

REPORT
OF
THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
TWENTY-THIRD SESSION
OF THE
National Liberal Federation of India
HELD AT MADRAS

On 26th, 27th and 28th December, 1941.



MADRAS :

PRINTED AT THE INDIA PRINTING WORKS, MYLAPORE,
AND PUBLISHED BY THE SECRETARY, RECEPTION COMMITTEE, 1942.

90

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CONTENTS

| | PAGE- |
|--|-------|
| TEXT OF RESOLUTIONS PASSED | 1-4 |
| FIRST DAY'S PROCEEDINGS | 5-32 |
| Welcome Address of Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar ... | 5-12 |
| Election of the President | 12-14 |
| President's Address | 14-32 |
| SECOND DAY'S PROCEEDINGS | 33-50 |
| THIRD DAY'S PROCEEDINGS | 50-92 |
| RESOLUTIONS:— | |
| (1) Obituary | 33 |
| (2) The Bhagalpur Ban | 33-41 |
| (3) Pakistan | 41-47 |
| (4) Separate Electorates | 48-50 |
| (5) The War | 50-58 |
| (6) Constitution | 59-73 |
| (7) Defence | 73-80 |
| (8) Condition of Agriculturists | 80-84 |
| (9) War and Industrial Development | 84 |
| (10) Political Prisoners | 84 |
| (11) Civil Defence... .. | 84 |
| (12) Reforms in Indian States | 84 |
| (13) Indians abroad (Indo-Ceylon Report) | 85 |
| (14) Indo-Burma Pact | 85 |
| (15) Office Bearers and Council | 85 |
| (16) Venue of the Next Session | 85 |
| (17) Vote of thanks | 86-90 |
| PRESIDENT'S CONCLUDING SPEECH | 91-92 |
| APPENDIX A. Messages of Sympathy | 92 |
| .. B. Members of the Reception Committee | 92 |
| .. C. List of Delegates | 92 |
| .. D. Council for 1942 | 93 |
| .. E. Working Committee for 1942 | 96 |
| .. F. Constitution of the Federation. | 97 |

RECEPTION COMMITTEE
OF THE
NATIONAL LIBERAL FEDERATION OF INDIA
TWENTY-THIRD SESSION

Office :—SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY, ROYAPETTAH, MADRAS.

OFFICE BEARERS

Chairman.

Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyar, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., LL.D.,
Edward Elliots Road, Mylapore.

Vice-Chairman.

1. Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri, B.A., B.L., C.I.E.,
Edward Elliots Road, Mylapore.
2. Dewan Bahadur V. Bhashyam Aiyangar,
"Vardhani", Kilpauk, Madras.

Honorary Secretaries.

1. Mr. E. Vinayaka Row, B.A., B.L.,
Advocate, Mylapore.
2. Mr. S. R. Venkatraman,
Servants of India Society, Royapettah.

Honorary Treasurer :

Mr. K. Balasubramania Aiyar,
"Ashram", Luz Church Road, Mylapore.

NATIONAL LIBERAL FEDERATION OF INDIA

TWENTY-THIRD SESSION 1941

RESOLUTIONS.

1. THE YEAR'S LOSSES

(a) The late Sir C. Y. Chintamani

The National Liberal Federation of India records with profound grief its sense of the irreparable loss that the Liberal Party and the country have sustained by the death of Sir C. Y. Chintamani. He was an eminent journalist, unwearied public worker and sleepless patriot. The public will long miss his extraordinary memory, unexampled devotion and wide and detailed knowledge of public affairs. The Liberal Party's debt to him is immeasurable as he watched over its prestige and welfare with singular fidelity in the face of great disadvantages and strove hard to maintain its principles and its influence on national affairs.

(b) The late Dr. Rabindranath Tagore

The National Liberal Federation of India laments the passing away of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore as a loss to India of the greatest magnitude. The cause of learning, of the fine arts, especially of music painting and poetry, and indeed of culture of the highest order has suffered a severe loss which the world will not forget for a long time yet. His services to education are scarcely paralleled in the country, while his rare courage and idealism gave public life unique dignity and power. His writings in Bengalee and in English constitute a library rich in wisdom and inspiration and a heritage which posterity will cherish with pride as well as gratitude.

(c) Other Losses

The National Liberal Federation of India places on record its sincere sorrow at the deaths of the Maharajadhiraja of Burdwan, and of Messrs. S. P. Basu of Calcutta and S. B. Gokhale of Nagpur, all three of them men of note who served the country well and faithfully.

2. THE BHAGALPUR BAN

The National Liberal Federation of India deeply deplores the turn that things have taken regarding the Session of the Hindu Maha Sabha that was to have been held in Bhagalpur. The ban placed on it by the Bihar Government is a denial of one of the fundamental rights of citizenship for which there was no justification in the circumstances. The Federation holds that it was the duty of the Bihar administration to afford protection to a lawful meeting of citizens from any apprehended molestation or disturbance. The Federation condemns emphatically the arbitrary action of the Government that has driven the President of the Hindu Maha Sabha and many distinguished members of it into an exceedingly difficult situation in which they have by their conduct earned the sympathy and respect of their countrymen.

3. PAKISTAN

The National Liberal Federation of India is emphatically opposed to any idea of dividing India into Pakistan and Hindustan on communal basis. Such a division in the opinion of the Federation is anti-national, inimical to unity and cohesion of India and entails the danger of disintegrating the national units, resulting in complete disruption of the nation.

4. SEPARATE ELECTORATES

The National Liberal Federation, while agreeable to the safeguarding of the interests of all sections of the people, considers that the aim of India's political evolution should be a democracy not based on considerations of race or creed, and therefore, the Federation is definitely opposed to the permanent existence of communal electorates and the present communal award, at the same time as it would not be practicable to effect this reform immediately owing to existing conditions, it considers that steps should be taken towards the elimination of separate communal electorates by the creation of joint electorates with reserved seats for a definite period."

5. THE WAR

The National Liberal Federation of India feels that the war of aggression started by Nazi Germany, supported by Fascist Italy and Imperial Japan has proved to be a great menace to freedom, peace and tranquillity in the world. The Federation is of the opinion that the forces of progress and Justice in this conflict are represented by the Allied Powers such as Great Britain, America, Soviet Russia and China.

The Federation feels that the present Far East War situation has brought India into the front line of the conflict and therefore appeals both to the Government and the people to view the situation realistically, and mobilise the resources of the country in men and material, to protect the lives of India's teeming millions from the imminent danger which threatens the country. At the same time it feels that the unity between the Government and the people required for the necessary effort will not be possible unless a new psychological atmosphere is created by a change in the policy of His Majesty's Government towards India, which is urgently called for.

6. CONSTITUTION

- (a) The National Liberal Federation of India protests against the Prime Minister's Speech excluding India from the scope of the Atlantic Charter and the recent speeches of Mr. Amery and Lord Linlithgow reiterating the determination of His Majesty's Government to make no change in their policy towards India.
- (b) The Federation while regarding the recent expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council by the appointment of additional Indian members as a step in the right direction, considers it as entirely inadequate to meet the needs of the situation. It is of the opinion that the Central Government should be so reconstructed as to have a fully national character. The executive Council should consist entirely of non-official Indians who should take charge of all portfolios including those of Defence and Finance. The reconstructed Government should deal with all questions of policy on the basis of joint responsibility, and the British Government should not ordinarily interfere with any policy that has the support of the Indianised Executive and the Central Legislature.
- (c) In regard to all Inter-Imperial and International matters the reconstructed Government should be treated on the same footing as Dominion Governments. The Federation further demands that in order to remove the doubts and apprehensions that have been created as to the genuineness of the intentions of His Majesty's Government regarding the future constitutional status of India, it should be immediately declared that India will enjoy the position of equality in regard to both status and functions with England and the Dominions within a period not exceeding two years after the conclusion of the war.
- (d) In the opinion of the Federation, the gravity of the International situation makes the acceptance of the demands put forward above.

a matter of urgent importance. It is necessary at this juncture that the Government should take bold and statesmanlike steps to bring about a unity between the people and the Government in the best interest of both India and England.

7. DEFENCE

The National Liberal Federation reiterating its demand for a radical change in the defence policy of the Government feels that the war has shown that for making adequate preparations for the security of India, it is essential that (i) the defence portfolio should be entrusted to an Indian member who commands the confidence of the people and that (ii) the defence forces of India should be organized on a fully national basis. It recognises the progress that has been made with regard to the manufacture of war-materials but is thoroughly dissatisfied with the policy in other respects. It urges in particular (a) that the policy of Indianisation in all grades of the army, navy and air force should be implemented; (b) that the classification of people as martial and non-martial should be given up and the army recruited from all provinces and classes to a greater extent than now.

8. CONDITION OF AGRICULTURIST

This Federation urges upon the Provincial Governments to consider and improve the condition of those engaged in agriculture and take the necessary steps in that behalf by making *inter alia* such changes in the system of Taxation of Land as provincial conditions may warrant, and resolves that Provincial Liberal organisations do consider the details for carrying out this object in the respective provinces.

9. WAR AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

- (a) The National Liberal Federation of India strongly urges the Indianisation of the Supply Department in order to win the confidence of Indians.
- (b) The Federation presses on the Government of India and the Provincial Governments the importance of taking advantage of the present conditions to foster the industrial development of the country. It is necessary, in its opinion, for this purpose that special efforts should be made to secure the establishment or expansion of the basic chemical and other industries under Indian control and management.
- (c) The Federation is of opinion that national interests require that special attention should be paid in the country to the establishment of small-scale industries.
- (d) The Federation urges the taking of all possible steps to develop Ship-building, Aircraft, Automobile, Locomotive and other key industries in the country.

10. POLITICAL PRISONERS

The Federation urges that the cases of persons detained under the Defence of India Act or under any other special powers of Government authorising the detention of persons without trial, should be submitted to a committee of High Court Judges in each Province for review, from time to time.

11. CIVIL DEFENCE

The Federation feels great apprehension that the steps so far taken by the Government in organising defence of civilian population against possibilities of air attacks on Indian Cities will, from the point of view of equipment training and personnel, prove neither effective nor adequate to meet the requirements which may be created by such an emergency.

The Federation therefore calls upon the Government to take immediate and more effective measures for strengthening the Civil Defence

Organisations in existence, and calls upon the people of this country irrespective of their political principles or convictions to co-operate fully and whole-heartedly in protection of their hearts and homes.

12. REFORMS IN INDIAN STATES

- (a) The National Liberal Federation expresses its full sympathy with the natural and legitimate aspirations of the people of Indian States for civil and political liberties.
- (b) The Federation urges that the rulers of States should without further delay concede to their subjects the rights of security of person and property, liberty of speech and press, freedom of association and worship, as well as representative Government as a prelude to responsible Government.

13. INDIANS ABROAD (INDO-CEYLON REPORT)

- (a) The Federation disapproves of the Joint Report of the delegations from India and Ceylon, as it ignores the solemn pledges and assurances given by the Government of Ceylon, from time to time, regarding the free entry of Indians and their equal legal and political rights with other sections of the population. It is emphatically of opinion that Indians should enjoy the same rights as regards free entry, carrying on business or following a profession etc., as citizens of the united Kingdom.

