India and when we undertake that work we should definitely deal with the question of providing protection for the minorities and other classes requiring special protection. It is only then that we shall be able to appreciate the importance of these issues and the paramount necessity of a spirit of compromise.

Lines of Constitutional Advance.

It is not my intention to discuss at any length the broad principles on which we should proceed to prepare the draft constitution. There are, however, just a few observations which I shall permit myself to make. It is no longer a question whether western wine can be poured into eastern bottles. That question was answered by Parliament so far back as 1917 and 1919 and notwithstanding the fact that kindly friends remind us now and again that parliamentary institutions have failed in Europe and that they are scarcely suited to the conditions of India and are wholly out of accord with our history and our temperament the issue now is as to whether we prefer to remain under what Mr. Montagu described as a wooden and ante-diluvian system or whether we shall tread the path which has been trodden not only in the West but also in the East whenever and wherever there has been a general awakening. There is no doubt that we shall commit mistakes and perhaps blunders, but we shall profit by our experience as other nations have. Originality in politics and constitution-making may be very tempting but it is at best a doubtful game. I, therefore, think that so far as we are concerned, there is no going back on the ideal of responsible government, that is to say, a form of government in which the executive will be responsible to the

Legislature. The electorates have to be widened and to be educated but we cannot wait until their education has reached a stage of perfection. Such electorates exist nowhere. The process of their education is an ever-continuing one and no doubt in India along with an extensive and intensive programme of educating our 'masters', we shall have to depend upon the repeated exercise of the franchise as a powerful educative factor. Similarly our progress towards full responsible government may be somewhat retarded but it cannot be indefinitely postponed because we cannot defend ourselves on our borders. For the present state of our helplessness, responsibility must rest on other shoulders but there again the question should be of not appointing commissions and shelving their reports or toying with the problem, but of evolving and executing a policy of military training and organization in relation to an India which is soon going to be self-governing and not in relation to an India which may after a century hope to be near the fulfilment of its cherished aspirations. Again I think that with all the difficulties that the problem of Indian States presents it should not be difficult to establish with their consent a system of relationship with them which should on the one hand preserve their autonomy and treaty rights and on the other bring them into line with the progressive spirit of the times. In short as I visualise the future, I look forward to an India consisting of federated states in direct and well-defined relationship with Indian states under the aegis of British Crown, as an equal member of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and not as a dependency under the stewardship of a distant India Office exercising over us the functions of an earthly Providence.

If all that is passing at the back of the minds of the high and the mighty at the present time is how best to make the working of dyarchy smooth, without touching the central government and without affecting the position of the Secretary of State, then I think there is a wide gulf which divides us from them. Neither the establishment of a "separate purse" for the two halves of the government, nor the duplication of legislatures for the two halves, nor the establishment of old-fashioned second-chambers (we know what a second chamber at Delhi can be) can in any degree satisfy any section of intelligent Indian opinion. I should be the last person to ignore the necessity for providing for proper and adequate safeguards against hasty legislation or action calculated to affect internal security or weaken our national safety. I have briefly indicated my views on the constitutional issue in the hope and trust that when you apply yourselves to this task they may receive due consideration at your hands.

Gentlemen, I have done. I am sorry that I should have taken so much of your time, but I should have been wanting in my duty if I failed at this juncture to put before you all the

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reasons for our dissatisfaction with the Statutory Commission as it has been constituted and our attitude towards it. It is neither the sort of commission that we should have liked to get nor anything like the round table conference which has been demanded by members of other parties. Instead of promoting good-will in the country and creating an atmosphere of cheerful co-operation and confidence, it has created an atmosphere of doubt and distrust. For the moment the prospect before us is dark and gloomy but we must not lose courage or faith in the justice of our cause. Other nations have had to put up with similar disappointments in their arduous journey to freedom and responsibility. Let us ask with the poet "If winter comes, can spring be far behind?"

On the conclusion of the presidential address Mr. D. G. Dalvi, the General Secretary, announced that the Reception Committee had received several communications of which he read only a few.

Sir Devaprasad Sarvadhikari wrote: "I regret owing to severe illness at home, I am unable to leave Calcutta at present and join the Federation meetings.

Messages of
Sympathy.

Pray, therefore, make my excuses to my Colleagues. Since all the suggestions of the Moderate Liberal Party have been definitely turned down and worse provisions than those originally announced have been introduced, we fail to see how we can usefully or consistently with self respect take part in connection with the deliberations or proceedings of the Reforms Committee. We should, on the other hand, try to formulate our own outlines of the constitution and present it to Parliament as the basis of Legislation for further Reforms."

Mr. Dalvi also read messages from the following gentlemen:

Mr. J. N. Basu of Calcutta, "Regret inability to attend. Consider joining Commission inadvisable. Heartily wish Conference success."

Mr. D. C. Ghose, Calcutta :—"Urge concentration upon constitution-making by all parties without delay."

The Secretary of the Indian Association of Calcutta sent the following telegram: "Indian Association, Calcutta, cordially invites all-India committees of the National Congress, Muslim League and the National Liberal Federation meet one another at Calcutta to discuss and settle the future constitution of India and to decide upon the most suitable line of action."

Mr. Jatar of Nagpur :—"Wish all success this difficult situation must be met boldly and tactfully."

Mr. Dalvi said messages had also been received from Rai Bahadur Anandswarup of Cawnpore, the Hon. Rao Bahadur G. A. Natesan of Madras, Rao Bahadur Jagadishprasad of

Muzafarpur, Rao Bahadur Mundle of Yeotmal, Mukunda Raja of Madras, Mr. Nandakishore Joshi of Amraoti and several others.

The President in adjourning the session said:—The Federation will now resolve itself into a Subjects Committee. All the delegates will, therefore, be members of the Subjects Committee. The Committee will meet here at 4-45 p.m. today. The Federation stands adjourned until 12 noon to-morrow.

SECOND DAY'S PROCEEDINGS.

The Federation reassembled at the Sir Cowasji Jehangir Hall on Wednesday afternoon, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru presiding

Sir Tej Bahadur said :—

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Before I place before you the first resolution I desire to move a resolution of condolence and it runs as follows:—

“This Federation places on record its sense of sorrow at the premature deaths of Rao Bahadur V. R. Pandit, Mr. V. K. Mainkar, Messrs. J. B. Sen and C. S. Deole, members of the Servants of India Society, who were all old and staunch members of the Liberal Party, and this Federation feels the loss of these Liberal stalwarts and conveys its respectful condolences to the members of their families”. I will ask you all to pass this resolution standing.

Condolence.
The President.

The resolution was passed, all standing.

The President: The first resolution is with regard to the Statutory Commission which will be moved by our distinguished leader, Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyar and seconded by Sir Moropant Joshi. After these two distinguished leaders have delivered their speeches, I shall place before you an amendment, notice of which I have received. I now call upon Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer to move the first resolution. Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer then moved:—

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“The National Liberal Federation is strongly of opinion that the official announcement made about the constitution of the Statutory Commission and the functions of the Committee of Indian Legislatures is unacceptable, as it flagrantly denies the right of the Indian people to participate on equal terms in framing the future constitution of the country and that the Legislatures and Indians throughout the country should have nothing to do with the Commission at any stage or in any form (b) That the Council of the Federation be authorised to take all necessary steps to give effect to this resolution”.

Sir Sivaswamy said:—

Mr. President, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

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swamy Aiyar.

After the very elaborate address of our distinguished President Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, it is hardly necessary that I should at very great length go into the arguments in support of this resolution. It is intended as a protest on the part of the Liberal Federation against the constitution of the Commission and the procedure which has been adumbrated in the debates in Parliament as the one likely to be followed by the Commission during its work. One would have thought that in a matter like this which concerns the destinies of the people of this country, the representatives of the people would be allowed a share in determining the form of the recommendations to be made with regard to the future constitution. That is the view which would suggest itself *prime facie* to any fair-minded person. Even those Anglo-Indian newspapers, whose attitude has hardened against us recently, were at one time of opinion that a purely Parliamentary Commission would be a very ill-advised one and that a mixed Commission would be the most satisfactory machinery for making the inquiry which has been prescribed by the statute and for submitting its report to Parliament. But contrary to all expectations, the form of the Commission which has commended itself to the wisdom of the British Government is a purely Parliamentary Commission. We in India had some suspicion as to the form that this Commission was going to take, when exactly it was conceived in the dark chambers of the Government we do not know. But from the moment that the public had any inkling of the fact that the scheme of a Parliamentary Commission was in process of formation, the country entered a protest against it. From all quarters came cries of dissatisfaction and discontent with the proposed constitution of the Commission. There was hardly a dissentient voice against it, nor is there even now a single dissentient voice, with regard to the ill-advised character of the constitution of the Commission.

Now, what are the reasons which have induced the British Government to adopt this purely Parliamentary form? We were told that when the Bill for expediting the appointment of the Commission was introduced and when the motion for the concurrence of Parliament with the names of the members of the Commission was placed, a full explanation would be given by the responsible members of the Government and that until we heard that explanation we should suspend our judgment and should not pronounce only an adverse verdict against it. We possessed our souls in patience and we waited. We have read the explanation that was given both in the House of Commons and the House of Lords by the responsible members of the British Cabinet. Now what is the explanation?

It resolves itself into two main reasons: one, that according to law, and as a matter of principle, it would not be possible to appoint a mixed Commission; and the other reason was that even if it was permitted, it would be most inexpedient to appoint a mixed Commission. These are the two main reasons which were given by the Secretary of State for India in the House of Lords. Let us examine those reasons. The Secretary of State for India spoke as a great constitutional lawyer and with all the weight of his prestige as an ex-Lord-Chancellor. While we are prepared to admit his great abilities and his position as an eminent lawyer, we cannot admit that he has any claim to a monopoly of sound judgment in the construction of a statute.

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He himself was obliged to admit that there is nothing in the terms of the statute to forbid the appointment of a mixed Commission. Then what is there in the statute which prevents it? He tells us that it is obvious that the intention of the statute of Parliament was that it should be a purely Parliamentary Commission consisting of members of Parliament alone. I have heard a friend of mine say, "When we cannot very well give an adequate explanation the best thing for us is to say 'for obvious reasons it is so and so'." That phrase "for obvious reasons" is often a cloak to cover the difficulties of giving a satisfactory explanation. Instead of being obvious, it is far from being obvious to any one here how the statute either in its letter or in its spirit could forbid the appointment of a mixed Commission.

If there is one canon of construction which is well-known to all lawyers, it is that you cannot get behind the grammatical interpretation of the statute when it is plain and that you have no right to refer to what was passed in the legislature and what was in the minds of the framers of the Act. I will only refer to a dictum of another great judge who also held the high office of Lord Chancellor and for a much longer period than Lord Birkenhead. I refer to the dictum of Lord Halsbury who said that the persons who are worst qualified to interpret a statute are those who framed the statute, for they have a temptation to import what was in their own minds into the construction of the statute and not what according to the accepted canons of construction, has to be gathered from the plain meaning of the words in the statute. Whatever weight you may be disposed to attach to the opinions of the lawyers here in India, you must attach weight to the dictum of such a great Lord Chancellor as Lord Halsbury. The Marquess of Reading did not support Lord Birkenhead and only said that a Parliamentary Commission was not ruled out by the statute. If the legal contention is inadmissible, what is the next ground upon which Lord Birkenhead relies? He says that even if the law allows it, it would not be expedient to appoint a mixed Commission.

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What is the ground of expediency upon which the Secretary of State relies? The main ground of expediency is apparently this: that it would be necessary to get a unanimous report, that if you appoint a mixed Commission you cannot expect a unanimous report and that if you want to make the Commission representative, it would have to be increased in size to the point of unwieldiness. These are all arguments which have been fully dealt with, like most of the other grounds, by our distinguished President in the course of his address. One wonders how Lord Birkenhead got it into his head that in order that the Commission should make a full inquiry into the conditions of this country and report on a scheme of constitutional reforms, it should include members not merely of the different large communities but also of the aborigines. That is a discovery the credit of which belongs entirely to the fertility of Lord Birkenhead's intellect. I can only express my wish that the same tender regard for the aborigines and the same tender regard for the depressed classes had been shown by the British Government in its dealings with Kenya, in its dealings with South Africa and in a great many other places. Whether Lord Birkenhead was really serious in making that reference to the aborigines I have great doubts. But I do not think that you will entertain any doubt that it would not have been impossible to appoint a representative Commission without extending its size to unwieldy proportions. As a matter of fact, we have known Royal Commissions containing as many as 18 or 19 members. The Macdonald Commission which was appointed to inquire into the Public Services of Britain. contained, if I remember aright, as many as 19 members. Wherever there is a considerable number of members, you must expect a certain amount of divergence of views. But the fact that differences of opinion are likely to emerge from the appointment of a Commission is no reason whatever for refusing to give that Commission a representative character. The Government have never been deterred in the past from making Commissions representative on the ground that the report would not be unanimous.

Then again it was said that if there was number of dissentient reports, Parliament would not be able to judge between these various dissentient reports and come to a decision as to which recommendation should be accepted. I never thought that such a poor opinion of the intelligence of Parliament would be expressed by such a distinguished member of Parliament as Lord Birkenhead. That person with the capacity of member of Parliament should be unable to discriminate between recommendations made by different members of the Commission, should be unable to appraise the weight to be attached to the different opinions or recommendations and should feel utterly at a loss seems to me to be a very poor compliment indeed to the capacity and judgment of members of Parliament.

Now, it may be said that Parliament has the ultimate responsibility for settling the scheme of constitutional reforms and for granting self-government to India. It has been said that that responsibility cannot be shared. We, the members of the Liberal Party, have always been willing to recognise it. Whether it was right or wrong, that the statute should vest the power of granting responsible government to India in Parliament is another matter. But so long as it is there in the statute, we are prepared to recognise that the ultimate voice would have to rest with Parliament. But it is one thing to say that the ultimate voice rests with Parliament and quite a different matter to say that in regard to the inquiry and the drafting of the report to be presented to Parliament Indians should have no right to sit on equal terms with the members of Parliament and conduct the inquiry. That is a denial of the rights that we have, of our moral rights that we have to share in the determination of the constitution of this country. Even within the limits suggested by the statute, we are entitled to claim that there is nothing to prevent our participating in the deliberations of the Commission we have every claim to participate on equal terms with the other members of the Commission in the conduct of this inquiry.

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Granting that Parliament has the right to determine our fate ultimately and granting also that Parliament has and may have the legal right to choose its own instruments for the conduct of the inquiry, does it follow that Parliament should not be just or fair or considerate to the best interests of the people with whom it has to deal? I do not think that in the exercise of its admitted right, it can claim a right to be unjust or foolish, for that matter. The success of the British nation in working their constitution has been ascribed by a great political writer to the sound stupidity of the English people, but I doubt whether in this case the stupidity of Parliament has not been of the unsound type. I for one have little doubt that the decision of Parliament is one which cannot possibly be pronounced to be well-advised.

Then, Sir, it has been said that though Indians have not been appointed as members of the Commission, Government have offered a unique opportunity to the Indian people of representing their case to the British Government. In fact, some have wondered at the inability of the people of India to appreciate the great benefits that would accrue from the Commission as constituted. Indeed we were told the privilege that we extend to India is one which has not been given to any other self-governing nation which was about to receive responsible government. It may be that there was no Commission of this kind sent out to Australia or to South Africa before those Dominions were granted responsible government. Their right to responsible government was never denied or delayed. What the people of Australia and South Africa did was that they met in convention and they framed a scheme in that convention and the British

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Parliament practically accepted it and gave it the force of an Act. That was the procedure which they followed in the case of Australia. We have no objection to forego this unique opportunity if only they would place us in the less favourable position in which Australia and South Africa and the other self-governing colonies are said to have been placed before they were granted self-government. We should be quite willing to meet in convention and frame some scheme for ourselves and submit it to Parliament, provided that the results of the recommendations of our convention are treated with the same respect as the recommendations of the conventions which emanated from those parts of the Empire.

We have been warned by some of our friends that boycott is a very dangerous weapon the use of which will recoil on the heads of those who launch it. Let me clear any misconception which may prevail upon this subject in the minds of those who utter this note of warning and in the minds of our well-meaning friends in this country. Our boycott is something different from the boycott or the non-co-operation preached by other parties from other platforms. We have never preached non-co-operation with the Government. We have considered it best in the interests of the country to co-operate with the Government as far as we can and get as much from them by co-operation as possible. We do not propose now to boycott the Councils. We do not propose to boycott the machinery of Government. There is no attempt to propose a boycott of Government educational institutions or the Law Courts or other Government organisations. Nor do we propose that there should be a boycott of imported goods. We know the consequences of the various forms of non-co-operation practised some years ago. We are fully aware of it and we claim that the consequences have fully justified the Liberal creed and have abundantly testified to the soundness of the principles which we have always adhered to as members of the Liberal Federation. What we mean is simply that we shall not co-operate with this Commission in any form. We shall not give any assistance to this Commission. We desire that the Legislatures should give no assistance to this Commission and, if possible, I should like our Ministers to do likewise.

It has been suggested that the members of the Legislative Councils should be asked to resign. I think that will be thoroughly useless, and mischievous course to adopt. I see no advantage in putting the members and the government to the expense of an election. We can do far more useful work by remaining in the Councils and preventing any measures being passed which are against the welfare of the people and in promoting measures which are really intended for the good of the people.

It is difficult for me to see what possible disaster can happen, if we boycott the Commission. It may be said that this is

only the thin end of the wedge when we are boycotting the Commission and that this boycott may lead to disorders. But we do not incite or advise anybody to follow up this boycott of the Statutory Commission by suggesting that the negative form of non-co-operation consisting only of our refusal to co-operate with the Commission will be attended with any disastrous consequences.

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Perhaps it may be said that if we boycott this Commission, the Commission may recommend reactionary measures and the taking away of what little powers we have. I do not believe for a moment that Sir John Simon who is a member of the Liberal Party or the British Parliament will be so ill-advised and so ungenerous as to adopt any reactionary measure of that kind. They have some regard for their reputation not merely with us in India but in the forum of the enlightened world. There is a new forum of the conscience of the civilised world which is partially embodied in the League of Nations and though we cannot discuss these questions of internal politics in the League of Nations at Geneva, there will be something like moral approbrium attached to anything which looks like vindictive measures or the destruction of solemn pledges. I do for a moment believe that there will be reactionary measures of that kind recommended or adopted however much irritated the members of the Commission may be by any action that we may take.

We know that our position is one of helplessness but to us, the saying goes "even a worm must sometimes turn." Let us now content ourselves with refusing to co-operate with this Commission as it is constituted.

Now it has been said that we have been assured most solemnly by Lord Birkenhead, Mr. Baldwin and others that there was absolutely no intention to put any stamp of inferiority upon us, that they always recognised our equality and that they are only compelled by the rigorous requirements of the statute to constitute a Parliamentary Commission. This protestation that they are making can only be regarded as mere a camouflage.

I have only to make one more remark, The resolution speaks of the right to participate on equal terms in framing the future constitution of the country. It may be open to the argument that under the existing constitution we have no share in the ultimate voice in determining our constitution. What we understand by that clause is that the future of the constitution must be one which is based on the recommendations of the people of this country. This Commission, it has been said, is charged merely with making a report and that so much importance need not be attached to the report. But we maintain that the constitution of the Commission is of the highest importance because it will determine the appropriate methods of advance which it is

necessary to adopt and we say that we ought to have a share in the inquiry which the Commission is charged with. (Loud applause).

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Sir Moropant Joshi (Berar) in seconding the resolution said:
Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen.

Yesterday in the excellent speech of our president and today in the speech of my friend Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer we have heard how we of the Liberal Federation meet the reasons that are put forward by responsible officials of the British nation in connection with the appointment of this Statutory Commission. It has been shown very effectively indeed in my opinion by the president that all the magnificent theories of political principles enunciated by those responsible officials can in practice be whittled down to something very shabby and something very meagre. I think he has admirably shown that and I think I should now devote myself to making the attitude which we as Liberals propose to adopt towards this Commission. We have to justify to the world how in spite of our Liberal traditions and that in spite of the principles that we have preached to negative the non-co-operation movement, why we are in this particular instance so strongly opposed to this Commission and why in practice we propose to 'boycott' the Commission though we do not use the word which has come to have a sinister significance. I want to make it clear that we are deeply affected by the intensity of the feeling that the constitution of the Commission has aroused in the country. We want to show to Government what our feelings are and how far we are prepared to go on account of such feelings. Our final protest is emphasised by this fact that we want to have nothing to do with the Commission, call it boycott or anything else, but that is as far as we shall go at present. If there is more provocation we shall see what we must do. If there is anything by way of repentance or better terms we have left ourselves free to change our attitude but at present this is our attitude and thus far we are prepared to go. We have been told that disaster may come out of this harmless little boycott that we propose to practise and that it may lead to riots and I find an attempt made in some quarters to argue that the Liberal Federation might be responsible for it. I want to make it as clear as possible, at any rate so far as I am concerned and I hope the sense of the Federation is the same, that for anything that may happen in the country hereafter the sole responsibility will rest on Government and Government alone. We are not against law and order. If in spite of this repeated provocation is given we of the Federation will not be held responsible if anything untoward happens. Whatever may happen we want to show to the world that we are justified in the attitude that we have taken.

Now, gentlemen, this is our position. What is the real reason why every Indian has been shocked at the appointment

of the Commission. Leave alone self-determination, leave alone the high pedestal which some people in this country have adopted for demanding self-determination, we of the Federation have always been willing to come to some honourable compromise on some reasonable terms. We will be satisfied if we are not to be the sole judges of our own destinies. We will be content with a mixed Commission with an equal number of Indians and Europeans to decide our future. We are willing to have that but we are distinctly told that we are not to have even that. I believe most of you will agree with me when I say that this is too much and nothing by way of a compromise on this one very essential point will, in my humble opinion, be acceptable to us.

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As I have said, we do not stand on a high pedestal but we certainly have a right to expect that in the final solution of this question Indians will have an equal voice in shaping their own destiny, that we are entitled to expect and if they won't concede that much then there hardly remains anything in my opinion for a compromise.

I think I may put before you the three stages in some of which it is possible to contemplate a compromise. The first is the elaboration and the preparation and presenting of the case by the elected members of the Central and Provincial Legislatures. Then the next stage is that in which they will allow us to cross-examine witnesses and even to examine confidential documents. The third and the last stage is the most decisive and important stage—the formative stage—when we shall be able as colleagues of the Simon Commission if we are allowed to be colleagues at all to satisfy the British colleagues of the justice of our claims and meet them not as suppliants but as co-equals sitting as judges and carrying the same weight as themselves.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, it is not a mere matter of sentiment to say that our being denied the right to sit down with the Simon Commission and decide our own destiny has shocked us so much. It is a matter of practical importance than that. Even if it were a mere matter of sentiment and there was such a rude shock given to us I think the resentment of the Liberal Federation would have been perfectly justified but that is not the only ground for our resentment. There is another and a very practical aspect of the matter which I wish to place before you. It is this. Whatever the position of the suppliants at the bar may be, if Indians are not allowed to sit as colleagues of the members of the Commission it means that it stops short at the very important function of being able to influence the final decision as colleagues. I hope every one of you will realise that it is one thing to put forward for consideration suggestions with all the emphasis you may command and quite another thing to be sitting on the same bench as colleagues and give advice and guidance to the European members of the Commission. You all know what happened in the case of the Sadler Commission. That is the

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position of vantage which is now denied to us by simply being allowed to present the Commission with our case. All that Sir John Simon may possibly do is to make things more elastic with regard to the second stage I have mentioned, namely the examination of witnesses and documents.

I am now speaking for myself. I do not know what the feelings of the Federation may be on the point. I for one am not prepared to compromise on that last point namely the formative stage which is the most important stage and so long as that disability is not removed I personally would have the same feeling towards the Commission as I have today.

As I have already said the matter is still open to a compromise on points that can bear a compromise and not on points of first class importance. Then we have to consider as to what we stand to gain and what we stand to lose by the attitude we have taken up. In my opinion we stand to gain this at any rate, that as Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer has said we are prepared emphatically to repudiate to the peoples of this world the very mean assumption that we are not fit to sit alongside half the number of European members of the Commission. I put very great value to that and that alone. I think it is very important that we should make it clear that we resent it and we want to prevent it being used as a precedent in the future. We want it to be made known that we do feel strongly on the subject.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, it is said that the boycott may not be effective. I do not know what is meant by being effective. Has any scheme of co-operation or non-cooperation yet tried been effective in the sense of bringing such a pressure on British Government as to win it to our view? What is the meaning of the boycott being effective? What I expect is that a large number of the intelligencia of the country and the people who count in political matters do not go before the Commission because they object to its constitution. That is enough for us. There may be others who will go; if they find that the honour of the country is an asset of lesser importance or if they are guided by any other motives let them choose their own line of action. We are not responsible for it. I do not think the boycott will be anything like the boycott in Egypt for instance, but the feeling in the country is so intense at present that we expect a very large number of people who count will not approach this Commission. I have already said that we will not be responsible for the disasters or anything else that may happen. Government have done enough by now to discount all sober thought in this country. I make this charge deliberately. They have not only sapped the Liberal Federation and the members of the Federation who wished well to the British connection but during the last ten or fifteen years you will not find a single Liberal of any consequence springing up afresh—we have only

the old fossils. All the influence that any member of the Federation may possess is being sapped by the action of Government not listening to the opinions that are given to them for consideration by us. That is all that I want to say. I wish you to accept this resolution. It is a most important resolution and I wish you to accept it because by so doing we shall make our position clear and we shall show the extent to which we are prepared to go at present. (applause)

Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai in supporting the resolution said:—

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I rise to support the resolution which has been moved by Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer. During the last few weeks most of us have read and spoken on this question to such an extent that it may sometimes seem a task of real boredom to address an audience on the same question and my only apology for standing before you this afternoon is that so long as there is any man or woman in this country who has not been personally convinced as to the justice of the position that we have taken up no amount of boredom or apprehension of boredom would prevent me from inflicting a speech upon you. It often happens in affairs of this character that with our somewhat fine ingenuity and intellect we happen to find numerous points of views which as dispassionate statemen it behoves us to consider. We do not seem to be made of that rough raw material that faces squarely any problem that is presented to us. I will not trench upon the legal argument of Sir Sivaswamy Iyer or of the seconder of this motion but I shall take a line of my own in that I feel that I would much rather address you on something that has not at all events been brought out as the true aspect of the question before us. I do not wish to conceal from you—nor could I if I tried—that I stand on what I am proud to describe as the extreme and, therefore, the vital line of the Liberal Federation. The situation was properly visualised by Sir Moropant Joshi when he said that it is somewhat sad to reflect that during the last ten or fifteen years the ranks of this body have been thinned and I ask you to examine in all conscience and in all seriousness what is the true reason that has placed this political body, possessing ability, possessing probably the best organising capacity, possessing personal prestige, and yet not counting with the country. I ask you to consider this matter in all earnestness because during the committee stages of this matter and somewhat later a question was vainly asked whether we might not omit the last words of this resolution which runs as follows: "and Indians throughout the country will have nothing to do with the Commission at any stage or in any form"—a state of mind which describes a halting attitude and vague sense of fear in taking a decision towards any effective step whatever.

If one examines the reasons of the measure which is the subject of this discussion they easily fall into three groups reasons of law as to which better minds than mine have spoken, reasons of

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policy as to which I propose to say a few words, and reasons of principle on which I wish to say a few more. It is those two that I propose to examine before you. The fact remains that the Commission is appointed for the purpose of investigating the condition of this country with a view to make recommendations for a further progress—let me at all events be optimistic to that extent—towards the ideal which was outlined in the years 1917-19. The one important fact that you find is that Indians do not find any such place on it. It is not a question of exclusion of this Indian or that but all Indians as such do not find a place on the Commission. It is made a matter of broad principle by the Prime Minister and it has been justified by the Secretary of State. The decision requires examination from the point of view of the ground which is given for the exclusion. The masterly analysis of Sir Chimanlal Setalwad deals with the point in a somewhat different manner to the one in which I look upon it, for if you examine the speech of Lord Birkenhead you will find that it is a lesson for us to wake up to the reality of the situation. He says; "We came to India 150 years ago in the guise of traders. We found the country disunited. We restored law and order. Well what do we find at the end of 150 years? Though the form may have altered the disunity in the country exists none the less below the surface." And the Prime Minister says in unmistakable language that so long as this disunity remains the British domination of this country must remain. Therefore we are told to our utter shame that we have not progressed during the last 150 years so far as moral upliftment of our race is concerned towards unity and towards solidarity. He says further that if the British army and the British navy are withdrawn and if their protection is not available to this country, we would not talk of self-government. That is the position taken up by British statesmen from time to time but no effort has ever been made towards the Indianisation of those portions of the British Government because the army and the navy are as much a part of the Government as the civil Government of this country. And we Indians have had no share in it. It is somewhat remarkable, however, to find that during the last 30 or 40 years of the life of the Indian National Congress, it never dawned on us until the years of the Great War in Europe that the weakest spot of demand for self-government was the absence of Indians from the highest ranks of the army and the navy. We always wanted more of civil service, more appointments in every department of Government, we wanted numerous measures of Council reform, separation of the judicial and the executive and if you examine the resolutions, it strikes one as a strong commentary on how we had almost come to believe that we had no place in the army and the navy as the basis of our right to rank as an equal member of the commonwealth. Ladies and gentlemen, therefore, the reasons that are given by Lord Birkenhead that it is they who will determine what Government they will give us are

reasons well founded from their own point of view. They are partly well founded in that it is we who would not uplift ourselves and in the fact that it is they who while talking of equality and partnership will always retain in their own hands the means of defence which alone will render us fit for self-government on dominion status. I remember a few years ago Mr. Curtis of the Round Table Conference came going round different parts of this Empire the lesson of his discussion is so important that I desire to state it to you. To us few persons whom he invited to discuss the matter of the status of India in the commonwealth of the Empire the first and foremost question he put us was what share and responsibility we were going to take towards the common defence of the Empire and towards the internal defence of our particular portion and he said that so long as we could not answer that question, all talk of self-government within the Empire was mere empty words.

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Therefore 'I want you to realise that the scheme' as Lord Birkenhead called it 'on the strength of which he justifies the exclusion of Indians from the Commission' is this that so far as the Commission is concerned it is not going to deal with the real aspect of the question, the real measure which will carry on the road to becoming a real partner in the commonwealth. In other words if ever there is going to be an effective commission for the purpose of a real advance it will have to tackle the most important question as an integral part of the enquiry as to how far, how soon and by what means the Indian army and the Indian navy is going to be re-organised that you will attain self-government in the true sense of the word. That at all events is how I understand the scheme. Assuming for the purpose of argument that your franchise was broadened, that a larger proportion in the Indian Civil Service was granted, that other facilities were granted for the internal administration of the country, is it really ever going to place you on a true status of equality. Speaking respectfully I cannot believe it is going to be any further real advance it. Let it be understood that is only when in the central legislature such a responsible government is granted as that we are able to formulate measures for effective control of our trade and finance and for national defence that we may be truly regarded as a member of the commonwealth.

The next reason given for the exclusion of Indians is again a reflection on our character. It is said by Lord Birkenhead that Indians of every shade of opinion are all men who belong to some particular race, religion or political creed. Therefore, he comes to the conclusion that our people are so situated that it is impossible to expect that we will, sitting on such a commission, give any views other than the views of the particular shades or religion to which we belong. No greater calumny was ever uttered on the independence of our judgment or to the honesty of our character, for is it right to say that whoever will sit as judges on the

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Commission will not examine all the points of view which are placed before them and come to a conclusion which is honest and independent because they are Indians. All Indians, however high they may be, have been branded of the sins of partiality. Therefore I say that this Commission is a great insult to our national sentiments and self-respect.

The import of it is that you have been described in such a manner held up in such a position as that you do not possess men of intelligence and judgment, sincerity of belief or honesty of character. It is a thing at all events, which, if you could do nothing more, you ought to give an unreserved protest and you can only do in the shape of the resolution that is before you.

We are told of the consequences of this resolution. Sir Moropant Joshi in bated breath talked of the possibility of riots as foreshadowed by the Anglo-Indian press. I am one of those who when faced with a situation of this kind do not seem to be very much perturbed by it, and for a good reason. During the last great War in Europe when they were fighting for freedom, was it ever a question of counting the cost? Was it ever treated as a problem of economics either in amount or in resource? It was treated as a problem where emancipation and regard for principle stood above all petty consideration of that character and no sacrifice was too great an effort. And yet we have been so utterly unnerved and so utterly demoralised that we are frightened at the possible loss of a hundred—assuming it happened. A subject race though, we may be, we have determined for ourselves that in all future steps that we shall take we shall certainly not be a voluntary party to an abdication of any principle whatever. (Applause).

Then it is said that supposing you fail in achieving this unity and solidarity of protest. Supposing you said that for ever you would not remain not only in that same bondage, but would not continue to deteriorate in the condition which is the very prime cause and reason of domination of a foreign race above you. For at all events you have got to begin to unite some day. It was argued: Oh, but if you fail it will show that the country is in a condition of disunion. But if you do not do so it will still do so more emphatically and show that the country does not even think of any steps towards establishing unity. It will be a very good reason now for the purpose of excluding Indians from the Commission, but in future for the purpose of excluding Indians for ever from any real participation in the government of India. Therefore let us not heed this. The very fact that you are told that you may fail must wake you up. If this is to be a ground for surrender it is at all events a confession of failure. If you began and failed at all events it is a confession of an effort, and the more successful the effort, you may take it, the great will be your moral gain in course of time, and I hope and trust that to-day and now you will lay the foundation

of the commencement of that moral and national effort, which will lead to the ultimate culmination of the unification of all parties and resolve that there shall be in India until self-determination is really achieved one party and one party alone, namely, the Indian. It is that of which you are asked to lay the foundation by saying that Indians throughout the country will have nothing to do with this Commission in any form or at any stage. As I have already said I am one of those who do not count the cost in measures of this character. Nonetheless the cost for loss and gain has already been measured by wiser men. They have told you that even in the matter of cost you are the better off. It is not mere futile words. I ask you to give your assent to this resolution not because it is a half-hearted attempt, not because it is a matter in which you have just been wounded in the matter of pride for the moment, but because notwithstanding the acceptance of the supremacy of Parliament as a matter of constitutional principle we have been treated differently by the other members of the British Commonwealth. It is time that we realised that the treatment that we deserve is the treatment that will be given to us. The more you accept what is given to you with submission the less will you gain in every next measure. Let us now at all events for once realise where we stand. The real step that you will have taken will be the step when you will realise that party politics do not stand in the way of real unity, that party politics have got to give way to all considerations of national independence, that religious differences when one comes to examine them are too trivial and too ridiculous, that they are neither fundamental in their character nor insoluble in their difficulties. It is only when you realise that, when you place the Indian problem over party and personal interests and it is only when you begin the unity of all shades of opinion in this country that there will be the beginning of a real step towards real advance and then only will our voice be heard effectively in any step for constitutional advance towards the ultimate attainment of self-government within the Empire. Not by words will you gain it, not by resolutions will you gain it, not as long as you continue to be divided amongst yourselves you will gain it. You will only gain it when you realise that it is only by combining all the different parties of the country. Let us not talk of distrust, let us not talk of fear, let us not talk of being misrepresented, let us liberalise and not talk of being told that we are walking hand-in-hand with those whose opinions are erroneous, whose opinions lead the country into error and loss. Let us all say this: Our ideal being the same in all measures which tend towards the same goal we shall stand shoulder to shoulder (Applause). It is in that spirit, ladies and gentlemen, that I ask you to carry this resolution, and may it be your sacred duty during the year that is beginning and another one that will come, until the Commission is out of the country and back again and out again, to see to it that not only you but every person whom you can influence, every party which you can affect

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shall not stint any effort either moral or otherwise to see to it that this particular measure which you have undertaken shall teach one lesson both to yourself and to Britain, namely, that you are not incapable of being united. (Loud applause).

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Pandit Hirdaya Nath Kunzru, (U.P) speaking in further support of the resolution, said: Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, why is it that we have met to-day to protest against the Statutory Commission, which, according to the statement of the British authorities, is coming out to this country to widen the bounds of our freedom? It does certainly appear strange that the instrument of Indian freedom is to contain no representative of Indian opinion on it. The normal method of investigating a question so far has been that the investigating body should contain representatives of all contending interests. At any rate, I remember no important committee or Commission during the past 40 years which has not contained an Indian element, however inadequate, on it. Whether you take the question of the Civil Services, or the position of Indians in the Indian army or constitutional questions, every Commission appointed to go into these matters has contained an Indian element. It has proceeded on the assumption that Indians must be given an opportunity on the same footing as those in authority of shaping decisions relating to these matters. But it may be said that this Commission is far more important than the previous Commissions; it deals with a constitutional matter which it is the sole prerogative of Parliament to decide.

Now, if the contention of the Secretary of State that it is difficult to appoint Indians on a Commission of this kind because of the existence of minorities in this country is true, then that difficulty will occur in all circumstances whether the question to be considered is one relating to the constitution or to the services. We hear so much about communal fights these days. What are these communal differences due to? We are fighting for our respective shares in the various services and in the various legislatures and other elective bodies. It seems, therefore, that in our public life the question of the share to be given to Indians in the higher services is no negligible in importance as compared with the question of the further constitution of this country. And if, therefore, on Commissions dealing with these services and particularly the Army it has been found possible to appoint Indians, I see no reason why it should be found more difficult to provide an adequate representation for minorities on a Commission dealing with the constitutional question.

We have had recently even a constitutional committee known as the Muddiman Committee and we had five Indian members on it, including the President of this Federation. Did you hear that it was said by any section of opinion that these Indians were not representative? Was any doubt thrown on their impartiality? If they were accepted as representing their countrymen what fresh

reasons have arisen to make Lord Birkenhead and the authorities in England suspect that if Indians of a similar standing in our public life were appointed on the Statutory Commission their partiality would be challenged?

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We have had another committee recently dealing with the position of Indians in the army and, as Mr. Bhulabhai Desai told you a few minutes ago, the position of Indians in the army is one of considerable importance, as this is the pivot on which the ultimate attainment of self-government hinges. We had Indians on that Committee and yet it presented a unanimous report which, I understand, has given a great shock to service interests. Now, taking all these committees from the Public Service Commission of 1886 to the last Commission, namely, the Indian Sandhurst Committee into consideration, does any sensible man think that if there had been no Indians on them and if we had contented ourselves merely with leading evidence before them, their conclusions would not have been far different from what they have been? Take the Islington Commission, the recommendations of which did not satisfy any advanced section of Indian opinion. Even those who were not privileged to know what happened behind the scenes may legitimately feel that the report of the Commission would have been far different but for the presence of Indian members on it. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald has told us that the Royal Commission is a very clumsy method of investigating a question and that it is almost impossible in the case of such a Commission to have a unanimous report. I do not know whether it is a great calamity to have different reports. At any rate in the case of the Islington Commission, the greatest difference was in regard to the Indianisation of the Indian Civil Service and when the time came for acting upon the report of that Commission we know that Mr. Montagu accepted the recommendation of Sir Abdur Rahim who stood by himself that Indians should, to begin with, be recruited annually to the extent of 33 per cent. in that service. We see thus that a minority report, even though signed by one member, may not be based on mere racial prejudice. It may be based on facts and arguments which may find favour with the authorities themselves in their calmer moments.

I fear, Sir, that the real reason why Indians have not been appointed on this Commission is not perhaps that they may present a report different from that of their British colleagues but that they may exercise so potent an influence, the arguments they use may be of such weight that like the Indian Sandhurst Committee the Statutory Commission may present a unanimous report which the Government here and the Government in England may find it very inconvenient to shelve and impossible in the present state of their feelings and prejudice to adopt. That seems to me to be the real reason why Indians have been excluded from this Commission.

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But, I will, Sir, for the time being assume that Lord Birkenhead is perfectly sincere in saying that so long as we are divided amongst ourselves it is not possible to have a Commission which is not exclusively parliamentary. I will admit that it is one of the duties of a government to protect the interests of minorities. But, I ask whether the facts relating to the British Empire as it stands today give us any ground for the belief that the Imperial Government is the just protector of the rights of minorities. In a certain sense perhaps it is their protector. Take the case of South Africa. Its population consists of 5 million indigenous inhabitants, about a million Europeans and about 1½ lakhs of Indians. Our British Government have been so careful of the rights of one minority the European minority there that it has placed the entire power and the entire machinery of Government in the hands of the European minority of a million. The 5 million indigenous inhabitants have no part or lot in that Government. (Shame.) No representative of theirs can sit in the South African Parliament and probably excepting the Cape Province no Indian or native can take part in the election of European members (Shame.) This is how the British Government shows its solicitude for the interests of minorities. It allows them when they are composed of members of its own race quietly to crush the majorities composed of members of other races.

Take the case of Southern Rhodesia. There again, is a small white minority and a large indigenous population. I was reading this morning an appeal issued to members of the British Parliament by the Anti-slavery and Aborigines Protection Society. It says that a law has been passed in Southern Rhodesia which enables the Government there to indenture children as labourers including both boys and girls, children of the age of 14 or less, even as young as 8 years old can be indentured under the law that has been passed as labourers. And now another measure has been placed before the Rhodesian Legislature to penalise any insolence or contemptuous behaviour on the part of the indigenous inhabitants towards European Officials and their own headmen who really are the instruments of British domination.

Take again the case of Kenya. There you have about 2½ millions Africans, about 25 thousand Indians and about 10,000 Europeans. Now you know that in 1923 after a great agitation carried on by our countrymen the British Government decided to confer responsible Government on that colony, not to place the entire Government in the hands of the ten thousand Englishmen. Now even this policy, however, unsatisfactory it may have appeared to us and to the real inhabitants of Kenya, is going to be changed. We want to increase the share of the immigrant communities—mark the plural number—in the Government of Kenya. Now the Indian community never asked to be given more rights in regard to the Government of Kenya. We can, therefore, only conclude that the solicitude of the British Government for the rights of the

immigrant communities is really due to its desire to increase the power of the European minority. Anyone who has gone through the debate that took place on the Colonial estimates a few months ago in the British House of Commons must have realised that the change in policy which has been recently announced is significant and vital and that if it is proceeded with we may at no distant date be confronted with a 'Self-Governing' Kenya in the "self-government" of which the indigenous inhabitants will have no part and in which their only business will be to minister to the wants and comforts of their European rulers. Today, the inhabitants of those places have been deprived of the best part of their land. They have to pay a huge tax and a poll tax in order practically to be compelled to labour for the white capitalists. In this colony to which the grant of self-government is in reality contemplated whatever for the time being British Statesmen may say, no attempt is being made to train the Natives in local self-government or to give them adequate education.

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But the very same Imperial Government which has allowed policies to be followed in other parts of the Empire becomes so solicitous of the rights of minorities in India that it thinks that every sect, every community consisting even of a few hundreds, if it only calls itself by a separate name, is entitled to a seat on the Statutory Commission.

Now how are we to deal with the Statutory Commission when it comes here? We are asked by some of our friends to think twice before we take up the intransigent attitude of boycotting the Commission. We are asked to think calmly over the consequences that might ensue. Well, let us think of the terrible consequences which, we are told, might befall us if we left this Commission severely alone. If Lord Birkenhead is perfectly serious in thinking that the position of India is the same to-day as it was 150 years ago and that the strong protecting arm of the British is needed to maintain law and order in this country, if he is sincere in thinking that the depressed classes need still the protection of a foreign government, if he really believes in his heart of hearts that unless this country is universally educated it can be given no large measure of self government, I ask you what it is that we can hope from the deliberations of the Commission. It is evident from what Lord Birkenhead has himself said most with regard to the imperative presence of the British in this country to maintain, it is impossible that the maintenance of law and order should be handed over to us. In other words the Police Department, the administration of justice and district administration must still continue to be in the hands of the British Government. Since the welfare of the masses is still to be watched for by the British Government it is equally clear that questions like land revenue and irrigation and such other matters which vitally affect the people at large can also not be transferred to popular control. What is it, then, that remains to

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be handed over to us? How will this Statutory Commission propose to increase our rights, our share in the Government of our country? Perhaps by transferring the Forest Department. The Muddiman Committee proposed more than three years ago that this very important department should be transferred to the Ministers. That recommendation has not so far been carried out. Whether the Statutory Commission repeats this recommendation or asks that it should continue to be reserved is a matter of no importance whatever.

If this is the utmost that we may expect from the deliberations of this Commission, then we can with an easy and clear conscience say to our countrymen: "Don't go near the Commission. Let it feel that we have some sense of self-respect. Although we might have to bow to force now we can at any rate have the consolation of not helping it to tighten the chains of slavery round our necks." (Applause). Some of our friends say that we are disunited amongst ourselves and that we should, therefore, give the best evidence that we are capable of before this Commission. The local Governments will try to blacken us as much as possible and if we do not place a different point of view before the Commission our case will go by default. Does anybody really think that the decisions of the Commission will be formulated in accordance with the evidence placed before it. A great deal of evidence, of very valuable character was placed before the Muddiman Committee more than three years ago. Important men all over the country including ex-members of the Executive Council gave evidence before it. To anyone who is desirous of studying the manner in which the bureaucracy has worked the reforms, the volumes of evidence issued by the Muddiman Committee will provide valuable food for reflection. But I doubt whether we can do to the value of that evidence by placing any fresh statements before the Commission. If the point of view of our administrators is determined really by the evidence that may be placed before them, then the Muddiman Committee ought to have submitted a very different report. But we know the procedure that it followed. When there was a disagreement between ministers and executive councillors, the statements of the ministers were held to be of no value; when there was a difference of opinion between the members of the executive council themselves, the views of the Indian members of the executive council were recorded as biased and only the Governor and his European colleagues were regarded as representing the true state of things. What can we expect, if we give more evidence, from this Statutory Commission. I am inclined to think Lord Birkenhead's warning that our progress depended on our ability to compose our internal differences should be taken to heart by all of us. It really impresses on us the fact that our progress will depend not on the evidence that we may tender but on the political solidarity we are able to achieve. It is

true that we are to-day fighting amongst ourselves, it is unhappily too true. But if we can show at this juncture that even when distracted by internal differences we have sufficient patriotism to unite to meet a common foe, it is the strongest and the only weapon with which we can meet Lord Birkenhead's arrogance. It is only by combining amongst ourselves that we can compel the Commission to recognise the reality on the Indian demand.

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Just one word more and I have done. I have already told you what we may expect the attitude of the Statutory Commission to be towards the question of provincial autonomy. Now if our share in the provincial government is not going to be largely increased, can we reasonably hope that the Commission will agree even to touch the framework of the Government of India? It is difficult to think that the Government of India will be liberalised even to the extent of one per cent. in the present state of things. We have, therefore, no option but to boycott this Commission and to indicate the solidarity of political feeling in this country by making common cause with all the parties which are fighting for our self-respect and freedom. The leaders of the Moslem community are almost solidly united on this point. The Zamindars are also taking a bold line, at any rate in the province which I come from. Two distinguished representatives of the Talukdars, namely, the Maharaja of Mahomedabad and Raja Sir Rampal Singh, both, I believe ex-Chairmen of the Talukdars' Association, have in no uncertain terms expressed their views in regard to this Commission. They have said explicitly and emphatically that it ought to be boycotted. There is no ground, therefore, for depression or pessimism. There is far more unity on this point than we could have hoped for two or three months ago. Every day the forces of progress are increasing and if only we have faith in ourselves and do not listen to the paralysing counsels of those who would sap our self-confidence, I have no doubt that when the Commission comes it will be confronted with the unanimous will of a determined India to achieve the fullest freedom. (Applause). It is, gentlemen, in this hope and confidence that I ask you to reject this Commission, to boycott it completely and to tell the British Government that so far from yielding to this arrogant assertions of racial domination you are all the more determined to work out your salvation by our own unaided strength (Loud applause).

Rao Bahadur K. G. Damle C. I. E., (Berar) in further support of the resolution said: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen: The distinguished patriots and leaders of the Liberal Party who have preceded me in addressing this house have exhaustively dealt with the subject matter of the resolution which I am commanded to support in all its bearings and hence my purpose is made very simple. The announcement of the appointment of the Royal Statutory Commission as made by the British Parliament and the speeches made by the Viceroy of

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India, the Secretary of State for India and the Prime Minister explaining the reasons why the suggestion to nominate Indian representatives on this Commission was not acceptable, have roused the indignation of the Indian Political thinkers and set them cogitating what further and deeper implications are made to attach to the deliberate exclusion of the Indians from an authoritative participation in the shaping of the further constitutional advance of their own country. The real question before the British Parliament was to appoint a body of accredited gentlemen to inquire on the spot into the working of the reforms as inaugurated in India by the Government of India Act of 1919 and to ascertain and report how far the results achieved by the Provincial Legislatures and the Legislative Assembly could be deemed to justify a further advance, in what direction and to what extent. The Commission is enjoined to submit its report to the British Cabinet in order that a joint Parliamentary Committee may scrutinize the propriety of the recommendations made in the report and prepare the ground for the British Parliament to decide whether India has shown herself deserving of a further constitutional advance and if so to be able to determine the measure and nature of the further advance to be granted to India. The present party in power in Great Britain claims that the Statutory Periodical Commission can be constituted only from among the members of the British Parliament and that no Indian can hope to sit on it. Eminent Indian Legal experts doubt the correctness or validity of this claim. We are not here concerned with determining whether the Commission could or could not validly include Indians as its members. I feel sure that the British Statesmen cannot deny the fact that Indians could and did attain the exalted position of being members of the British Parliament. Mr. Dadabhoi Naoroji, Mr. Bhavnagree, Lord Sinha and Mr. Saklatvala have attained that position and shared in the British administration as members of the British Parliament. A commission of Inquiry, like the Statutory Commission appointed, plays a very subordinate part indeed as compared with the British Parliament. Logically speaking, therefore, it is idle to say that Indians who are capable of participating in higher and more responsible spheres of administration are unfitted to serve on this inferior body like the Statutory Commission. The objection to the inclusion of Indians on this Commission must, it seems to me, proceed really speaking from something, other than the inherent incompetency of the Indian race to assume the responsibility of the functions which the Commission is called upon to perform. The British statesmen are proclaiming that Indians are unfit to serve on this Commission. It is difficult to imagine that British statesmen are forgetful of the fact that two Indians are at any rate living members today of the British Parliament. But, in politics, logic, when it is unserviceable, is often cast aside and plausible excuses are invented to support a policy already decided.

upon. If the present British Cabinet has once made up its mind not to appoint Indian representatives on the Commission it can support its decision by numerous plausible and ingenious excuses. The truth is transparently clear. The British Cabinet did not want to appoint Indians on the Commission. Had they merely stated this their unjust and arbitrary wish in plain words, they could have at least been credited with a straight-forward statement. By pleading excuses the British statesmen have missed the mark and shaken the confidence of the thinking Indian public. By assuming the entire trust for the welfare of the hundreds of millions of the Indian population, the British Parliament has brought India under its permanent tutelage and by denying the right to act and to speak on its behalf, to the few intelligent Indian leaders, the British statesmanship is virtually of its own accord, delaying the progress of constitutional reforms in India indefinitely long.

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Ladies and Gentlemen, the matter under consideration is plain and simple. Any casual observer will not fail to discern the motive behind the denial of the Indian's right to sit on this Commission. Language will be meaningless if the treatment accorded to the Indian demand on this subject cannot be regarded as anything less than a calculated affront to India as a whole. If India possesses no self-respect and Indians do not feel insulted when their national honour is disrespected, can India ever hope to live as a nation? All talk for Indian Nationhood is useless if Indians do not impulsively feel dishonoured by their exclusion from this Commission of Inquiry.

Lord Sinha has issued a warning to his countrymen to desist from disassociating with the Simon Commission. He foresees disastrous consequences and irreparable losses issuing from this policy of aloofness advocated in India. Lord Sinha's high position and personal experience are entitled to great respect and his patriotism is unquestionably high. The aloofness implied in the resolution recommended for your acceptance differs widely from the ordinary implication of a boycott. People grow nervous as soon as the aloofness advocated is talked as a boycott. The policy of absolute indifference and aloofness advocated now is an expression of the righteous indignation which every thinking Indian feels for the National insult implied in the denial of Indians' right to serve on this Commission.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is needless to be afraid of British statesmen. They are astute politicians trained in the art of governing and as true statesmen they cannot afford to be shortsighted and narrow-minded. They possess great powers of foresight and are and have to be broad-minded. They will not misunderstand the Indians if the latter show, however strongly, their resentment for the insult to their National honour. If the Indians show that they have no self respect or that their country

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possesses no national honour they will certainly be lowering themselves in the estimation of the British people. Just as the British people feel National pride and possess self-respect, they are accustomed to expect a similar sentiment in the Indians whose progress and happiness they are guarding and to whom they have promised Swaraj. India is on her trial and at this critical juncture, I beseech you, Ladies and Gentlemen, to consider how far it will serve our National purpose if we allow ourselves to be condemned as less than human beings devoid of self-respect and national honour.

To me there is no need of apprehension that India will lose appreciably if the Indians remain aloof from the Simon Commission. I still believe in the word of the British statesman when he says that there will be no going back on the form of constitutional reforms inaugurated and that the advance will be progressive, slow or quick according to the measure of willing co operation and fitness shown by the Indians in working out the reforms granted. The threats and gestures of anger on the part of the British politicians are to my mind intended to test the strength and temper of the Indian mind. If India does not stand the test, her fate will for ever be hopelessly doomed.

With these words I commend this resolution to your unanimous acceptance (applause).

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Rao Krishnapal Singh of Awagarh, M. L. C., (U. P.) in further supporting the resolution said: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen: Perhaps in the minds of some of you though I hope there are only a few amongst us now, some doubt has been left as to whether the policy of boycott embodied in the resolution under consideration of the house is a proper one for the Liberal Federation to adopt.

If you do not follow this one there are two more courses open to you one to co-operate with the Statutory Commission when it arrives in India and the other to keep silent. If you adopt the former one that of co-operating, you will have to surrender a very important right of your countrymen. If, on the other hand, you decide to keep silent, I am afraid it will never pay in politics. It is for this reason that the policy embodied in this resolution is recommended to you. It is not a tactical move nor a measure of expediency but, if I may say so, it is an absolute necessity in the present circumstances. Boycott may appear as an extremist's move but, gentlemen, when you consider that the present responsible British statesmen have thrown a deliberate challenge to you by forcing on you a Commission from which Indians have been excluded, it is not proper for you as self-respecting people to co-operate with this Commission which comes to you for examining the conditions prevalent in this country and to make suggestions for its future progress. As a living nation, therefore, it is absolutely necessary for you to have nothing to do with such a body.

If you will co-operate with it or if you will send witnesses before it the world will say that either you are not prepared for fighting for freedom or incapable of it and will think of you as weak and timid people. Whoever may have any regard for such a nation the Englishman, I know, has none.

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And, if I were to remind you now of Mr. Desai's appeal made to you for making the Boycott effective and successful, I would ask you briefly to do your best, not merely by talking to your friends of its advantages or making speeches but by persuading members of the Central and Provincial Legislatures who may be asked to appear as witnesses before the Commission to refrain from doing so. If we do not prove equal to the task we have to face in the coming future and assert ourselves now, we shall forever have to surrender a right which has till now been recognised as ours viz. that we should have a share and our voice should carry weight in the moulding of our own destinies.

Babu Bhagwati Saran Singh M. L. C. (Behar), in according his strong and cordial support to the resolution on behalf of the landlords, remarked that this section was generally regarded to consist of flunkeys and *johuzoors*. But even among them there is a great awakening and the entire exclusion of all Indians including landlords had come upon them as a rude shock. In this hour of the nation's trial he was confident that every patriotic landlord knew that his place was with the people whose natural leader he was supposed by the bureaucracy to be. To desert the national cause at this hour and to go against the universal national will that of having nothing to do with the Simon Commission was down right treachery—nay a heinous sin—a *pap*—and he appealed to the landed aristocracy as one of their humble members not to be guilty of this *pap*. There was such a solidarity of opinion on the proposed boycott of the Statutory Commission that he was sure that the house could not only carry the resolution with acclamation but see that it was fully implemented by action as provided in the second part of it.

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Mr. Chunilal M. Gandhi of Surat, speaking in Gujarati, said :— Mr. President, brother delegates, ladies and gentlemen: I am asked to support this resolution in Gujarati. I wonder if it is really necessary to do so. However, as I am asked to do so, I have to do. I do not propose either to read the resolution or to give its translation in Gujarati. The resolution purports to say that the announcement made by Government about the constitution of the Statutory Commission and the functions of the committees of the Indian Legislatures is unacceptable to us, as it wounds our self-respect by denying to us our birth-right of determining what the future constitution of our country should be. From the time the great war began in Europe in 1914 till November 1918 when the armistice was announced, responsible statesmen in England were loud in proclaiming the right of self-

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determination in favour of all nationalities, small or big. We were then ungrudgingly given the equal right of dying in the trenches of Belgium and Germany. But when the war is over and the time comes to give Indians the right of participating in the formation of the future constitution for their country, they are to be denied the most elementary right of every citizen of India. It is, therefore, that we now say that we shall have nothing to do with the Simon Commission at any stage and in any form. Ladies and gentlemen, we are told that we are divided and, therefore, cannot hope to have any representation on the Simon Commission. Gentlemen, the manner in which the three parties, the Conservatives, the Labourites and the Liberals, behaved teaches us a very important lesson. Whatever their other differences may be, the parties in England know how to sink their differences when a question of common national policy arises. The Conservatives, the Labourites and the Liberals are all readily agreed to exclude Indians from the Simon Commission. Can we not know and learn to do so and to take a lesson from their conduct, sink our differences and present a united front on this occasion? With these words I commend the resolution for your acceptance and I have no doubt that you will carry it with acclamation (applause).

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Mr. Moropant B. Marathe (Belgaum) in further supporting the resolution in a forceful speech in Marathi said I am before you to support the resolution on the Statutory Commission. It is the resolution of far-reaching consequences. It will determine our future constitution and it is only in those aspects that we ought to view it. We as Liberals are to express our opinion on the resolution. The importance of the resolution is made obvious by the very fact that the Government has been trying every means to see that there is no opposition to the Simon Commission. The subject of the resolution is killed with this object, through medium of an interview of our revered leader Lord Sinha, published just on the eve of the Sessions of this Federation. The publishers thought that they would at least impress the liberals and succeed in keeping them away from the boycott. Now what has been said in that message? Lord Sinha after declaring the inadvisability and undesirability of the boycott, asks us to remember Dadabhai, Gokhale and Surendranath and their policy. Yes, we know their policy and it is their training that tells us to pass this resolution. In this connection, I draw the attention of those who desire to deter us from declaring boycott to the memorable speech of the late Mr. Gokhale delivered at Allahabad in February 1907, that is 20 years ago, under the presidency of no other man than the present Swarajist leader Pandit Motilal Nehru. The title of the speech was "Work before us." In his speech, Mr. Gokhale declared that there are two ways to get out of the present state of bondage, one of rebellion and the other of constitutional means. He further warned his countrymen that the first way was out of the question.

The only way by which our nation was likely to secure freedom was the constitutional method.

Mr. Gokhale exhorted the Indians to go over the road of constitutional agitation and in defining the extent and hints of constitutional agitation, he said that while prayers and petitions are at the one end, the other end is non-payment of taxes. So the constitutional agitation to which we are pledged, includes the mere boycott of the Simon Commission. Practically it has no active or direct action, it is simply contained in our keeping ourselves away from the inquiry of the Commission. I, therefore, assert that not only we are not diverting from the teachings of our departed leaders, but we are faithful to their advice and showing to the world what liberalism of India enunciated by these honoured departed leaders really means and stands for and how they do not fail to show courage when national interests demand it.

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The Liberal Party has accepted the Government of India Act of 1919. It has accepted the sovereignty of the British Parliament in reference to further advance. This does not mean that it has accepted the sovereignty of the agency which the British Parliament would use in collecting information for the basis of consideration for further constitutional advance. Our rightful demand is therefore, that a Commission entrusted with the said work ought to include representative Indians.

Non-inclusion of Indians is not only against the letter and spirit of the Government of India Act but is a direct negation of our self-respect. It is a national dishonour and we ought to view it accordingly. I, therefore, entreat you not to bear this insult but retaliate by this resolution.

It is an unnecessary apprehension that there will be disturbances by this course, and we are referred to the assembly at Madras. Yes, we are not at one with that assembly in principle. But as regards this question we are with them. There will be demonstrations and hartals—I go a little further and say that an agitation be made to declare a general strike for a few hours on the railways leading from Bombay to Delhi on the day of the departure of the Simon Commission by way of a protest. These actions may or may not be welcome. We of the Federation only want to show our disapproval and disgust about the Simon Commission by declaring and working up our declaration that we liberals have nothing to do with the Commission. For this purpose, we might bring every moral pressure to bear upon the members of the various Legislatures and other Indians in general to act as if no Commission has arrived.

But we have got to guard against the working of the enemies within our country if our country is to be saved, I mean, the

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attitude of the party headed by Mr. Jayakar and Mr. Kelkar, who are satisfied with the Committees to collaborate with the Commission.

But you must not forget that no recommendations or suggestions made by these committees with additional powers would be placed before Parliament as recommendations and suggestions of the Commission. It means that they will not have the determining influence on the discussion that will take place in the British Parliament. Then why should we go in for such a 'Committee.' Therefore, my earnest request to you is not to go in the trap of these Committees. Our respected leader Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer has already given a warning to that effect and it is our bounden duty to obey it.

Lord Birkenhead has done his duty by asserting the supremacy of Britain even in such matters. He has thrown a challenge. It is now our duty to rise to the occasion and show we also have our sense of self-respect, and the courage of retaliating in an equal measure by boycotting the Simon Commission.

With these words, I commend the resolution for your unanimous acceptance.

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Mr. N. B. Karnekar, (Sholapur,) speaking in Marathī, in further support of the resolution expressed satisfaction that there was a large number of Indian patriots, who were demanding boycott of the Statutory Commission, irrespective of their castes or creeds. He said that the Non-Brahmins in the Bombay Presidency were going to hold a Conference at Nasik in January 1928, when they would decide as to what attitude they would take regarding the Commission; but he as an individual member of the Non-Brahmin Party wanted emphatically to express the opinion that all should adopt this political boycott; he hoped that his Non-Brahmin brethren would not fail to adopt this policy. He referred to the opinions of some who held that this golden opportunity of giving evidence before the Simon Commission would not be lost, as in their view no fresh Commission would come for a long time and thus it would be fatal to the country, if Indians would boycott the Commission; but these men forgot that the Commission consisting of inexperienced Europeans on Indian affairs, with no Indians included in it, would be of no use to the country. He also referred to the fact that some persons observed that there was no provision made in the Reforms Act, that Indians should be included in the Commission; to this, he said the reply was that there was also no mention in the Act that a Commission consisting of only Europeans and not Indians be appointed to frame the future destiny of India. He further remarked that Indians were not even consulted as to the time when the Commission ought to be appointed, and that the names of persons constituting the Commission were abruptly

published. Now the question before the Federation was, he continued, whether the Liberals were in favour of the present Commission and the reply was that they were not. If Parliament would make any other proposals, the Liberals would not accept them, unless Parliament recognised the principle that Indians have got the right to participate on equal terms to frame the future constitution for India. Concluding, he said, that Liberals would always stand for nationalism and self-respect.

Mr. C.Y. Chintamani (U.P.) next addressing the meeting said:
Mr. President, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

You have had today so many speeches on the subject of the Statutory Commission that I have to apologise for asking you to stand one more speech. The first question which we have to put to ourselves is why this Commission has been appointed and the second question is why we Indians have been excluded from it. The Commission has been appointed because a provision exists in the Government of India Act of 1919 that it should be appointed after the expiry of ten years from the date of the passing of the Act. If you will go back to the Montagu-Chelmsford report and the discussions that preceded the introduction of the Government of India Bill you will find that Mr. Montagu had one supreme motive in proposing this procedure. He said: "We have promised to India responsible government as the goal of British policy. At the same time we find that immediately we cannot introduce a system of full responsible government. We have to be content with a transitory system which cannot be the last word from the point of view of administrative convenience. But shall we compel the people of India to resort to overwhelming agitation every time they want an advance towards self-government, or shall we taking a lesson from what has happened in Ireland, devise an expedient by dint of which, from within the constitution now introduced it may be possible for further steps to be taken without the necessity of outside agitation?"