The Federation is particularly of opinion that (i) no distinction should be made regarding employment under Government and quasi-government bodies between the children of persons possessing a domicile of choice and of holders of certificates of permanent settlement and they should have the same rights of employment as other citizens of Ceylon and (ii) that the rights of Indians already in Ceylon in respect of re-entry, and freedom of choice with regard to employment should not be restricted in any manner.

14. INDO-BURMA PACT

The Federation disapproves of the Indo-Burma Agreement and regards it as inconsistent with statutory and other pledges given to Indians at the time of the passing of the Government of India Bill with regard to the rights of Indians to enter Burma freely to carry on business, to follow a profession etc. In the opinion of the Federation, the agreement nullifies the protection given to Indian business and professional interests, etc., by the Government of Burma Act.

The Federation urges the Government to accept the resolution passed by the Central Legislative Assembly asking the Government that no Order-in-Council should be issued until the Agreement is suitably modified and provisions which are discriminatory and humiliating to Indians are removed.

15. OFFICE-BEARERS AND COUNCIL

Resolved that the following gentlemen be appointed Office Bearers and members of The Council :—

President :

Sir Bejoy Prasad Roy.

Secretaries :

Mr. M. D. Altekar.

Mr. N. C. Bharucha.

Mr. Nibaran Chandra Ray.

Other names are printed in Appendix .

16. VENUE OF THE NEXT SESSION

Resolved that the next session of the Federation be held at Nagpur.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE TWENTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE
NATIONAL LIBERAL FEDERATION OF INDIA
HELD IN MADRAS

On the 26th, 27th and 28th December, 1941

FIRST DAY'S PROCEEDINGS

The Twenty-Third Session of the National Liberal Federation of India commenced at noon on Friday the 26th December 1941, at the Sundareswarar Hall, Mylapore, Madras, under the Presidency of Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy. About 100 Delegates from all over India and a large number of distinguished visitors including ladies were present.

Prominent among those present were—

1. Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, P.C.,
2. Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri, C.I.E.,
3. The Hon. Dr. Hirdayanath Kunzru,
4. Sir Vital N. Chandavarkar.
3. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. Patro, Kt.,
5. Diwan Bahadur V. Bashyam Ayyangar,
7. Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.,
8. Rao Bahadur A. S. Krishna Rao Pantulu,
9. Sir V. Ramesam, Kt.,
10. Mr. C. R. Srinivasan,
11. Sir Chimanlal H. Setalvad, K.C.I.E.,
12. Diwan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri,
13. Dr. R. P. Paranjpye,
14. Mr. Burjor J. Shroff,
15. Mr. R. H. Kelkar,
16. Rao Bahadur K. V. Sesha Ayyangar,
17. Mr. T. G. Gadre.
18. Miss Shireen C. Kerrawala (Bombay).
19. Mr. Nausir C. Bharucha,
20. Sir Cowasji Jehagir, K.C.I.E.,
21. Dr. C. S. Mahajani,
22. Hon. Mr. P. N. Sapru,
23. Rao Bahadur M. R. Ramaswami Sivan,
24. Mr. R. H. Khelkar.

The President-elect was received by the Chairman of the Reception Committee, Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri, Mr. E. Vinayaka Row, Diwan Bahadur V. Bashyam Ayyangar and others and conducted to his seat. After the President-elect, the Chairman of the Reception Committee and the Delegates had taken their seats, the proceedings commenced with the singing of the national anthem "VANDE MATARAM" by the pupils of the National Girls' High School, Mylapore, Madras.

Address by the Chairman of the Reception Committee.

Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar :

BROTHER-DELEGATES, FELLOW-LIBERALS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

On behalf of the Reception Committee of the twenty-third annual session of the National Liberal Federation, it is my privilege and pleasure to offer you a most hearty welcome to our city. I hope that the sincerity of our welcome will make up for any deficiencies in the arrangements we have made for your convenience during your stay in Madras.

Address of Sir
P. S. Sivaswami
Ayyar : the
Chairman of
the Reception
Committee.

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Ayyar : the
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the Reception
Committee.

We are meeting under the shadow of the greatest war in the history of the world, which has enveloped all the continents and seas of the world and has drawn all the nations of the earth into its vortex. All the resources of science have been employed in creating new engines of war, slaughter and destruction, and the war is being waged not merely by the armed forces, but also by economic weapons and political propaganda. The ruthlessness with which the war is carried on, the passions and ill-will it has aroused, and the resources of the countries which are arrayed against each other in this world conflict forbid any hope of a speedy termination. But, however prolonged it may be, the resources of the allied powers and the justice of the cause for which they are fighting justify a feeling of confidence that in spite of any temporary set-backs and reverses, the war will end in the victory of the allied powers. It is, however, bound to lead to an upheaval in the present order of things, political, economic and social. New international and domestic problems will arise for solution, and we in India cannot hope to escape the impact of the new forces and problems, more especially as the menace of war is approaching our own shores. The political parties in India will have to re-examine their position in regard to the political goal of India, their ideals and policies, internal and foreign, and the methods by which they can achieve their ideal for the India of the future.

From the time that the Liberal Party seceded from the Congress, there has been a radical divergence of views between the Congress and our party. In the early days of the Congress the ideal was the attainment of equality with the dominions of the British Commonwealth. The Imperial Conference of 1926 described the self-governing countries of the Commonwealth as "autonomous countries within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another, in any aspect of domestic and external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of nations." The Statute of Westminster gave effect to this resolution of the Imperial Conference, and developed and clarified the conception of Dominion Status. The status of a dominion under the Statute of Westminster was one of free and equal partnership with England and the self-governing dominions. The conception of Dominion Status envisaged by the Congress as its goal and ideal automatically attracted to itself the definition and development of that status as explained by the Statute of Westminster. The maintenance of the British connection has been part of the creed of the Liberal Party from the very beginning. While membership of the British Commonwealth of nations is a source of strength, it is attended by no disadvantages. The tie which binds the members of the Commonwealth is not the result of coercion. Nevertheless it has ensured mutual co-operation and assistance in times of danger, and has been able to withstand the strains and stresses of the world war and has tended to draw the members together more closely than ever. In times of danger and international conflict a policy of isolation is attended with peril, and even the most powerful countries in the world are obliged to form alliances for safety and security. It is difficult for us to appreciate the goal of absolute independence which has been adopted in recent years as the creed of the Congress. If independence and the severance of the British connection were granted, how would it be possible to maintain our independence in the face of the designs of aggressive powers thirsting for conquest, aggrandisement and domination? The Congress leaders have not condescended to explain this point. Is it by developing the defensive forces, armament and equipment of India, or by entering into alliances with other powers, or by the realisation of the millennium when human nature would be so transformed that wars and aggression will become things of the past? The last alternative can only be accepted by the followers of visionary leaders. As to the second alternative, which power in the world, European, American or Asiatic, can be regarded as a more suitable ally than Britain with which we have been connected for more than two centuries and by whose culture we have been so deeply influenced, which has cherished the ideals of justice, freedom and ordered progress and which has

produced the noblest champions of liberty in the world? Revolutionary thinkers and leaders may perhaps be inclined to suggest an alliance with Russia, and Asiatic countries like China and Iran which have yet to develop their strength. I do not think that an alliance with communist Russia will commend itself to any well-informed person in our country. Nor is it possible to entertain hopes of succour from China which is herself struggling for existence and has been despoiled of her own territories and menaced with the loss of her remaining territories and independence.

Address of Sir
P.S. Sivaswami
Ayyar : the
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The fact that England has not acceded to our demands for freedom and has so often used her power over India for promoting her own interests, and followed policies which have stunted the development of the people or has encouraged the growth of communal cleavage, has filled the minds of many in India with resentment and distrust. They believe that India can never attain the full stature of nationhood under the aegis of, or in alliance with Britain. But the policy of severance of the British connection is a counsel of despair and can only lead us from the frying pan into the fire.

Let us consider the first of the three alternatives which I have mentioned. How long will it take us to organise our own defensive forces and develop our strength so as to repel aggression? Assuming, for the sake of argument, that it can be accomplished within a period of ten or twenty years after the grant of independence, will aggressive and covetous powers be so chivalrous and obliging as to desist from invasion till our powers of resistance are fully developed? That Britain has not developed our powers of defence and enabled us to stand on our own legs is one of our gravest charges against her administration. In the changing circumstances of the world, no country can afford to follow a policy of isolation. The fate of the nations which have adopted a policy of neutrality during this war must be a warning. Closer union with the British Commonwealth and alliance and co-operation with the powers that have combined to overcome the totalitarian powers of darkness and evil should be the guiding principles of India's external policy.

If the Congress ideal of independence must be regarded as visionary and dangerous, the means and methods advocated by them for achieving the ideal are equally impracticable and futile. Mahatma Gandhi's original reaction to the war was in favour of rallying to the side of Britain and aiding her in her efforts to defeat the totalitarian powers. Since then the Congress has adopted a policy of refusal of all participation in the war against the axis powers. Refusal to aid Britain may have the effect of weakening the allies and prolonging the war, and may perhaps even affect our chances of victory. But, as Mr. Gandhi pointedly put in the beginning, what will become of India if Britain falls? It may perhaps be thought that Britain is not likely to be defeated and that India may safely refuse co-operation in the war and seek to undermine the moral authority of the British Government. The policy of alienating the people from the British Government is not calculated to promote feelings of friendliness between Britain and India or hastening the emancipation of India. What then is the value of the policy of non-co-operation advocated by the Congress? While it cannot be denied that, like hunger-strikes in jails, the policy of non-co-operation has had the effect of bringing prominently before the British public the feelings of resentment and distrust, and, in some quarters, even a feeling of hostility, towards Britain which have been engendered by Britain's treatment of our legitimate aspirations and by her fatuous failure to develop the military power and defensive strength of India, with the object of keeping the country in a state of perpetual dependence and abject and humiliating helplessness, the Liberal Party is alive to the risks of non-co-operation and believes that the wisest course under the present circumstances is to rally to the support of Britain and help to inflict a crushing defeat upon the axis powers. We see no reason for departing from the creed which has been followed by the Liberal Party ever since it came into being.

While I have indicated the course which our party has to follow, our attitude must not be understood as any approval of the policy which has

Address of Sir
P. S. Sivaswami
Ayyar : the
Chairman of
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been pursued by the Government. The Government have no doubt repeatedly declared that they will help India to achieve the goal of a free and equal partnership in the British Commonwealth soon after the conclusion of the war. The controversy now between the British Government and ourselves relates to the conditions which the Government have attached to their promise to bring the new relationship into existence. Some of these conditions are of a character which it is not possible for us to fulfil. The Secretary of State has declared that the constitutional scheme must provide for the due fulfilment of the obligations which have arisen from contractual engagements towards the members or the services, or from Britain's long course of connection with India. The obligations refer to the Muslim community, to the backward classes and to the Indian Princes and States. So far as the services are concerned, no reasonable person in India will object to the fulfilment of contractual obligations already incurred. Nor will there be any objection to the reasonable representation of the scheduled castes and communities. It is admitted by Mr. Amery himself that these obligations do not stand in the way of shaping the structure of India's future constitution.

The most serious difficulty put forward is the adjustment of the claims of the Muslim community. Mr. Amery has stated again and again that the Hindu and Muslim communities must come to an agreement among themselves with regard to the future constitution and that in the absence of any agreement among these communities it will be impossible to transfer power. The Hindu community has never been unwilling to concede any reasonable demands of the Muslim community or to provide safeguards for their just rights. But what is to happen if it is impossible to reach an agreement? The conflict between the claims of the two communities is largely the creation of British policy, and the British Government cannot avoid responsibility for its solution. The demand of the Muslim community for the division of India into Pakistan and Hindustan is one which no Hindu, or for that matter anyone sincerely interested in the national integrity and welfare of India, can possibly agree to. In any negotiations for the settlement of controversies of this character we often reach a point where it is impossible to come to an agreement. The Hindus consider that the claim of the Mahomedans is one which will end in the vivisection of India and will expose her to external danger and internal anarchy and confusion. Upon this point the Hindus cannot give in under any circumstances. Mr. Amery himself has not failed to realise the immense practical difficulties in the way of the so-called Pakistan project. He has referred to the dismal record of India's history in the eighteenth century, and the disastrous experience in the Balkan countries before our eyes to-day, in order to point out the terrible dangers inherent in any break-up of the essential unity of India, at any rate, in its relation to the outside world.

The other matters referred to by Mr. Amery are comparatively easier to settle. The present deadlock is mainly due to the feelings of suspicion and distrust which have pervaded the relations between the people and the Government and between the different communities *inter se*. These feelings have been encouraged by the attitude and policy of the British Government, and the unreasonable intransigence of any particular party must be overcome by the authorities responsible for the situation. One of the devices which have been adopted for creating and keeping alive feelings of hostility is the separate electorate for the Hindus and Muslims which was brought into existence by Lord Minto.

The refusal of Mr. Winston Churchill to extend the Atlantic Charter even at this time of the gravest world crisis and the refusal to fix a date for the attainment of Dominion Status betray a deplorable lack of statesmanship, and have contributed to deepen the suspicion of the people in the sincerity of British promises qualified by conditions which cannot possibly be fulfilled in any near future.

The present deadlock cannot be considered to be merely the result of a domestic problem arising from the failure of the two major communities to come together. It is far more largely due to the issue between Britain and ourselves in regard to the unwillingness of the former to transfer real power to the people of India, as amply evidenced by the scheme for the expansion of the Executive Council in the Government of India. This expansion has evoked no enthusiasm among the people for two reasons. It has not completely Indianised the Council and has not transferred the most important portfolios like defence, finance, home and communications, to Indian hands. It may perhaps be suggested that they are too important to be transferred to Indians and during a time of war. The handsome tribute which the Viceroy paid a few days ago to the capacity, wisdom and spirit of co-operation of the non-official Indian members who have been recently appointed is gratifying, and there is no reason to apprehend that if the key positions in the ministry were transferred to non-official Indian members, the safety of the country or the efficiency of the administration would be imperilled. I may refer to the opinion recently expressed by Sir John Maynard, who was at one time a member of the Punjab Executive Council, that the portfolio of defence should be entrusted to a non-official Indian. Sir George Schuter has pointed out that what is needed is, first, that the Viceroy should be surrounded by a fully representative cabinet, and, secondly, that provincial governments should resume office on a frankly coalition basis, with enlarged cabinets in which opposed groups can work together. It must be remembered that any lack of experience on the part of non-official Indians will be made up by the experience and guidance of the members of the secretariat. The opportunities for joint deliberation and co-operation thrown open by the expansion of the Executive Council may reasonably be expected to bring about a better understanding and sympathy not merely between the members themselves, but between the communities to which they belong. Our view has been confirmed by the opinion of Mr. M. S. Aney, based upon his experience of the working of the Viceroy's cabinet. Mr. Aney has remarked that "if it can be shown that the Centre and the provinces can be efficiently administered by coalition cabinets during the period of the world war, all arguments against granting self-governing status to India on the ground of Hindu-Muslim differences and minority interests will gradually pale into insignificance and ultimately vanish. The administrative achievements will themselves expose the hollowness of the arguments, and even the masses will be able to see through the fallacies of the cries and slogans intended to appeal to their racial feelings or religious susceptibilities."

Address of Sir
P. S. Sivaswami
Ayyar : the
Chairman of
the Reception
Committee.

Another difficulty referred to by Mr. Amery is that arising from the obligations of the Crown towards the Indian States, except in so far as, and to the extent to which, they may have joined the Indian federation. I have no doubt that most of them will be willing to join the federation and that the difficulty raised by Mr. Amery is exaggerated and far from insuperable.

One of the points in Mr. Amery's criticism of the Congress demand relates to the technique for settling the future constitution of India. He refers to the demand that India's future constitution must be settled by a constituent assembly elected by universal adult suffrage over the whole of India. I agree in Mr. Amery's conclusion that this procedure cannot be adopted, but for reasons different from those advanced by him. Such a constituent assembly is an unworkable, ill-qualified and unsuitable body for the framing of a constitution, and history does not justify any faith in the wisdom or soundness of the constitutions framed by such bodies. Among other authorities, I would refer to the convocation address delivered by Sir Maurice Gwyer, the Chief Justice of India, at Benares two years ago.

Mr. Amery thinks that the British form of democracy is unsuitable for India, and has been good enough to investigate the whole field of political structures and look for precedents in many directions in the world. The

Address of Sir
P. S. Sivaswami
Ayyar : the
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Committee.

British pattern of a democratic constitution is the one which has worked most satisfactorily, and an Englishman may very well pardon us for our desire to follow the British model which has worked so well and with which our study of history has made us familiar.

The war has brought into prominence some of the gravest defects in the policy of the British administration of India. We were assured by the military authorities that all the necessary steps had been taken for the adequate defence of the British possessions in Burma and Malaya, and that the forces and the equipment provided for them were ample and sufficient to repel any attack by our enemies. The events of the last few days have revealed that our forces have been greatly outnumbered by the Japanese, that our equipment in armament has been lamentably deficient and that these causes were responsible for the reverses suffered in Burma and Malaya. The most serious loss suffered by Britain is the destruction of two of the largest battleships in the British navy, which has been attributed to the lack of protection by sufficient aircraft. The progress of the Japanese arms in Malaya, the evacuation of Penang and the attack of Hong Kong, said to be the Gibraltar of the East, are some of the latest incidents of the war which show how ill-founded were the boastful assertions of confidence in the sufficiency and preparedness of the British forces in this region, and have affected the prestige of the British power. If the Government had embarked in time upon the production in India of armament and basic industries, we might have been better prepared to avert the disaster which has overtaken the British navy in the East. It is only subsequent to the war that the Government have turned their attention to the remedying of some of these defects, and it is very doubtful whether even at the present time the Government realise the wisdom and urgency of carrying out the industrialisation of India. No serious steps have been taken by the Government of India for the encouragement of ship-building in India on any large or adequate scale, and no one who has read the accounts of the progress recently made by Australia in the matter of ship-building can accept the plea of the Government that their omission to launch a vigorous programme of ship-building is due to the difficulty of procuring the supply of the necessary engines or other materials from America as adequate or satisfactory. We in India have a deep-rooted suspicion that the reason why Britain has not encouraged a policy of industrialisation of India is the fear of Indian competition with British industry after the war. The war affords excellent opportunities for the creation of new industries, and especially basic and key industries, and it is to be hoped that advantage will be taken of these opportunities by the Government of India under the inspiration of the non-official element of the expanded Executive Council. It has not been the habit of the British Government to listen to the opinions or advice of the moderate parties or leaders, or to yield to any popular demands, however just and reasonable, until their obstinacy has done all the harm it can by exasperating public opinion and creating feelings of disaffection. The arrest of Mr. V. D. Savarkar, the President of the Hindu Mahasabha, and other members of the Sabha is an amazing act of folly in keeping with the attitude of Mr. Winston Churchill and other diehard Tories who control the Cabinet. The least that they can do at the present moment to convince the people of the sincerity of their promises is to accept and carry out the recommendations of the non-party leaders' conference held under the wise guidance of our illustrious countryman the Rt. Hon'ble Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, and our distinguished elder statesmen like Sir Jagadish Prasad, Sir N. N. Sarkar and the Rt. Hon'ble M. R. Jayakar, and to restore responsible government in the provinces where it has been suspended.

Whatever troubles and ordeals the war many entail upon us, there is no reason to despair of the future. Public opinion in England is gradually setting in favour of a fresh orientation of the policy of the British Government towards India. We are grateful to the members of the Labour Party and other members of Parliament who have espoused our cause, and to Journals like

the *Daily Herald*, the *Manchester Guardian* and the *New Statesman* who have been supporting us. Public opinion in America is also in sympathy with our aspirations and efforts for the attainment of an honourable position in the British Commonwealth and of an equal and free partnership with Britain and the other members. We may therefore look forward to the fulfilment of our aspirations for Dominion Status very shortly after the conclusion of the war.

Address of Sir
P. S. Sivaswami
Ayyar : the
Chairman of
the Reception
Committee.

I hope it will not be considered out of place to add a few words about the land revenue policy of Government. Opinion, official and non-official, has greatly changed on this subject. There was a time when instructed public opinion was all in favour of permanent settlement and clamoured for the permanent fixation of the revenue demand in ryotwari as in Zamindari areas. First official, and later non-official, opinion veered round to the view that in a predominantly agricultural country where the bulk of the revenue was raised from land, it would be a great mistake to limit the revenue demand permanently, and the great authority of Sir Thomas Munro was invoked in favour of this view. There has been discussion as to whether Munro merely commended field-war settlement as opposed to the Zamindari settlement of Lord Cornwallis and was not against the fixing of the revenue demand permanently. Even those who then expressed themselves against the permanent fixation of the revenue demand did not rule it out for all time, but desired to postpone it to such time as the revenue demand might become fairly stabilised. Anyhow, for over sixty years now we have proceeded on the footing that it would be a mistake to limit and fix once for all the revenue demand of Government in the ryotwari areas. Things have since changed. There is no longer any hope of increased revenue from land. Agriculture which was at no time very satisfactory as a source of living has, since the last depression, fallen on evil days. Even the Agriculturists Relief Act has not relieved the agriculturists of their indebtedness. All agriculturists, large and small alike, have been living in a poor way for over a decade now. And every observant person notes the fact that the Mirasdar is daily getting more and more impoverished and insolvent. Unless adequate relief is given to the agriculturist agriculture will cease to yield even the scanty living that it gave at one time. The idea of permanently fixing the revenue sufficiently low in the interests of agriculture and agriculturists is again to the fore. The old Hindu books spoke of one-twelfth, one-eighth, or one-sixth as the royal share of the produce of land. It varied probably according to need, but it never exceeded one-sixth, in theory. It was in the times of the Mussalman ruler that the theory arose of the land as belonging to the Government and one half the income as the legitimate demand of the Government. One-twelfth has the merit of approximating to the revenue demand in some of the countries of Europe. Here in India the Todhunter Committee suggested the fixing of revenue at a comparatively low figure not exceeding twenty-five per cent. If it should become necessary, a moderate income tax may be levied from agricultural income above a certain amount. Without some such mode of relief to the agriculturist, agriculture may soon drift into such a deplorable condition that not merely agriculturists but the whole country may sustain an irreparable injury.