Mr. Montagu answered the question by deciding to introduce this procedure of a Statutory Commission so that the people of India might know that at intervals of a few years the manner in which the then existing system had worked might be examined and further steps taken. Mr. Montagu in his speeches on the Government of India Bill in the House of Commons made three important statements which it is very relevant that we should remind the British Government at the present juncture. He asked the House of Commons first to remember that the Government of India Bill of that year was only the first step on the road to self-government. Secondly, he asked the Government of India to remember although the Governors-in-Council and the Governor-General-in-Council were not then made legally responsible to their respective legislatures they were the Government of a country which

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had been promised full responsible government the first step in the direction of which had already been taken and that, therefore, they should conduct themselves even in the reserved sphere as though they were already responsible to the legislature; in other words, that the spirit which should inform the Government of the country not merely in provincial transferred departments but throughout the whole sphere of administration must be the spirit of a government representative of and responsible to the people of the country. The third thing which he told the House of Commons was that they should be on their guard against employing arguments against constitutional advance and concurrently following policies which would make constitutional advance impossible. He illustrated this statement by citing the case of the defence of the country. He warned his fellow-countrymen that it was no use for them to tell the people of this country that they would not expect to have self-government for as long as they were not capable of defending their frontiers and at the same time to follow steadfastly a policy which would for ever make it possible for the people of India to defend themselves. He told them not to make the wider diffusion of education the antecedent condition of political advance and at the same time make the wider diffusion of education impossible.

If you will bear in mind these three among other and similar statements made by that great and good Secretary of State whose premature death we continue to deplore as one of the greatest national calamities, and if then you consider all the facts and circumstances relating to the present Commission in the light of what Mr. Montagu, the author of the Statutory Commission idea, said you will realise the enormity of the offence which the British Government and Parliament have deliberately committed against the self-respect and the interests of our Motherland.

The Statutory Commission was not due to be appointed until the year 1929 but Indian public men of all progressive political parties have during the last four years been urging that the British Government should not wait until the year 1929 as though there were some mysterious significance attached to that year but should profit by the warning which the comparative failure of the working of the present system had afforded and take steps to antedate the Commission. To this demand one constant and consistent answer was given, that they would not do it. In the year 1924, when a resolution was moved in the Legislative Assembly by Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar, the present Governor of the Punjab, who, I believe is one of the satraps consulted about the present Commission, Sir Malcolm Hailey made an elaborate statement on behalf of the Government of India, which was an argument against any appreciable constitutional advance at an early date.

Again, when in 1925 Pandit Motilal Nehru as the leader of the Swaraj Party moved in the Legislative Assembly a resolution which has come to be popularly known as the national demand and which in substance was identical with the resolutions which we had and have since passed in this Federation, the Government of India again, through their spokesman, declined to take the action that Indian public opinion demanded. The Muddiman Committee sat in 1924 only to consider what could be done and might be done consistently with the structure, policy and purpose of the Government of India Act. You have already been told about that Committee. It had placed before it overwhelming evidence from those who had worked the system from inside Government, and from members of the Legislatures, it had before it the memoranda of Governors in Council and minutes of Ministers in office, and the weight of opinion that was placed before it was to the effect that the present system should not be allowed to continue and that it should be radically revised. Mr. President, you as one who had so much to do with the Minority Report of that Committee know very well what courtsey was paid to that document which was signed among others by a former member of the Government of India, by a former member of the Government of Madras and by a former member of the Government of Bombay and by Mr. Jinnah, one of the veteran public men of the country. When Pandit Motilal Nehru moved his proposition in the Assembly there was an official motion before it inviting the Government of India to take action on the lines of the Majority Report. The Majority Report was a reactionary document but even in that report there were a few recommendations of some value. But, ladies and gentlemen, would you believe it that after a period of three years, after the presentation of that report to the Government of India, not one of the material recommendations even of that Majority Report has been carried into effect?

Having systematically ignored, disregarded and dismissed with contempt Indian public opinion of every shade and every variety during these several years, the Government in England and the Government of India suddenly discovered in the year of grace 1927 that they owed a duty to Indian public opinion which had been asking for an earlier revision of the constitution, and sensitive and responsive as these gentlemen have been in their respect for Indian public opinion, and as persons who have given innumerable proofs of that respect, they have antedated the Commission by two years. But they resolved that the Statutory Commission should contain not a single member of the subject race. Now is it or is it not important from the point of view of our whole political future that we should treat seriously this deliberate exclusion of all Indians and every Indian for no other reason than that they are Indians? If the functions of the Commission were comparatively unimportant and if they could

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be treated as of a very transient nature which would not leave any impress behind, then we might rest content after a formal protest. Actually the Commission is charged with most important duties. We have only to turn to the preamble of the Government of India Act and to the language of section 84 A to consider how vast, how far-reaching the consequences of the deliberations of that body will be. It has been stated that our further constitutional progress must depend upon the degree of co-operation which we extend and the sense of responsibility which we display. Is it one of the functions of the Commission to inquire what is the degree of co-operation which the Governor-General in Council and the Governors-in-Council have extended even to moderate and responsible public opinion in the country? I charge the Governor-General-in-Council and every Governor-in-Council and the Secretary of State with a deliberate, persistent and contemptuous disregard of Indian public opinion and a systematic refusal to co-operate with the Indian public. If there were Indian members on the Commission and if the British accused us of lacking in the spirit of co-operation they would turn the tables on the British. The Commission is to inquire what is the sense of responsibility which Indian public men have shown themselves capable of but I inquire what is the degree of responsibility which the British Government in India and in England have shown themselves capable of. Notwithstanding the great national awakening, notwithstanding the plighted word of the British Parliament, in spite of all the declarations that have been solemnly made that the Government in India is on the road to transformation into a fully responsible government, in the face of all these, I charge the British Government that they have shown themselves during the last 5½ years since Mr. Montagu was driven out of office so unceremoniously, incapable of sense of responsibility to the people in dealing with the problems of Indian government. If there was any Indian on the Commission this question would be brought up and the Commission would not be allowed merely to consider this problem as though Indians were the accused and the British Government were to give judgment in favour of their own noble selves.

The Commission is to inquire what progress education has made in the country. No Simon Commission, in my opinion, was required for that purpose. It was not necessary for Sir John Simon to throw up his lucrative practice at the bar and his brilliant career in the House of Commons temporarily in order to find out what progress education has made in the country but if there were Indians on the Commission they would bring home to the British their full responsibility for the most disastrous educational backwardness which still disgraces this country. Until 1921 the exclusive responsibility for education rested on British shoulders, while since then, notwithstanding all the efforts Ministers have been capable of making in order to accelerate educational progress,

they have got their step brothers, the members of the Executive Councils to deal with them as a subservient branch of the Government which is not in control of the purse and it is due to them that educational progress has not been half as rapid as it should have been during the last few years. The London *Times*, has summed up the functions of this Commission as amounting to nothing less than to inquire into the whole future of India and with this interpretation of the scope of the Commission such eminent authorities as Lord Sydenham better known all over India now as our arch-enemy than as a former Governor of Bombay, Sir Michael O'Dwyer and other gentlemen have expressed their cordial agreement.

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Well, Mr. President, if they appoint in accordance with the provision of the statute of the Parliament a Commission whose functions extend to what amounts to an investigation into the whole future of India, and if from that Commission the British Government in a most insolent manner exclude every son and daughter of India merely because they are not members of the ruling race, are we not justified in expressing our resentment? If we show either vocal contentment or even silent acquiescence in that position I do not think it will be necessary for anyone to talk of any further political advance. But I am glad to think that not even Sir Mohamad Shafi, so lost in love of co-operation with the Commission, is able to say that the exclusion of Indians is a right and proper proceeding.

As regards those few Indians who welcome the exclusion of Indians even more than Englishmen, we must not pay them the compliment of giving a reply in kind to all they say in print. It has been argued that the exclusion of Indians has been taken too seriously by us, that its motive and its effect have both been misinterpreted and misunderstood by us. It has been said that the device of consultative committee of the Legislatures gives to the people of India perhaps more than the most radical Indians would have dared to ask for. I have only to point out that the authors of the scheme are the present Government in England with Lord Birkenhead as the Secretary of State and the authors of the scheme in India are the Government of India in whom no one of us has any confidence, and the supporters of the scheme include such indomitable friends of Indian national aspirations as Sir William Marris, for you to realise whether the scheme that has been actually put forward is more liberal in character than the inclusion of Indians in Simon Commission could possibly have made it.

During the last few days a most distinguished Indian, one of whom no Indian should speak except with a feeling of genuine respect, one for whom I personally have a feeling of affection and regard, I refer to our illustrious countryman Lord Sinha, has expressed an opinion against this policy of boycott to which I myself and those who have addressed you on the resolution

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invite you of the Liberal Federation to commit yourselves. Lord Sinha has asked us not to forget Dadabhai Naoroji, Sir Surendranath Banerjea and Mr. Gokhale when we decide to embark upon a campaign which he deems will be attended with disastrous consequences. The names of Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendranath Banerjea and Gokhale have only to be uttered in an assembly of Indian nationalists for every one to bow his head in deep reverence, and if Lord Sinha could prove to my satisfaction that the policy to which we are committing ourselves is a policy which would have been disapproved by them, I for one notwithstanding all the weight I attach to the arguments of our respected leaders, would have deemed it my duty to reconsider my position. But what did Mr. Gokhale say on the boycott of British goods at the Benares Congress in 1905? If we employ the word boycott it is not because we are actuated by an unworthy feeling of hatred or enmity but because in the English language that is the one simple word which most expressively and plainly brings out our meaning. Mr. Gokhale denied that boycott was unconstitutional and only stated that certain conditions were necessary for a boycott movement to be successful. He argued thus on the boycott of British goods—a far more serious thing than the boycott of the Commission. Two years later Mr. Gokhale delivered at Allahabad an important address on constitutional agitation. I will ask you to read that address and then to tell me if our decision to have nothing to do with the Simon Commission is anything which can be described as a departure from what Mr. Gokhale held to be comprehended by constitutional agitation. The Liberal Federation has been taunted by Congressmen for adhering to the phrase “constitutional agitation” which our extremist critics allege is nothing but a policy of prayer, petition and protest. On the contrary, for most of us constitutional agitation both in England and in India has meant what Mr. Gokhale explained and described on several occasions, and we have to give a practical proof that there is nothing more masculine, more vigorous, more practical, more patriotic than constitutional agitation with all that it includes and connotes.

Next Lord Sinha holds up to us the name of Sir Surendranath Banerjea. Yes. What did Sir Surendranath do in connection with the partition agitation in Bengal when he inaugurated the Swadeshi and boycott movements? In view of what he said and did on that occasion, to say that what we are doing now goes against his teachings is to say something which is not in accordance with facts. Lastly, the name of the most revered of Indian patriots Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji has been taken. What do we find in the whole public life of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji extending to over 60 years? His whole life was a sermon upon sacrifice, upon courage, upon radicalism. Lord Sinha warns us against the disastrous consequences of the policy to which we are committing ourselves. He says that when the present Reforms were

introduced there was the vitiating atmosphere of non-co-operation which rendered their working very difficult. We are asked whether just at the time further reforms are to be introduced as a result of the Simon Commission, we the supporters of the present reforms should be a party to the creation of an atmosphere which is unfriendly and unfavourable. If I thought that the Simon Commission was a body of genuine reformers seriously and sincerely intended to propose a scheme of reforms that would be acceptable to any section of progressive Indian opinion, I would admit that there was some force in Lord Sinha's plea. If that had been the intention of the Government in England would they have set up a Commission in the personnel of which there was no place for Indians and accompanied the appointment by speeches such as those that were delivered in the House of Commons and the House of Lords? If the intention had been to follow Mr. Montagu's example by the introduction of a large instalment of constitutional reform approximating to Swaraj, I am certain that the Tory Government would not have made up their minds in a hurry and alienated the whole body of patriotic Indian public opinion by excluding every Indian from the Commission. On the contrary, going back to the speech of Sir Malcolm Hailey in the Assembly in 1924 and the several official utterances between that time and the present on the subject of further constitutional reforms and bearing in mind the implications of the opinions expressed and the arguments put forward by official apologists, I venture to think that their object is not the introduction of any large instalment of further constitutional reform but either to perpetuate the *status quo* or so to modify the present constitution as to fetter progress. I shall not in the least be surprised if as a consequence of this Commission the dyarchical system in the provinces were to be so modified as to reduce still further the fractional power now enjoyed by our Ministers and to increase still further the powers of the Governor and his Executive Councillors and to fortify the position of the Indian Civil Service. The modifications of the present system that we may hope to expect from the deliberations of the Commission will be modifications that will be welcome not to Indian reformers but to the Anglo-Indian opponents of Indian progress.

As regards the Central Government and the Central Legislatures, I for one, do not expect one particle of progress as the result of the Commission. On the other hand, I think they will hug to their bosom the doctrine that they may allow the grown-up children called Indian politicians to toy with the secondary departments in provincial administrations which do not touch British interests, but shall not let them touch anything in which the latter are deeply concerned.

The Simon Commission is likely to result in no substantial good. It is probable that it will result in substantial mischief.

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You may ask me: Why don't you try to prevent that mischief? Frankly I say if I had the slightest confidence or any reason to cherish the belief that I could by going before the Commission and exposing the defects of the present system and setting forth the national demand and minimise the mischief I would readily do so. But there is no use. We all went before the Muddiman Committee. What was the result? Nothing. We might as well have slept comfortably in our beds. On the other hand there will be one serious practical harm done if anyone of us went before the Commission. They will say, "We have considered the presentations made to us by representatives of every political party all over India. We have given full weight to every fact, every opinion, every argument advanced by every single politician who came before us and our conclusion is wholly against them and we confirm what Sir William Marris and others have stated. If on the other hand we wash our hands clean of this business, we decline to go before them and keep up our agitation for Swaraj, notwithstanding all that the Commission may say or do, they will be deprived of the moral authority which we shall have wantonly presented to them if we co-operated. It is, therefore, a matter of the utmost practical consequence, a matter of vital importance, not merely a sentimental consideration although to sentimental consideration I attach the greatest importance, that we should take the right decision at the present moment and in the assertion not only of our national honour but of our national rights decline absolutely to compromise the position of our country by going and giving evidence before this Simon Seven. There is doubtless prevalent amongst some of us an idea that these subordinate committees of the Legislatures are going to have an equal status with the Statutory Commission. I tell you nothing is further from the fact. The speech which has created this impression is principally a speech delivered in the House of Commons by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the leader of the Labour Party and a former friend of India. I have read that speech with great care and I have read the salient passages more than once and my interpretation of the speech is different from that of those in whom hope has triumphed over experience. That speech read with the speech delivered by the Prime Minister shortly afterwards in the House of Commons shows you that these Committees of the Indian Legislatures shall not have the right to report to the British Parliament and to the British Government and not even to report to the Government of India. Mr. MacDonald, the author of what is seemingly the most generous of the speeches, said "how can we recognise any Committee that is not set up by ourselves?" And if the Provincial Committee makes a report, it will be submitted to the Legislative Assembly and the Assembly Committee will dispose of that report as it may deem proper. The position of those Committees will be like the position of the co-opted members of the Southborough Committee sent out to India in 1918. I

enjoyed the doubtful position of a co-opted member of the Franchise Committee in the United Provinces. I can assure you my "*amour propre*" was consulted in every respect. I was seated by the side of the *pucca* members and I was allowed to cross-examine the Secretaries to Government and other witnesses with the same freedom. But when the examination of the witnesses was over, the whole of the business that remained for me to do was to take my ticket from Lucknow to Allahabad. Not only was I not a party but I did not know when the Committee deliberated and what decisions it was going to take. Our friend Sir Moropant Joshi was a co-opted member of the Functions Committee in the Central Provinces, and he will bear out what I have said. (Sir Moropant nodded assent.) Then again there is such a thing as joint deliberation between the two halves of Provincial Governments. This is one of the features of the Montagu-Chelmsford system. I am here, gentlemen, in the proud distinction of being an ex-Minister like my friend Sir Shankerrao Chitnavis. In the United Provinces our first Governor Sir Harcourt Butler followed this plan but when he left and the new Governor, who is not enamoured of this device, came in there was a meeting at Government House to which we, Ministers, were invited in the same manner as Executive Councillors but as soon as we reached Government House we were told that the Governor-in-Council was meeting to consider a matter of reserved business. The Ministers were virtually told "Please stand out, you cannot go in until that business is concluded." Then we were summoned and when our joint business was over the Governor said, "Will you kindly walk out, gentlemen, my next concern is only with these people and not with you." When the Simon Committees get to actual deliberations this is what the committees of our legislatures will be told.

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These Committees, I assure you, will not enjoy a vestige of power in relation to the Simon Commission. They will be in no more dignified a position than the subordinate branch of the dyarchical Government or of the co-opted members of the Committee I have mentioned.

I should like to know whether Mr. MacDonald was serious when he invited India to believe when he invited his embarrassing colleagues like Col. Wedgewood to believe that the Committees of the subordinate Legislatures of India would have an equal status with the Simon Commission. Remembering Mr. MacDonald's attitude towards India in the past, I should be sorry to doubt his word. But when I read the pathetic protestations of these great British politicians, I cannot help recalling the lines:

Earth is sick and Heaven is Dreary
Of the hollow words that States and Kingdoms
When they talk of Truth and Justice ! utter.

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The last argument used for the exclusion of Indians was that they were not united. I would just ask you to inquire of Mr. Baldwin and Lord Birkenhead whether they remember the case of Ireland in the year 1920 when Earl Birkenhead was one of the members of Mr. Lloyd George's Coalition Government which evolved the policy of the Irish Free State, whether Irishmen were all united, all peaceful, all favourable and friendly, and whether the present state of India even from the point of view of inter-cine divisions is worse than the case of Ireland in 1920 and say honestly, if it is fair to the people of India to put forward such arguments.

One more argument has been put forward with reference to the Indian Civil Service. This service has been defined by a high authority as a steel frame. Sir Sivaswamy Aiyar has given me a small illustration regarding the steel frame which I would place before you. When a man builds a new house does he consult the building materials made of steel, what they would like the design of the house to be, whether they will remain in positions if the house be constructed according to a certain plan.

Lastly Mr. President, there was the very characteristic speech of Mr. Baldwin who wound up with the remark which my friend Mr. Kunzru brought to your notice, namely, his plea that when God has any great work to be accomplished he entrusted it to his Englishmen. Mr. Baldwin earlier in the speech said with some uncton that Englishmen were not in the habit of praising themselves. We in India are very familiar with that trait of the Englishman's character! Our Anglo-Indian papers show how humble and modest Englishmen are and how highly they think of us. Mr. Baldwin's statement is characteristic of the British race. Long ago one of their poets sang.

"Pride in their port, defiance in their eyes.

I see the lords of humankind pass by."

What is more to the point, when in 1914 the Great War broke out, the idol of the present day Englishmen and of political jingoes in particular, Mr. Rudyard Kipling wrote some verses and in them he said. "Who dies if England lives? Who lives if England dies?" Well, we don't wish England should die. We the people of India have for ages immemorial adopted in our every day lives the creed of "live and let live." Therefore, no Indian, be he ever so debased, ever so unworthy of his ancestors, would ever wish either England, or any other country, to die and ourselves to live. But if it is a question of any country dying or any country living I think we, the people of India, can raise our heads among the nations of the world, above the tombs of other nations western not less than eastern, and proclaim that we will live and will continue to live.

Whatever may be the fate of any country, we have the faith in us, the irremovable, the invincible faith that will conquer

any difficulty, the faith that will shake mountains, notwithstanding all difficulties and discouragements. India lives, India will live, India shall live and live not as the helpless dependency of arrogant England. India will live as a free India, as an honoured India, as an India that will still contribute to the progress of the world, a contribution that will be as valuable and as imperishable as India made in the past.

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Much has been said of the prudential considerations which some critics allege unduly weigh with the members of the Indian Liberal Party. I do hope and trust you fellow Liberals will show in this the crisis of our fate that that accusation has no substance in fact, that Indian Liberal leaders are as ready as if not more ready, than ever to do everything in their power, everything that situation calls for, everything that can be done with any advantage to the country in order to uphold the honour of the country and to promote its interests. We Indian Liberals have shown during the past nine years what it is to stand up for a principle notwithstanding popular wrath and in spite of Government frowns. To us Liberals the saying is not merely of academic interest, it is a saying of vital principle and of applicability in our every day work, the saying: "What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul." (Loud and continued applause).

After concluding his speech Mr. Chintamani said:

I forgot a duty entrusted to me by the President. It was to bring to the notice of this Federation that a letter had been received from the assistant secretary of the Indian Association, Calcutta, that Bengal Liberals were largely opposed, or a large number of them were opposed to the policy of boycott of the Simon Commission. It was my duty to bring it to the notice of the Federation earlier. I bring it to your notice now but I am confident that that will not materially affect your judgment.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Indian Representation on International Bodies.

RESOLUTION NO. 2.

The President:—The second resolution will be moved by the Hon'ble Sir Phiroze C. Sethna.

The Hon. Sir Phiroze Sethna (Bombay), said:

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:—

The resolution which I have the honor to move runs as follows:—

"The National Liberal Federation of India strongly urges that Indian representation on the League of Nations and other International or Imperial Conferences should be by a delegation predominantly Indian in its composition and led by an Indian."

Indian Representation on International Bodies.
The Hon'ble Sir Phiroze C. Sethna.

Indian Representation on International Bodies.

The Hon'ble Sir Phiroze C. Sethna.

The subject matter of this resolution has been discussed in the Central Legislature more than once. As far back as 10th March 1924, I had brought forward a resolution which ran as follows:—

“This Council recommends to the Governor-General in-Council to appoint an Indian of suitable rank and qualifications to be the leader of the delegation representing India at the session of the Assembly of the League of Nations to be held in September this year.”

Government were most sympathetic to judge from the reply of the then Hon'ble Member in charge Sir Mahomed Shafi. The same Sir Mahomed Shafi is today responsible for advising the country to appear and give evidence before the Statutory Commission in spite of the deliberate insult to India by the absolute exclusion of any single Indian on the Commission. I will give you Sir Mahomed Shafi's exact words in reply to my resolution. They were as follows:—

“The Government of India fully recognise that the wish expressed in the resolution which has been moved by my Hon'ble friend, Mr. Sethna, is natural...The Government of India fully recognise that fact, and the House may rest assured that the proposal will receive the most careful consideration of the Government of India when the time for appointment arrives.”

It was on this assurance that I withdrew the resolution.

Full two years elapsed but during both these years in spite of the assurance given by Government and which was virtually a promise the leaders appointed were not Indians. Government had deliberately flouted the wishes of the country although they had assured the Council of State that they were in entire sympathy with my resolution. The country cannot but regard Government's attitude as one more instance of going behind what was nothing less than a definite promise. I deemed it right therefore, to put forward the same resolution in identically the same terms once again on 17th February 1926. The member in charge then and now is the Hon'ble Mr. S. R. Das. Mr. Das spoke at greater length than myself but devoted all his time to replying to an amendment to my resolution moved by a Swarajist member to the effect that the leader and other members of the Delegation representing India should be appointed from one of a panel of six persons to be elected by the two Chambers of the Central Legislature. In answer to the argument I put forward, all that Mr. Das had to say was that Government hoped very shortly to make an announcement.

The announcement appeared in the English newspapers on 1st of July 1927. I happened to be in London at the time and on July

2nd I addressed a letter to the London "Times" from which I may be permitted to quote the last paragraph. I said :

"The names now announced show that the Government have once again flouted the wish expressed by the Legislature and have so far given no reasons whatsoever as to why they have not selected a suitable Indian as the Leader of the Delegation. In the past such eminent Indians as Lord Sinha, Sir Ali Imam, the Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri, Sir Sivaswamy Iyer, Mr. Hassan Imam, Sir Dadiba Dalal and Sir Atul Chatterjee were selected as members of the Delegation. Any one of the above could have been selected as the Leader this year, or if the Government desired to make fresh appointments, they certainly could have nominated some other prominent non-official Indian. If they considered it necessary that the Leader should be an official, then surely the present High Commissioner for India in London is an Indian and an official and if he had been chosen for the position the appointment would have met with universal favour in India and would have been appreciated as an act on the part of the Government in conformity with resolutions moved in the Council of State with which on both occasions, Government have expressed their entire sympathy."

The announcement made by Government dealt with the following three points. First that the Agenda of the Assembly of the League of Nations includes matters relating to Foreign Policy and International Relations. Secondly that the British Member alone can appreciate the guiding principles of the Foreign Policy of His Majesty's Government and thirdly it was the British Member alone and not an Indian who can carry out the responsibility of the Secretary of State in this regard. This made it necessary for me to bring forward the same resolution for the third time which I did on 9th March 1927 and I hope I replied convincingly to all the points to judge from the fact that the resolution was passed by the Council, in spite of the lame explanation Government offered.

As regards there being questions of Foreign Policy surely there are questions of Foreign Policy involved even in the affairs of Government of India and Indian Members of the Executive Council of the Viceroy are not considered incapable of dealing with them. The second and third points in favour of the British Member as against an Indian Member that the latter will not understand the position as well as the former are unsound, unwarranted and casts an unjustifiable slur on the capability of a suitable Indian leading the Delegation. This is again a gratuitous insult to Indians and one must protest in the strongest terms possible.

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Whether the League of Nations has so far justified its existence or not is perhaps open to question. It is because India is an original member of that body and also because India contributes a very handsome amount towards its upkeep that it is very necessary that our representatives should be all or almost all Indians and more than anything else that the Leader himself must be an Indian. It may not be generally known that the covenant of the League of Nations was signed at the Peace Conference at Versailles in 1919 by 12 States including India and that the signatories on behalf of India were the late lamented Mr. Montagu, the Maharaja of Bikaner and Lord Sinha. Today the number of States that are members has reached about 60. The annual expenditure is £ 900,000/- or more and India's share there of exceeds eight lacs a year and there are only 4 States viz, England, France, Italy and Japan, which pay more than India. Surely, it cannot be argued for one moment that you cannot find Indians possessed of such ability as may be requisite in one who leads such a Delegation. And may I ask if the qualifications of the European Leaders who have been appointed so far are in any way superior to those of the Indian gentlemen whose names I read out from my letter to the *London Times*? Again Indians of the ability of the Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri and the President of this Federation Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru have served as the representatives of India at the Imperial Conference. Cannot any one of them or others be entrusted with the leadership of the Indian Delegation to the League of Nations? In the debate in the Council of State, Government tried to make out that there were intricate questions involved which would require special knowledge. May I ask if those who were appointed leaders are not given the assistance of men who have made these questions their special studies and with their guidance is it not possible for the Indians I have named to represent the views of the Government of India in the manner they would desire?

It was also urged by Government that under existing conditions perhaps an Indian leader would put forward views which would not be identically those of the Government of India. Surely, this contingency can be safeguarded against by previous consultation with the leader to be appointed. In fact, any leader whether Indian or European may have his own personal views but if he went as the representative of Government he would be expected to put forward no other than the views held by the Government of India. This, therefore, seems an empty excuse. I said that there was an amendment to my resolution that the delegates including the leader from India to the League of Nations should be chosen from a panel of legislators elected by the two Houses of Central Legislature. That amendment was lost. We have not included that amendment in the resolution.

which this Federation has framed and which I have just moved. All that we ask for is that the Indian representation of the League of Nations as well as other International or Imperial Conferences should be predominantly Indian. We do not go so far as to say that they must be all Indians but what we do ask is that such delegations must be led by an Indian. That is necessary for the honour and prestige of the country and if there was any doubt on the point I will quote what the Irish representative Mr. Fitzgerald observed at the Imperial Conference of 1923. Here are his exact words :

“ Putting myself in the position of the Indian I do not think that Indian representatives here are of an equality with us, because they are not really here in a representative capacity. They are not really sent by an independent Indian Government and they cannot really be regarded as equals with the rest of us ”.

This certainly is most humiliating and we want that there will not again be occasions for others to make any similar remarks. It is the duty of Government to help us in this matter and convert what has been so far no more than lip sympathy into a settled fact.

Mr. N. M. Joshi, (Bombay) in seconding the resolution, said;—
Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen;

In seconding this resolution I need not speak more than a few words. The resolution asks the Government of India to appoint Indians as the leaders of the delegations that attend the Imperial Conferences and the other International Conferences and to see that the delegations will be predominantly Indian. Since the end of the war India came to be represented on the International bodies as a separate nation. This position of India is a somewhat anomalous one. The Imperial conference consists of Governments within the Empire which are responsible to the people. The Indian Government is not responsible to the people of India. Still somehow or other India got an independent position on the Imperial Conferences. In the same manner the League of Nations consists of independent self-governing countries. India is not yet fully independent nor a self-governing country, still by some stroke of fortune India came to be a member of the League of Nations.

In spite of the fact that India does not hold the same position as the other independent countries in the International Conferences, we Indians consented to take part in them simply because we feel that the position of India may improve by our attending these conferences. We feel that we may come into touch with the outside world, our vision may be broadened and the position of our country may be brought before the opinion of the whole world. It is due to this feeling that we Indians

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The Hon'ble.
Sir Phiroze C. Sethna.

Mr. N. M. Joshi.

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Mr. N. M. Joshi.

agreed to take part in these international conferences. But unfortunately there are also disadvantages in our attending these conferences. The mover of the resolution, Sir Phiroze Sethna, has told you how humiliating and how galling it is for Indians to attend these conferences when Europeans lead us in these conferences. I am unfortunately one of those people who had to undergo this humiliation before the international world. But fortunately for me, I represented a labour delegation the independence of which is recognised by the constitution of the Conference itself but the fact remains that the head of the delegation of the Government of India was sometimes a European. Whenever questions were asked us why a European represented the Government of India we had to say that India is not yet a self-governing country and Great Britain is still ruling over India. It is enough that we are a subject race in our own country and it is not necessary that Great Britain should insist that our subjection should be proclaimed to the international world by insisting that Europeans should lead our delegation. Sir Phiroze Sethna has told you why Indians should be appointed as leaders of the delegation. He has explained that the Indians who have attended these conferences are as good as Europeans that have the delegates and in many cases Indians were better. But there is only one point which makes our Government insist upon the Europeans as their leaders and that point is the desire of Great Britain to show to the world that India is not still an independent country. As far as I can see there is no other reason why Indians should not be appointed as leaders of the delegation. There is no other reason also why the Indian delegation should not be fully Indian.

I will tell you a little experience of mine. When I went to America I stayed at Washington for some time. On account of my desire to do sight-seeing I looked into a guide book and I found what was described as the Indian Department. I thought it was a department which concerns itself with the Indian students and began to make inquiries. I found that the department had nothing to do with Indians, but it had something to do with the American Indians or the Red Indians. I was very keenly interested in the Red Indians also. I went to the place where the department was located and went from room to room eager to find a real American Indian or a real Red Indian. But instead of them I found in every room a white Yankee. In sheer despair I asked one of them why I did not find a single American Indian or Red Indian and I was shown some films about the Red Indians. It was at that time that I felt "Here is a department called the 'Indian Department' intended for the American Indians and in that department I could not find a single American Indian or Red Indian." At that time I felt that these poor American Indians were only intended to feed the American white people

and their position in their own country was nothing. And simultaneously I asked myself what would be the feeling of a Czechoslovakian who visited the India Office in London. I felt he may be feeling the same thing, may feel pity, but may at the same time feel that we are not independent and self-governing as the other governments are but we are only intended to be a grazing ground for the English. I have experienced this feeling and, therefore, I have taken so much of your time. Ladies and gentlemen, it is unnecessary for me to make a long speech to secure your support for the resolution so ably moved by Sir Phiroze Sethna. (Applause).

Mr. Phadnis: Mr. President, and fellow-delegates: The fulfilment of national aspirations, it is said, lies in international status and that is why I regard this resolution as very important. The arguments that have been given in support of the previous resolution can be applied to this resolution also.

Indian Representation on International Bodies.
Mr. S. V. Phadnis.

A voice from the dais: He wants to move an amendment.

A voice from the hall: We want your amendment.

Another voice: Let us have your amendment.

Mr. Phadnis: The amendment runs like this. I want the following words to be added in the last but one line of the resolution after the word 'Indian':—'in' composition, preferably chosen from the elected members of the central legislature and led by an Indian'. This amendment, I am very glad to tell you, has been accepted by Sir Phiroze Sethna. I add this to the resolution simply because Government sometimes puts an apology that the resolutions that are moved from the platforms of political conferences, like the one we have been deliberating upon, are too vague and indefinite. Here is an amendment which provides for some choice, some indication and some definiteness, so that Government, if they want it, can take action. It is always constitutional practice, Sir, that you must, when a resolution is passed, attach some definiteness to it. When the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms were accepted, they were more accepted for the element of representative government, for the electorate and for the franchise than for the privileges and the rights they conferred upon us. Therefore, in keeping with the spirit of representative government I am moving my amendment. Let us tell Government "We want not any Tom, Dick or Harry, as they say of an Indian." They can easily find the very best people, but we want to tell them that we want on the international bodies people who have some representative character, members of the central legislature. They carry with them the representation of their constituencies and through their constituencies the representation of their country. That is why I put this amendment before you and I am very glad indeed that Sir Phiroze Sethna has accepted it.