The urgency of the matter is clear to us in Madras, and, very likely, agriculture is in the same position in other provinces also. The policy that is now being pursued was laid down by the Government in the eighties of the last century. The Government are merely alleviating the present distress by granting yearly remissions of revenue which are by no means adequate. It is a forlorn hope that conditions will improve and the old assessments can be resumed. Even the reduced assessments sit heavily on the impoverished agriculturist. Congresses and conferences have long been demanding the fixing of revenue by legislation. I can only say that this question deserves early attention at the hands of Government. One may add that periodical revision of revenue seems to be a fruitless task

Address of Sir
P. S. Sivaswami
Ayyar : the
Chairman of
the Reception
Committee.

as no one sees the smallest chance of agriculture being again able to bear heavier taxation.

It remains for me to refer to the irreparable loss which our party has sustained in the death of Sir C. Y. Chintamani, the distinguished journalist who was one of the original founders of the Liberal Party, and held the office of Secretary of the All-India Liberal Party for many years. He presided over the annual session of the Federation more than once, and was one of the strongest pillars of the party. He was a staunch Liberal throughout his life and never wavered in his adherence to the creed and principles of our party. With his exceptional gifts of character and ability, his extensive knowledge of politics and the conditions of the country, his rare courage and transparent sincerity, and his devotion to the cause of the country, he rendered invaluable service not merely to the Liberal Party, but to the causes and movements with which he was associated during his life.

The death of Sir Rabindranath Tagore, the poet laureate of India, is a loss which affects the whole of India and the world of literature, English and Bengali. He was an embodiment of the finest efflorescence of the combined spirit and culture of the East and the West, and achieved a world-wide reputation by his literary creations. To use the language of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, "India's renaissance began with the flowering of Tagore's genius." He has spread light, culture, refinement and happiness in millions of homes in India.

(Loud applause.)

Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar : I now request you to proceed with the election of the President.

Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri will now propose the election of the President.

Election of the
President: Mr.
T. R. Venkata-
rama Sastri.

Election of the President

Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri : Mr. Chairman, Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, this year we hold our session in exceptional circumstances. We have had a set-back probably every year now for several years. Events move fast, each year making the situation worse than in the previous year. We have now had more than two years of War. Till last month it was all in the West. It has now broken out in the East also. It has become a world war in which all the major powers and all the continents are involved. We were told that our frontiers, were Singapore and Hon-kong in the East and Egypt and the Mediterranean in the West and that we ought to get trouble from the West rather than from the East. To-day it is from the East that we have to apprehend trouble more than from the West. The defences at Singapore were said to be adequate to meet the need. Most of us thought here—I do not know whether I should not say that all of us believed—that the threats of aggression on the part of Japan were a mere bluff. I do not know and I cannot say if Government also thought that they were likely to be bluff after all. Their preparations to-day in the East are far from adequate, and before we knew it, the War was at our very doors. How the situation changes from day to day will be seen from the fact that since the President-elect left Calcutta, a state of emergency has been declared there. There is the further fact that an unwise and unimaginative Government has arrested the leaders of a great party, a fresh party which has been assisting the the Government wholeheartedly in prosecuting War efforts. The Government have exhorted us to throw ourselves heart and soul into the War, but meanwhile they are doing things that are calculated to damp the enthusiasm of the country and retard and put back such War efforts as we are already putting forth. It is in this situation—external and internal—that we meet in our twenty-third session here to-day. We have chosen Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy as our President. He has built a remarkable career, he has gone from success to success in life. Educated in the Presidency College at

Calcutta and the University Law College, he is a Master of Arts and a Bachelor of Laws of the Calcutta University. He became an Advocate in the year 1924 at the age of 30; but even before that date, in the year 1921, when he was only about 27 years old, he was elected to the Legislative Council by the General Constituency of Bengal. That position he held from 1921 to 1926. For a few years subsequently, he represented the Landholders constituency and after that, he resigned his seat and became an Advocate of the High Court of Calcutta. He was Minister for Local Self-Government from the year 1930, and after the Government of India Act 1935 came into existence, he became Minister for Revenue. I do not think I can very accurately refer to the other positions he held. I think he held the King's Commission in 1918 when he was only 24. From 24 to 30, he was in the Calcutta Corporation, he has also been on the Calcutta Improvement Trust. He has sat on the Commission which considered the effects of Permanent Settlement in Bengal, he also sat on the Franchise Commission presided over by Lord Lothian, in fact after a distinguished career he rose to these places a bit early in his life. May I say that the position which we propose to offer him to-day—I do not know whether I can say it with any certainty—is likely to make him the youngest President of the Federation? But I am sure of this, that very few, if any, of the Presidents of the Federation have reached that position in the forty-eighth year of their life.

Election of the
President: Mr.
T. R. Venkata-
rama Sastri.

I have very great pleasure in moving that we request Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy to preside over the deliberations of this session and conduct its proceedings.

Sir Chimanlal H. Setalvad: Ladies and gentlemen, I have very great pleasure in seconding the proposition. The proposer has told you that after a brilliant career our President-elect has occupied great positions of responsibility, and I feel that we are all lucky in having got him to preside over this session.

Election of the
President:
Sir Chimanlal
H. Setalvad.

The Hon. Dr. Hirdayanath Kunzru: Mr. Chairman, no words are needed from me in support of the proposition placed before the house by Mr. Venkatarama Sastri. I have perhaps the good fortune of knowing our President-elect more than any one else in this hall. And to the many qualities mentioned by Mr. Venkatarama Sastri, I can add one from my personal knowledge of him. His urbanity and his desire to understand the point of view of the other man are well-known to those who have come into contact with him. I support the motion before the House.

Election of the
President:
The Hon. Dr.
Hirdayanath
Kunzru.

Mr. T. G. Gadre: Mr. Chairman, I am very glad to support the proposition on behalf of the Central Provinces and Bihar.

Election of the
President:
Mr. T.G. Gadre

Mr. A. S. Murti (Orissa): Mr. Chairman of the Reception Committee, it gives me very great pleasure to support the proposition to nominate Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy to the presidentship of this session. I do not want to make a speech on this occasion. We were told that he has served on Commissions early in life, and on this occasion I think it is our privilege to give him a commission while asking him to conduct the deliberations of this Assembly: and it is this: unfortunately in this country political parties have been stressing the differences that exist between them. The Congress always points out what is the difference between itself and the Liberal Party, and I think the Liberal Party to some extent stresses the differences that exist between itself and the Congress. For obvious reasons, I do not want to refer to the Muslim League. And though the differences are irreconcilable differences, yet I would give this commission to my friend who is going to occupy the Chair, that instead of seeking out the differences and stressing them, he should find out what are the points of contact between these political parties in order to work out a national solution with an agreed formula between ourselves. The Congress has got its goal and we have got our goal. Ideologically there may be differences between the two, but in

Election of the
President:
Mr. A. S. Murti
(Orissa).

ideas or identities, there are no differences between the two. The Congress has initiated the constructive programme, and this body which is composed of Liberal statesmen—If I may claim that privilege to the body to which even laymen like me belong—has also got its goal, freedom. If we do not work with the Congress in any other matter, let us work with the Congress at least in this matter of the constructive programme. And that is the commission which I desire, on behalf of the delegates assembled here, to hand over to you, Sir Prasad Singh,—that you will find out the points of contact between the Congress and this body and make us both work together in the common cause.

Secondly, Sir, we have practically come to the stage of political insagacity (Laughter). It has been urged, much to our dis-credit, that the politicians in this country have not been able to find out a common formula or agreed solution, so that our friend Mr. Amery who is sitting on the other side of the seas, may hand over to us our freedom which is our birthright. I have therefore this Commission also to give you, Sir, on behalf of the delegates that have come here, that you should find out what are the methods of resolving our differences, so that we may tell Mr. Amery: "Well, Sir, there are practically no differences between us and even the Muslim League" and we may tell him that there are points of contact with Mr. Jinnah, prove to him that there is basic unity in this country and on the basis of that unity, tell him that we are entitled to that freedom which is our birthright.

With these words, it is my privilege to support the motion that has been so ably moved in this House, seconded and supported.

Election of the
President:
Sir P. S. Siva-
swami Ayyar.

Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar: The proposition has been duly moved, seconded and supported. I now put it to the vote.

The proposition was put to vote and carried unanimously.

Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy formally took his seat and was then garlanded.

Presidential Address.

Presidential
address: Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy:
FELLOW DELEGATES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Kindly allow me to offer you my sincere thanks and greetings on the signal honour that you have been pleased to bestow on me by electing me your President. It is an indulgent decision on your part which has given me the privilege of serving the cause of Liberalism and of giving expression to my humble opinion on some of the momentous issues before the country in this period of great crisis. I only wish that your choice for the president-ship had fallen on one who is more worthy of the position and the responsibility that it entails. The Liberal Federation has a noble tradition and a rich record of service, and I am confident that the Federation has a great part to play in shaping the political destiny of India. We shall be straying away from a correct perspective if a belief ever gains ground that the Liberal Federation has played out its role and that it should now make room for intolerent, factional organisations. The light of Liberalism is needed most badly in the present circumstances of the country when the dark shadow of extreme and barbarous movement has cast a gloom on the earth. This enhances the responsibility of the Liberal Federation and adds to the difficulties of leadership. Fully conscious of my limitations and shortcomings and alive to the responsibilities of this position depending on your co-operation and help I have accepted your kind invitation, and I feel deeply grateful to you for this confidence and honour.

We meet here today under the shadow of a serious danger of foreign aggression to our country. The Japanese menace which had been threatening India and Burma for the last several months has at last come on us. This is

a moment of supreme trial for us. In this hour of calamity, we Indians should stand united, face the danger with courage and fortitude and decide political issues with reference to realities of the situation and not merely on abstract political principles. Defence of our motherland is our first and foremost concern. With the Japanese guns booming only a few hundred miles away from the coast line of India or the enemy aeroplanes threatening our cities and other industrial centres we cannot afford to indulge in discussions of political theories or of the shape the Indian political constitution should take unless such discussions are helpful in encouraging people to take action against the enemy or in bringing about greater cohesion amongst the Indian people.

Presidential
address : Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

Our Losses

We mourn this year the loss of our national poet, Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore who was the most powerful liberalising agent in the realm of thought. Dr. Tagore was the finest product of renaissance brought into being through the union of the Indian and European streams of knowledge and culture. He through his writings and preachings carried aloft the banner of universality in this age of narrow nationalism. His death removes from our midst the greatest exponent of liberal culture in human affairs.

By the death of Sir C. Y. Chintamani, an ex-president of the Federation, the Liberal Party in India has been deprived of a sagacious leader and a valued worker. He served the cause of Liberalism over a period of thirty years with unflinching zeal and passionate devotion. A firm believer in the future of Liberalism, Sir C. Y. Chintamani propagated its principles with considerable courage and at a great personal sacrifice. He was gifted with a fine intellect, and was a man of high character and outstanding ability. He died full of years and honours and left behind a great tradition for others to follow.