Sir Phiroze: Mr. President, I ask you if the amendment is seconded.

The President: (after a pause) The amendment falls to the ground for lack of a seconder.

The resolution was then put to the vote and declared carried.

The Constitution Committee

RESOLUTION N. 3.

Rao Bahadur R. R. Kale moved:

The Constitution
Committee.
Rao Bahadur
R. R. Kale.

This Federation resolves that a Committee of the undermentioned persons, with power to add to their number, be constituted in order to formulate, as far as may be in co-operation with similar Committees of other political organisations in the country, a scheme of Constitutional advance towards Swaraj, and that the Committee do submit its report to the Council of the Federation as early as practicable.

Rao Bahadur Kale said:—

The names of persons who are to serve on the Committee will be read to you by the President sometime later. I only want you simply to listen to a few words in support of the resolution. I have been asked by the President to be very brief and the resolution does not want any speech, but wants action—action not only on the part of the members who are going to constitute this committee but action on the part of each of you delegates and sympathisers of this Liberal Federation. Because I do consider that this is a very important matter. It is a great opportunity that we, the members of the Liberal Federation, have got on this important occasion of formulating a scheme, and the Liberals, really speaking, are eminently fitted for such a task.

When the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms were announced and the present Government of India Act came into force it was stated by an Anglo-Indian paper in this city, the 'Times of India', I believe, that "any agitation outside the Council has no place now, because the Councils are there and you can agitate in the Councils whatever you want." You remember that it was at that time that owing to vital differences we had to separate ourselves from the premier national body to which we belonged and we formed ourselves into a Federation. And the wisdom of our course has been demonstrated, the step that we took has been justified, as you will see, by the present circumstances. You have been told this morning repeatedly by speaker after speaker that the reforms may have been worked in a spirit different from that in which they have been worked latterly. It is clear that the present bureaucracy, the

present Secretary of State and the present authorities of the Government of India and the Government at Home are determined to see that there is no real advance. As Mr. Chintamani told you,—and I share with him his fears—instead of any progress I am afraid there may be a retrograde step taken as a result of the Commission that has been appointed.

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Much has been said as to the reasons and motives that dominated the Secretary of State, Lord Birkenhead, in excluding Indians. I am not going to take you over all those reasons. But so far as I am personally concerned, I believe that the chief reason that must have induced the Secretary of State to exclude Indians is that seeing that reports of the Committees and Commissions that have been formulated since the Reforms, contained convincing arguments by the dissenting members, which (arguments) if they are made to appear to Parliament, it may be that the British Parliament may be influenced more or less by the recommendations that may be contained in the dissentient reports of Indian members of the Commission; the Secretary of State wanted to avoid any such contingency. He wanted so to arrange matters that a unanimous report would be available to those people in England who would certainly be guided in framing the Bill for the revision of the Indian constitution. That is, to my mind, the reason that has induced the Secretary of State to exclude Indians from participation in the framing of the report. That is the most important part of the whole affair, hence I consider it a blessing in disguise.

It is not wise statesmanship on the part of the Secretary of State, however, diplomatic it may be, but as I said it is a blessing in disguise. We must, therefore, utilise the opportunity in doing what the Secretary of State has prevented us from doing. Let us, therefore, not merely sit by passing negative resolutions of having nothing to do with the Commission. People say, "well, if you simply have nothing to do then the judgment will go by default." I, therefore, think that this resolution is very important in order to give an effective reply to Lord Birkenhead and other people of his stamp. We must set to work immediately. We must set up a Commission on which there will be members of the Liberal Party—I have got the names, and perhaps you have got the names as well—and there are other names which will be announced presently. I believe there will be not only Liberals and the names, I am sure, will convince you and everyone outside this assembly not only here but in England that they consist of persons who have had practical experience of the internal working of the executive council, ministers and members of the Assembly and the Councils. If a unanimous report of such persons, taken along with the reports of other Commissions—and you know by this time every political body has awakened to a consciousness of its duties in this behalf—then

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it will be a very effective reply to Lord Birkenhead and a real service to the country itself. It behoves us, therefore, to take a leading part in this connection. Let us set to work and let us produce a report.

Ours is a party which has for its policy something which is neither selfish nor visionary. You know there are political schools of thought, there are communal schools, or semi-communal or semi-political parties and there are ultra politicians or extremists, hence it is very necessary at this juncture for us to act together. First of all let us produce a report and the resolution says that we should take the assistance of other parties, hence I appeal to you, each individual member of this Federation, to speak to and influence all your friends, who may belong to other parties also. It is the duty of all of us. If your friend belongs to a different party, I am sure you can by exchange of thoughts come to some settlement, and in that way if you can produce in collaboration with other people and other committees a scheme which can be unanimously placed before Parliament, it will be to our lasting benefit. As our worthy President in his presidential address, -in the latter half of his address, -has thrown out certain very constructive suggestions, I am not going to take you through the work, the arduous task, of framing a scheme. I know it is a very difficult task and it will take a long time even to make a suggestion at this stage. I simply ask your attention to the latter part of the President's speech and you will be convinced that the trend of his thought is such that ought to be acceptable to every party, including our Mahomedan friends.

The important question in this connection will be about the communal electorates; whether there will be separate electorates or joint electorates. This is one of the vexed questions which has agitated us in the past and still continues to agitate the minds of the politicians in the future. But surely a *via media* can be found and if just as in 1916 we were able to produce a comprehensive scheme, it will with the help of the two communities become the joint scheme of the two great communities. I now have learnt from past experience, that what is called the Lucknow Pact or the Congress-League scheme which initiated the separation of the communal electorates has resulted in making the relations of the two communities more and more bitter. Therefore, learning and profiting by the past experience, I think you will realise that the time has come when we must take another step so that the friction between the two communities may be lessened and at the same time care may be taken to safeguard the interests of minorities. These are matters which will require no doubt careful consideration.

We shall have also to carry on propoganda in the interests of what are called the deprsssed classes. So far objections have come from two quarters, -some of the Mahomedans and a section

of the backward of depressed classes. We have heard and you have heard, I think, that these people are clamouring for a Commission consisting of Europeans as being in their interests rather than for a Commission of their fellow-countrymen. You have to note that these are the words and these are the resolutions of interested persons. If you move about in your own district and among your own peoples, and have a talk with members of the backward classes I do think that there is no such thing as we see in the papers which can be exploited by the Anglo-Indian Press. That work lies before you. I am sure we will be in a position to convince our own brethren that it is not in the hands of the foreign bureaucracy that their salvation lies but that it is in their and our own hands. Lack of education has created inequality in the Hindu Society and it is really, due to the policy of the British Rule enunciated about a hundred years ago, that education was not made compulsory. I mean there are so many things in respect of which there is need for an awakening. Things have to be explained in their proper light. You will be surprised to see that during the last six years when the reforms have been in operation we have been able to do a great deal in the interests of the backward people and in regard to their development. The awakening that has dawned over them has been due mainly to the introduction of primary education and the increase of facilities for educating the boys of the depressed classes. You can explain to the people that the British rule of 100 years has not been able to do that which we Indians under the reformed constitution have been able to achieve during the last six years. All of them will be better advised in following the lead of the educated people of the country. They are the people of your country and they have the interest and the welfare of the whole community at heart. If you convince them on these lines I think there will be no difficulty in inducing them to accept the lead given by all the political parties of the country for the same end. With these words, ladies and gentlemen, I commend this resolution to your acceptance.

Rai Bahadur Thakur Hanuman Singh, M. L. C., (Lucknow) seconded the resolution. He said: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I beg to second the resolution which has been so ably moved by Rao Bahadur Kale. To second a resolution of this nature I think no long speech is required because all that has to be said in favour of the resolution has been said by the mover. However, I will try to speak a few words with a view to give my wholehearted support to it. Brother delegates, you know that Lord Birkenhead, since his appointment as Secretary of State for India, has repeatedly been saying that Indians have not put forward their scheme formulating their demands in a constitutional manner. This sort of repeated observations of the Secretary of State seems to me to be due to his unwillingness to take the matter of constitutional reform of India in right earnest,

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Hanuman Singh

It cannot be believed, brother delegates, that when he made these remarks he was unaware of the resolution which our Federation passed in 1924, the resolution which was moved by Pandit Moti Lal Nehru in the Legislative Assembly and was adopted by it. These resolutions embodied our demands in full. Then there have always been discussions going on in the press in India and now and then in England too. If he is prepared to ignore all these facts then we must take upon ourselves, with a view to silence him for the future, the duty to frame a constitution and after it has been thoroughly considered by all the political parties in the country and after considering it in such a thorough manner that it may be acceptable to every one of those parties, forward the same to the Secretary of State so that in future he may have no opportunity, no reason and no justification to say that the Indians have not put forward their demands. We want for India dominion status, nothing less or short of it, because without attaining that status we cannot prosper, we cannot rise in the estimation of other nations, we cannot solve the difficulties under which we are labouring. We have got very able men who can draft the constitution which may be to a very great extent acceptable to all political parties. Our President has indicated the lines on which the constitution may be drafted and he has suggested that the Commonwealth of India Bill should be taken, to start with, as a basis and after incorporating such amendments and alternations as may be necessary, we can adopt it to be submitted to Parliament for its consideration. Brother delegates, I need not take your time any longer. With your permission I may say that this Federation has adopted a similar resolution in the past. But upto now no action has been taken on that resolution. We are very often complaining that resolutions passed in the Legislatures of the country are not heeded by the Government but our Council too has been guilty in this respect. I hope the Committee which is being appointed will take very great care to give its best and earliest attention to this most important work.

Mr. Faiz B. Tyabji (Bombay), in supporting the resolution said:

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen;

I beg to support the resolution that has been duly put before you and seconded and supported. It is necessary that we should put forward a constructive scheme of our demands in a properly formulated manner before the country and the British Government. The object of this resolution is self-evident and I do not propose to take up more of your time in supporting it as important considerations connected with the constitution will be placed before you tomorrow. I shall then beg of you to give me your attention for a few minutes. I ask you to give your assent to the resolution that is now before you

Mr. G. K. Gadgil [Poona] said: Mr. President, brother and sister delegates, ladies and gentlemen:—It is late and I propose to be very brief. I think you will agree with me that this is almost a self-evident proposition, a corollary to proposition No. 1, which you have adopted with such enthusiasm. To meet the charges that the Liberals are simply sitting on the fence, that they are adopting a merely negative attitude and that they will not say anything themselves but will keep the matter simply smouldering in the country, we want to pass this resolution and give effect to it. We do not want to be open to the charges I have just enumerated but we are going to place before the country something which the British Parliament—I mean both Houses—can look at and know exactly what India wants. The idea of having the Committees of the Legislatures and getting them in some way co-opted with the Simon Commission with the derogatory position which they would under those circumstances or under the present circumstances occupy, will be thus avoided and at the same time an effective answer will be furnished to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, who said, “we want to know from the Indians what they want, what should be the constitution of their country.” Where is it that the shoe pinches? It is the wearer who can say where it does. It is we who can say what the constitution should be. It is right, therefore, when we say that we do not want to submit to the Simon Commission what the country wants but that we shall place before the country for its adoption a scheme of constitutional development culminating in Swaraj or responsible Government. The word ‘Swaraj’ as printed in the resolution has been altered into ‘responsible Government’ and every Liberal here who has been in touch with the development of the significance that has been attached to the word ‘Swaraj’ at various times right upto complete independence outside the Empire as recently proclaimed will approve of the change. I have to say one thing only. It is the duty of every Liberal to carry this resolution and when he goes out of this hall to talk to his friends, whether extremists, moderates, non-co-operators, Swarajists or even the Responsivists to consider and agree to it. You can talk to them. Some of them are our friends in private life, they are our countrymen and not enemies. Tackle them nicely and prove it to them that it is an essential need of the country that a constitution should be framed with the unanimous voice of the nation and presented to Parliament. If we cannot do that, if we cannot reach an agreement in our own country, well, then what is said of us in both the Houses of Parliament, that India speaks with different voices and that it is impossible for Indians to unite on an agreed programme of self-government or responsible government by self-determination, will be proved to the world to be true. For, if you cannot agree there is no self-determination at all. Therefore, it is necessary, that everyone of the Liberals should strive his utmost to get an agreement on the question of our political constitution. I ask you to carry this resolution with acclamation. (Applause).

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Committee.
Mr. G. K.
Gadgil.

The President before putting the resolution to the vote read out the names of Members who constituted the Committee they were :

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru (Chairman).
 Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyer.
 Sir Chimanlal H. Setalvad.
 Sir Moropant Joshi.
 Babu Jotindra Nath Basu.
 Mr. Faiz B. Tyabji.
 M. C. Y. Chintamani.
 Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai.
 Rao Bahadur K. V. Brahma.
 Rao Bahadur V. M. Kelkar.
 Rao Bahadur R. R. Kale.
 Mr. C. M. Gandhi.
 Babu Bhagavati Saran Singh.
 Mr. Manu Subedar.
 Pandit Hardaya Nath Kunzru (Secretary)
 and Messrs Surendra Nath Varma and Vishwanath Prasad (Hon. Asstt. Secretaries).

The resolution was then put to the vote and declared carried.

The President.

I propose to take up the fourth resolution tomorrow. We are meeting this evening in this very hall in Subjects Committee. We have got a very important programme to get through. Important resolutions are coming for discussion in the Subjects Committee, and I ask all the members of the Liberal Federation, which will resolve itself into the Subjects Committee, to be present at the discussion of the Committee at 6 o'clock this evening in this very hall. Mean while our friends of the Reception Committee will be "At Home" to you in the quadrangle outside. The session is adjourned till 12 noon tomorrow.

THIRD DAYS' PROCEEDINGS.

The National Liberal Federation met again on Thursday afternoon, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru presiding.

Improvement
of the Masses.
Mr. G. K.
Devadhar.

Mr. G. K. Devadhar (Bombay) moved the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 4.

(1) This Federation affirms its conviction that the condition of the masses in India is deplorable owing to their poverty, low physical stamina and lack of education.

(2) The Federation strongly urges upon the Government and the people of India the urgent need for initiating adequate and suitable measures for the improvement of their moral, material and physical condition and for this purpose it earnestly recommends, (a) the promotion of free and compulsory education among boys and girls alike (b) the development of agriculture, (c) the expansion of the co-operative movement and other schemes for debt-redemption, (d) the initiation of schemes for rural re-constuction, (e) the improvement of village sanitation by systematic propaganda for spreading the knowledge of the laws of health, and (f) by introduction of organisations like the village panchayats.

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Mr. Devadhar said :

Mr. President, fellow-delegates, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I have been entrusted with the resolution which I have read out to you. I do not think it is possible for two opinions to exist on an important and vital question like this. Only yesterday we passed a very important resolution which defined the attitude of this Federation towards the Simon Commission and determined its character and at the same time justified rightly our attitude because of the slight that had been given to our self-respect and because of the denial of the principle of self-determination. Now I would ask you one question. Do the masses who form the bulk of our country fully participate in the feeling of resentment which we all feel on an occasion like this? I think we shall have to admit that they are not in a position to do so because they are very backward today in education and they have not been able enough to cultivate that wider outlook on national questions in order that they may come in line with the so-called educated classes and I believe with that object in view we have to devise a method of work by means of which we will be able to lift up the masses and improve their condition economically, morally, educationally and politically and the resolution lays down definite lines along which this task will have to be attempted. In my opinion this resolution is more important than many other resolutions which we have passed. It mentions the various causes for the backwardness and the deplorable condition of our masses and at the same time it suggests various remedies by means of which this position of theirs could be improved as far as possible. Well, in the first place we have to recognise that one of the greatest drawbacks in their position today is illiteracy or the slow spread of education among them. I have no time at

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my disposal to place before you an array of facts to show how the education of our masses is in a very sorry condition today. If you have time to open the pages of the Statistical Abstract of British India you will find the total number of institutions for education existing in the country today and also the number of pupils—both male and female—attending them. You will also find there that among this large number of institutions, numbering about two lakhs and the total number of students which is about 90 lakhs, you will find a very small percentage of institutions that are really in existence for the spread of primary education. I do not believe that number will exceed 25,000 today and if we see the number of students receiving this primary education, whatever its value, it is not really one-sixth of the total number of pupils attending the total number of educational institutions.

That will show you that so far as educational condition is concerned our masses are very backward. The total amount of money that is being spent in the country in all provinces on the score of education does not exceed 20 crores and out of this amount I think 16 crores is devoted on what may be called direct expenditure on education and out of this I do not believe more than 4½ lakhs is spent on primary education. Now this Federation recommends that Government in all the provinces ought to make education for the boys and girls of the poorer classes free and compulsory. Some of you may say that if education is made free it would add to taxation because it will reduce the income from fees. I think if you take into account the total income from fees it will not amount to three crores and if you make education free and compulsory I believe it will facilitate the work of improvement which is so dear and near to everybody. If you improve the masses educationally you will find it unnecessary to improve them morally. I do not say that they are immoral because of their illiteracy. I use the word 'moral' in the wider sense. We want them to have a wider outlook and possess a high measure of culture and public spirit. All this I believe will flow from the spread of education.

Then speaking about the economic or the material improvement of the masses, this resolution suggests three or four different measures. The first is the improvement of agriculture. Well, this is a very large subject and I do not wish to dwell on it at great length but even for the improvement of agriculture and for the improvement of the economic condition of the masses by means of improved agriculture, education is absolutely essential. Therefore, spread of education forms the basis of all means of amelioration. It is not merely the introduction of scientific methods or improved implements or artificial manures that will solve the true problem, but it is the spread of agricultural education also that is important and if you will look at the figures you will find that there are very few agricultural schools in the country.

Look at the vastness of the population that depends for its living on the production from land and look at the smallness of the number of schools that are intended for the boys of the agriculturists and then you will see there is a great need not only for the improvement of the methods of agriculture but there is a much greater need for the spread of knowledge of the modern scientific lines relating to the improvement of agriculture. Again you must have often heard a complaint that most of our agricultural classes are not only steeped in ignorance but are very poor and enormously indebted. Now this problem of indebtedness is a problem which is appalling in its nature and baffles the efforts of both Government and independent workers. One of the measures adopted by Government after a great deal of thought and realisation of the fact that several agrarian remedies adopted have not proved effective is the introduction of the movement of co-operation. This movement has been in existence for the last 22 years and I believe, notwithstanding the several defects that are seen creeping into it today on account of the large bulk of membership and the very wide area over which it has spread, it has done a considerable amount of good.

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It is not merely an institution which substitutes the money-lender or the Sowkar. It achieves far greater results. It is in its essential character not only an educational movement but it is something more. It is a movement which will lift up the masses morally and while bringing a considerable amount of economic benefit to the people it will improve them socially also. But this is not an occasion for me to deliver a lecture on the benefits and the good results of the co-operative movement. I can in passing say that in India to-day we have over 70 thousand co-operative institutions with more than 30 lakhs of membership and has at its command an amount of capital which easily exceeds 50 to 55 crores of rupees. Well, considering the great need and the requirements of the people in this direction the achievement which has been to the credit of this movement may not be very great, besides, there are several flaws I know and every Government is now trying to improve the movement by trying to appoint Committees for the purpose of going into the details of its working. The Madras Government had appointed a Committee on Co-operation and I am a member of that Committee working there for the last three months and I will be soon going to complete the work. I believe some such thing would have to be done in other Provinces also as this is the most effective direction in which the economic uplift of the masses can be effected. There are besides several other methods and the land mortgage bank is such a one by means of which the indebtedness of the masses will be reduced. Then there is a third way and that is this. We have got in villages some old industries which on account of competition have died out. For the purpose of rural

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reconstruction we shall have to adopt such measurers as would lead to the reviving some of the old paying industries and the introduction of such new industries as would be suitable to the places where they are introduced. Then the fourth measure that is suggested is the improvement of village sanitation by means of a systematic propaganda dealing with the knowledge of the laws of health—personal and public.

So far as the economic improvement, the educational improvement and the moral improvement of the masses is concerned this Federation has suggested some remedial methods. You must recognize that the physical condition of our masses is not quite satisfactory or is not what it ought to be. If you take into account the vital statistics you will probably find that the death rate per mile in rural districts is slightly lower than the death rate in urban areas. But do not be misled by the death rate. In the year 1918 when there was the terrible epidemic of influenza, it carried away nearly six millions of our population and a very large proportion of this heavy toll came from the rural districts. That is an indication of the fact the physical condition of our masses is not what it ought to be and that their stamina is very low. It is due to several causes.

In the first place, I do not believe they get a substantial meal or a meal which is full of nutrition. Secondly, they do not get a sufficient supply of the other necessaries which go to make life comfortable and happy. On that account the physical stamina of our people is very low. It is really the concern of the country at large as also of the Government that the stamina of the people must be improved. They should be made as strong as possible and they should be given every kind of facility for medical relief of the preventive as the curative type. Fortunately the preventive medical treatment has come to the forefront and if we are to spread knowledge of health laws and laws of hygienic conditions properly the condition of our people in the villages will be improved to a considerable extent. If you go into the villages and find the sources from which the villagers get their drinking water you will be surprised to see that they do not understand that the water which they drink must be pure. You may see sometimes that they are unable to get good water. It is not their inability alone, but it is probably their ignorance of the necessity of drinking pure water, that really stands in their way.

In this way, I believe, a large amount of work has got to be done, and this is only possible if we supply the necessary leadership for these people. We are always in the habit of saying that we have the village panchayat system, but if we go into the villages we do not see a thing like a panchayat but we always come across two or three factions, no two or three people agreeing together for good work. If this state of things is to be improved, you must try to take full advantage of the Panchayat

Act now in force and form your Panchayats or union of panchayats as they have in Madras and try to foster true leadership among the people themselves so that with the help of these facilities these leaders of the villages or leaders of the rural parts, will be able to promote their interests on lines of self-reliance and self-protection. For these services we have also to organise as far as possible institutions of the type of village panchayats. In Madras they have got a special department and a big officer is put in charge of the panchayat unions of which they have got something like 500 or more. We in the Bombay Presidency have got about 135. I am not sure whether they are working well; the need for leadership must be recognised and it must be created among these rural people. You must try to stimulate in them the desire for working for public good. If you do so you will easily create a fine organisation. You might start gymnastic clubs; you might start village libraries and form social clubs for them and similar other institutions by means of which leadership may be built amongst these people. For these reasons, ladies and gentlemen, I have to request you to give your whole-hearted support to this resolution.

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Devadhar.

Let me assure you again on the successful manner in which we carry on our work from day to day and from year to year with regard to the improvement of our brethren who are not really condemned to live in rural parts that our further progress will depend, so that the people can very cheerfully live in rural parts. Our national advance will to a large extent depend upon our effort in this direction. We have also to suggest one more thing. We often hear of complaints of the rural people being driven away from their village homesteads and being compelled to settle down in urban areas, in cities and industrial towns like Bombay, Calcutta, Nagpur and Madras and are being subject to the very bad conditions of life. In order to prevent that process which is at work today we can only do one thing. If we really want to arrest it successfully we should create such facilities and provide such comfortable life in villages for these people as would result in their adhesion to this purpose; several activities thereby would be removed the various impediments they have been experienced by them in the way of their educational and in their moral advance. When they are removed their life would have been made as happy, comfortable and as progressive as possible. We have, therefore, to uplift the masses by building up that leadership and by creating all these facilities in villages. In the villages themselves we have got to see that the people have enough money strength and capacity to organise their own life and that they stick to their villages, their fields and their homes without losing anything which they would have probably earned if they had gone to towns like Bombay, Nagpur or Madras.

This, in brief, is the substance of the resolution and I have no doubt that appreciating the spirit of the resolution that has been placed before you, you will accord it your whole-hearted support. (Applause).

Dr. P. N. Daruwala (Bombay), in seconding the resolution, said: Mr. President, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

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Dr. P. N.
Daruwala.

It gives me very great pleasure to second this resolution that has been proposed by Mr. Devadhar for your acceptance. To me the improvement of the masses is a matter of most vital concern. If the representative institution is to prosper in India it behoves us all especially the members of this great Indian National Liberal Federation, to see that its foundation is properly laid with the proper enlightenment and advance of the teeming millions of this vast continent. In order to do so we have to take into consideration the Government of India Act under which we are living. The Act that has been in existence since 1919 has introduced a system of government which has made the representatives of the people in the legislative councils responsible to their electorate and, therefore, it is the bounden duty of the electorate to see that the representatives fully discharge their trust and the Ministers that are appointed from amongst those representatives are the real trustees and repositories of the advance of the teeming millions of this vast continent. Unless and until these Ministers rise to the occasion and show their earnestness and devotion to the cause for which they are sent to do their duty the teeming millions of India will have to suffer from the lack of those disabilities which have been enumerated in this resolution.

Compulsory free education for boys and girls is the most important to the solution of this great and vast and difficult problem, to raise the status of India in the eyes of the rest of the world. The late Mr. Gokhale in his memorable address at Allahabad told us that India was to take her place in the councils of the world. He said: "I want the Indian people to be in their own country what other people are in theirs. I want our men and women to have opportunities without any distinction to grow the whole height of their stature unhampered by cramping and unnatural restrictions. I want India to take her place among the great nations of the world, politically, industrially, in religion, in literature, in science and in arts. I want all these and feel at the same time that the whole of these aspirations can, in essence, and in reality, be realised within this Empire." I ask you brothers and sisters to rouse yourselves from lethargy and try to bring up, the teeming masses of this vast country. It is no use passing resolutions and sleeping the rest of the time. Let us be up and doing. Let us revive those village punchayats and let us see that the Free and Compulsory Education Act is put into force with all vigour and acted up to with all the determination and with all the earnestness at our command and let those members of municipalities, taluka boards and village pachayats see to it that every child in the district, in the taluka and in the village has had due share of education, so that by means of that awakening a sense of self-respect will dawn upon the rising generation and then we, the whole of India, can rise

so that the great ideal which our great statesmen laid before us may come to be realised in as short a time as possible. I have very pleasure in seconding this resolution. (Applause).

Mr. R. S. Saterkar (Berar) in supporting the resolution in a Marathi speech said:

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:-The resolution which I have been asked to support has already been read out to you. I need not waste your time by reading it again. The resolution is as comprehensive as it is important. It is comprehensive in as much as it enumerates so many items of improvement. It is very important as it relates to the end of the activities of all the political parties in India; the end viz. the happiness of the people of our country. And it is for this reason that I attach far more importance to this resolution than any other and even than one relating to Self-government or Swaraj which is nothing but the means to achieve the ultimate goal viz. the happiness of the people in general. The various items of improvement enumerated in the resolution can conveniently be grouped into three main headings: viz. the *economic condition, education and sanitation.*

Now, Gentlemen, education being the foundation of every kind of improvement, I shall take up education first. It is a matter of disgrace that under the British administration of the last 150 years not more than 7 persons out of 100 should be able to read and write their names. How long should such miserable condition of education be allowed to continue? Now there can be no two opinions in regard to the proposition that elementary education must be free and universal. But then even if the people were to try in this respect in right earnest and sincerity, the work of making education free and compulsory is beyond the capacity of individual workers and beyond the limited resources and incomes of institutions like Local Boards and District Councils and Municipalities. I am of opinion that this problem cannot be satisfactorily solved unless the Government in every province earnestly comes forward and spends far more on education of the masses than at present. An excuse of want of sufficient funds is always put forth. If there be not sufficient funds, the Government should effect retrenchment in expenses on Military and Police and find out sufficient funds for education of the people. This does not, however, mean that no responsibility lies on the people, or that the people should keep silence. People should be prepared for being taxed even, if necessary, for education, as our progress in all other matters mainly depends on our progress in education. I, therefore, think that every leader in India to whatever party he may belong and every political worker in India, whatever creed he may belong to, must incessantly insist that the Indian children must receive free and compulsory education at an early date.

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Gentlemen, before I finish the measure of education, I draw your attention to the necessity of getting the stereo-typed curriculum followed in the schools. India being mainly an agricultural country, it is now high time that Indian students should get elementary education of agriculture through schools. I, therefore, hope that the leaders and Legislative Council members concerned in this respect will try to effect this salutary change in the curriculum as early as possible.

Gentlemen, as regards the economic condition of our people, I hardly need to remind you of the fact that our country is proverbially poor. As I already said our country is mainly an agricultural country. The wretched condition of an Indian agriculturist is too well known. Really speaking, the matters must be so improved that India does not depend solely on agriculture. Industries must be developed. Even as far as agriculture is concerned, the agriculturist must be helped in various ways and must be educated in methods of cultivation and of living. The Co-operative movement is the proper movement that does a great good to agriculturists; and it is, therefore, necessary that this movement should be widely spread. Here I may be allowed to say that the people in general look at this movement with some suspicion and they think these movements are more for convenience of the towns people than for the welfare of the agriculturists. It is very necessary that such an impression, though wrong, should at once be removed. The leaders and workers in the Co-operative movement should therefore, move from village to village, knock at the doors of agriculturists and assure them by means of films and lectures that the co-operative movement is really conducive to the welfare of agriculturists.

The resolution also recommends that sanitation should be promoted. Gentlemen, I leave to you to imagine the worst condition of sanitation through rural areas when you see that sanitation is far from satisfactory even in cities and municipal areas. I don't see any possibility of its improvement through rural areas unless Government spends something more on it. The branches of Red Cross Societies in some parts of India are doing splendid work of spreading the knowledge of the laws of health by means of cinema films. Such sort of systematic propaganda on greater scale is needed and will do ample good.

Medical relief, also, needs a great improvement. In rural areas the people have to suffer most because of the absence of medical relief. Even ordinary accidents and diseases in rural areas prove fatal because no medical help is available; it is absolutely necessary that dispensaries should be opened on a large scale in rural areas. Satisfactory improvement cannot be effected in this respect, also, unless the Government comes forward and gives ample grants to Municipalities, Local Boards and District Councils.

People living in towns and cities, having motorable roads at their disposal cannot possibly realise the difficulties of poor agriculturists living in villages. For about 5 months in a year even bullock carts cannot be taken over the *katcha* tracks. And even when they can be taken, there are numerous difficulties due to narrow and deep sunken ways. When cars cross each other, they have to wait for hours together. One car has to be taken back for about half a mile even. Sometimes quarrels and fights ensue. Even the bare necessities have been denied to poor village agriculturists from whom Government derives ample revenue. Agriculturists cannot get the advantages of easy and good markets and hence they lose in prices for their goods. To improve this sad condition of the *katcha* tracks is undoubtedly beyond the poor resources of the Local Boards and District Councils. Hereby I do not mean that Local Boards and District Councils do not owe their duty to the people and should not exert in this respect. They must exert and as Berar is concerned, I assure you, gentlemen, that District Councils are doing their best in this respect. But their level best cannot satisfy the people's demand and hence the aid of all powerful Government is needed. The economic condition of agriculturists cannot possibly be improved in its entirety unless communications are developed on large scale.

Ladies and Gentlemen, only a few words more and I close. Introduction of the village Panchayats is the most essential measure for the uplift of the masses as these are the institutions where the masses will get to learn the first lessons of self-government. We have to admit that the progress in this respect is far from satisfactory. It may further be said that after the introduction of village Panchayat Acts it was the duty of the people and their leaders to take full advantage of the Act and to establish Panchayats on a very big scale. But I request you to bear in mind that we must take things as they are and not as they ought to be. From an experience on the working of Akola people in this respect, I am of opinion that under the present mentality and illiteracy of the masses, a satisfactory advance in this respect is not possible for some more years, unless the District Magistrates and other Government executive officers under them seriously and heartily come, or are made to come, to the actual help of District Councils and other political workers in the establishment of Village Panchayats.

Gentlemen, with these few words I heartily support the resolution and pray it may be carried unanimously.

The resolution was then put to vote and carried unanimously.

The President then in calling on Mr. Faiz B. Tyabji to move the next resolution said: I do not propose to make any speech at this stage but I would ask your earnest attention to this particular matter of intercommunal unity. If you can help in the

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creation of a proper atmosphere in regard to communal unity I think even if you fail in other respects, you will have achieved a great success in this effort.

RESOLUTION No. 5.
Inter-Communal Unity.

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Unity.

Mr. Faiz B.
Tyabji.

Mr. Faiz B. Tyabji said:-

Mr. President, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

The resolution which I have to present for your acceptance runs as follows:-

- (a) This Federation places on record its deep conviction that in the interest of the general progress of the country and in particular, for the early attainment by India of responsible government; it is of paramount importance that unfortunate differences of a communal character should be composed; and in order to remove this serious menace to the progress of the country, this Federation calls upon all its members to promote and actively support every movement calculated to bring about a better understanding between the Hindus and the Muslims and to place the relations of the two communities upon an honourable footing of toleration in religious matters and on a basis of unity in political matters by the just representation of the minorities in the Legislatures and with due regard to efficiency in the public services of the country.
- (b) This Federation cordially appreciates the earnestness of the distinguished Muslim leaders who have put forward the scheme for the settlement of outstanding differences between the Hindu and Muslim communities and suggests that various items of the proposed settlement should be discussed at an early date by duly elected representatives of the communities in a spirit of such genuine co-operation as will lead to complete agreement.
- (c) This Federation affirms that national patriotism should be the foundations of representative institutions and that such patriotism can best be developed by a system of joint electorates qualified by a reservation of seats for important minorities until such time as it may be possible with the good will of the communities concerned to dispense with the reservation of seats.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

You will perhaps on a first hearing of the resolution think that it deals with a great number of subjects and that it may be difficult to put them all under one head, but I trust if you give the matter a second thought you will see that there are one or two main considerations on which the resolution is based. I think I may put its purport before you in a single short sentence; the resolution is a plea for a constitution for India based on unity amongst the various communities forming India; it is a constitution based on unification. For that purpose the resolution asks that we should begin by religious toleration. It is most deplorable that religion, the object of which is the highest good of humanity as a whole, such good as transcends the mere physical welfare of individual human beings - that religion which is based on entirely altruistic and self-denying principles that religious proselytism whose only object ought to be to place before our brethren those truths which we consider of paramount importance, that religion should be the means by which we are divided among ourselves and in the name of which we are causing loss, harm and disunion among ourselves. That deplorable circumstance is present in India into such a form, that we cannot shut our eyes to it and no one can meet in such a gathering as this without first expressing a fervent hope of being able to compose those differences.

All this is so obvious that it is unnecessary to take up your time in dwelling on the religious differences, and on the desirability of composing those differences. I, therefore, immediately proceed to the next step which is more closely associated with our present object namely political unity. If we start with a basis of religious toleration so that the followers of different religions in India may with self respect and with the respect of their brethren around them, exercise their own religious convictions, then we can go on to consider what is needed for our political unification. Unification is necessary for our political regeneration. If our energies are spent in internecine troubles, we cannot hope to advance. Disunion puts us in the position of a body that spends its physical energy in internal combustion instead of utilizing that energy for moving forward-moving in the direction in which it ought to move. That energy which we as a body ought to employ for the purpose of moving towards the goal which we have before us, is wasted in quarrelling and doing harm to each other. We thus make ourselves no better than an inert mass without any energy of its own, an inert mass that is a victim to every external force that may drive it in directions that force may desire. We ourselves become incapable of directing our movements in the direction in which we desire to move, but we are swayed by outside forces. So our first effort should be to conserve

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our energies for a common purpose instead of using them one against the other neutralising them, and making ourselves a dead inert body.

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What then should be the purpose and aim of our political unity. I cannot find it necessary at this stage to say that the goal we have to attain is self-government. For that purpose we should take as our first step the obtaining of that which will give to the whole country and to every portion of the population of India a voice in the Government, an interest in seeing that the Government is as it ought to be, and a voice in the concerns which are to lead to the advancement of every individual of the country in every direction. For that purpose we have to devise means by which representative institutions should be so formulated that the governing body, the legislative body and the serving body of our country represents every portion of the vast numbers of the population of India. It is for that purpose that we have to devise some means of seeing that the minorities in our population are represented, that there are people who are in every way qualified for seeing eye to eye with the people of every portion of our population and it is for that purpose that we have to see that the minorities are represented in the services and in a government of a country. Therefore, one portion of our resolution lays down that having as our objective political unity of the country we can attain is only if we provide that the Government of this country is representative in every sense and that it is not representative unless the minorities are also adequately and justly represented. At the same time our experience has shown us that the methods we employed in the past for the purpose of ensuring adequate and just representation have not had the beneficent effect that we hoped they would have.

We have found that an entire separation of the electorates has been the means of bringing about a further divergence of views. Experience teaches us that we ought to correct that portion of the constitution of India. You will have observed that the meeting of the Indian National Congress at Madras has passed a resolution on the question with which we are dealing and the delegates of the Congress have also resolved that future elections should be on the basis of common electorates but that minorities should be protected by the reservation of a certain number of seats. It may be that the decisions already arrived at as the result of discussions between members of various communities and as expressed in the Congress resolutions, have settled some of the points which were outstanding at the time when our resolution was drafted. I refer in particular to the part marked (b) of our resolution. But if so, it is all for the better. Our resolution is in the most general terms and touches only the broadest aspects, and you will be glad to observe that our resolution proceeds on the same basis as

that passed by the Congress. We have found that the best way of serving the purpose which I have tried to indicate to you, of a truly representative legislature is to have a certain number of seats reserved for the minority communities which may otherwise be unrepresented. Our resolution refers to a just representation of the minorities in the legislatures as well as in the public services of the country. And to that matter I wish to draw your attention for a short while.

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The services of the country, the public services, if they consist of servants of India and not its masters, must be such that they are efficient to render these services which the whole country needs. And if we find that there are, as unfortunately we do, differences in the needs and requirements of the people, differences in the traditions and the viewpoints of various portions of our country, territorial or otherwise, it is necessary that our services should be so manned that they are efficient, qualified, capable and desirous of serving every portion of the country. And it is for that purpose that it is necessary that the services should also be representative. I entirely dissociate myself from any arguments based on the consideration that the services are something like loaves and fishes and they have to be divided and there is to be an equality of division between the various communities. I entirely disassociate myself from such arguments and I ask you, ladies and gentlemen, to dissociate ourselves from that consideration, when considering the constitution that India should have. I do not say, I should be false to the actualities of life if I said, that this consideration can never come in. But I do strongly and emphatically put before you and through you to the country that considering the present circumstances of the country you ought to decide how its services can be manned so as to ensure the utmost efficiency. (Applause). And because it is necessary that the services of the country should be the most efficient I wish you to realise that the services cannot be efficient if they are not representative or if our services are from one community to the exclusion of another. I wish you to consider the members of the services as servants of the country. In what way will you select them so that you get servants who will serve your country best and most efficiently? For that purpose and from that point of view I say that it is necessary that your services should include members of all the communities and that there should be no fear that the needs of one community or another will not be understood or will not be properly served because there are no members of that community amongst the governing—I beg your pardon—I mean the serving body of the country. It is unfortunate that while we are considering this question there does come in the question of loaves and fishes. Put aside for a moment this consideration first as you would put aside the claims of any individual who came forward and said,

that he wanted loaves and fishes as an argument for being selected.

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Remember—whether you are in a minority or in a majority—you cannot advance unless every portion of the country advances. You can no more expect the whole country to progress if you neglect the needs and wants of the minority or of the majority than you can expect your body to be strong if you neglect one part or number of it—if you exercise only your right eye and neglect your left eye. You must have such a scheme of life that every portion of your body becomes strong and efficient and every portion of your body is exercised and gets that work which is necessary in order that it may develop and grow and be strong and efficient. What is true of the physical body is true of the body politic. What is true of the members or parts of our body, is true of the members of the communities that constitute the whole of the country. It is for that reason gentlemen, that I press on you, to put aside all other considerations and to see in what way the whole country can advance and in what way it can be served best, so that no portion of the country is allowed to suffer from atrophy, is allowed to be neglected and to remain backward and thereby prevent the progress of the whole country.

We hope—and our resolution gives indication of that hope that the time may come when the reservation of seats and provisions for the special representation of the minority communities in the services may be unnecessary—when these safeguards as a part of our constitution may be safely omitted. What will lead to that? That will come about when every majority community and every member of each community recognises that in order that the whole country may have its needs served, we must have people in the legislatures as well as the services who are able to appreciate and provide for the needs of every particular member of the community, when our electors are careful and wise and unselfish in the selection of representatives in the legislatures and the Government equally careful and wise in the selection of officers for the public services so that neither the electors nor the members of the Government forget in providing for their own needs, their own requirements and their own benefits the needs requirements and benefits of others whether of the minorities or of the majorities then it will be unnecessary to have reservations of seats and services or rather such provisions will become a dead letter. For the reservation of seats is necessary only when the needs of a particular community are not attended to by those who belong to other communities when it is found that the majority does not attend to what are the requirements of the minority. We look forward to the time of a general awakening to a sense of public interests, and the duty on the part of the electors to look to the general welfare of the whole of the country—when every person thinks of every other person and the needs of all are served by each.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in short the resolution that is before you, is a resolution for a unity constitution. It is a resolution based on the best and highest expectations and the highest desires for the advance of the country. It is a resolution that looks to every portion of the communities forming India and not to one to the neglect of the other. Ladies and gentlemen, I hope that when the time comes you will make up your minds to follow the lead that it gives and the appeal that it makes to you to do everything in your power to bring about complete unity by religious toleration as well as by political altruism. (Applause.)

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Lala Kesho Ram, M.L.C., (Punjab,) seconding the resolution said:—Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, I suppose you have now had a very learned discourse on Hindu-Mahomedan unity. Since I come from the Punjab and from Amritsar I would like to place before you facts as they actually stand in that city or in that province because in that city and in that province you had the beginning of great things. It is there that in 1910 we had the greatest sacrifice ever made in India and I think it is due to that sacrifice that we had what are called the Reforms and it is since then that the Hindu-Mahomedan unity had its rise. It is at Amritsar that the Hindus took water from Mahomedans and Mahomedans from Hindus and treated each other as brothers. I suppose it was that that made the government feel that these things ought not to continue for long. And the time came and in 1923 some how or other they managed it—I don't know, I can't say positively whether I am allowed to say in this hall who managed it. Anyhow things were managed and there was an actual riot in 1923. The cause, as you know, is not religious, as the mover of this resolution thinks. More or less it is the Reforms and the separate electorates that are mainly responsible for the Hindu-Mahomedan tension. And we the members of the Councils or of local bodies are mainly responsible for these disturbances. Because when there is a separate electorate, a Hindu candidate must prove to his community that he is the most bigotted Hindu, and a Mahomedan must prove to his community that he is the most bigotted Mahomedan, that he will even die for his community. So will I have to prove at the time of the elections. It is for that reason that we people worked for three years together and you know when there is a disturbance near by our elections—as we had it in 1923 and the elections were coming on, the Council elections—all those candidates who were standing for those elections actually helped rather than minimise the disturbances.

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Ladies and gentlemen, you have now to think how best we can solve this problem. Of course, this resolution is drafted in the city of Bombay where I suppose they do not fully realise what we up in the Punjab do. You people read what we have actually done. We are told that we are not to fight. Of course

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we do not like to fight. But some how or other we are made to fight. (Laughter). I am told that it is not the question of Reforms and offices, but I am sorry to say that it is. It is all the question of Reforms and offices, or to put it bluntly, it is a question of posts and votes. That is all. You solve the whole problem of Hindu-Mahomedan unity, if you solve this problem.

Now, the question is that we Hindus are in a minority in the Punjab and the Mahomedans are in a majority. The Mahomedans are 55 per cent; the Sikhs are 12 per cent; and the rest are Hindus. We are in a minority and we have given the majority community all concessions. They govern us and the question is whether they have rightly governed us. Is not Sir Fazli Hussein responsible to tell the province and the country that they have rightly behaved as a majority community? Take any other province where the Hindus are in a majority. I suppose Mr. Chintamani was once a Minister and I suppose he will be able to render a good account of himself and say that the minority community has nothing to complain against him. We, in the Punjab,—you may have heard a lot about it—have everything to complain against the majority community there. We had no justice done to us. Of course I am here to support this resolution, (laughter) and I am placing before you the facts and figures of both sides so that we may be in a position to come to a compromise. (Turning to the President), As a lawyer, Sir, you know that we have to tell our clients that these are their weak points and these are their strong points and so I like to tell this house...(laughter).

We are told times out of number that the Mahomedans have no faith, no reliance and no confidence in a Hindu majority. But I say "what you want we are prepared to give, but give us this assurance that this is the last thing that you want. Let this be the final thing. If you want it we are prepared to give it. We will let you govern us, (as you are governing us in the Punjab) in U. P, Assam, Madras and everywhere. We will give you this concession everywhere, but then, you should render an account of yourselves. You are responsible to us. You must know that you also owe a duty to us. "Some are under the impression that it is only the Hindus who are out for Swaraj and that there is going to be a Hindu Swaraj. We are prepared to tell you "We are prepared to have a Muslim Raj" we are prepared to give them all. The questions of music before mosque was unknown 8 years ago. It is now one of the chief causes of trouble, I am told, I am telling you not with a view to speak against this resolution (laughter). I am going to support this resolution (continued laughter). What I wanted to tell this house I am saying so that you may know what the actual facts are and the means by which we have been able to solve them.

We, in Amritsar, thought that we were going to have another disturbance this year in September, but since the government was not very keen and the people were not very much prepared for it, we thought better. We thought we should go forward and have a sort of "Ithad," committee or a unity committee. I happened to be the Secretary of the committee. We brought round the members of the municipality. We went round and told all those persons who were actually our canvassers that we were not going to back them up and that we were not going to fight. They really understood that there was none to back them up, none to support them and none to finance them. And actually they did not fight.

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This resolution is only calling upon certain individuals and telling them that in the near future—this year or the next year or I don't know when, this resolution has got that pious wish that one day—they will call a meeting of the elected members. How they are going to be elected, when they are going to be elected and who is going to elect them this Resolution is silent—the resolution as it stands. I raised this question in the Subjects Committee but the President wanted me to second this resolution. It is discipline pure and simple, and one ought to carry out orders and I am here now to carry out orders (laughter).

The mover of this resolution and, I suppose, those who are responsible for drafting it think that reservation of seats is not very important because they want to dispense with the reservation of seats. We are a minority community in the Punjab and we are prepared to dispense with the reservation of seats. We don't want reservation. Alright, let there be a joint electorate. Let all Mahommedans get in. When we are prepared to do that why don't they do so in other provinces? But they want a majority where they are in a majority and a substantial minority where they are in very great minority. That is their demand. If you want to accede to that demand, I would request this house to accede to that demand. Let them have it. You had better go and tell the people, however illogical and illegal it may be, that it is done for national good and for Swaraj. For the Swaraj that we might some day get we might give in. Let them have all that they want but get an assurance from them once and for all—and I hope Mr. Tyabji will give us that assurance on behalf of other presidencies—that this is their demand and that this is the final thing that they want. And if this is all, I for one, for the Punjab (applause)—I have not consulted the other members of the Council of course (laughter)—I can assure you that I will be able to persuade them to believe in nationalism. I know that if I commit myself my friends in the Council and the Hindus will agree and say that they are prepared to agree. But let this be the final thing and we for one, are prepared to agree. I hope, ladies and gentlemen, you will agree to this proposal for the present and let us see what comes next. (laughter and applause.)

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Rai Bahadur
Thakur Hanuman
Singh.

Rai Bahadur Thakur Hanuman Singh, M. L. C., (U. P.), speaking in support of the resolution, said: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,—The resolution which I am going to support is such as would, if adopted by this Federation, be of very great use to the progress of the country at large and will be greatly helpful in bringing about union between different communities inhabiting the country. Fellow delegates, I am not going to deliver a speech in support of the resolution as has been delivered by my friend from the Punjab, who has preceded me. We have assembled here to devise means for union amongst ourselves and not to say things which instead of bringing about union might cause further split. Fellow-delegates, in this resolution there are three points to be considered. One is the joint electorate, the other is the share of different communities in the State services and the third is religious differences between the Hindus and the Mohemadans. As regards the third question, I have to say that I am not going to speak at any length on it, or in the way in which our fellow-delegate from the Punjab has spoken. This question is to be considered by a conference which will meet hereafter. I trust and believe that a representative conference as is proposed in this resolution will be better qualified to take up different points and after discussion and analysis and thoroughly considering the situation will come to some suitable compromise which may be acceptable not to one community but to all communities to which that decision may concern.

Now I desire to take up the general question of unity between different communities. The chief factor of which, and which always looms large, is the due share of the minorities in the services of the State. Though the share in the State services is a matter of trifling importance yet it cannot be ignored because it has come to occupy too prominent a place to dislodge it from which has become an insuperable task. In course of time no doubt the advocates of large share in the service will lose their zest and then the matter will cool down. It goes without saying and it is the considered opinion of Indians as well as foreigners, that without unity amongst ourselves we cannot expect to attain full Swaraj and it also goes without saying that without Swaraj we cannot prosper and we cannot command the same respect, privileges and status as Indians we are entitled to claim and deserve. Here I may be permitted to quote that well-known poet Tulsidas that where there is unity there is prosperity and where there is disunion there is misery. Brother delegates, we annually assemble to consider political questions concerning our country but upto now we have not been able to discover means which may be effective in bringing about goodwill and concord amongst ourselves. I think it ought to be the first business of every political organisation to do what might have the effect of removing dissension and bringing about union and good understanding. If we at this juncture fail to do something

effective to remove the difficulties which are obstructing our path towards Swaraj then any amount of after consideration or repentance of our Commission will not avail us in any way. Unless we learn the lesson and adopt the principle that we should be Indians first and Hindus and Musalmans afterwards we cannot solve the political question which is staring us in the face. Had their been, fellow delegates, unity amongst us then Lord Birkenhead and other Lords and politicians of his way of thinking would not have interpreted Section 84-A of the Government of India Act 1919 in the way they have interpreted it and sent to our country a Commission which is purely Parliamentary and from which we have been totally excluded. I believe and trust that when that Section was framed and passed it was not the intention or purpose of the Legislators that no Indian would be allowed to take a seat in the Commission which would be sent to this country for enquiry and report on the political advancement. We have suffered and suffered immensely from our internecine dissensions, but even then we have not taken a lesson. If you cast a look on the history of Hindus, I mean towards the latter part of the Hindu period, and the history of the Muhammadan period then you will come to know that our downfall and the downfall of the Muhammadans were due to Civil Wars and jealousy amongst the different communities and different peoples inhabiting this vast country. On this occasion I desire to say that the Government in England and in India have not correctly gauged our feelings. They in their heart of hearts must have thought when appointing the Simon Commission that the Musalmans of India would in a body co-operate with the Commission. I hope you will give credit to them that they have not bartered the interests of their country but like true patriots have boldly stood up to retaliate the insult which has been offered to every one of us. They have stood with all those who think that India has been insulted by the Government. Now, Gentlemen, are we to deny the Musalmans or other minor communities their due share in the services of the country and carry on the tug of war which is going on for a long time and is jeopardising the cause of the country or are we to allow better sense to prevail with us? We are surely to be benefited in numerous ways with the advent of Swaraj. With the advantages and facilities which we will have in progress, are we to think of these minor matters which certainly matter little when we compare the advantage, when we think of the prosperity and when we think of the contentment of the people after the attainment of Swaraj. Gentlemen, if we give them their due share, certainly all those communities who are either in the majority or who, on account of their superior education or superior position, have been able to get hold of more offices in the Government service than their numerical strength allowed them, and if a number of these offices are allowed to go to these communities whose due it was to hold them, then I would say

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they will not suffer much. We must remember that when India will be self-governing most of the offices which are in the hands of the Europeans will be in the hands of Indians. The majority communities should think that if they lose in one way they will gain in another. And the salaries which will be paid to the members of the minority communities will remain in our country which will increase our prosperity. Fellow delegates, it is natural that when there are better prospects all those who are behind or in backward condition always try to go to the front to have a big share of what is to come. So a stern agitation among the minority communities is not unnatural but, if you give them their share, I think they will feel contented and instead of discord and distrust there will be confidence between one community and the other. Trust begets trust which is an adage which cannot be gainsaid.

In conclusion, I would say that if we put our heart into the question of the solution of political problem and especially of unity and good will amongst the different classes of our countrymen it will not be too difficult to solve, provided we act upon the principle of give and take and provided we believe that unless we can bring united pressure upon a very powerful government which is bent upon delaying the advance of Swaraj to our country we cannot hope to gain the end in view. We are helpless in other ways, but we can show to Government if we are so inclined, a united front, and there can be no Government on the face of the earth which can stand against the united front of a country, but what to say of a country so big as India!

Before I close I desire to take up in brief the most important question of joint electorate. Voluminous literature can be collected on this vexed question of separate and joint electorates. The consensus of opinion as found is in favour of joint electorates. Amongst the Muslims there are two sets of opinions. One which predominantly supports the separate electorates and can only agree to joint electorates if the majority communities will by way of price concede to the Muslims the following demands viz:

Introduction of Reforms in the North-West Frontier Provinces and the Province of Baluchistan and formation of Sind as a separate Province. These concessions can very easily be made and had when the atmosphere is allowed to cool down and better relations are brought to exist. Mutual confidence when established will achieve what is fair and equitable. Let us first of all sink our differences and strive hard with united action to gain our common goal and when we achieve it then sit down to divide between ourselves the gains.

With a view to better prospects in the electioneering campaigns the members in different legislatures speak and interpellate in a manner which always lead to renewed tension between the two major communities which up till now has resulted in no special good to one or the other community. With these few remarks I support the resolution. (Applause.)

Mr. R. H. Kelkar (Poona), speaking in further support of the resolution, said: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen:

The resolution that is before you is really speaking the resolution of resolutions. We have on our agenda several questions relating to the demand of self-government by India, but before we attain our goal it is necessary to do several things. If we have to do these several things at any rate we ought to remove the impediments that are in our way and the resolution that is before us is of the utmost importance from that point of view. If self-government is our goal, well, then, we ought to proceed from a national point of view and if communal differences are the order of the day, well, then, how can we find time or energy or money even for the attainment of the several things that we ought to attain. It is really very sad that with the Reforms our communal differences have also increased, as was remarked the other day and it is very sad for me to say that I come from that part of the country where communal differences have been the order of the day, and I am connected with it in two capacities. I am the President of the Hindu Sabha and I am also engaged professionally to conduct cases of riots. Well, when I find that so much time and energy and money are being wasted for conduct of these cases, besides the moral depravity that I see from day to day in witnesses who come with a particular story before the Court, I often thought how different it would be if we were to give up this line of conduct altogether. And it is from that point of view that I say that the resolution is the most important one. Probably after fighting both the communities have now come to a position which may be described in the words of a Sanscrit poet which means that after they have broken each other's heads they are now in a position to come to a reconciliation, and I am glad to say that that is the feeling which, at any rate in my part of the Province, people have come to realise. It is, therefore, that we have said that these people ought now to see their way to settle their differences and in settling the differences it is all the more necessary that we should always remember the principle, Do unto others as you would be done by.

In matters of religion toleration should be our watchword both toleration and self-respect. If we want our respect to be respected by others certainly we ought to know and to realise the necessity of respecting the feelings of others. It is from that point of view that we ought to approach the question both as regards religious differences and political differences. And when we understand the spirit that underlies the first paragraph of our resolution I think we have gained much and very little remains to be done.

Happily even in the Congress the same line has been taken. Although there was much debate they all have come to a

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unanimous conclusion and let us hope that the country will also accept the principle embodied in that resolution.

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Kelkar.**

On the the question of joint electorates although the representation of the minorities was hailed some time ago we have seen how disastrous it has been and the way suggested by us is only by way of an improvement upon that and we say let us try this experiment because that at any rate would bring the two communities together and if we find that we can pull on in this way there is no reason why we should not dispense with it altogether.

With regard to the second paragraph we have really to thank the Mahomedan leaders that they proposed several ways of arriving at a settlement and they came forward to advise their co-religionists to come to terms with their Hindu brethren.

If the country accepts this resolution then I should say that the goal of self-government will be reached at no distant date. With these few remarks I commend the resolution to your acceptance.

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**Mr. Prakash
Narayan Sapru.**

Mr. Prakash Narayan Sapru (U. P.) in further supporting the resolution said: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

Yesterday you passed a resolution affirming your definite intention not to have anything to do with the Statutory Commission. You also passed a resolution appointing a committee to draw up a scheme of responsible government for your country. The resolution which you are asked to pass to day only implements those resolutions for it seems to me that without national unity, without Hindu-Moslem unity, it will be impossible to achieve responsible government. Hindu-Moslem unity is the foundation upon which you must build up the structure of your self-government. There is no denying the fact that the communal situation in the country is of a very grave character and if we were to analyse the causes of this communal trouble we should find if we were honest that we of the educated classes are to a certain extent responsible for this present communal tension. Now I believe that Lord Morley has in one place in his book "Compromise" said that what matters in any country is the attitude of the extraordinary man. We are the extraordinary men in this country, we the educated classes, and it is our duty to lead the masses and to point out to them the right way. I am afraid we have not realised our moral responsibility in this matter. We have not done our duty by the masses and it is time for us to wake up to the realities of the situation. For if the communal situation is allowed to drift as it has been drifting, we shall be faced in this country with an Ulster and it will be a far more formidable Ulster than the Irish Ulster because it will not be a localised Ulster. It seems to me that we of the majority community have got a special responsibility in this matter. It is for us to allay the apprehensions of the minority communities and to do

everything in our power to assure them that the swaraj we are working for is Indian raj, a Hindu-Muslim-Christian raj, and not a Hindu raj, Muslim raj or a Christian Raj. Therefore, you will agree with me that it is absolutely necessary for you to put your house in order and the resolution is asking you to do something which is your duty. The resolution says that you must inculcate the lesson of religious toleration. It is a strange irony of fate that we in this country should be relearning religious toleration—we who always in the past practised religious toleration. I was reading the other day Prof. Rapson's book on Ancient India and he paid a great compliment to both Hindus and Mahomedans and he said we were the most religiously tolerant people. It is a strange irony of fate that in this twentieth century we should be presenting a spectacle of a divided house, fighting for what? Music before Mosques and cow slaughter. We are entering a modern world and we cannot, as our president remarked the other day, cherish the antiquated memories of a bygone age.

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The second thing that this resolution says is that you must give due and adequate protection to your minorities. Now, that I submit is not an unreasonable demand on the part of the minorities, and in the third part of our resolution we express our appreciation of the earnest efforts of the nationalists among the Mahomedans for the bold stand which men like Dr. Ansari, Mr. Jinnah and Sir Ali Imam have made for joint electorates. It was very gratifying to me as a nationalist to find that at the Indian National Congress at Madras a settlement was arrived at yesterday on this question and to that settlement such distinguished leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha movement as Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and several others were parties. It is a hopeful sign of the times. Personally speaking I find myself in absolute and entire agreement with the Delhi proposals and I would ask you to approach them from the national point of view. I submit that no sacrifice will be too great for national self-government. If we are to achieve national self-government it will be only through a series of compromises. We cannot at this stage of our national evolution afford to be constitutional purists. You may object to this or that item of the Delhi programme but I would ask you not to dissect that scheme in a critical spirit. If you view the whole problem in a broad and tolerant spirit of mutual accommodation it will enable you to establish friendly relations between the two communities for ever in the country. And here let me again emphasise that we as the majority community have got a special responsibility in this matter. We must give every possible support to the nationalist Mahomedans. We must try and give a nationalist colour to Moslem politics and it is only by giving support to the nationalists among Mahomedans that you will be able to combat this spirit of communalism which is rampant in the country to day.

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In the last part of the resolution we say that national patriotism which is the foundation of all representative institutions will be best developed by a system of joint electorates. Now it seems to me that a nation in order to be free must make a passion of freedom and if you want to develop that passion for freedom you must see to it that the responsible government that you build up in this country is based on sound foundations. I recognise that the matter of separate electorates is a matter essentially for the Mahomedans to decide. You should make it the pivot, as the president remarked the other day of any agreement between the Mahomedans and the Hindus. At the same time it seems to me that communal representation and responsible government represent conflicting ideals and you cannot build up a real system of responsible government with communal representation and I will tell you why. At present the Government in this country is responsible to the Secretary of State which is one common factor. You cannot have divided loyalty, divided allegiance, in any state. You cannot have one set of people looking up to one class as their masters and another set of people looking up to another class. Another reason is, and I will be frank about it, that experience has shown that communal representation encourages communalism, it gives encouragement to communal leaders. There is no place in this system of electorates for moderate men and, therefore, it is necessary that we should carry on with the support and co-operation of the nationalist Mahomedans a propaganda in favour of joint electorates. I recognise that so long as Muslim opinion is not ripe for this change you cannot abolish separate representation and so far as that is concerned you will see that the resolution does not commit you to the abolition of communal representation immediately. All that it says is national patriotism will be best promoted by a system of joint representation.

For these reasons Sir, I support this resolution.

Mr. Madan Mohan Raina (U. P.) further supported the resolution in Urdu.

Mr. Jaffer
Hajeebhoy.

Mr Jaffer Hajeebhoy (Bombay), in further supporting the resolution said:

A famous English historian, writing on the expansion of British Empire, lays stress on the fact that Great Britain may have lost more land and sea battles than what the school histories record, but the fact remains that they have never been won in a diplomatic war. This then, ladies and gentlemen is the race you have to win your freedom from. Even if you were united this great race of Empire builders and holders would fight you tooth and nail before they gave you an iota of what they would consider would jeopardise their hold on their best paying Jhagir. How much harder for us when the two great communities are flying at each other's throat.

The first step then, is unity, and believe me, it can be brought about. The secret is give and take. And ladies and gentlemen, often you have to give more that you bargain for and take what you don't want. If one son is mal-nurished, the loving parents give him extra food even at the expence of depriving the healthy ones what they have been used to.

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Mr. Jaffer
Hajebhoy.

As long as we quarrel, as the cats did in Æsop's fable, the British will keep on biting of big lumps pretending that by doing this they will hold the balance true and in the end both the communities will get but a shadow of what they would have, had they been friends.

The resolution was then put to the vote and carried un-animously.

Resoluton No. 6

MILITARY POLICY.

Mr. Manu Subedar (Bombay) next moved the following resolution:--

Military Policy.

Mr. Manu
Subedar.

(a) While recognising that the recommendations of the Indian Sandhurst Committee do not satisfy Indian aspirations, this Federation deplores the delay and unwillingness of the Government to give effect to them, as they mark a beginning in the Indianisatiois of the higher ranks of the army in India and urges that no time should be lost in carrying them out.

(b) This Federation further urges that progressive reduction should be carried out in the ratio of British to Indian troops till the army in India is completely Indianised.

Mr. Manu Subedar said :

The resolution that has been entrusted to me divides itself into two parts. The first deplores the inactivity of the Government of India in giving effect to the recommendations of what is known as the Skeen Committee's report. The second part is a more general emphasis on the need of the complete Indianisation of the army in India so that we may carry on the defence of the country without the assistance of any imported material from outside. In this connection I may say that it is a vast subject. If I try to tell you all that it is possible to know and say with regard to the Indian army question you would be sitting here till tomorrow afternoon. I will, therefore, be extremely brief and say that the aspiration, to defend one's own country and to take part in it has been a very old political aspiration of this country. You will remember that the repeal of the Arms Act formed part year

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after year of the programme of the Indian National Congress and that was in the belief,—a belief which I do not share at the present moment,—that it was owing to the taking away of arms from us which had rendered us unable to stand out and fight for our freedom or to retain it after we had acquired it. I think what is necessary is that there should be a proper organisation, a nucleus of trained forces to which new forces can be added at any time when there is an emergency. This organisation exists in this country in what is known as the Indian army but it is Indian only in the lowest strata of personnel, all the rest of it is not Indian. You remember that the Englishman is very jealous of what he considers his own interest and his own rights and privileges. He claims the right to defend his own country and to die for it and several hundred thousand Englishmen laid down their lives in the last war for the honour of their country. Well he claims that as his right and privilege but he is a man of such curious mentality that he also claims the right and privilege of defending India for all time in any emergency and from preventing Indians themselves from undertaking this patriotic and honourable task. The door had been permanently closed to us and in spite of many knocks it has never been fully opened to us by Englishmen, the door to military service in the officer's rank. For many years the Congress also asked that the ranks of the King's Commissioned officers should be thrown open to Indians but their demand went for nothing. When the war broke out India poured out men and money and when England realised that in an emergency India was very useful, as a matter of favour the officers' ranks were thrown open to India but what was given to us after persistent demands and several resolutions in the Assembly—the most important of them was that moved by Sir Sivaswamy Aiyar 1921—what was given to us was what is known as the eight-unit scheme, which a cultured mathematician in Delhi calculated would Indianise all the officers of the Indian army in about 6,000 years.