Outside the Liberal ranks, we have to record with regret the death of Sir Bijoy Chand Mahtab, Maharajadhiraja Bahadur of Burdwan, the scion of a distinguished House, and a prominent and devoted public servant with liberal ideas.

The Faith of a Liberal

We are living in an age which is in a state of delusive bewilderment. Hopes spring in our heart only to be frustrated; desires grow in intensity only to be dashed to pieces. People look for a dogmatic programme of action leading them straight to the millennium, but visions fade away leaving only heaps of ruined aspirations. This is an age fleeting and changing, and it is difficult to remain rooted in one's belief and conviction. In this sea of quick and rough changes, it is bad oaranship to stick to the old and familiar methods; but at the same time, it would lead to disaster if we are lured by short-cuts to be foundered on the rock of illusions. For right living and for sound politics, there must be a balance between conflicting demands. The attitude of mind which is bound up with the instinctive desire to preserve what we possess and what we are used to should be deprecated. The irresponsible habit of mind which helps to unloosen the anchor and to carry us away into new and undiscovered harbours merely for the sake of a venturesome change should also be abjured. With me Liberalism is not a fitful and temporary phase, or a doctrine flowering as the by-product of efforts of the middle-classes to win their place in the sun, or a philosophic justification of the new practices of a particular invigorating age. Liberalism is a habit of mind which affords the sense of expansion and the feeling of spacious exhilaration. Externally, it includes the liberties of thought and expression in civil affairs, it makes all citizens equal before law; in the biology of social organisation, it throws open equal opportunities and subordinates all restrictions and restraints; politically, it advocates the principle of popular sovereignty; internationally, it disavows the use of force which is

Presidential
address: Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

the basis of all tyranny and stands for freedom and justice. Liberalism is thus a movement of liberation, an invitation for clearance of obstructions obtruding the progress of mankind, and a call for the flow of free and spontaneous vital activity in the cause of social welfare. It is not merely a historical creed which has outlived its usefulness; it is a force co-extensive with life and vibrating with the struggle for free-expression.

But the faith of a Liberal stands to-day shaken by the power-philosophies corroding the political institutions of many of the present-day countries. Liberalism, it is to be noted, abjures power-philosophy. It is true that love of power is a part of normal human nature, but power-philosophy gives birth to, and sustains, an organisation for the maintenance of power in the hands of the leader or of the caucus submissive to him. The power-impulse finds explicit expression in the leader and implicit nourishment from the followers. The impulse of submission, found in the followers, is ignited by the desire to acquire and maintain power for their own party. The power philosophy starts from the basic aim that the promotion of social co-operation is its objective. But, in the struggle, it makes the group supreme and State subordinate to the interests of the group through whose assistance the leader gains ascendancy. It is thus found that the most successful democratic leader through the corrosive effects of power-philosophy sets aside democracy and instals authoritarianism in its sacred shrine. The cult of the hero produces a nation of cowards. The conclusion drawn from history and psychology is this: if social life is to fulfil social desires, it must not be based upon a philosophy derived from the love of power. The power-philosophy is the antithesis of democracy, and it is found in history that without democracy, the coalescence of economic and political power in the State produces all the evils of despotism. It is Liberalism that can give full play to the brake of democratic control which is essential in the organisation of the modern State. If the State moves away from its liberal ideals, it is bound to run in the narrow and suffocating channel of absolutism which gives rise to fascism on the one hand and communism on the other.

New Concept of Democracy

The forces of darkness and retrogression are challengingly on the offensive; they are threatening to pull down again all that has been painfully built up after years of toil and turmoil. If the liberal contents in a State organisation are taken away, dictatorship steps in to throttle Democracy. Democracy is not merely the right to vote; it does not consist in the specific right to decide its leader or Government; Democracy as a political method is not merely "a majority rule" or a government by consent of the governed. In modern dictatorship also, the majority is acquired; the "consent" is secured. Democracy is to be understood not by reference to the "consent" or the number of citizens consenting but to the conditions under which the consent is elicited. The essential features of Democracy are that if the pooling of ideas and views have been full and free and wide, and that if the spirit of tolerance has left its hallmark in the ascertainment of what is for the good of the community as a whole. Such a democratic regime can only be ensured by the free play of liberal principles.

Party Government

It is to be noted that "constitutional principles and forms do not operate in a vacuum of abstract reason." These principles have to be carried out by those who are in power. Naturally, the operations of Government are related to the interests represented by the body of men who control the apparatus of the State. It is the liberal principle and democratic spirit that can conduct the operations of Government for the satisfaction of the common desires of citizens. The Party is a mechanism to control public opinion, and if the party Government be rigid and tied down to the interests of the party

members only, it is not a far cry from dictatorship. If the Party Government does not act with wisdom and discretion, if it outrages the feelings of those who are placed outside the Party in power, it creates conditions for the smooth growth of dictatorship. The political constitution loses its fragility and soundness if it is worked by a Party with a narrow sense of party-fidelity. The party system depends for its success on the fulfilment by each side of a certain understanding which they must not violate. If the spirit of compromise is absent, the party-system can work out, beneath the appearance of democracy, an authoritarian regime whereunder the interests of the people in general will be swallowed by those of the members of the Party. We should guard against such a rigid party-system.

Presidential
Address : Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

Parliamentarism, properly understood, affords "a pattern example of the way in which men can arrive at an agreement despite their conflicting interests." The opposition is not merely tolerated, but treated with respect as indispensable. This "legitimisation of the opposition infuses an element of humanity into parliamentary Government." Parliamentary institution is democratic so long as the rival parties should be in close agreement on the need of mutuality in respect of fundamental questions. When the rival parties are exclusive opposites between whom there is no prospect of final adjustment, and there is absence of the basis of common agreement about fundamentals, the inevitable consequence is the emergence of one-party which seeks to suppress the minority opinion. At that stage, Parliamentary Government ceases to be democratic, and a true Liberal views with concern such a state of things.

The primary political question is: how to preserve the democratic method in the political system of the country. The situation in our country is worsened by the appeals made by extremists who are impatient of democratic conditions. We are faced with a situation where the political party formulates principles or policies in advance of public discussions and refuses to compromise under any circumstances. The political parties thus render public discussion useless, and the democratic method of searching for agreement through discussion and of looking for action on the basis of the greatest possible measure of agreement is held at a discount. Problems of compromise, declared Lord Morley, are of the essence of the parliamentary and cabinet system. An unbending politician is an obstructive factor in democratic politics. Compromise does not involve the surrender of principles of one party to those of the other; it evolves an adjustment; it works out a synthesis on the basis of a dialectical approach.

The multiplicity of parties and groups in our country shows that the spirit of co-operation and compromise is inadequately developed. We have competing parties with conflicting slogans. They are not knit together by a sense of realism; they are carried away by differing ideologies. In a dependant country where the sphere of political activity is limited, this is perhaps inevitable to a certain extent, but it presents an unfortunate spectacle. The country is being split up into different parties; there is emphasis on various class-interests tending to class-conflict in society; there is bias and prejudice obstructing the growth of progressive national life; the spirit of intolerance is running rampant; the craze for political spoils hurts the national interests. In this wise, the national movements for political liberation is relegated to the background with a loud emphasis on class-conflicts. That is where we stand—on the edge of a volcano charged with the possibilities of disruption of the national struggle into stray, disorganised, exclusive class strifes. The cohesion of the struggle is suffering, and accordingly, we meet with more loud voices, less action; more declamatory and flamboyant language less constructive approach; more nervous and undisciplined agitation, less sacrifice for the cause; more impatience in sharing in spoils, less restraint in the service of the country. In this dark alley of rattling slogans and interested moves, the old compactness of the national-struggle is slowly wearing away, and we are left with dry slogans and exhausted country-men. The situation undoubtedly calls for bold, united action.

Presidential
address: Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

The Constitution Act of 1935, in its working, gives us a glimpse into the trends of the party-Government in India. It does not augur well for the future. When the elections under the new Constitution Act were fought, it was found that the Congress Party came out generally successful at the polls, and in seven provinces they obtained majorities to their credit. The Congress Party did not fail to exploit their splendid electoral victories to the strengthening of their position, and they could easily extract an assurance from His Excellency the Viceroy that there would be no undue interference with their administration. They accepted Ministry. But it is striking that in the matter of formation of Ministry and in pursuit of Ministerial work, the Congress Party showed a definite leaning towards fascist methods. They did not take it into account that the peculiar conditions of the country, arising from communal electorate and different minority interests, ruled out the case for one-party-government. They recruited Ministers from their own party; they abandoned other parties and even refused their co-operation. As a political theory, a homogeneous cabinet with unity of purpose is effective and useful, but as a political strategy it led to disastrous results. All other non-congress parties felt that under the Congress regime they had no access to power, nor should they be given any opportunity to serve. The loyalty to the Congress Party became the passport to power; the supremacy of the party subordinated all administrative considerations. The Ministers who were servants of the Party placed themselves under the direction of the zonal dictator, known as the Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee. It was definitely a fascist move where the dictatorship of a clique, based broadly on a party of workers, set down to rule throwing the spirit of accommodation in the background and forging party supremacy to the forefront. They stood on the fundamental basis that they had come into power to serve and nurse their party-organisation, and those who were not with them were taken to be against them. That is the *sine qua non* of power-politics. Their partisan bias and outlook have been, to a great extent, responsible for the conglomeration of forces antagonistic to the Congress in the shape of the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasaba. Frankness requires it to be stated that if the Congress Ministry were thrown open to the members of the non-Congress Hindus and Muslims, their administration could not have left lacerated feelings in any section of the community so as to create political animosities and antagonisms of so acute a type as is found in non-congress organisations. The Congress threw political wisdom to the winds and hugged abstract political theories, which in practical politics, proved a great handicap. If the Congress could continue in power, they might have mowed down opposition to a considerable extent. But again in obedience to abstract reasoning they left their positions of vantage. Every nationalist will deplore the Congress going out of power at the dictate of barren idealism.

But as a Liberal, I cannot but view with dismay the growth of rigid party government which is not mellowed by the spirit of tolerance and accommodation. If a political party in power with a view to establish itself securely seeks to remove all possible conditions which may ensure the prospect of a return of its rival to power, or the conditions of a country are such that there is no possibility of alternating cabinets, the threat to parliamentary democracy is bound to be serious. To put it in the language of an eminent authority, "in the alternation in power of political parties there is often worked out in practical dialectic what discussion could not discover." If the Government majority is brutally and ruthlessly used and the possibilities of alternating Government do not exist, the situation becomes congenial to fascist dictatorship. The political conditions in our country do not vouchsafe smooth sailing of democracy unless reconciliation, seemingly impossible on the doctrinal plane, is effected on that of practical politics. When the political parties are moving towards power politics, it is the task of a Liberal to attempt a synthesis so that parliamentary democracy may work on proper lines for the collective interest of the nation.