Now what we say is this. England in 1917 made a declaration that it was the intention of England to give progressive self-government to this country. We say to the Englishman that if you have any sense of honour and if you really mean what you said in 1917, then while throwing open other offices and while making little administrative changes here and there you cannot withhold the organisation of the army and you cannot keep back Indians from it. No country can win its freedom, can retain the freedom very long after winning it if the people of that country have not organised themselves for the defence of the country but all these demands have been hitherto met with indifference. In 1924 I was privileged to hear that historic debate on the self-government resolution in which a demand was made for immediate and complete self-government. To this demand all the brains of the Indian Civil Servants were brought to bear in order to give an effective reply and Sir Malcolm Hailey, the ablest of

the Indian Civil Servants, was put up as the spokesman of the official side. He made several points but the biggest point he made and put the greatest emphasis on was that there was the problem of defence and he said; "After all if we left this country you could not defend it against either internal disorders or external attacks."

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I say over and over again, every time that India has held out the hand for co-operation or for constitutional advance we have been reminded some times with a patronising attitude, some times cinically, that we cannot defend our country but when we make the demand to send our boys to the army, that we want to train them to fight and die when necessary for the country, then that demand is not granted.

What is the method of putting off such a demand adopted in this country? After 150 years of British rule several political expedients have been evolved, one of them is the expedient of appointing committees, some of them to secure the fulfilment of a promises made by Government and others to prevent action being taken on them. Indeed on this military question the Government of India thought they would astound some of our leaders by putting them on the committee so that they would come back after witnessing the vast organisation, hold up their hands and say: "Indians cannot go there!" They never expected the unanimous report of the Skeen Committee, and yet this Committee sends forward a unanimous report. The fact that the report does not satisfy all demands is due to the fact that all such reports are matters of a compromise. All the same though that report does not go far it makes certain definite recommendations but what is the allitude Government of India? They say "We have these recommendations under consideration. What we have to say in regard to these recommendations we shall address to His Majesty's Government because Indianisation cannot take place in the army unless it was as a direct and proper method for creating a Dominion army. In other words India which pays Rs. 60 crores for the army cannot secure a small and deffnite reform in the army on lines recommended by a Commission appointed by Government themselves. It cannot secure this reform because it must wait until the War lords of England have something to say about it.

Apart from this we have even today an important party from the British Cabinet visiting this country, the Secretary for War. What has he come to this country for? For the benefit of his health? No. He has come down in order to see the ways and means of utilising the Indian army established with India's money for Imperial purposes. I believe we do not even object to that. We say, use it when you like but only admit Indians in the officers' ranks.

On this occasion at all events the Skeen Committee appears to have been appointed not in order to expedite a reform but in

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order to put it off. We shall never cease to emphasise the need for the admission of our young men into the army. To every society an admixture of men trained and disciplined for the army is a great gain and I believe many of our social ills would be easily put right if we had this valuable element of military officers as part of our social life. This is the usefulness of military men in time of peace, where as in emergency they carry on their shoulders the most important task, viz. of meeting the enemy and defending the country. The delay in carrying out the recommendations of the Sandhurst Committee is due to vested interests. The question is whether India's sons will be officers of her army, or whether the officers will always be imported. We should never cease to press this question.

With regard to the second part of the resolution, I would say that at a very heavy cost we have an army in India which technically would be regarded a mercenary army, an army in which the soldiers work for a salary. The Indian soldier works for the party who pays him the salary. That is our principal complaint. In no other country in the world is there an army which is maintained by the country but which cannot be called a national army. In this country which is very poor what we want is not a costly army which is paid for defending the country but a voluntary army in which the men feel proud to serve and defend their country and which trains and disciplines the youth of the country for the service of the motherland. No reforms are possible so long as our army is kept water-tight. It is even proposed in connection with the reforms that the question of the army must not be discussed, that the question of the defence of the country must be kept out of the pale of the reforms. No country can acquire or retain its freedom if it is unable to defend itself and I say that we should all make it matter of honour to press this question on the English statesmen and tell them: "If you mean honestly to take this country to the path of self-government according to your professions then you must be prepared to let us have a full share in the army. If you don't do that we shall know what to think of you, we shall know the political trickery which is involved. This is a big question and all I can do is to ask this Federation not only to pass this resolution but never cease urging for the opening of the doors of the army wide to our sons. (Applause).

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Mr. S. P.
Andrews-Dube.

Mr. S. P. Andrews-Dube (u. p.) in seconding the resolution said :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen :

Thirteen long months ago the Indian Sandhurst Committee submitted their report to the Government of India. Last August in the course of a discussion in the Legislative Assembly on this report His Excellency the Commander-in-chief was pleased to say when asked as to when the Government of India was going to give effect to the recommendations of this Committee that the

matter was under the consideration of His Majesty's Government in London. The question of Indianising the commissioned ranks of the army is not a new question. More than forty years ago when the Indian National Congress came into being this question first began to engage the attention of our public men and at the same time that of a high Military officer in the Government of India, I refer to General Chesney who also recommended to the Government that steps should immediately be taken to open an Indian Military College so that Indians may be trained for commanding Indian armies. I am not going to dilate on the various successive stages that have figured in the pages of our history dealing with this question but I would just refer to the year 1905 when once again this question was taken up by the Government of India and then the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Kitchner, after consulting various other officers of the Indian army made a recommendation that in order to improve the efficiency of the Indian Army a military college must be opened in India. Things went on and it was only when our rulers were face to face with that struggle which involved a question of life and death to them that they promised to remove this racial bar and throw open the doors of their Sandhurst in England to Indian youths to be trained to command Indian armies in India. It was from that time that ten vacancies came to be filled by Indians. Shortly after that Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford submitted their constitutional report in which they mentioned that if India was really to advance towards responsible government, more and more Indians had to be given the opportunity of officering their army. Nine weary years have passed by and not one has been added to that list of ten vacancies. Next, the Reforms came and our Legislative Assembly took up this question. This Sandhurst Committee was appointed after a great deal of agitation in the Legislative Assembly and I wish to place before you briefly the recommendations of this Committee. It was recommended by the Skeen Committee, as it is popularly known, that immediately the number of cadetships for Indians in Sandhurst should be doubled and in the course of 25 years at the outside the percentage of Indians in the Army Commissioned ranks must be half and half and after five years, that is in the year 1933, an Indian Sandhurst should be started in India itself.

Now, friends we are at the end of the year 1927. If steps had been taken on these recommendations shortly after this report was submitted to the Government of India probably now the time had come for them to give effect to that recommendation which says that the number of Indians is to be doubled from 10 to 20; but as yet the subject is under discussion between the Government of India and His Majesty's Government in London. It seems, therefore, that no action can be taken in the year 1928.

However, what is the ground on which the Government of India and its spokesmen in the Legislative Assembly have suspen-

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ded action being taken on this report. They say the question is not only a small simple question concerning India, but is a big question involving Imperial interests. India being a link in that huge chain of the British Empire, action cannot be taken on this report without consulting His Majesty's military advisers in England. Those advisers are probably busy considering the provisional proposals submitted by the Government of India. It passes my understanding what the Government of India means when it says that India being a link in the chain of Imperial interests action cannot be taken. Suppose, instead of India, the question pertained to some self-governing colony, I am sure they would not have waited till the advisers of His Majesty in Britain had given their final decision on this the provisional recommendations.

So long as England wields control over us, it is England's responsibility to see to India's military interests outside its borders, but so far as our internal defence and internal peace and order are concerned, it is the Indian army whose primary responsibility is to attend to this. And when I say this I am supported by the resolution which was passed in the Legislative Assembly in the year 1921 with the whole-hearted consent and approval of the Government of India. It was then declared that the army in India was primarily meant for the defence of this country; the question of Imperial interests was not at all taken up at that time and now because it suits His Majesty's Government they have raised this plea of Imperial interests and are thus delaying action being taken on this important report.

Gentlemen, if we ask for further advance in constitutional matters, we are told that India being unable to defend herself is not really fit to take charge of the administration of this country. If we ask that we should be given more and more power in officering and in commanding our own armies, we are told that the matter is of such vital importance and so many interests are involved that action cannot be taken soon. They want us to wait in peace and keep our souls at rest until they in their leisure can come to any decisions. This is a vicious circle so long as you do not with a strong and vigorous mind declare your desire that you want to have full control, as complete a control as possible, over your army, I believe this Government, which has shown its friendliness to us by appointing this all-white Commission just recently, will not move in the matter. I do not wish to take up more of your time so far as this part of the resolution goes.

The second part deals with another question. The mover of the resolution has already told you of the visit to our country these days of His Majesty's Secretary of State for War. What is the object of his coming to India? We do not exactly know. It is only a surmise that we can make and that is that probably in fulfilment of the idea, given out in the course of the last

budget debate in the House of Lords by Lord Haldane, that the Secretary of State for War is in our midst. I shall not touch on that point, as my friend, the previous speaker, has already dealt with it. But just one thing I want to draw your attention to, and it is this.

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To-day the ratio between English soldiers and Indian soldiers is about 2.5, that is, for every English soldier in India we have got 2.5 Indian soldiers. If you look back on the history of this question you will find that far back about the time of the Mutiny, this was not the ratio. At that time for every English soldier that was to be found in the country there were more than five Indian soldiers. However, our rulers came to the decision that Imperial interests demanded that the strength of the English soldiers ought to be increased, and they increased it from about 1:5.5 to 1:2.5. Why is it that we are asked to maintain such a large English contingent in our country? If you look at it from the view-point of costs, you will be surprised to find that for every English soldier that we maintain here we can maintain four Indian soldiers; for 60,000 British troops in India we can maintain for the same cost, and, I am sure, with better efficiency, 2,40,000 Indian soldiers. Therefore, on the score of cost alone, it seems absolutely unreasonable that such a large contingent of English soldiers should be located in this country. If it is said that Indian soldier is inefficient and incapable, let the record of our troops on the battlefields of Flanders and other battlefields in the last war bear testimony to it. (Applause). We all know that the Indian soldier is as brave and courageous as any soldier found anywhere in the world. Therefore, friends, I do not understand why such a large number of English troops is maintained in our country.

The resolution demands that the ratio, so far as English soldiers go, should be reduced and more and more Indian troops engaged. And when I say this I again have the support of the resolution passed with the whole-hearted approval of the Government of India in 1921. Lord Rawlinson, who was then the Commander-in-Chief in India, speaking on the resolution moved by our friend, Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyar agreed that progressive and prudent Indianisation of Indian troops was to be carried on. Friends, if to-day the time has not come for the government to take the action on this resolution, I wonder if the time will ever come. This resolution which has been moved year after year from the platform of the Liberal Federation has, I believe, your complete and whole-hearted support. With these words I commend this resolution to your acceptance. (Applause).

Prof. B. G. Sapre (Sangli,) speaking in support of the resolution, said: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen: As the resolution has been spoken to by the proposer and the seconder, I do not wish to take much of your time. It is no doubt the sixth resolution on your agenda paper, but I have no doubt that it is

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one of the most important resolutions to which the Liberal Federation can give its attention. I think the second part of the resolution which speaks about the progressive reduction of the ratio of British to Indian troops chronologically comes first.

There was a time, ladies and gentlemen, when the British army here consisted of a mere handful of officers and a small rank and file. It was in course of time that with the help of the Indian army or with the Indians themselves properly drilled and improved into an army that India was conquered. However, when the conquest was completed, then as the result of experience a certain proportion between the Indian army, that is to say the army composed of Indians, and the European army, or the British army, was fixed. After the mutiny it was half and half and that proportion has more or less continued to this day, so that though they choose to call it the Indian Army, it is really speaking an army consisting of Indians to some extent and of British troops to the remaining extent.

It is being realised gradually by our people that for the advance of our country as well as for other purposes, it is desirable and it is also necessary, that Indians should take as prominent a part in this as possible. Our object in pressing this demand is not merely economical, that the Indian army is cheaper than the English army, but there is a national object. It is now recognised throughout the world that the best defence that a country can have is an army composed of its own citizens. Of course, only a small part of the citizens need be kept on warlike footing during peace times. But the people themselves must have military training and should be in readiness at any time to have a sufficient army mobilised at a moment's notice, which can only be done if the army is composed of the people themselves. In course of time, therefore, the Indian army should be composed entirely of Indians, so that it will give us facilities for our own purpose and it will give us that confidence in us in the absence of which we cannot press for responsible government. Unless we are able to defend ourselves, it is no use having responsible government.

The first part of the resolution is confined to the officers of the army. You will find that until quite recently all those officers were of the English section of the army, and the British section of the army were Englishmen. It is now being realised that it is necessary not only to have the rank and file composed of Indians but it is equally necessary that the officers, the brain of the army, should also be Indians. During the war we know that Englishmen of high families came forward, they officered trained armies and carried England successfully through the war. It was more or less as a result of that that there has been a general desire in this country especially among the educated classes and sons belonging to noble families in this country, that they should also have a military career open to them. There are

no military careers open to us at present. There is only some faint opening, if you consider the University Training Corps which is merely in its initial stages. I am right when I say that there are at present practically no openings for a military career for the educated classes and the demand in the first part of the resolution is that in course of time not only should there be facilities provided for the military education and training of young men in this country but also they should be appointed officers not only in the army but also in the other branches of military equipment.

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Gentlemen, since the war a great revolution almost has taken place with regard to the status of the army and the object with which it is being manoeured. Before the war, the defence forces of India were more or less confined to the defence of this country, but after the war England has distinctly realised that India could serve as an admirable stage or a vantage ground for the defence of the eastern parts of the British Empire. There have been two committees since then the Esher Committee, for instance, which went thoroughly into this question, the question as to how far the Indian army should be made part of the whole Imperial scheme of defence for the whole Empire. From this point of view the army in India is not merely for Indian purposes, but is also Imperial purposes.

One important change has taken place with regard to the position of the army. The Commander-in-Chief, is he to be responsible to the Government of India or is he merely an officer at the dictation of the War Office in England? That is of course a constitutional issue and I have no doubt that the Liberal Federation will pay attention to it. Another important change is with regard to the equipment of the army and the officering of the army also. The war has shown what science can do by way of advance. The army is not such a simple organisation as it was 10 or 15 years ago. It has become extremely complicated, the artillery and cavalry each one assisted with the latest instruments of destruction but on top of it a whole army of tactics so that you see that with the progress of science the army has become more complicated and when progress is being made in science and in the Imperial aspect of the war, it is very necessary that we should have a full claim with regard to the constitution of the army, with regard to the purpose for which the army is to be utilised and so on.

Therefore, though this resolution concerns itself with the officering of the army and the rank and file of the army it really amounts to this: we ought to have our whole Indian army composed entirely of Indians, not only with regard to the rank and file, but also with regard to the officering of the rank and file. When that point is reached then only will we be able to say that we are able to defend ourselves and then only will self-government become a reality. Therefore, the resolution is of first-class

importance. The time will come when we shall all have responsible government and then at that time this resolution will be the first on the agenda of the Liberal Federation. Ladies and Gentlemen, I support this resolution very cordially and I request you to pass it with acclamation (Applause)

The resolution was put to the meeting and carried.

RESOLUTION No. 7

Industrial Labour.

Industrial Labour

**Mr. N. M.
Joshi.**

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, I have the honour to move the resolution which runs thus:--

(a) This Federation recommends to the Government of India to appoint a Committee to enquire into the condition of Industrial Labour such as wages, hours of work, unemployment, and unprovided for sickness and to suggest remedial legislative measures, when found necessary, such as establishing machinery for fixing minimum wages, for reduction of hours of work, for establishing unemployment and health insurance and establishing machinery for settling industrial disputes.

(b) This Federation recommends to all Liberals in the country to help the working classes to organise themselves into Unions for protecting their interests and for mutually helping themselves by co-operative efforts.

Mr. President, the resolution which has been placed before you is a very modest one. It does not commit the Liberal party to any important piece of labour legislation or to any violent action for the improvement of labour conditions in the country. The resolution merely recommends to the Government of India to appoint a committee to make an investigation into the conditions of life and work of the working classes in our country, such as conditions as regards the wages, as regards the hours of work, as regards the unprovided-for-sickness and unemployment, and if the inquiry shows that certain remedial measures are necessary the resolution recommends to the Government of India to take legislative action when found necessary for setting up some machinery for fixing the minimum wages for reducing the hours of work for establishing system of health and unemployment insurance and for enacting such other measures. The recommendation as contained in the resolution, as I stated at the beginning of my speech, is a very modest one. To those who are interested in labour the recommendation may not appear to go sufficiently far, but remembering that the present Liberal Party consists of persons who are not partisans either of labour or of capital but consists of people who are generally anxious to make progress in

improving conditions in our country, those who may be specially interested in this problem may content themselves by what the resolution offers this afternoon.

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I am not one of those people who would not like our country to develop its industries and would like to go back to land and to villages. Sometimes people misunderstand those people who take interest in labour matters, that they are against the development of industries. It is not the truth. If there are any people who recognise the necessity of developing industries in our country it is those people who have studied and devoted some of their time and energy to the cause of labour. (Although we recognise that the development of industries is necessary in the interests of the country and in the interests of the working classes, still if we remember the experience of those countries which have developed industries, we think that it is necessary to take some protective measures in order that the evil results which had appeared in other countries may not appear in our country.) In England and other countries there was some excuse, for allowing evils to grow for if preventive measures were not taken before the industries grew, people in those days, about 100 years ago, did not possess much experience of industrialism. They did not know what reckless industrialism may bring in its train. Moreover in those days, the Governments of Europe did not believe in interfering in what are called private undertakings, but those days are gone now. We have before us the experience of 100 years. We know what effects follow industrialism. We also know now that Governments of countries are expected to interfere in what are called private undertakings. We expect our governments to protect private industries. We, therefore, should expect our governments to protect those who are engaged in those industries. We have, therefore, less excuse now not to take any preventive measures knowing the experience of the world, when we think of developing our industries.

At present in our country there is absolutely no doubt that the standard of life, especially of the working classes is much lower than the standard of life of those people who are living in Europe and other advanced countries. You take the housing in the working classes in Bombay. The working classes here live in an one-room tenement. A family consisting of four or five people has to live in a room 10 feet by 10 feet, but if you go to Europe or America you will hardly find families living in an one-room tenement. The smallest number of rooms given to a working-class family in Lancashire is four. Take our food. There is absolutely no doubt that the nutritive qualities of the food which the working classes eat are less than the nutritive qualities of the food given to the inmates of Indian Jails.

The same thing is true about hours. In Europe generally the hours of work for industrial labour are eight in a day and 48 in a week. In India according to the Factory Act the hours are 10

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in a day and 60 in a week. Gentlemen, I have known people who argue that 10 hours' work is not very hard work. They say formerly our factories used to work 14 hours a day or at least 12 hours. To those people who consider that 10 hours' work in a factory standing for all the 10 hours is not too much, I would suggest that they should themselves go to the factory and work near the machine as ordinary workers for six months and if they come out in the same condition of health then certainly they have some right to talk of 10 hours' work not being very exacting.

In the same way when the workers come to Bombay and other cities and their connection with their villages is broken up, during periods of sickness, during periods of unemployment and during the period of their old age they are generally uncared for. We who work in well recognised institutions and organisations generally get privilege leave for one month, sick leave for two months and such other long furloughs. But we may not sometimes realise what happens to the people who do not get even a few days' sick leave, who do not get anything during their old age. If you consider for a moment the condition of the working classes, who do not get their wages even if they are really sick for a day or even when they are sick for a month or two months when they want more money than at any other time, we shall certainly realise how their health suffers and their families also suffer a great deal. It is not right that these conditions should be allowed to remain as they are.

Gentlemen, the resolution does not ask you to accept the conditions as they are described by me. It simply says that we should recommend to the Government of India to appoint a committee to make an inquiry into these conditions. Personally I am satisfied that if a committee is appointed the committee will find that the conditions are as they were described by me just now. And if the committee finds that conditions are as they are described, I am quite sure that the committee consisting of reasonable men will recommend that remedial measures must be taken. The remedial measures are mentioned in the resolution. In European countries when wages are very low they appoint some organisation or some board to fix the minimum wage. The committee will also propose to reduce the hours of work. We demand that our hours of work should be reduced to the level to which the European hours of work stand at present. If there is any country in the world where there should be smaller hours of work it is India. In Europe it is said that people can work harder and longer on account of the climate being cold but that in India people cannot do as much work as in a cold country. It is, therefore, clear that if there is any country where the hours of work should be smaller and shorter it is our country. We simply ask that the committee should go into this question and if the committee thinks that the hours of work are longer then the committee will recommend that the hours should be reduced and then it is

the business of Government who could accept or reject the recommendations of the committee.

Ladies and gentlemen, the last portion of the resolution recommends to you all that you should spend a part of your time and energy in organising the workers of our country. It is all very well for us to recommend to the Government of India to pass legislation, but it takes time before we can make the Government move. Not only that if Government is to be moved it must be moved by some organisation of the workers. It is necessary that the workers of our country should be organised into their own organisations to protect their interests and if the Liberals take interest in the working classes and their welfare, the first thing to be done is to organise the workers to help themselves. Fellow-Liberals, I hope this resolution will be passed unanimously and action will be taken in accordance with it (Applause).

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Mr. P. S. Bakhale, (Bombay) seconded the resolution. He said: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, I stand before you today to second the resolution which has been so ably moved by my friend Mr. Joshi who had dealt with in detail the problems that are enumerated in the first part of the resolution. Mr. Joshi has told you that the condition of the labouring classes in India is most appalling. Let me tell you, gentlemen, and I am sure you will be surprised to learn that peons working in Government offices after they had put in 30 years' long service have to retire in some offices with a pension of Rs. 4 a month. How then do you expect these poor inferior servants to maintain themselves and their families when they have no other source of income ?

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**Mr. P. S.
Bakhale.**

The hours of work in India so far as the factory legislation is concerned are no doubt restricted to 10 hours a day, but in practical experience we find that workers on Railways have to work for 15 or 16 hours a day. Many of you must have felt irritated at the treatment that you received when you go to a ticket office to purchase a ticket at the railway booking office. You are indeed dissatisfied with the attitude that is adopted by the person selling tickets, but you forget at that time the long hours during which and the circumstances under which he has to work.

I will chiefly confine my remarks to the second part of the resolution which, I hope, will not be allowed to remain only as a pious resolution. It calls upon all the Liberals to take action, and I hope that they will not shirk their responsibility, of organising the labouring classes in their districts. During my discussions with many of my friends I was told that the main object of starting trade unions was to promote strikes. Let me tell you, gentlemen, that strikes are no doubt one of the means—and I say it is no doubt a constitutional means to achieve our end. But strike is a dangerous weapon and the working classes do not like to use it very often. The main object with which trade unions are started is not to strike or to promote and encourage strikes, but to uplift

the working classes and it is for that and that alone that I appeal to you to follow and act up to the second part of the resolution and encourage the organisation of trade unions in your district. With these few words, I commend the resolution to your acceptance. (Applause).

Here Sir Tej Bahadur left the chair which was occupied by Sir Moropant Joshi.

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**Mr. R. R.
Bakhale.**

Mr. R. R. Bakhale, (Bombay) in supporting the resolution said: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, In supporting this resolution I should like to make only one or two observations. I feel that Part (b) is more important than part (a) of the resolution. I think the Liberal Party is taking a step in the right direction in asking the Liberals in the country to take up the work of labour organisation and help the working classes in the country in forming themselves into Trade Unions. Indian politicians have been sometimes accused in certain quarters of indifference towards the interests and welfare of the masses and the working classes. They have also been accused sometimes that they do not take proper interest in improving the condition of these people and raising their standard of life. I think this resolution, particularly part (b), is intended as an answer to those who level this charge against the Indian politicians. But that charge can be refuted only if we take steps to carry into effect the terms of this resolution; otherwise it will be a resolution on paper only and the accusation that has been levelled against us will continue to be made. I, therefore, hope that the Liberal Party in India will take effective steps during the next year to increase trade unions in this country and also to improve the condition of the working classes. Labour organisation in India is not at present very strong. If we take only the number of workers who are wage earners engaged in the organised portions of the industries and other occupations, their number is only 35 lacs or so; but out of this number not even 2 lacs have been organised. The percentage of labour organisation therefore, is not even 4. ✓ It is now universally recognised that in this age of factories and mass production, organisation of the workers is for the purpose of collective bargaining, an indispensable necessity if we have to improve the conditions of service of those employed in these industries. If, therefore, we have to develop our industries on the right lines and at the same time improve the condition of the working classes, it is absolutely necessary for those who are interested in the welfare of the country as a whole to support and help their poorer brethren. You will remember that in the initial stages of our political movement we had taken the help of such men as Hume and Wedderburn. The labour movement to day is to-day in an infant stage. It is therefore, fair that we who have developed the political movement to a certain extent should help our poor people in a similar manner. I shall be only too glad when I find that such eminent politicians as the worthy President of this

Federation or Sir Moropant Joshi or Sir Sivaswami Iyer go to the working class localities of Bombay, Madras and Calcutta and help the working classes in their organisation. If that is done, I am sure the pace of organisation will be considerably accelerated and that the work that has got to be done will be stimulated to a great extent. I, therefore, hope that the Liberal Party will try its best to carry into effect the terms of part (b) of this resolution.

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I do not wish to speak anything about part (a) of the resolution for the simple reason that it has been dealt with quite adequately and eloquently by the mover of this resolution. We are making a suggestion that the Government of India should appoint a committee to inquire into the working class conditions. I may tell you that this is not a new suggestion coming from the Liberal Federation. The Indian Textile Tariff Board which was appointed by the Government of India last year to investigate the conditions of the working classes has itself made a recommendation of this character and invited the Government of India to appoint a committee of the character which we have referred to in this resolution. This is what the Board says :—

“In the course of an enquiry such as ours, urgency of the problems presented by the illiteracy of Indian Labour could hardly fail to be borne in upon us. We should be failing in our duty if we did not emphasise the need not only for primary and technical education but also for adult education if labour is to produce from its own ranks leaders who can speak with knowledge and authority on its behalf. These and other problems relating to labour call for a more comprehensive enquiry than the limits of our terms of reference permit.”

You will thus see that part (b) of the resolution is nothing more than a repetition of the recommendation of the Textile Tariff Board. We are not making a very great demand on the Liberal Federation when we ask that it should emphasise the importance of this recommendation and urge upon the Government to give effect to it. I, therefore, hope that you will be pleased to carry this resolution.

At this stage Sir Tej Bahadur reoccupied the chair. The resolution was put to the meeting and declared carried.

The President then addressing the meeting said :

There are some more resolutions to be gone through and I have now got the second instalment that is placed in my hands. The third instalment is expected at any moment. In the second instalment, there are two resolutions to be moved from the chair and the others have to be spoken to by different gentlemen. Now I put these two resolutions which I can put from the chair and then adjourn for half an hour and meet again to pass the

The President.

remaining resolutions some of which are really of great importance and then I expect to lay before you the Statement which is going to be issued on behalf of the Liberal Party.

The President then read and put to the meeting resolutions Nos. 8 and 9 and they were carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 8.

Problem of Indian States.

Problem of
Indian States.
The President,

The National Liberal Federation notes with satisfaction that certain Indian States have made a beginning in the direction of introducing representative institutions in their territories and hopes that all the Indian States will take early steps to bring their administrations into accord with modern ideas of progressive government.

RESOLUTION NO. 9.

Indian Mercantile Marine.

Indian Mercantile
Marine.
The President,

(a) The National Liberal Federation of India, while welcoming the establishment of the Training-Ship "Dufferin" in Bombay strongly urges upon the Government of India with a view to make the Training-Ship a success, the necessity for taking legislative action to ensure the compulsory employment on coastal ships of Indians as Officers and Engineers in accordance with the recommendation of the Indian Mercantile Marine Committee.

(b) The Federation, moreover, endorses the finding of the Committee that something more is required beyond the provision of Training facilities in order to develop an Indian Mercantile Marine and strongly urges the Government of India to give effect to the recommendation of the Committee that the Indian Coastal Trade should be reserved to ships the ownership and controlling interests of which are predominantly Indian.

(c) The Federation further urges the Government of India to (1) help ships, owned and managed by Indians to participate in the Overseas Trade of India. (2) adopt effective measures to develop the ship-building industry of India. (3) legislate for the abolition of the Deferred Rebates system.

After the half an hour's recess, Mr. S. G. Vaze (Poona) moved the following resolution:

RESOLUTION No. 10

The East African Problem.

The East African
Problem.

Mr. S. G. Vaze.

- (a) The National Liberal Federation views with grave concern the declaration of policy contained in the recent White Paper entitled "Future Policy in Regard to East Africa" (Cmd.2904), which, in the Constitutional changes likely to be introduced under the guise of Federation, threatens to place the Indian residents, as well as the African natives under the domination of the European settlers, in complete reversal of the policy laid down in the White Paper of 1923 (Cmd. 1922). This Federation is opposed to the new policy of "associating the immigrant communities in the responsibilities and trusteeship of Government" and urges His Majesty's Government to retain all political power in its own hands and not to advance the political status of either immigrant community till a fair proportion of the natives attain the franchise on a common property and educational qualification and can obtain an effective share in representation by election on a common register.
- (b) This Federation further protests against the non-inclusion of a single Indian Member in the East African Commission.

Mr. Vaze said :

I daresay you are all familiar with the situation as it exists at present in Kenya. A Commission, again an All-White Commission, has been set up and is already on its way to East Africa. Its professed object is to consider if it is practicable to bring into closer union the three countries of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika in the solution of common problems like railways and ports, posts and telegraphs, customs and tariffs medical and agricultural research, etc. With this end in view it was thought desirable to entrust the enquiry to financial experts and to men who have given a close study to racial questions. But all the members of the Commission selected are Europeans and we must first of all protest against the exclusion of Indians from the body. Now it is unnecessary for us to impugne the financial ability of the persons actually chosen, but we could all straight away mention more than a dozen Indians who would be recognised on all hands to be as great financial experts as those who have been included in the Commission. To mention only one name, Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas would have been of the very greatest service to

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Problem.
Mr. S. G. Vaze.

the Commission and would have inspired confidence in the Indian community as none of the men can on whom the Government's choice has fallen. If we make a protest against the non-inclusion of Indians, our protest must be addressed not to the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Amery, but again to the Indian Secretary, Lord Birkenhead, to whom it was left by the Colonial office to nominate a member to represent Indian interests. And it was Lord Birkenhead who preferred an European official to an Indian non-official to protect Indian interests. By the way this is another indication of the fact that the British Government seem now to have made a fixed rule to exclude Indians from all inquiry committees.

I must say, however, that the unsatisfactory composition of the Commission is a relatively small matter compared to the other grave issues involved. If the Commission's inquiry were restricted to those administrative matters which I mentioned just now, it would not have perturbed us very much, though of course even then we should have had good reason to complain of the exclusion of Indians. It is generally recognised that a greater degree of co-operation than exists at present is desirable among the several East African countries, and if such co-operation can be brought about it will benefit the Indian probably just as much as the European and the native. And if there should be any matters on which Indian interests are likely to be prejudicially affected, we may be confident that the Indian community, assisted as it will be by the official delegation which has been very considerably sent to Kenya by the Government of India, will be able to put their difficulties and get them solved, even by a Commission of such an unsatisfactory character.

What really causes alarm, and I should say grave alarm, in the mind of the Indian community is the fact that the Commission is authorized to open up large questions of policy which we had all thought had been closed once and for all in 1923. Those questions relate to constitutional changes, a revision in the composition of the Legislative Council, and a redistribution of political power, first, as between the Colonial Office and the Local Governments and, secondly, as between one resident community and another in the Colonies concerned. Now if there were the least possibility of the Constitution being revised as a result of inquiry so as to make it approximate a little more closely to what is dictated by a sense of fair-mindedness and justice, we should be the very last persons to object to a fresh inquiry; on the contrary we should welcome it. For we all feel that the existing arrangement [is grossly unfair. In Kenya the Indian community outnumbers the European by 5 to 2 and yet on the Legislative Council the European outnumber the Indians nearly by 5 to 2. As for the natives, who number some 3 millions, they have only one representative on the Council as against 5 of the Indians and 11 of the Europeans, and that the single

representative assigned to the natives is, and will always be a European. Now this in all conscience is extremely unjust, but we may be certain that as a result of the Commission's inquiry the position of both Indians and native Africans will be very much weaker than it is at present.