Need for a United Front

Presidential
address : Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

In view of the chaos of political thought and undisciplined action, the need for a united front for the achievement of our political advancement is great. The group spirit, the partisan bias, class conflict, competing self-interests—all this is clogging the path of our progress. It is unfortunate that in the absence of cohesion amongst the different political parties communal and sectional movements are gaining strength. The energy of the nation is being dissipated over a host of sectional causes. In normal times, we could wait for the slow progress whereby movements gain in strength gradually and make for effective united action. But the present situation is likely to deteriorate beyond redemption if it is left to take its own course. Signs are visible which make it clear that the cause of Democracy is in jeopardy. The Congress definitely invokes the name of Democracy in all its moves, but its method and manner of execution have not the liberal contents of democracy. The Muslim League, in its basic ideal, is very far from democracy, as it stands for the vindication of a particular community. The Hindu Mahasaba, in its present strength, is largely the result of reaction from communal bickerings. To make the political struggle effective, we must come together and present a united front. It need not be a movement in which different parties and political organisations will lose their identity, but there should be a movement to coalesce for achieving political freedom. It is imperative that all of us should feel for the country and act as a united force. The factional fight which is going on may ultimately lead to the building of a strong party seeking to disavow democracy for its own purposes. We shall, in that event, stand defeated in the course of our struggle and in attaining the objective. The necessary consequence of such a struggle is the growth of a tyrannous party; intolerant of criticisms and authoritarian in issuing decrees. That will be the grave of our fight for the cause of democracy. I would, therefore, plead for national unity on democratic lines for the pursuit of our political struggle. If democracy is to be made a living force amongst us, we shall know how to feel for all and to act in co-operation with all.

The Genesis of the New Constitution Act of 1935

The Government of India Act, 1935, is an ill-fated statute. The Montague-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 were introduced as an experimental measure; the dyarchy in the provinces was not meant to be a finality but as the precursor of full ministerial responsibility. In 1924, the Indian Constitutional Reforms Committee, presided over by the late Sir Alexander Muddiman, confessed that dyarchy which was introduced was clearly a complex, confused system having no logical basis rooted in compromise and defensible only as a transitional expedient. The Minority Report, signed by the Right Hon'ble Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. M. A. Jinnah and others frankly stated that the dyarchical system had failed, and in their opinion it was incapable of yielding better results in future.

Public feeling since then began to grow uneasy. They were anxious for the termination of the transitional period. They asked for effective reforms which would give them full opportunity for governing the Provinces with patriotic direction and encourage willing co-operation of the people. The British Government, however, move very slowly, and it has been our painful experience that they often are miserly when a generous gesture only can ease the injured feelings of the nation. The policy of gradualness, amounting to inaction, exasperated and alienated the Indian nation. At a time when the greater part of the people was inclined to resort to direct action in order to give expression to their sense of resentment against the ungenerous approach of Great Britain with regard to the Indian problem, the Simon Commission was appointed which confirmed the policy of distrust in Indians. After the publication of the report of the Simon Commission, the Round Table method was tried. There were three sessions of the Round Table

Presidential
address: Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

Conference which could give no final shape to the coming political reforms. The memorandum of the Indian Delegation of the Round Table Conference on the political reforms of India was not given the careful consideration it deserved. The usual procedure of the Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform was gone through, although Indian representatives were associated therewith. The net result was that "Indians talked; White Hall drafted and Westminster legislated." The Constitution Act was passed in 1935, and it came into operation in 1937 in a limited way, as the scheme of Federal Government, contemplated in the said Act, is yet to be given effect to. It is thus seen that the failure of the Reforms of 1919 was officially recorded in 1924, but the British Government took another full ten years to pass a new Constitution Act which could not be, in its entirety, put into operation within the next seven years. Such a halfhearted and ungenerous approach makes India cold and sullen. Accordingly, the pledge of "the progressive realisation of responsible government" does not strike the chord of Indian heart. The time-table in the instalment of reforms in India is so disappointing and irritating that the country is easily thrown into a cauldron of discontent due to a sense of frustration. All this shows a total lack of imagination on the part of the British.

Technique of Constitutionalism

The mere wish for fulfilment of political aspirations is not enough for a nation; they are to strive for it. The seizure of power is a question of political strategy, rather than of political philosophy. In a dictatorship, the revolutionary adventure is perhaps inevitable for securing the State power. Dictatorship gives no alternative to a citizen who differs from its purpose. But in a Democracy, the seizure of political power through constitutional means is not only wise but practical politics. And one should always bear in mind the mature observations of Prof. Laski on this point. He says, "it is the duty of the citizen to exhaust the means placed at his disposal by the Constitution of the State before resorting to revolution. I believe that the gains which are inherent in the technique of constitutionalism are profounder, even though they are more slow, than those which are implicit in the revolutionary alternative."

In our country, the political constitution of India recognises the democratic principle, though in a limited sense. The principle of self-government is accepted; the ideals of parliamentary democracy have been set in motion. There have been variations in details; there are imperfections running through the Constitution Act, but responsible self-government is emphasised upon in the actual working of the political system. If the country is to make a further stride along the road of self-government, the technique of constitutionalism is undoubtedly wise and expedient; to exhaust the country's efforts on the barren channels of strikes and boycotts, interspersed with violent risings and rebellious upheavals, amounts to insane playing with the interests of the nation at large. Every country has its natural and historical factors which shape its political struggle, and those who are brokers of the Russian experiment and vassals of foreign ideologies have no objective appraisal of the conditions obtaining in our country. They must be told, here and now, that the political struggle cannot be carried out without complete understanding of the social forces at work which are beyond the grasp of intellectual truants sauntering in foreign pastures.

We should take note of this basic postulate; we should be governed by the objective conditions of the country. I feel that our political struggle, to be effective and fruitful, must move around the orbit of constitutionalism; it must seize every vantage of power for further conquest of the State-machinery. It is not a counsel of despair; it is not the philosophy of inaction; it is not the programme of the timid and hesitant people. Ceaseless search for the acquisition of the State power through constitutional machinery and accommodation of the State-power for the social welfare of the people in

general require services of the highest kind and sacrifices of infinite magnitude. It is only bold heart that strives for action; it is only selfless spirit that shines in service; it is only dynamic mind that builds the citadel of progress. Those who shirk are obstacles in the way; those who hesitate and bide time invite inaction which paralyses the nation. Sacrifices, unless called for in the interest of the country, have little meaning, less justification. Should I be told that the sunken eyes, exhausted bodies and drooping souls of our countrymen could be restored to full vigorous health by our patriotic citizens breaking laws, and fomenting strikes and courting imprisonment? It is a mid-victorian conception of the political struggle that heroism consists in slow and self-inflicted waning away and in individual or organisational efforts for national reorganisation without the aid of the machinery of the State. With the dawning of the modern concept of the State as a social service organisation, it is an accepted axiom that service in the cause of the nation for a brighter and happier state of things can only be effectively rendered through the State, and as such the seizure of the State-power is the supreme political question, and the subordination of the State-machinery to the welfare of the people is the highest political service. Those who run away from this ideal invite wastages; those who willingly forgo the instruments of State for the service of the citizens release the forces of disintegration.

Presidential
Address : Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

The Constituent Assembly

In sober realism, the transference of political power to India can only take place through the consent of the British nation. Because, in theory, the Imperial Parliament is the sole Constituent Assembly of the British Empire. All this does not rule out the wresting of political power or the creation of proper sanctions for achieving the desired political goal. If the political system is to be suited to the new needs and demands of the country, it must be fashioned by Indians themselves. In the circumstances, the Constitution of the country must be adapted to its requirements and should represent the will of the people. The imperfections of Constitution are not, its real blemishes; the chief virtues are that the Constitution should reflect the will of the people and be indigenous to the country. To achieve all this it is necessary that the new Constitution, responsive to new demands, should be framed by the Constituent Convention.

Historically a Constituent Assembly is convened to frame the constitution of a new state and is understood to be committed to the three basic postulates: (1) it is a sovereign body; (2) it is to function on the free will of a free people; (3) its decisions are final. Such a concept of the Constituent Assembly is related to the phenomenon of revolution. But in our country the objective conditions being different, the Constituent Assembly should meet as a constituent convention, and in order that the Constitution framed may be related to the demands of the new situations obtaining in the country, the convention should derive its powers from the people. But the Convention, elected for the definite purposes of drafting the fundamental laws of the country, should neither be unwieldy; nor should it be made a party question to establish the supremacy of a particular party. That partisan bias which breeds intolerance and generates power-politics is the negation of the basis of democracy. Situated as we are, we suffer from certain limitations in the matter of election of a National Convention. The country has not until now gone through the training of universal franchise; the political immaturity of the ordinary voters will be evident from the high percentage of illiteracy in the land; the country has never been educated on the lines of political objective to be sought and achieved, except the vague demand of severing connection with Great Britain to the farthest limit; the lessons of party dictatorship have been propagated to the ultimate detriment of national cohesion in formulating demands and in fighting constitutional issues. In the circumstances, the National Convention for the specific purpose of drafting the constitution should consist of a small body of people, elected either by the executives of the different political organisations of the country or by the

Presidential
address: Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

provincial legislatures on the basis of proportional representation. Those who are revolving round the orbit of Communal Award and deriving political importance therefrom would naturally view with disfavour any democratic proposal for the framing of India's future constitution. But this much they should concede that a majority decision, at least on matters not affecting their fundamental rights, should not be resisted. The National Convention should cease to exist after its allotted task is gone through. On the analogy of the Dominions, the Constitution, as framed by the National Convention, may receive the imprimature of approval by the Provincial or Central Legislatures before ratification by the British Parliament. Under the present conditions, the authority and the initiative for summoning a National Convention lie with the Government of India, and ultimately with the British Government, but the demand for such a Convention can be adumbrated by the different political parties and the provincial legislatures.

The theoretical issues as to the plenary powers of the Convention or the ultimate agreement of the British Parliament to ratify the Constitution as settled here in India by such a Convention need not be pursued to their logical conclusion. Politics is neither a logical code nor a philosophical issue; it is a process and a force which stands for movement and stability; it is yoked to a sense of realism and influenced by the objective conditions. Accordingly, the given situation and the given conditions should shape the contours of political movements. Those who prefer soaring in the balloon of catchy theories and exciting ideologies to moving on the hard tract of facts may object to the toning down of the revolutionary concept of Constituent Assembly. But their quibbles and squabbles should be avoided in the furtherance of the genuine interests of the country. To wait for the emergence of conditions helpful for the framing of an ideal constitution is not sound politics; because an ideal constitution for all time to come can never be written out by any Convention, however powerful and revolutionary it may be.

The Indian Unity

The most striking feature of the Indian history from its earliest times down to the present age is the working out of a synthesis which respects "ordered complexity and harmonised multiplicity." Hinduism has never declared its fascination for any statutory methods of salvation. From the sages of early times down to Tagore, Indian culture has been interpreted to be the meeting ground of alien faiths and vindication of truth over creeds. The Hindu theory is that "religion is not correct belief but righteous living", and that every group and every nation has an individuality worthy of reverence. India has accommodated different creeds and spread a warm living sense of unity. There is thus an inner cohesion from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. As a Liberal I have profound faith that the main note of Indian civilization, if given free play and restated with reference to new conditions, will be found equal to the present emergencies of conflict and instability.