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We, therefore, say to the British Government, "go back to 1923." That does not mean that we want that the present composition of the Council to continue, but we want that the principle which His Majesty's Government laid down in that year should be adhered to. It must appear strange in any one amongst the Indians to be found to acclaim and appeal to the White Paper of 1923 as our shield. For there is hardly anything in recent history, barring of course the appointment of the Statutory Commission, which provoked such discontent amongst the Indians as this despatch. It went against us on almost every point in dispute and we all vied with one another in denouncing it. But even when our resentment was at white heat we did not fail to recognise that it embodied a sound and righteous principle, the principle, namely, of what is called native trusteeship. We knew of course that this principle was brought into requisition by his Majesty's Government for the purpose of defeating the just claims of the Indians ; but still we readily acknowledge that in itself the principle enunciated in the White Paper was just. Mr. Sastri, who probably expressed Indian resentment most strongly at the time, said speaking at the Hotel Cecil in London immediately after the publication of the White Paper: "There is one gain of immense significance upon which all parties to the dispute, as well as the Imperial Cabinet, may congratulate themselves. It is the clear and unequivocal recognition that the interests of the African natives are paramount and must take precedence of those of the immigrant communities. The Colonial Office have in express terms declared themselves to be trustees, and, it is to be hoped will take their trust more seriously and conscientiously than they did heretofore". We are here concerned only with the political aspect of the native trusteeship. What the Colonial Office said about this aspect was to this effect: "The native is at present unable to take an effective share in representative government, and so long as he remains in this position, it will not be possible to confer any powers upon the immigrant communities, at whose hands the natives are likely to suffer. On the Legislative Council, therefore, there will no doubt be representatives of the immigrant communities, but their function and their power will be limited to representing their communal grievances. All real power will be centred in the Colonial Office until such time as the native is able to take his rightful place in the government of the country. When this principle was enunciated we did not quarrel with it ; on the contrary we fell in with it and only urged Government not to let it remain on paper as a pious wish, but give effect to it."

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If the British Government were so long giving lip service to this principle of unctuous rectitude and disinterestedness, in order that under its cover they may seem to justify an extremely unjust decision in regard to Indians, they have now decided openly to go back from the whole policy. They of course still protest that the principle of native trusteeship is not being discarded but never were protestations more hypocritical than in this White Paper. The new policy is one of "associating immigrant communities in the trusteeship of the natives". So runs the tag at present, but what on earth does it mean? It means that those whom the natives have any cause to fear are now to be taken into partnership with Government in trusteeship and in government, which means in other words that those who stand in danger of being exploited and oppressed are to be placed under the protection, at any rate partial, of the very exploiters and oppressors. I have no time to deal with the many fallacies and sophisms of the White Paper, but I may be permitted to ask your attention just to one sentence from it. It says: "If clashes between these interests (i. e. the interests of the immigrant communities) and those of the vast native populations are to be avoided, their share in the trusteeship for the progress and welfare of the natives must be developed". Certainly, there can be no clash of interest when the despoiler himself is made the moral and the legal guardian of the despoiled! The political implication of this new doctrine is that the Colonial Office need not have all power centred in its hands, but that it may share it with immigrant communities. This new principle has already been definitely laid down in the White Paper. All that is left to the Commission to determine is the extent to which power can be shared in practice.

Now what is to be our attitude to this new orientation of policy? Are we to reject it altogether or are we to accept it in principle and try to extract from it as much as it can yield for the Indians. We adopt in this resolution the first alternative. We reject the policy *in toto* and refuse to avail ourselves of any advantage it may possibly bring to us. But the other alternative was adopted the other day in the Legislative Assembly by the member of the Government of India dealing with this matter, viz. Sir Mahomed Habibulla. He said in effect: "The natives of Africa may possibly have some reason to complain of the new White Paper; but the Indians surely have none. For they too along with the Europeans will get additional power as a result of this White Paper. Does not the White Paper speak everywhere of associating the immigrant communities, meaning there by the Indian as well as the European in native trusteeship? Now, I think it would be a most fatal error to take up this attitude, but I am afraid the official delegation sent to Kenya is also going to take it up. My first objection to it is that it is in the highest degree immoral. We, who have always been declai-

ming against the exploitation of the natives by the whites, cannot now ourselves seek opportunities to exploit them. Nor can we arrogate to ourselves such superior merit, that, having a chance of exploitation, we will still refrain from taking advantage of it. My second objection is that although the White Paper speaks of giving us a share with the whites in political power, as a matter of fact will give us none. It will make our position very much worse than now. One can advance several reasons in support of this inference. Firstly, although the White Paper speaks of both the immigrant communities being associated in trusteeship, Mr Amery in the speech he made in the House of Commons in expounding the policy, did not refer even once to the Indians, but used arguments, which are applicable only to the whites. Secondly, the whites are making most fantastic schemes for the composition of the Legislative Council, schemes in which the whites are to be given an absolute majority over all the other elements Officials, Indians and natives put together. They are in fact demanding what amounts to responsible Government or very little short of responsible Government, and the Governor of Kenya, instead of restraining these wild ambitions, gives every encouragement to them. The result, therefore, of accepting the new policy and trying to make the most of it can only be to hand over both the Indians and the natives to the tender mercies of the Europeans. It is thus not only just but expedient in our own interest to reject the policy and call upon His Majesty's Government to adhere scrupulously to the policy enunciated in 1923. This is what we do in the resolution. We ask that no advance should take place in the political status of either of the immigrant communities till the natives are in a position to win an adequate number of seats in open elections on a common register. If, however, we should take the other line, and make an attempt to obtain the largest possible share in native trusteeship which may be devolved by His Majesty's Government on immigrant communities, we would gain nothing whatever and would only deprive ourselves of the great leverage which we now have of a strong moral position. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance for us to urge Government from the platform of this Federation as we do in the resolution, not to change the policy adopted in 1923. I commend this resolution to your acceptance. (Applause)

Mr. V. N. Tiwari (U. P.) in seconding the resolution said:

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

It is not necessary for me in seconding this resolution to make a long speech, as the mover of the resolution has stated all the points that are relevant to the consideration of the subject. All that I have to do is to cross the T's and dot the I's of his statement. You will notice in the resolution a reference has been made to two White Papers one issued in 1923 the other in 1927. I do not propose to take up your time by reading

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to you more than one or two sentences from both these White Papers in order to place before you the issue that is involved in this question. In the White Paper of 1923 it was expressly stated that primarily Kenya is an African territory and His Majesty's Government thought it necessary definitely to record their opinion that the interests of the African natives must be paramount and that if and when these interests and the interests of the immigrant races should conflict the former should prevail. That was the policy laid down in the first White Paper. After that a Commission was sent out headed by the Under secretary for the Colonies, Major Ormsby Gore and that Commission submitted a report in 1924. They made a reference to this question of federating the various East African Territories. In their opinion they found that there was a great deal of opposition to this idea of federating the various East African Territories. They said they had consulted all the different interests in Kenya as well as in other territories and had come to the conclusion that there was no demand whatsoever for the federation of the territories. In 1926 there was a conference of the Governors of the various East African territories and there it was adumbrated by the Colonial Secretary that not only the question of administration but also the larger question of policy would be discussed and one of the questions of policy that was discussed by this Conference of Colonial Governors in England was whether the time was not ripe to bring about a federation of the East African territories. Now what is the inwardness of this new proposal? Instead of explaining to you in my own words what it is I should like to read to you the statement made by Mr. Thomas of the Labour Government when he was in charge of the Colonial Office. He said that the idea of federation was opposed to the declaration made in the White paper of 1923, and that in the trusteeship of native interests British Government could not associate.

Therefore, those of us who are opposed to this policy of federating the various territories do so on the ground that if the territories are brought under one political and economic control the result will be that the policy which is now rampant in Kenya against not only Indian interests but also native interests will be extended to other territories as well. That is the one ground on which we base this proposal.

The second ground is this. In the White Paper of 1927 it has been stated that not only the European community in the East African territories but other immigrant communities such as Indians will be associated in the trusteeship. As has been pointed out by Mr. Vaze, the Indian community as such has never put forward this claim. They are not there to help the Europeans to exploit the natives of East Africa.

Mr. Tiwari, continuing, said: The predominant political power will be vested in the European community resident in these territories and the danger of that is obvious enough. There

is another speech made by one of the leaders of the Whites in Kenya and he makes it perfectly clear what their object is in asking for this Federation. He said, when the Federation of the East African colonies comes to pass Kenya should be the headquarters and they in their programme must look ahead and make provisions therefor. You will never solve the labour problem, he said, until you control the colony. When you have that you will immediately solve that problem. Government's policy should be that natives of the colony must work.

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Therefore, gentlemen, the object of the Whites in Kenya is to see that they have not only absolute and unfettered control over the vast native resources in Kenya but also in Uganda and other territories of East Africa. He further went on to ask the meeting to define how the policy should be enforced. He said, Government must say that the policy of the Kenya Government should be this: Natives must work either in the farms or work in the reserves, but work they must. If this policy were to be applied, the absolute control of the colony will vest in the Whites. Against this statement and its implications we lodge a protest in the first part of the resolution.

In the second part of the resolution we lodge a protest against the exclusion of Indians from the Commission of Inquiry that has been sent out from England. As Mr. Vaze pointed out to you that is no new thing. In the Statutory Commission, against which we protested yesterday, there is no Indian. Similarly in the Commission of Inquiry that is going to East Africa it is no cause for wonder that there is no Indian representative. I may bring to your notice one fact. As soon as the news in regard to this White Commission was brought to India there was a motion of adjournment in the Assembly which was moved on the 18th August 1927 and the various non-official members who took part in the debate on the motion for adjournment made it clear that they would not be satisfied that Indian interests would be properly safeguarded unless there was at least one Indian representative belonging to the non-official section of public men in this country and the Government of India was pressed to give an undertaking that in forwarding the debate to the Secretary of State they would associate themselves with this demand.

There is a third point I should like to place before you. My friend Mr. Vaze has said that there is some danger that the representatives who have been sent by the Government of India to proceed to Kenya to prepare the Indian case to be placed before Commission will adopt the attitude that was advocated by the official spokesman in the Assembly on that occasion. Knowing as I do at least one of the members of that mission of two Indian officials who have been deputed to Kenya, I feel certain that at least Kunwar Maharaja Singh will not be a party to any such thing. I hope and trust so long as Kunwar Maharaja Singh is

there we may rest assured that he will not be a party to any step whereby Indians will bear a share of the responsibility for exploiting the natives for the benefit of Europeans and Indians alike. I commend this resolution to your acceptance.

The resolution was put to the vote and carried.

RESOLUTION NO. 11,

Improvement of Untouchables.

Improvement
of Untouchables.

Mr. V. N.
Chandavarkar.

Mr. V. N. Chandavarkar (Bombay) moved the following resolution:

(a) This Federation notes with satisfaction the general awakening in favour of urgently removing the evil of untouchability and declares its emphatic opinion that unless and until the equal status of depressed classes in political, civil and social matters is recognised, there can be no real progress in the country.

(b) This Federation impresses upon all Provincial Governments and local bodies the necessity of allotting annually an adequate sum for the award of scholarships to the children of the depressed classes and of making their education—primary, secondary and higher as well as technical—free. The Federation further urges that the Provincial Governments should at once open the door of all services under them for the admission of fit candidates belonging to these classes and give them preference for employment when fully qualified candidates are available.

Mr. Chandavarkar said:

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I deem it a matter of great privilege and pride that I should have been called upon to move this important resolution. To me, Sir, the question, of the depressed classes is the most important question, more important than even the question of Hindu-Moslem unity or of the Statutory Commission. It is not a matter reflecting credit either on ourselves or on Government that in the year 1927 we should have to pass such a resolution both from the Congress and from this platform. I believe it was at a Social Conference held at Dharwar about 25 years ago that the late Mr. Gokhale drew the attention of the country to the political aspect of this problem. Since then there have been several organizations working for the betterment of the Depressed Classes. Yet it is a matter for shame that even now there are educated people among us, who, though they do not defend "untouchability," still argue that this reform should be gradually introduced and not forced upon an unwilling

people, and these are the very persons who are loudest in propounding high-sounding doctrines of liberty and self-determination. You will be surprised, Sir, to know that only about a month ago in this very city which is looked upon as the most cosmopolitan and advanced city in India in social matters a resolution abolishing separate arrangements for drinking of water for students of depressed classes in Municipal Schools was defeated in the Municipal Corporation and among those who voted against the resolution were several Swarajists, and, I am sorry to say, even members of this Federation. I submit, Sir, there can be no compromise or gradual progress in this matter. We of this Federation should put our foot down upon any attempt to give any, even indirect, recognition to this evil.

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Sir, we are fighting for an equal status in the Empire and denouncing rightly too all those who are not prepared to concede our claim to the same. We are doing this in spite of the fact that we are governed by an alien race and belong to an alien Empire. But what is it that we are ourselves doing in our own country? How are we treating the depressed classes who after all are our own kith and kin? I venture to say that in some parts of the country even the position of the pariah dogs is better than that of the untouchables. If this is so, with what face can we, in the eyes of the Providence, fight for freedom? Do you think that unless our own hands are clean, Providence will be on our side in our struggle for freedom? Our own wretched condition is the direct result of our tolerating a state of affairs under which our own kith and kin are treated by ourselves worse than animals. The other day, Mr. Srinivasa Sastri speaking at a meeting in Durban said that the origin of the caste system was really based on colour prejudices of the Aryan races against the aborigines. It is this caste system that has been the ruin of this country. No amount of sophistry should reconcile us to Varnashram Dharma or a religion which tolerates such an inhuman evil as that of untouchability. Do you realise that by tolerating untouchability we have been digging our own graves? What is our position in the world now? Everywhere we are looked down upon. We have become the depressed nation of the world. In speaking on the Statutory Commission, Mr. Baldwin said that the exclusion of Indians was a question of principle. Yes Sir, it was a matter of principle, the same principle which makes us treat the Depressed Classes as untouchables that has led the British Parliament and Government to exclude us from the Commission. If, in his interpretation of Section 84 (a) of the Government of India Act Lord Birkenhead has been guilty of fraud upon the Constitution, we, in our interpretation of the *Smritis*, have been guilty of fraud upon ourselves and of fraud upon the country, a fraud which has led to our political degradation. It is not a question of elevating the depressed classes. It is a question of elevating ourselves. If

we are sincere in our desire to be a free nation and to restore its ancient glory to this country of ours, then I say that our duty is clear and that it is to free this country from the curse of untouchability. Unless and until we do that we shall never be, nor deserve to be a free nation.

Mrs. Gunabai Waghmare. Mrs. Gunabai Waghmare (Berar) seconded the resolution in a short speech in Marathi.

Improvement of Untouchables. Rai Bahadur Thakur Hanuman Singh (u. p.) in supporting the resolution, said :

Rai Bahadur Thakur Hanuman Singh. Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

I stand here to give my wholehearted support to the resolution which has been so ably moved by Mr. Chandavarkar. This resolution deals with the elevation of the depressed classes. To these depressed classes we have been according a treatment which has been, I may be permitted to say, inhuman in more respects than one. Now it is high time that we should think and sincerely believe that we have been committing a sin against them and take upon ourselves to ameliorate the condition of these classes both politically and socially. Unless we do it our nation cannot be said to have attained a healthy growth. No nation can be said to be strong and well developed. We have been treating them worse than animals. Dogs can enter our temples but some sections of the depressed classes cannot go near the temple. Sir, we have been monopolising to ourselves even the houses of God thinking that the depressed classes are not the children of God. How can we do it? We should encourage them to approach us; we should encourage them to think that they are also human beings and if educated they cannot be different from us. It is deplorable to think that when one of these depressed class people takes to Christianity or Islam he becomes touchable and worthy of our society. Then I may inquire of you fellow-delegates whether there is something wrong with our religion or there is something wrong with these people? Those who are taking a very great interest in the removal of untouchability and other disabilities with which the depressed class people are surrounded should be encouraged and they should find ready co-operation of everyone or should not forget that when we elevate others we elevate ourselves. This work is very heavy and arduous at the same time. We alone cannot achieve it with much success unless the Government co-operates with us. It is for this reason that the second part of this resolution has provided that the Government should annually allot an adequate sum to be distributed amongst the scholars of the depressed classes with a view to helping them in education whether it be primary, secondary, higher or technical. At the same time the resolution impresses upon the Government the necessity for the encouragement of the depressed classes that it should open the doors of all services for the admission of the depressed class candidates who

may be qualified for employment. At the same time it also desires the Government to give preference to the depressed class people, provided they are qualified for the services which they seek for. With these few remarks, ladies and gentlemen. I commend the resolution for adoption and I hope that those gentlemen who have come from Madras will take an earnest interest in a matter of such vital importance to the country to the Hindu community especially. There in Madras the condition of the depressed classes is simply miserable, more miserable than the condition of a dog. Those who are the leaders of that province should consider it their first duty to do their utmost to ameliorate the condition of those depressed classes and in doing it they will be serving the depressed classes as well as India.

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Rai Bahadur
Thakur Hanuman-
Singh.

The resolution was carried.

The President: Ladies and gentlemen, I have a very painful duty to perform now. We have just learnt from the Press of a most deplorable event and that is the sudden death of a great Indian leader which took place at Rampur the night before last. I refer to Hakim Ajmal Khan. He was probably the most respected citizen of Delhi and one of the most influential leaders in northern India. He represented a very ancient Mahomedan stock in Delhi whose fortunes had been connected with the Moghul Empire for centuries. In Delhi, I can say with personal knowledge, no one has commanded the same prestige or the same influence as Hakim Ajmal Khan or his great ancestors. But it is not of the historical tradition of his family or of the great social position that he occupied in the life of Delhi that I wish to refer at length. It is of his great services to the cause of Indian nationalism during the last 10 years or so of his life. It is true that he belonged to a different platform, but we cannot forget that throughout the last 10 years he dedicated his life to the cause of the country in every department of public activity and nowhere more than in the sphere of reconciliation of the communities at present at variance. The death of such a leader at such a juncture is nothing short of a national calamity. With the rest of India we join in paying our tribute to his memory and conveying our respectful sympathies and condolences to the bereaved family in your name and on your behalf and, may I respectfully add, on my own behalf I would take the liberty of moving a resolution which I will read to you now and which I have no doubt you will pass in solemn silence. The resolution which I have drafted runs as follows:—

The Late Hakim
Ajmal Khan
The President.

RESOLUTION NO. 12.

The Late Hakim Ajmal Khan.

The National Liberal Federation has learnt with deep sorrow of the sudden death of Hakim Ajmal Khan Saheb of Delhi and places on record its tribute to his memory. In his death Delhi loses

its premier citizen, the Unani system of medicine its most commanding exponent and Indian nationalism a leader of rare personal charm whose memory will always be cherished as that of a devoted servant of the country and as one whose constant effort was, by his personal example and great influence, to establish peace and harmony between the Hindu and his co-religionists."

now ask you all to pass this resolution standing.

The resolution was passed all standing.

The President : Now, ladies and gentlemen, we have practically reached the end of our programme, but there are a certain number of resolutions which I have been authorised by the Subjects Committee to put before you from the chair and I will read out those resolutions.

Resolutions Nos. 13, 14 and 15 and 16 were put from the chair and carried, Mr. Chintamani reading out the names referred to in resolution No. 16. They were carried, the President ruling that there was nothing to prevent Mr. Chintamani from being the Secretary and Vice-President of the Federation as well as a member of the Council—a point of order raised by Rai Bahadur Thakur Hanuman Singh.

RESOLUTION No. 13.

Assessment of Land.

Assessment of
Land.

The National Liberal Federation of India protests against the inordinate delay made by nearly every provincial government in carrying into effect the recommendation of the joint Select Committee of Parliament that the general principles of Land Revenue Assessment should be embodied in legislation and the Federation urges that this should be done without delay.

RESOLUTION No. 14.

Bengal Internments.

Bengal Internments.

(a) The National Liberal Federation strongly reiterates its protest against the continued detention of many persons in Bengal under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1925, and urges that all of them should be either set free or tried under the ordinary Criminal Law.

RESOLUTION No. 15.

Constitution of the Federation.

Constitution of
the Federation.

(a) The following be inserted at the end of Rule 3}

"The Council of the National Liberal Federation shall be styled as the National Liberal Council of India."

and

(b) the words "and such number, if any, of Assistant Secretaries, as may be appointed."

RESOLUTION NO. 16.

Council and Office-Bearers for 1928.

(a) The Federation re-elects Mr. C. Y. Chintamani and Pandit Hardaya Nath Kunzru as the Hon. General Secretaries and elects Messrs. Surendra Nath Varma and Vishwanath Prasad as Hon. Assistant Secretaries for the year 1928.

(b) The undermentioned members shall constitute the Council of the Federation for 1928.

(Here the General Secretar read out the nams).

The President then read out the following Statement which was to be issued to the Press both in India and in England over his signature.

1. The Indian Liberal Party having met at the tenth annual session of the National Liberal Federation held at Bombay consider it their duty to make a public declaration of the reasons which have compelled them to adopt their present attitude towards the Statutory Commission which has been appointed by His Majesty's Government in concurrence with the Government of India. The Liberal Party in India have always aimed at and worked for the establishment of responsible Government in this country so that India may stand at no distant date on the same footing as the self-governing dominions which are members of the British Commonwealth. They accepted the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms and have worked them to the best of their ability in the hope and belief that the introduction of responsible government would soon follow.

2. The Liberal Party desire to draw public attention to the fact that during the last six years no less than five resolutions have been moved in the Central Legislature urging upon His Majesty's Government the need for taking steps towards the establishment of responsible government. During the last four years the Swarajists and other parties in the Central Legislature have formulated their demand and have asked for a round Round Table Conference. Never have any party asked or suggested the appointment of a purely Parliamentary Commission.

3. The appointment of a purely Parliamentary Commission based as it is upon an interpretation of the Government of India Act which the Liberal Party wholly repudiate as being unwarranted by the plain terms of the Statute and opposed as it is to

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the spirit of the Act as well as all considerations of broad-minded statesmanship, has been supported by arguments of a specious character, the validity of which the Indian Liberals are not prepared to accept.

4. In the opinion of the Liberal Party there was nothing in the language of the Act to prevent Government from including in the Commission at least an equal number of representative Indians. They repudiate the assertion that this was impossible and place on record their emphatic protest against the manner in which the entire question of India's advance has been prejudiced by exaggerated and even sensational statements made in that behalf by responsible statesmen in Parliament. The exclusion of Indian public men on the ground that they have in the course of their public activities expressed their views on constitutional questions amounts to penalising all public expression of opinion and is unprecedented in the annals of constitutional reform.

5. The Liberal Party have given their careful consideration to the scheme of Committees adumbrated by Government. Notwithstanding the assertions made by responsible Ministers of the Crown and by certain other statesmen that it virtually amounts to a Round Table Conference, the Liberal Party maintain that in the light of the pronouncement hitherto made, these Committees are not in truth and fact equals of that Commission. They cannot share in the responsibility of making any proposals submitting any report to Parliament or voting at the sittings of the Commission. Their functions are to assist the Commission by placing their proposals before it, and the Commission may accept or reject them. In point of fact according to Mr. Baldwin it was a matter of principle that these committees were excluded from participating in the responsibility of framing proposals and submitting them to Parliament. The Liberal Party is aware that Indian delegations will be invited to England to lay their case before and discuss the proposals of the Statutory Commission with the Joint Committee of Parliament, but it is obvious that such a delegation like the delegation which went to England in 1919, can only make representations or express views on concrete proposals and this provision like the provision relating to the Committees in India, amounts to nothing more than the recognition of the ordinary right of representation which is open to every subject of the Crown. In the opinion of the Liberal Party, these provisions can be no substitute for the direct recognition of India's claim to share in the responsibility of framing a constitution to be laid before Parliament.

6. The Liberal Party are aware that power has been reserved to Sir John Simon, the Chairman of the Statutory Commission, to liberalize the procedure of his Commission vis-a-vis these Committees of the Legislature but it is obvious that whatever Sir John Simon may do, he cannot consistently with the terms of his reference and the statement made by the

Prime Minister in Parliament, that the Commission will be at liberty to lay down its procedure provided that "such procedure is within the framework" fixed by Parliament, create a new and truly co-equal status for these Committees without reference to Parliament.

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7. In these circumstances the acceptance of these proposals of Government does not appear to the Liberal Party to be consistent with the self respect of India, or with their unanswerable claim that Indians should have an effective share in the determination of the constitution of their own country. It is obvious from all the proceedings in Parliament that this Statutory Commission is to be used as a precedent for the future. In the opinion of the Liberal Party, India ought not to be subjected to repeated enquiries by periodic Commissions which are bound to be detrimental to the development of her national life and the time has come when a permanent and durable constitution capable of automatic growth and development should be framed by a competent and representative body. Even upon the assumption which the Liberal Party repudiates, that there is need for further periodic enquiries, the Liberal Party cannot, while accepting the constitutional position that the final authority according to the British Constitution is Parliament, accept the precedent of a Statutory Commission from which Indians are now excluded and will always be excluded in future.

8. In short, in the opinion of the Liberal Party, the Statutory Commission fails to satisfy the test of a properly constituted Commission with an adequate Indian representation nor does it amount to a Round Table Conference. It is a bare and emphatic assertion of the right of Parliament not only as the final authority to pass a constitution for India but also to adopt an exclusively British Agency for exploring the avenues of progress and it is at the same time the negation of India's claim that it should have an effective part in the determination of her Constitution. In these circumstances and for these reasons the Liberal Party have come to the conclusion that they should have nothing to do with the Commission at any stage, to any extent and in any form.

After reading the Statement the President said :

Now gentlemen, this is a Statement drafted by some of us and discussed before the Subjects Committee of the house and I should imagine it is as plain and as clear a Statement of our position as it could be. It is open to our hostile critics at the present moment who are bent on a campaign of misrepresentation for purposes of their own propaganda with motives of a very questionable character to read into these lines anything they like, suppress as much as they like or to indulge in any misrepresentation they like. Our statement of the case is there. We do not expect, certainly! I do not expect, that we shall be shown the courtesey by the English press at this particular juncture, of publishing

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this in extenso. We know that at the present moment it is extremely difficult to get the Indian side of any question and particularly the Indian side of the question of the Statutory Commission published in most of the papers in England barring perhaps one or two honourable exceptions such as the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Herald*. I have no doubt the special correspondents will be busy publishing their own views of the matter but although there may be a conspiracy of misrepresentation on the part of some people who feel surprised at our attitude we still hope and believe that there are ways open to us of getting this Statement published in England and bringing it to the notice of the British public. I shall refer to the subject later on in my concluding speech and I am now only asking you to express your approval by endorsing this Statement. I am authorising your executive to take such steps as are possible to bring it to the notice of the British public and leaving it to our friends here to indulge in comments to their hearts satisfaction. This, therefore, is presented to you without any apology or without any regret and I hope you will express your unqualified approval of it by adopting it.

The proposition was agreed to.

RESOLUTION No. 17.

Next Session of the Federation.

The President then moved the last resolution on the agenda. It was as follows :

Next Session of
the Federation.

Resolved that the Eleventh Annual Session of the National Liberal Federation of India be held at Allahabad at such time in the year 1928 as may hereafter be decided.

He said: LADIES & GENTLEMEN :

The President.

The last resolution I have got to place before you is that the 11th annual session of the National Liberal Federation of India will be held at Allahabad in 1928. On behalf of the United Provinces and on my own behalf, I have much pleasure to invite the Liberal Federation to meet there and I hope you will all respond to the invitation which is extended with great cordiality. We shall try to make you as comfortable as it is possible to do so this time of the year and I hope you will accept the invitation.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Vote of Thanks to the Chair.

Vote of Thanks
to the President
The Hon. Sir
P. C. Sethna.

The Hon. Sir Phiroze Sethna in proposing a hearty vote of thanks to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru said: Ladies and Gentlemen,

The work of this session of the National Liberal Federation has now been completed very successfully. For this result we are

indebted to all the organisers but to no one as much as to our esteemed President, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. I deem it, therefore, a matter of pride and privilege to be asked to move a vote of thanks to him. The National Liberal Federation amongst the political parties in this country is comparatively speaking young in age. Previous to 1918 the Liberals were associated with the Indian National Congress. In fact they were the founders of it but about that date, the sober views all throughout propounded by them did not meet with the acceptance of a section of the congress people and they gained the ascendancy. This made it necessary for the Liberals to secede and we started this Federation. Its first session was held in this city exactly nine years ago from now so that the present session is the tenth. It is a strange coincidence that the very first session of the Indian National congress held 43 years ago in 1885 met in this very city and a further coincidence that in this very year when Government have deliberately gone out of their way to antagonise their supporters in the Liberal ranks and for the matter of that the whole country, the Federation met again in Bombay.

Vote of thanks
to the President

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When the Federation was first started in 1918 the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms were being seriously discussed and those who called themselves Swarajists were by no means enamoured with the instalment that was likely to be offered and were it not for the Liberals, these reforms might have been wrecked at their very inception. It will be no exaggeration to say that we saved the Reform Scheme which ran serious risk of being wrecked. Government, therefore, have reason to be thankful to the Liberal Party for the solid support this party extended to the Reforms. In fact the Liberal Party whilst clamouring for further advances for our rights have always proceeded on constitutional lines and they have done so because of such wise counsel as they have always had from their eminent leaders like the late Mr. Dadabhoj Naoroji, Mr. Gokhale, Sir Surendranath Banerjea and many others. Their mantle has fallen to-day on such staunch Liberals as our esteemed President, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, Sir Sivaswamy Iyer and very many others. These leaders have been directing us on right lines throughout and we are confident that under their leadership we shall progress as we ought to.

Now Ladies and Gentlemen, if 1918 was a momentous year when we started the National Liberal Federation it cannot be denied that 1928 is equally momentous. In 1918 we were wholeheartedly with Government but in 1928 we have good reason to oppose Government in a particular matter. I refer of course to the Statutory Commission on which it has pleased the British Cabinet not to offer a single seat to any Indian, whereas in fairness there ought to have been at least half as many Indians as Europeans. Much has been said and written on this subject

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ever since the announcement was made that the Royal Statutory Commission will consist of only seven Britishers. It is not for me to dwell on the subject any further than to say that we are entirely at one with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru who was the first to sound the alarm and point out that this action on the part of the British Cabinet was a positive insult to India as a whole. We cling to this opinion and in all honor we cannot possibly think of having anything to do with the Commission as it is constituted at present.

As you know, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru some years ago went as a representative of the Government of India to the Imperial Conference. I have not had the time to look up the exact words used by him at the memorable speech he made at the Conference but which were something to the effect that if India was really regarded as an equal partner in the British Empire then Indians should not be made to enter the house by the stable door but by its main entrance. This is exactly what has been our feeling in the matter of the treatment that has been extended to us throughout and particularly at the present moment. India is a component part of the British Empire. India is the brightest jewel in the Empire. I for one regard it as a fortunate circumstance that England and India are so united and at the same time I believe that we are indispensable to one another. I would go further and say that England without India cannot be regarded by the world at large as that great British Empire which it is today. It behoves England, therefore, to treat India and Indians in the same way as they do the other parts of the Empire.

It was most essential that at this particular juncture we should have for our President a person who possesses all the necessary qualifications that are requisite in one who is called upon to fill so distinguished an office. I am reminded of the opinion on this subject expressed by Delane the famous Editor of the *London Times* who laid down that such an individual must possess (1) imperturbable good temper, tact and patience (2) previous legal training, if possible, (3) absence of bitter partisanship in his former career (4) the possession of innate gentlemanly feeling which involuntarily command respect and deference and lastly (5) personal dignity in voice and manner. I am sure there is no one amongst you who will deny Sir Tej Bahadur the possession of all these attributes in the fullest degree. His good temper, tact and patience have been manifest all throughout the proceedings of the session but more so in deliberations of the Subjects Committee where they are needed to a far greater extent. As to his legal training, all of you here know that he has filled the highest position in the land in this particular department, having occupied the post of the Law Member of the Viceroy's Council. I attach great importance to the third qualification viz. absence of bitter partisanship and I cannot do better than quote his own words when he was a Law Member that as

such he belonged to no religion and no party and so acted to the letter. In fact, there is no Indian leader today who is doing more to promote unity between Hindus and Mahomedans and I may add he would be the first to promote a proper understanding between Government and the Indian Liberals if only Government both here and in England did not treat Indian opinion with scorn and contumely. As regards his innate gentlemanly feelings there is no question for he has always commanded respect amongst all sections of the people, high or low, rich or poor. I need say nothing about his personal dignity in voice and manner. You have had ample evidence of it these last three days.

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to the President.

The Hon. Sir
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Sethna.