The Pakistan Movement

It is, accordingly, very unfortunate that in a land marked by comprehensive synthesis at every turn of historical process, the theory of a hostile and dual attitude is gaining ground. The Pakistan movement, as propagated by the Muslim League, is a challenge to the fundamental unity running through the whole continent of India; it is a repudiation of the unity of purpose which underlies the external multitudinous ramifications of society; it encourages an attitude towards life where emphasis is placed on differences and incompatibilities in scorn of the impulse of cohesion. Such a scheme leaves society open to the assaults of chaos and anarchy. The Pakistan movement is undemocratic as it perpetuates the two-nation theory in the political, economic and social planes. It is making its way by the deification of sectional interests, it is releasing the forces of individual self-interests in

the arena of social welfare. The Pakistan movement is compelling allegiance amongst those who want to prosper materialistically amongst the slothful conditions of racial and ethnical disharmonies. It is a creed in which "there is intellectual error, moral blindness, social perversity." As a political reality, it has little justification. To cut out an Indian province, predominantly Muslim, from the vitalising effect of the Federation of other provinces, or to create conditions for the coalescence of the Muslim-dominated provinces into a Federation as the counterpart of the Indian Federation of the Hindu-dominated provinces is not a step forward in the democratic path of progress; it is an eloquent and passionate preaching of communal ascendancy in defiance of social harmony. Such a scheme contains contradictions which are menacing in the ultimate analysis. The scheme which denies the liberal contents of democracy and runs counter to the Indian philosophy and practice and seeks to gather around forces of disharmony is a poor device and an immature political doctrine, and it is undoubtedly to be resisted in the interest of the basic foundations of Indian nationalism. I stand for vindication of fundamental minority rights; I shall struggle for the emergence of conditions so that the free will of the people can be obtained to shape the representative responsible government of the country; I shall be in constant search for adjustment and synthesis to promote social harmony; but I can never agree to a rigid, narrow approach for the victory of communal or party interests through the statutory supremacy of sectional groups. As a Liberal, I deprecate the fascist method and approach; as a Democrat, I disavow the strategy of dictatorship; as an Indian, I refuse to believe that the dualistic attitude which has given birth to Pakistan on the one hand and to Hindu-dem on the other in contradistinction to the fundamental spirit of Indian civilisation is a cure for our errors and ills.

Presidential
address : Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

Hindu-Moslem Alliance

My faith and doctrine urge me to scorn exclusive absolutism. I believe with Spinoza that "religion is universal to the human race; wherever justice and charity have the force of law and ordinance, there is God's Kingdom." Those who love their own communities, their own sects more than truth and justice transform themselves, in course of time, into self-centred individualists. If we concede, as every Indian should, that our task is to bring together into one living organism all believers and citizens with a view to help the growth of a co-operative group, we shall find conflicts, religious or otherwise, unnecessary and obstructive. The fight about dogmas is really irreligious. And I am definite that our Indian civilisation is wholesome for communal harmony. If political spoils be the parents of communal bickerings, we should strive for devising a political system which gives poise and stability and generates a sense of confidence and the spirit of adjustment. It is really painful if the centre of gravity in religion shifts from righteous living to political plunders through the mechanism of communal strife. The true way to maintain the Hindu-Moslem unity is "by according due respect to the true distinctness of the different parts." The Hindu-Moslem friendship is to be viewed not as a mere device for political necessity, but, as Poet Rabindra Nath Tagore stressed, "it is for the sake of our humanity, for the full growth of our soul that we must turn our mind towards the ideal of the spiritual unity of man." If Hindus and Moslems meet in mutual understanding and trust on the common field of co-operation, we shall find the barriers broken up and friendship consolidated on important essentials. It is true that the Moslim conquerors came to India from outside, but their currents of knowledge and feeling brought freshet after freshet to swell the Indian ocean of civilisation. In our music, our architecture, our picture art, our literature, the Moslem culture has made precious contributions. The restoration of touch with the outer-world gave a fillip to Indian navy and sea-borne trade. There was internal peace over a large part of India; there was administrative unity with a common "lingua franca"; the

Presidential
address: Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

rise of vernacular literature was encouraged. The great religious movements in the time of Moslem rule mingled with the currents of Indian life and broadened the basis of religious democracy. If, at this stage of our history, we fall a victim to unmeaning separatist tendencies, we shall find great opportunities crippled by the differences of communal accent and idiom, leading to irreconcilable divisions and vindictive communalism. We should, therefore, pool all our honest efforts for the consolidation of the Hindu-Moslem alliance. It is not to be forgotten that "truth consist not in facts but in harmony of facts."

Demand for Reforms.

It is a constitutional tragedy of the highest kind that the Government of India Act, 1935, which granted a federal form of Government could only be applied to the provinces whereas the Central Government continued to be in the old habiliment of the Reforms of 1919. Provincial autonomy without the integrating influence of a federal form at the Centre was incongruous. With an irresponsible executive in the Centre, Provincial Autonomy incensed provincial jealousies and introduced elements of disintegration involving an assault on the fundamental unity of India. The decentralising influence of provincial autonomy was complicated by the fact that the barge of the Indian Constitution was towed to the Communal Award. With such a handicap, no constitutional machinery can function smoothly and effectively. I do not criticise the Award so much in the matter of allotment of seats, although in a democratic form of government votes are counted and not weighed, as I do in the matter of repudiation of the principle of citizenship. We are under the Award not so many citizens owing allegiance to the mother country to be returned to the Legislatures by our countrymen, but we shall have to remain confined in the compartment of religion for electoral and legislative purposes. Legislators are responsible not to the people in general but to their communities. This method of election taints the whole political system. If the present Constitution has satisfied none, added fuel to communal bickerings, bred a spirit of provincial exclusiveness, and cut adrift the political parties from democratic moorings, there is no element of surprise therein. The Constitution started on the wrong track, and naturally it has led to deadlocks in some provinces and unstable coalitions in others. The sense of nationalism is injured; the spirit of accommodation is submerged in the ravening for power; the lessons of citizenship are forgotten in the wild search for sectional and communal leadership. The failure of the present Constitution is evident from the release of the forces of retrogression. The country is, therefore, impatient for new effective, political reforms.

It is true that there is the promise of the British Government to the grant of Dominion Status of the Westminster variety within the shortest period of time after the conclusion of the war. There is no doubt that we Liberals stand for the Dominion Status, as contemplated by the Statute of Westminster, 1931. The Statute gives effect to the resolutions of the Imperial Conferences of 1926 and 1930, and it is instructive to note that the Imperial Conference of 1926 described the mutual relations of the self-governing countries composed of Great Britain and the Dominions as follows: "They are autonomous countries within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of domestic and external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations." The title Dominion was chosen for distinguishing the parts of the Empire enjoying responsible government from the dependent countries. India at present does not stand in the list of Dominions. The Dominion Status is not far removed from Independence inasmuch as it negatives the Colonial Laws Validity Act, 1865, which imposed a vital limitation on the powers of Colonial Parliament, invests the Dominion Parliament with the full power of making laws having extra-territorial operation, and rules out the Parliament of the United Kingdom from legislating for Dominions except with their consent. The

essentials of Responsible Government or not expressed in the Dominion Constitutions, and the triumph of such principles is secured by the political sense of the people and wisdom of the leaders.

Presidential
Address : Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

It is difficult to forecast what order will emerge out of the present mighty conflict of competing ideas. After the war, the Statute of Westminster may undergo changes ; and the nature of Dominion sovereignty may be suitably modified to strengthen the enduring character of the Commonwealth. With this we are not at present concerned. The Federation should claim for India the attainment of the status and functions of the Dominions within a brief and definite period after termination of the War. I would therefore, urge that there must be an unequivocal declaration by the British Government that after the War India shall no longer be treated as a dependency and that our constitution shall give us the same status and powers as that of any other unit of the British Commonwealth. If the Dominion Status is hedged round with restrictions and safeguards interfering with the full play of the functions of responsible Government, the Federation must stand up to resist them. No cabinet dictatorship should be installed with an irremovable Executive as the guiding spirit. Power has a corrupting influence and it will undermine the edifice of responsible government if those who are in charge of the State machinery are not made responsible to the public. However brief the period may be, the Council of Ministers should not be placed outside the chastening influence of public opinion. Any scheme which encourage irresponsibility abrogates responsible Government, the true foundation of Democracy.

The mere pledge of Dominion Status does not inspire enthusiasm amongst our countrymen because it is fastened round with three vague conditions : (1) there is no definite time-limit at the end of which the pledge will be redeemed ; (2) the transfer of political powers should be consistent with certain historic and other obligations which the British Government have towards India ; (3) the right of self-determination will be conceded in the event of agreement amongst Indian themselves. This threefold brake emphasised in the recent declarations of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India has rendered the pledge illusory and incapable of being redeemed. The history of British rule in India is strewn with many a broken pledge, and they have honoured such pledge only when the Indian national demand proved inexorable. It is a sad comment on British statesmanship.

The declaration by the British Prime Minister that the Atlantic Charter so far it relates to " the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they will live " will not be applicable to India has disappointed Indians greatly, and it has deepened their suspicion that Great Britain is not sincere about her war aims and in her declarations that this struggle is for the creation of a new world-order and for the vindication of Democracy. Mr. Winston Churchill's statement has proved a damper to India's enthusiasm in supporting the war efforts of Government. India has made it abundantly clear that in the interest of Democracy she stands for the preservation of the rights of man which are in jeopardy in the totalitarian countries and those under their control and that she is definitely allied against Nazism and Fascism. The statement of the British Prime Minister has made India nervous about her position in the new democratic world-order for the creation of which Great Britain is supposed to have entered into this struggle. India is anxious to associate herself with democratic powers to check the tide of Nazi aggression and has placed her resources unreservedly at the disposal of Great Britain. But her enthusiasm is bound to get chilled and determination to fight the enemy slackened unless she is convinced that sacrifices which the Indian people or being called upon to make are in the interest of Democracy and restoration of freedom in the world and that in the new world-order that is expected to emerge as a result of the victory of the Allied powers in this war India is going to be placed on the same position as that of other free countries within the British

Presidential
address: Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

Commonwealth of Nations. As an earnest of British sincerity for the cause of Democracy and for the conferring on India the status of a Dominion after the termination of the war, all sections of our countrymen have asked for "replacement of the present form of Central Government by a Government responsible to the public."

One need hardly remind the authorities that unless Indians are definitely assured that they too will have equal opportunity of being liberated when the new democratic world-order is ushered in on the victory of the Allied powers in the war it is more than human to expect that India will prove enthusiastic in supporting Great Britain in this struggle and would strain her every nerve in contributing to the Allied Victory. The psychological effect of the recognition of India's just claim for political emancipation in return for her contribution to this struggle for the vindication of Democracy should be adequately appreciated. Four hundred millions of people of this sub-continent with ancient traditions of culture, heroism and sacrifice cannot be coerced to co-operation merely by the bogey of Nazi aggression. The Liberal Federation has recognised that the present time is not congenial for bargaining, though India's grievances are profound and many, and it specifically asked that the "Central Government should be so reconstructed as to have by convention a fully national character" and "the British Government should not ordinarily interfere with any policy that has the support of such an Executive and the Central Legislature." All this could be done within the limitations of the Constitution Act of 1935. But the demand for political reforms during the period of war met with routine answers from the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. The vague pledge of Dominion Status was recalled and everything was promised after the war in an indefinite manner. The effective part of the reply was the expansion of the Viceroy's Council without introducing therein an element of responsibility to the country. I do not deny that His Excellency the Viceroy has got a team of able individuals in the expanded council. Ability loses its effectiveness in the barren channel of non-responsibility. Moreover, the policy is executed in a half-hearted way. The portfolios of Defence and Finance should also have been entrusted to non-official Indians, enjoying the confidence of the country. If the Viceroy's Council are fully replaced by responsible non-officials and if the rule of collective responsibility without undue interference with the policy adopted by the Executive Council are stressed and followed, public confidence might be slowly established. The sooner the present dyarchical arrangement in the Executive Council is removed, the better for all concerned. I am sure that the Indian Members of the Council will soon realise the difficulties of working under such a system and will feel greatly handicapped by the presence of colleagues who are neither responsible to the people nor are in a position to approach important issues from the national point of view.