It is our good fortune that we shall have throughout the year at the head of the Federation so eminent an Indian as our worthy President. He will have to bear the brunt of the work no doubt, but we who are associated with him as members of the Working Committees or as members of the Federation must do all in our power not only to carry out his instructions but to help the cause of the Federation and thereby the cause of India as best we can. It is well said that knowledge will not fall from Heaven any more than wheat or potatoes. These come after hard work at tillage and the ability to run a country or run a Federation or any concern successfully demands the hardest intellectual labour. No man uninstructed in seamanship would risk taking the job of steering a vessel. We want not only an expert captain but also an expert crew. We shall all prove helpful if we follow Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru's able leadership. In the multitude of counsel there is wisdom and perhaps a just view and if the young men of whom there are so many present here this afternoon are going to make a fine thing of India, let them begin by amassing knowledge equal to the job and promote the work of the Federation in all its details.

In Sir Tej Bahadur, we have the living embodiment of the best traditions of Liberalism. In all that we have acted and done as a political body, we have always been guided by what we have to be in the best interests of our Motherland. We found ourselves opposed to the non-co-operation movement. We were called traitors and denounced by our own countrymen but that did not prevent us from pursuing our appointed path of duty. Now, that the turn has come, when we find ourselves opposed to Government, the discovery is made by that very body of men who landed us to the skies as sober politicians that we are a body of disappointed selfseekers: But our President has shown that we are to be bought neither for a price nor to be intimidated by villification; and for thus vindicating us, not only the Liberal Federation but our people as a whole, our thanks are due to our President.

I am confident that I am voicing the sentiments of you all when I tell Sir Tej Bahadur on behalf of you all, "you are our

guide, philosopher and friend, lead us to the fray and we shall follow you to a man," I now move a cordial vote of thanks to the President (Loud applause).

Mr. D. G. Dalvi seconded the vote of :thanks and it was carried with acclamation.

Sir Chimanlal Setalvad then garlanded the President amidst enthusiastic applause.

President's concluding address.

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Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru who, on rising to reply, received a great ovation. He said:

Sir Chirnanlal Setalvad, brother delegates, ladies and gentlemen.

My first duty now is to acknowledge with all the sincerity I can command the very kind language in which my distinguished friend Sir Pheroze Sethna has expressed his approval and I take it the approval of you all of my conduct in the chair. I am afraid in whatever other respects Sir Phiroze Sethna may appear to be a 'moderate', in his generosity he is certainly not a moderate. I almost felt that if I could exercise my privilege as a president of this Conference I should call him to order but I know that Sir Phiroze Sethna is one of the most sincere men in the country. I, therefore, return to you, Sir, my humble and respectful thanks and I also thank my fellow Liberals for the kind manner in which they received that exaggerated appreciation of my work from my distinguished friend. I desire more particularly to thank them all for the manner in which they have supported me on this momentous occasion.

Having made my acknowledgements to Sir Phiroze Sethna and to you all fellow Liberals, I have a more pleasant and as sincere a duty to perform and that is to convey on my behalf and on your behalf our sense of obligation to the Reception Committee and in that connection I would mention the name of our distinguished and trusted friend and colleague, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, whose long association with the Constitutional Party which has had the privilege of being led by him on many occasions is acknowledged with pleasure and pride and entitle him to the greatest respect on our part. I also desire on your behalf and on my behalf to convey our thanks to our indefatigable Secretary, Mr. Dalvi, whose zeal in the cause of Liberalism and whose irrepressible optimism about our future are assets of great value to us as a Party. And with Mr. Dalvi, I would associate the names of our friends Mr. Vasant Rao S. Ravut and Mr. V. R. Bhende who for the last four or five days have spared no pains in being serviceable to every one of us. May I also convey our thanks to the young girls who every day gave us beautiful music and to the volunteers who made themselves so useful to us all.

After making these personal acknowledgments I would ask your attention just for a brief while to a few observations that I propose to make on this occasion. If I were asked today to sum up briefly the proceedings of the Federation during the last three days in a few words I would say that they were characterised by two leading features. First the definition of your position as a constitutional party in respect of a matter of a constitutional character in a most constitutional manner, and secondly the definite adoption of an attitude of helpfulness and friendliness in a matter which is of the most vital importance to the progress of this country, namely the Hindu-Mahomedan question. Now these are to my mind the two leading features of the present session of this Federation and if you have achieved any success in regard to both these questions, in clearing the air and in paving the way for future work, I think in whatever direction you may or may not have succeeded, you can certainly congratulate yourselves on having achieved success in regard to these two important matters.

Now, gentlemen, with regard to the Statutory Commission, it was a matter of common knowledge that under the Government of India Act the Secretary of State was bound at some time or other to place the names of certain persons before Parliament to constitute a Commission for the purposes specified in that section. Now, as I ventured to point out in my original speech, Indian political opinion representing a very much larger body of men than we represent has during the last ten years, steadily, persistently and unswervingly contended that the reservation of the right to determine the pace of the progress of this country and the stages through which that progress should be made by Parliament itself was neither just nor wise. On the other hand we who broke away from our associates in public life frankly recognised at that time that having regard to the British constitution it was inevitable, whether we liked it or not, that that power should remain in the hands of Parliament, but while we acknowledge the supremacy of Parliament and while we do still recognise the supremacy as a constitutional body, we are bound to say to-day that we never for a moment thought and indeed there was no justification for any such thought that that preamble meant or that it was intended to bear or was capable of bearing the interpretation, either reading it by itself or reading it in conjunction with section 84 A of the Government of India Act, that the agency to be appointed by Parliament for exploring further avenues would be exclusively a British agency at any time. We sincerely hoped and trusted that the spirit inaugurated by Mr. Montagu at that time and which was accepted by members of all political parties in England would be followed on an occasion like this when Parliament decided to discharge its statutory obligations.

As Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer pointed out in his penetrative analysis of the Government of India Act yesterday, there was

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nothing in either the preamble or Section 84 A of the Act to prevent Parliament from appointing either an entirely Indian Commission or for the matter of that an entirely English Commission. It is really a question of prudence, discretion and statesmanship as to whether the commission to be appointed should be entirely Indian or entirely English or partly Indian and partly English. So far as the legal argument of Lord Birkenhead is concerned, with all humility I venture to say that if Lord Birkenhead was not the Secretary of State but if he was occupying the Woolsack and if any lawyer, howsoever high or eminent, even though he might be of the same eminence as that of Sir John Simon had put forward for his acceptance as Lord Chancellor the interpretation which he himself put before the House of Lords, it would have been laughed out and Lord Birkenhead himself would have felt shocked at the violence that was being done to the plain language of the Statute, and if anybody had reminded Lord Birkenhead while sitting on the Woolsack that the framers of the Act really intended to mean by the Commission a purely Parliamentary Commission he would first have asked them who the framers of the Act were, were they men who knew their English, were they Englishmen? If they were Englishmen did they not know their own mother tongue, were they at that time not advised by eminent constitutional lawyers and by capable draftsmen? Why was it then that the framers of the Act would not use or did not use proper language to give expression to their innermost thoughts? The argument would have been inadmissible in any court of law whether in England or anywhere else.

Proceeding, Sir Tej Bahadur said: The argument of Lord Birkenhead would have been inadmissible in any court of law whether in England or in India. Therefore, so far as the legal character of that argument is concerned I will ask you to dismiss it as an argument of despair started by a Counsel who wanted to persuade a jury in a case like that by putting forward specious reasons. When, however, you come to the question of prudence and discretion and statesmanship you have got to ask why is it that in the year 1927, when it became necessary to reduce to practice the professed Indo-British partnership in a commonwealth in which both Britain and India are interested, you find all the assets going into the pockets of the British partner and all the liabilities being heaped on the head of the Indian partner. I put it to you, is it a fair conception of any partnership, of any political partnership? Is it consistent with fair dealing, with the proper exercise of discretion, with the breadth of view with which we should like to associate responsible ministers of the Crown? I have no doubt what your answer will be. But let us not forget that the year 1927 is 8 years away from the year 1919 and that at that time the man who ruled the India Office was a quite different man from those who now preside over the destinies

of 300 million men in that building. Well, the Conservatives are at the present moment the dominant factor in Parliament. They command an over-whelming majority. They can do anything they like. The remarkable feature of the situation is that the Liberals should have forgotten all the traditions of their Liberalism and should have subscribed to the grossly strained interpretation the sensational remarks and the exaggerated statements made by responsible statesmen there in regard to the political situation in India. Well, as regards the Labour Party I confess I have many friends among them and I have a great regard for several of them but let me be absolutely frank with you: it would be impossible for any one of us to hold that every single leader of the Labour Party, howsoever high his reputation may be, takes the same view with regard to Indian matters as he would take with regard to what are called home politics. Therefore, when you find that the Conservative majority in the House of Commons has been supported on an occasion like this by the Liberals and by the bulk of the Labour Party the conclusion is inevitable that so far as India is concerned the question of India's advance is not approached from the point of view of India but from the point of view of Imperialism (hear hear.)

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Now, we have accepted this constitution in 1919-20 having differed at that time, deliberately differed, from our fellow countrymen. Having been invited to accept this constitution at that time in the hope and belief which we honestly entertained at that time that the Act of 1919 was going soon to lead to the establishment of responsible Government, our responsibility in regard to this matter of the Commission was much greater than that of any other party in this country. So far as other parties are concerned they have not cared, and they do not care, either for the preamble of the Government of India Act or of Section 84-A. Therefore, on an occasion like this the Liberal Party would have been untrue to its traditions of Liberalism and to its own country if it had not raised its voice and said to the Government here and to the Government in England: Whatever may have been your statements at that time, we take you at your word and we take our stand on the express language of the statute and we charge you with deliberate breach of faith. (Applause). No consideration of sobriety, no consideration of moderation should prevent any Liberal, when he finds that it is a case of breach of faith on the one side and on the other a case of sacrificing the interests of the country in future, from discharging his manifest duty (Applause). It is from that point of view that I have approached this question.

Now: I venture to think, that is at any rate my belief, that there are scores of Liberals here in this country who, notwithstanding their attitude in regard to this question of the Statutory Commission, are as solicitous about the orderly and constitutional developments of India's politics as any Englishman might

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be, because we all realise that it is our country and that it is up to us that we shall take no hasty steps no such steps as might imperil the safety of the country in future or bring the entire constitution to a standstill.

Well gentlemen, that being the position our course is absolutely clear and that is that we should tell the Government here and the Government in England: We recognize the plenitude of your power; we recognize that you have got the power to appoint any kind of commission, to adopt any kind of agency for examining the position here but so far as we are concerned, neither on grounds self-respect nor in view of the interests of this country, we shall not by our submission and acquiescence put you in a position to tell the British voter and the British Parliament at the end of this so-called inquiry that you have had the support of even the saner section of the country. That is the exact position.

Now during the last six weeks or so since this announcement was made I will beg you to examine the position which has arisen in our country. In the first place there is the undoubted and undeniable fact that so far as the leaders of the Liberal Party are concerned all of them without a single exception either on this platform or on any other platform have absolutely and in an unqualified manner condemned this step of the Government. Not only have they condemned this step of the Government in an unqualified manner but they have in an equally unqualified and positive language advised their fellow Liberals and the country at large that so far as this Commission is concerned "let it come and let it go but we take no notice of it; we shall have no dealings with it in any shape or form." The responsibility of the Government must be undivided. They have denied to us any share in the responsibility, real responsibility and Government have no right to ask us now to assume responsibility for decisions to which we cannot really be a party. (Applause). In other words the charge of non-co-operation cannot possibly lie against us. I charge the Government of India in your name, I charge the India Office and I charge the British Government with having non-co-operated with the saner section of the country (loud applause) and as I said on the 11th of November at Allahabad addressing a public meeting at Allahabad it is not we who have occasion to feel concerned as much as the Government, because they have by their conduct shown that they are ready to take a leaf out of the book of non-co-operators whom they have condemned.

Well, when arguments of a specious character advanced by eminent statemen in Parliament failed and when all their persuasions failed and when their cajolery failed and when their expostulations to several of us failed, then a campaign of vilification and, misrepresentation was started in the Press and it is flourishing still. Visions of riots are being held up in *terrorem* over us.

Well, as Sir Moropant Joshi said yesterday, the responsibility for these must lie with those extremists who are day in and day out exasperating Indian sentiment by the mischievous manner in which they are carrying on the campaign of vilification against Indians and the persistent manner in which they are misrepresenting the case of India by an iniquitous and mischievous propaganda both in India and in England.

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The Liberal Party will not deserve to live as a party even for 24 hours if they should submit on these conditions to idea of co-operation either with the Government here or with those who profess to speak for the British nation. It has been said "Oh yes, but Liberals are not sincere in their professions about the so-called boycott." Well, let us wait and see. Many of us have been in public life for 25 or 30 years. We know how propaganda is worked by our enemies; we know how seeds of dissension are sown; we know how some of our men have at times played into our enemies' hands. It has been said that there is nothing in common between us and the men who have met at Madras and that while we are trying to please them we are only hoping that some golden bridge may be built for us. Gentlemen, let me tell you this thing plainly that there is this common between us and not only the men who have met at Madras but the entire country, the Hindus and a considerable section of the Mahomedans and a considerable section of the Zamindars that we have no confidence in this Commission and that we are not going to have anything to do with it in any shape or form. Well as regards the golden bridge being built for us, the answer is very plain. The golden bridge can be built only by those who have by their conduct shown that they are not prepared to co-operate with us. So far as we are concerned we have told them and we tell them again, "If you want to work single handed you are quite welcome to do so; if you want our co-operation and our goodwill then courteous gestures from Sir John Simon or any laxity in procedure on his part or mere access to, or mere leave to look at, the records of the Government or the official minutes of the Government, or the privilege of examining witnesses will not do, the slight must be removed instead of intricate methods being adopted the Government should have the courage to take the straightforward course of saying "Oh yes, we have taken a wrong course and we are going to set it right" and it is when they do it that there will be no occasion for dissociation or refusal to participate so far at any rate as our party is concerned. So long as the Government take their stand upon their right to appoint any agency which they like and so long as they say that they are going to exclude Indians from that agency, speaking for myself, no amount of courteous gestures Sir John Simon may make and no threats from newspapers, which I believe, are out for doing mischief and whose remarks are in the nature of wish being father to thought, will persuade me to submit to an arrangement of this character. (Applause).

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Therefore, gentlemen, your position is clear and should be clear. The Liberal Party has never believed in any dramatic or theatrical way of demonstration and I venture to think that during the last one month or so that the Liberal leaders have spoken or written on this question in the Press they have said nothing from which they can recede or for which they can offer any apology or for which there is any occasion for regret. We have said on other platforms, we have said here and we say it now that so far as this Commission is concerned we are not going, in any shape or form, to associate with it, and the best way of implementing it is to try to persuade the members of the Legislature at Delhi and in the Provinces to accept our advice, because if the Legislatures refuse to co-operate with the Simon Commission or to go before the Simon Commission we shall have shown that an essential portion of the structure built by the Government has fallen to the ground and the government will then pay attention to the situation and consider whether they should devise other means by which they can carry the country with them. (Applause). That has been our scheme and that is our scheme and that will be our scheme.

Therefore, let not a calculating press sow seeds of disunion between one party and another and try to hold up threats of the character which have been held up during the last few days. Now gentlemen, if this is the position in India the position in England, so far as the presentation of our view point is concerned has been worse for some months past. Barring the honourable exception of the "Manchester Guardian" and the "Daily Herald," it has been impossible for any Indian to get the Indian version of Indian things put in any paper in England and I do say that for several months past there has been a sort of freemasonry among the English papers to keep out the Indian point of view absolutely from the British voter and it is at a juncture like this when the atmosphere is poisoned by the publication of the scurrilous book of Miss Katherine Mayo that this Commission has been started.

What hope is there for us that this Commission is going to do anything great for us? If it is only going to scrap the machinery to readjust the administration, well I do not think by dissociating with that Commission we stand to lose much. So far as the Government of India and the India office are concerned you may be sure that they will be left absolutely intact. I have already dealt with the argument which has been repeatedly urged by certain communal leaders namely, that if we Hindus do not go before the Commission other communities will steal a march over us. Well within the next two or three days we shall be able to know what reply the other communities have got to give to this argument. Even then you may take it that there will be men of a certain type in this country of three hundred and fifteen millions, men who will be always willing to steal a march

over their neighbours but that there are some men of that type can be no argument against our following the course which appeals to our wisdom and to our sense of honour.

I do not wish to take any further time of yours on this question. I pass on to the next leading feature of the sitting of this Federation and that is the resolution that you have adopted in regard to the communal question. The resolution as you know was drafted the day before yesterday and put before the Subjects Committee yesterday before we came to know of the compromise which has been arranged at Madras. Although we belong to a different party yet we rejoice in the compromise which has been arranged at Madras and I desire to congratulate the leaders who are responsible for it. We sincerely hope and trust that the arrangement will be implemented by action in every part of India and that some of us will take it up as a missionary work to spread an atmosphere of goodwill in every part of the country. Speaking frankly I do not care half so much as to what attitude you take up towards the Simon Commission as I do about the Hindu-Moslem union for it is my firm conviction that when once you have settled your differences of a communal character, when the minorities whether they are Mahomedans or Sikhs or any others are satisfied that their position and lot in a self-governing India is going to be one of safety, honour and progress then I think you need not bother yourself about the Statutory Commission. You will then easily reach or very nearly reach the goal and it would be impossible for any one here or in any country to stand in your way. It is for that reason that I attach far greater importance to this resolution and the action that may be taken in accordance with that resolution and it is for that reason that I desire to offer my hearty congratulations to Pandit Malaviya, the leader of Hindu community, and to Mahomedan leaders for having adopted this sane attitude at Madras and I have no doubt that their action will lead to far reaching consequences. On behalf of myself and on behalf of the Liberals I can make this definite promise that in any attempt that may be made in the settlement of these differences any party may count upon our undivided support and allegiance.

Gentlemen, I have nothing more to say. I again thank you for all the attention and courtsey that you have extended to me. I sincerely hope and trust that we shall be firm in our resolve and that we shall not allow our vision to be blurred. The task of constitutional reformers is always a difficult one. We Liberals might be weak in numbers but the principles of liberalism are always strong and will always continue to be strong. We have every reason to congratulate ourselves that the very principle of co-operation for which we fought in 1919 and 1920 came to be adopted by other parties a few years later. I say so in no spirit of party triumph, I say so with no desire to blame them any more than they have a right to blame us for the

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attitude we have adopted. I only refer to that in support of my contention that the principles of Liberalism are strong and assert themselves sooner or later. (loud and continued applause).

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The tenth Session of the National Liberal Federation then terminated amidst enthusiastic scenes.

Mr. Hirdaya Nath Kunzru addressed the gathering before dispersing as follows :

I have three announcements to make to you. The newly elected National Liberal Council will meet at 8 o'clock to-morrow morning at the Servants of India Society, Sandhurst Road. The Committee which you have appointed to draw up a constitution will meet at the same place at 9-30 to-morrow morning and the Social Conference will meet in this hall at 11-30 a. m. to-morrow.



Appendix A.

Members of the Reception Committee.

- 1 Sir Chimanlal H. Setalvad, K.C.I. E, LL. D. 113, Esplanade Road, Bombay.
- 2 Mr. D. G. Dalvi, M. A. LL. B., 73, Charni Road, Bombay,
- 3 Mr. N. M. Joshi, M. L. A. Servants of India Society, Bombay.
- 4 Mr. Vasantao S. Ravut, French Bridge, Chaupaty, Bombay.
- 5 Mr. R. K. Tatnis, 364, Thakurdwar, Bombay.
- 6 Mr. J. R. B. Jeejeebhoy Alice Building, Hornby Road, Bombay.
- 7 Mr. M. D. Altekar M. A. Hajee Cassum Blocks, French Bridge, Bombay
- 8 Mr. J. P. Mehta B. A. LL. B. Solicitor, Alexandra Road, Gamdevi, Bombay.
- 9 Mr. D. L. Vaidya, Solicitor, 121, Esplanade Road, Bombay.
- 10 Sir, Hormusji C. Dinshaw Kt. M. V. O., O. B. E. Adenwala Bagh, Tardeo.
- 11 Dr. B. V. Rayakar, J. P. Bhai Jeevanji Lane, Thakurdwar, Bombay.
- 12 Mr. Y. V. Rege, B. A. LL. B. (Solicitor) Lalgir Mansion, Harvey Road, Gamdevi, Bombay.
- 13 Mr. K. J. Dubash, B. A. LL. B. (Solicitor) 79, Meadows Street, Bombay.
- 14 Mr. R. S. Navalkar, B. A., LL. B. Vakil High Cour, 17, Bhai Jeevanji Lane, Thakurdwar, Bombay.
- 15 Mr. D. Madhav Rao, "Govind Vilas" Triplane Madras.
- 16 Mr. Madhavlal M. Bhatt, J. P. Alice Building, Fort, Bombay.
- 17 Mr. S. N. Gamadia, M. A. Pedder Road, Bombay.
- 18 Dr. P. N. Daruwala, LL. D. BAR-AT-LAW, Gowalia Tank, Bombay.
- 19 Mr. Rustom K. R. Cama, (Solicitor) Yusuf Building, Esplanade Rd, Bombay
- 20 Mr. Gopaldas V. Desai, Rasul Bhavau, Nadiad, (Gujarat.)
- 21 Dr. S. S. Batliwala, L. M. & S. Gulcher Lodge, Sopari Bag Road Bombay.
- 22 Mr. J. M. Ranina, Advocate, Sandhurst Bridge, Sandhurst Road, Bombay.
- 23 Mr. J. D. Mahalaxmiwala, C/o The Times of India, Bombay.
- 24 Mr. M. B. Chothia, Motilal Mansion, Hammam Street, Fort Bombay.
- 25 Mr. Fazal I. Rahimtulla, B.A., M.L.A., Ismail Building, Hornby Rd, Bombay
- 26 Mr. H. R. Dadabhoy, Asan Building, Ballard Estate, Bombay.
- 27 Mr. Faiz B. Tyabji, Bar-at-Law, Somerset Lodge, Warden Road, Bombay.
- 28 Mr. N. J. Kohiyar, (Solicitor) 113, Esplanade Road, Bombay.
- 29 Mr. V. N. Chandavarkar, Bar-at-Law, Pedder Road, Malbar Hill, Bombay.
- 30 Dr. D. A. De'monte, Summit View, Bandra Hill, Bandra.
- 31 Rao Bahadur M. W. Pradhan, Sai Pradhan Bag, Santa Cruz.
- 32 Mr. V. N. Gorakshakar, Patil Vakil's Bunglow. Santa Cruz.
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- 36 Principal T. A. Kulkarni, H. P. T. College, Nasik.
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- 40 Mr. Amiruddin S. Tyebji, Little Gibbs Road, Malabar Hill, Bombay.
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- 44 Mr. C. M. Gandhi, Advocate. Nanpura Road, Surat.
- 45 Mrs. Laxmibai G. K. Gadgil, 580, Sadashiv Peth, Poona.
- 46 Mr. G. K. Gadgil, B. A., Bar-at Law, 580, Sadashiv Peth, Poona.

- 47 Mr. J. R. Gharpure, B. A., LL. B. Angre's Wadi, Girgaon, Bombay.
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- 78 Mr. Shawaksha H. Khasukhan, Nanpura. Surat.
- 79 Mr. R. R. Bakhale, Servants of India Society, Sandhurst Road, Bombay.
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- 127 Mr. L. G. Mahajani, Luxmi Bhavhan, Behind Training College for me n Sadashiv Peth Poona.
- 128 Mr. S. K. Sindkar, Inamdar, Narayn Peth, Poona city.
- 129 Mr. S. K. Godbole, High Court Pleader, 859, Sadashiv Peth Poona.
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- 148 Mr. L. X. Rego, Militia House, Matharpacady, Mazgaon Bombay.
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- 150 Prof. C. N. Vakil, M. Sc., Cutch Castle, Sandhurst Road, Bombay.
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- 152 Dr. Moreshwar Chintaman Javle J. P. 684, Dadar, Bombay.
- 153 Lakshuman H. Chaudhari, L. C. E. Road North of French Bridge, Bombay.
- 154 Mr. Kashinath D. Khote, J. P. Laud Mansion Bombay
- 155 Mr. Gopal Krishna Devadhar M. A. C. I. E. President, Servants of India Society, Sandhurst Rd., Bombay
- 156 Mr. Gopal Balkrishna Chitale B. A. LL. B. Dandekar Bldg, Charni Road Girgaon, Bombay.
- 157 Mr. Shridhar Govind Bhawe, Radha Bhavan, Matunga, Bombay.
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- 160 Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai, M. A. LL. B. (Advocate) Warden Rd. Bombay
- 161 Sir. Ibrahim Rahimtullah Kt. C. I. E. Ismail Bldg. Hornby Rd., Bombay .
- 162 Mr. A. R. Dintimkar Nemaui Building, opp. Parsi Statue Byculla, Bombay.
- 163 Mr. Vithalrao S. Alkonde 19-23 Kamatipura, 10th Street, Byculla, Bombay,
- 164 Mr. Ganpatrao V. N. Guntuk 101 A Kamatipura Bazar Road Byculla, Bombay.
- 165 Mr. Ramkrishna Mahadev Salvi, Shreenath Ashram, Vile Parle, B. B. & C. I. Ry.
- 166 Mr. N. C. Narasinha Acharya B. A. LL. B. C/o Mr. S. S. Persha, Examiner Press, Bldg., Medows Street, Fort, Bombay
- 167 Mr. Venkat Limbaji Kodal Kamatipura 8th Street, P. O. Byculla Bombay
- 168 Mr. Jafferbhai Hajeebhoy, Bar-at-Law, Daval Hall, Warden Road, Bombay.
- 169 Mr. R. P. Karandikar, High Court Pleader, Satara.
- 170 Mr. Jamshed N. R. Mehta, Karachi.
- 171 Sardar M. Govind Rao, Dewas Junior, (C. I.)
- 172 Mr. Jeha gir R. Dubash, Carnac Bridge, Bombay.

Appendix B.
LIST OF DELEGATES.

Bombay Presidency.

- 1 Mr. V. R. Bhende, Journalist, 10, Saraswati Bag. Andheri.
- 2 Mr. R. S. Padbidri M. A. Journalist, Saraswat Bldgs., Gamdevi, Bombay.
- 3 Mr. S. S. Mani, Servants of India Society, Girgaon, Bombay.
- 4 Mr. Mahadeo Ramkrishna Bade, B. A., B. Sc. Social Service League, Girgaon, Bombay.
- 5 Mr. S. S. Washikar, Journalist, The Dnyan Prakash Office, Sandhurs, Road, Bombay.
- 6 Mr. Syed Munawar B. A. M. L. C. 237, Ghelabhoy Street, Bombay.
- 7 Mr. P. G. Naik Byculla Station Road, Bombay.
- 8 Mr. S. G. Gokhale M. A. Member Servants of India Society, Bombay.
- 9 Mr. Digambar Keshav Rajguru, B. A. 16, Mohan Building, Girgaon,
- 10 Mr. N. C. Bhesania, High Court Vakil C/o N. H. Moos, Bar-at-Law, Alice Building, Hornby Road., Bombay.
- 11 Mr. Yadneshwar V. Bhandarkar B. A. LL. B. Vakil High Court, Khotachi Wadi, Girgaon, Bombay.
- 12 Mr. Vasudev G. Bhandarkar, B.A. LL. B. 60. Khotachi Wadi G, Bombay.
- 13 Mrs. Shantabai Ranade C/o Dr. N. K. Ranade, Nowroji St. Thakurdwar, Bombay.
- 14 Mr. Anant Pandurang Bhate Gangaram Kahatris Wadi, Thakurdwar, Bombay
- 15 Mr. Vasant Ramchandra Nerurkar, M.A. Urankera's House, Mugbhat, Bombay
- 16 Mr. Vinayak Parashuram Nagpurkar Ambewadi, Girgaon Bombay.
- 17 Mr. Vishnu Laxman Kolhatker Social Service League, Bombay,
- 18 Mr. Purushottam S. Phalnikar Badam Wadi, Rele's Chawl, Girgaon Back Road, Bombay.
- 19 Mr. Dinkar Sakharam Varde B. A., LL. B. Bhai Jeevanji Lane Thakurdwar, Bombay 2.
- 20 Mr. Ganpat Vishwanath Lad, Govardhan Mansion, New Bhatwadi Road, Bombay.
- 21 Mr. Anandrao Sohiroba Telang, Krishabai Bldg., Benham Hall Lane, Girgaon Road, Bombay.
- 22 Mr. H. A. Hussein B.A., Bar-at-Law, 11 Mathew Road, Bombay 4.
- 23 Mr. S. B. Baikar B.A. 50, Sadashiv Street, Bombay 4.
- 24 Mr. Sadanand Lakshuman Kapadi, B.Sc., 5, Chunam Lane, Bombay 7.
- 25 Mr. K. N. Mahale, Messrs. Mahale & Co., Marwadi Bazar, Bombay.
- 26 Mr. G. Y. Chitnis Ph.D., Prarthana Samaj, Bombay 4.
- 27 Mr. K. S. Ramchandra Iyer Ewart House, Tamarind Lane, Fort, Bombay
- 28 Mr. Dattatraya Govind Kale, Journalist, Ville Parle, (B. B. & C. I. Rly).
- 29 Mr. Ramchandra Narayan Sohoni Servants of India Society, Bombay.
- 30 Mr. Vasantrao Mangesh Laud, B.A., LL. B. 1, Kandewadi, Bombay.
- 31 Mr. H. Ezekial B.A., Manager,, Infants and Public Milk Supplying Co., Palghar (B. B. & C. I. Rly).
- 32 Mr. Martin A. R. Sequira B. Com. Khan Bldg., Reay Road, Bombay.
- 33 Mr. Shanker Vishnu Phadnis B.A., S.T.C., Headmaster. R. M. E. School, Bombay.
- 34 Miss Khorshed C. Taraporewalla (Principal) Adi Mansion, Gowalia Tank Road, Bombay 7.
- 35 Mr. M. C. Taraporewalla, Adi Mansion, Gowalia Tank Road, Bombay 7.
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- 38 Mrs. Saibai Ranade, I.C.P.S., Bombay.
- 39 Mrs. Yamunabai Joshi, Bombay.
- 40 Mr. R. V. Shroff, 65-67, 3rd Bhoiwada, Bhuleshwar, Bombay.
- 41 Mr. M. H. Vakil, BA, LLB., Ville Parla,
- 42 Mr. D. B. Desai Warden Rd., Bombay.

- 43 Mr. Keshav Kashinath Gadgil B.A., High Court, Bombay.
- 44 Mr. Keshavji Ramji, Warden Road, Bombay.
- 45 Mr. Ardeshir R. Dubash Plumber Bldg. 2nd Charni Road, Bombay 4.
- 46 Mr. Prof. Vinayak Anand Gadgil M. A. Aanuman Bldgs 7-7 Lamington Road, Bombay
- 47 Mr. Raghunath Sakbaram Ravut French Bridge, Bombay.
- 48 Mr. Yeshwant Sakbaram Ravut -do
- 49 Mr. S. K. Naique, Laxmi Chawl Mohan Bldgs, Girgaon Bombay.
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- 56 Mr. Bhumaya Pachatti Yeshual 81, 3rd Kamatipura Bombay
- 57 Mr. Mahadeorao Mahadeo Khanoray 47 4th Kamatipura, Bombay.
- 58 Mr. Balkrishna Narsooji Kalewar 4th Balaram Street Grant Road, Bombay
- 59 Mr. A. N. Joshi, Elphinstane College Hostel, Bombay.
- 60 Mr. Datta Ganesh Kale, High Court Pleader, Nariman Building, Bombay

Poona.

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- 74 Prof. Vishru Narayan Kumbhare M. A. Limaye Wadi, Sadashiv Peth, Poona City
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- 86 Mrs. Tarabai Patwardhan 383 Narayan Peth, Poona City
- 87 Mrs. Kamalabai Gandhi 569 Sadashiv Peth „
- 88 Mr. Sridar Ganesh Vaze B. A. Servants of India Society Poona
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- 90 Mr. P. B. Chiplunkar, 27th, Shanwar Peth, Poona City.

Satara.

- 91 Mr. Sadashiv Krishna Joshi, B. A. LL. B. Satara
 92 Mr. Govind Bidesh Poukshe Bavani Peth, Satara City
 93 Mr. Raghunath Vishnu Deshpande Sadashiv Peth, Satara City
 94 Mr. Shridar Vishnu Joshi Machi Satara City.
 95 Mr. Vagbhat Narayn Deshpande, B. A. LL. B. Sadashiv Peth, Satara City
 96 Sardar Ramchandra Rao Raghunath Panditrao, Mangalwar Peth, Satara City
 97 Mr. Narahar Gangadhar Joshi B. A. LL. B. Somavar Peth Satara
 98 Mr. Narayan Laxman Hable Wai Satara
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