The Principle of Functional Representation.

The Communal Award, we have found, strikes at the basis of citizenship. Rights of citizenship are derived from the fact that citizens are members of society. They are endowed with rights so that they may enrich the common life; they are burdened with duties so that the total well-being may not suffer on the rock of individual or group interests. The State which neglects these rights and duties fails to build foundations in the hearts of its citizens. The scheme of the Communal Award is strung on a different note; the common life is subordinated to the communal life; the social well-being is sacrificed to group interests. There is no citizenship; there is communal and sectional approach which manipulates the machinery of the State to the purposes of the Award. The State, through the device of communal electorates and statutory allotment of seats on unscientific basis, has ceased to encourage fellowship of men aiming at the enrichment of the common life.

The Liberal Federation cannot but fight for the rights of citizenship. The conception of citizenship, it must be noted, is a functional one. We

possess rights as means of achieving social welfare. Our rights are related to functions, and they are to be respected by the State because of their social implications. To quote an eminent political philosopher, "by a functional theory of right is meant that we are given powers that we may so act as to add to the richness of our social heritage. We have rights, not that we may receive, but that we may do." It is true that our contributions to the store of social well-being are not equal, but our rights of citizenship are founded on our contributions, suffused with social contents.

Presidential
address : Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

If this modern sociological approach is accepted, it will be found that functional representation in the legislature should be accepted as the alternative to communal representation. It is contended by critics that functional representation is a reactionary move. They forget that the functional theory of right is the heart of the modern concept of the State. The State never acts; it is acted for by those who are in power, and naturally the government of the State consists of a small number of persons who have the authority to issue orders and to exact obedience from the citizens. We call a particular system democratic in which the will of the average citizen is the channel of direct access to power. This right to the political power involves the right to the franchise. The basis of the franchise may be geographical or occupational; that is a methodology which does not obtrude the final objective. In the case of geographical representation, citizens generally vote either as members of a party or a group; in the case of occupational representation, the citizen will vote as a member of his union or vocation. In a democratic form of government, an elected member of the legislature is not a delegate but a representative. When legislators are merely delegates of the particular parties or groups to which they are devoted, the basis of democratic government is violently undermined. Democracy directs the efforts of citizens on an honest search for compromise which does not allow the interests of individuals or interests of groups to dominate. The method of representation is to be judged by the test if the free will of citizens is reflected in the legislature. It is an erroneous contention that functional representation will bring together a miscellaneous group of representatives, eager for advancing their occupational interests. Representatives are not expected to act as mere delegates and vassals; they are as much interested in social welfare as the representatives of geographical areas. But functional representation has certain merits, especially in a country like India. It will teach our people that our rights are correlative with functions; it will do away with unwieldy geographical areas; it will help political consciousness and emphasise the need for organised action; it will bring into forefront those who are useful members of society and throw the idlers and the useless into the background, thus serving a much-needed lesson that every citizen is called upon to make his contributions to the welfare of the country; it will reduce election expenses which make seats more easily available to the monied persons. Functional representation helps the useful members of society to function more usefully as members of the State. I am not dogmatic about my views, but to me it offers a fascinating alternative to communal representation. The question deserves serious examination from our statesmen and thinkers.

Defence.

The problem of Indian defence is bound up with our political objective. The transfer of political power becomes meaningless if it cannot be decided from unrighteous aggression. It is to be viewed as a pressing national question in its international setting. At present, we are entirely at the mercy of the British both in matters of internal and external defence. The continuance of the present situation confirms the suspicion that the Britishers in their defence policy of India are mainly interested in perpetuating this rule and government. The Government of India Act, 1935, does not ensure the transfer of control of Defence to the Indian people. It is realised that the defence policy cannot be, by a stroke of provision in the Statute fully handed

Presidential
address: Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

over to the Indian legislature. There must be a period of transition which should be as short as possible. The transitional scheme should be pursued in a way so that India may be placed on the footing of the Dominions in the matter of defence. In the Dominions, there is the development of the military and air defences in practically complete autonomy and the evolution of naval defence based on the closest co-operation with the British fleet. We find that the Dominions possess unfettered control over their forces, and "even in the event of a declaration of war by the British Government which might involve them willingly or otherwise in hostilities, it would rest with them to decide to what extent, unless attacked, they would use their forces to aid Britain."

The achievement of the Dominion Status in respect of defence policy requires handling of the military question from the Indian point of view. The policy of distrust arising from the Mutiny complex should be abandoned; the pace of Indianisation amongst the soldiery and the officers should be accelerated; the area of recruitment should be broadened so that all the castes and all the provinces may not be denied their legitimate share in military services. A very large portion of Indian revenue is required for military expenditure, and it will be most unfortunate if the policy of greater Indianisation with the consequent reduction of British troops and the strengthening of Indian air and naval forces are not pursued with zeal and foresight. The present rate of progress in the matter is disappointing; it is definitely disconcerting when we Indians look around and find that the country which has poor national defences has little opportunities to make its contribution to the new world-order based upon freedom and democracy. The present war has made us awake to the dangers of negligent attention to military matters. The potential resources of the country have not been carefully husbanded to consolidate the land, air and naval forces of India. To day we are rich with resources but weak in materials; our contributions to the successful prosecution of the war on behalf of the Allies are limited by the short-sighted policies in respect of armament and industrialization. But in pushing on our demands, we should not forget that the transfer of political power is more important than the question of Indianisation in the Army.

The World War.

The present world war is a mighty conflict between two systems of thought. The intensification of nationalism and the glorification of power-politics have given birth to Hitlerism. It is a challenge of the armed force to the human spirit of freedom. The present war can only end when Hitlerism is destroyed. That cannot be achieved by a mere victory in the field. Hitler is a mere offensive pustule on the face of a deeply ailing world, as Mr. H. G. Wells puts it. To get rid of him and his Nazis, we shall have to see the causes removed, otherwise the disease will manifest itself in some new eruption. India is immensely interested in such a task. It is true that constitutionally our belligerency is not our own choice, but the spirit of Indian thought is definitely against the Nazi doctrine of ruthless suppression of human freedom. The Atlantic Charter pledges support to the conquered and harrassed countries and as such it is welcome, although we cannot but feel that in the scheme of the new world order the serfdom of India will disturb its balance.

The war has already reached our frontiers. To stand by and watch the vandalism of infamous aggressors invites disasters on us. Our grievances against British rule are great and grave, but we have a duty to our own country. We cannot calmly see our country overrun by plunderous hordes. We must resist them; we must co-operate with those who are in the field to resist them. Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan have threatened our peace and security; they are stretching themselves for their own expansion; they

are menacing the basis of civilisation in which we are interested. The situations calls forth our willing services and sacrifices for the victory of the Allies in the cause of Indian Democracy. If India falls a victim to the authoritarian powers, the clock of our political progress will be definitely put back and she will have to undergo ruthless suppression for an indefinite period of time. It is for the sake of India that Indians should offer their services and resources. This is not the time to bargain on the doctrinal plane, although we should not stop impressing the British Government that for fuller utilisation of the willing co-operation of India the settling of political accounts is urgent. As realists, we cannot remain indifferent to the need for co-operation in war-efforts and to the necessity of political adjustment. There is a visible bond between these two pressing issues.

Presidential
Address : Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

I am happy to find that Pandit Jawhar Lal Nehru after his recent release has made a significant statement that "in the grouping that exists there is also no doubt that the progressive forces of the world are alligned with the group represented by Russia, Britain, America and China" and that he "wished well to the group which contains the progressive forces." It registers a definite swing of opinion in favour of co-operation and removal of all impediments to common action for a common cause.

The war has focussed our attention on the need for a National Army. It has quickened our desire for self-reliance for the growth of national life in all its aspects. It has struck the string of our patriotic fervour which ensures sacrifices for the country. It has thrown new opportunities for the expansion of national industries on undiscovered lines. If the policy of industrialisation is permitted to touch on all requirements of the war, a new harbour of progress will be opened for this unfortunate country. But if our industrialisation is made to suffer in the interest of foreign exploitation, that will incense political animosities to a degree, and such a state of things will not be helpful for the restoration of the spirit of co-operation which is sadly needed at the present moment.

I cannot but conclude my observations on the world-war without paying our tribute of respect to the fighting Indian troops. Their high martial qualities have been tested in the drive against Marshal Graziani's invading armies and in the conquest of Eritrea and a large part of Abyssinia. Their heroic attacks in Lybia, successful intervention in Iraq, and the occupation of Syria showed their mettle in the best. Those Indians who have sacrificed themselves in the present war have died martyrs to a deserving cause. We offer our sincere condolences to their families. It swells our hearts with emotion and pride when we read the memorable testimony of Sir Archibald Wavell, Commander-in-Chief, with reference to Indian troops: "I am proud to have them under my command. Their training, their discipline, physique and morale have drawn warm admiration wherever they have served." It is a tribute to our nation and an acknowledgment of our potentialities.

Indians Overseas

It is the duty of the Government of India to look after the interests of the Indians domiciled abroad. The condition of Indians in the Dominions and Colonies raises the supreme political question that the principle of inter-Imperial equality is not observed when the question of coloured race is involved. The Imperial Conference of 1917 admitted the right of the Indian Legislature to regulate the immigration of Dominion nationals, or British subjects connected with the Dominions, "on the basis of reciprocity." But nothing has been done towards this end. The Government of India Act, 1935, won the golden principle that the relations with the Dominions would be exercised in accordance with the advice of the Ministers of the Governor-General, and the responsibility would be of the Ministers. The Act thus provided that Britain had no direct interest in the matter of the relations between India and His Majesty's Dominions. But such a provision is held over, because Federation has not taken effect. Differentiation against British

Presidential
address: Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

Indians in the Dominions and Crown Colonies is a national wrong which should be redressed without loss of time. India may feel her interests abroad secure if the status and functions of the Dominions are granted without reservations. That is an ideal to be fought for with a view to eliminate all anomalies and deficiencies in this and other matters.

The present position of Indian emigration is imperfect and unhappy. Under Sect. 10 of the Indian Emigration Act, emigration for the purpose of unskilled labour to any country beyond the limits of India is unlawful at present. But emigration for the purpose of skilled labour is permissible. In each case, a permit has to be obtained from the Local Government on the terms and conditions laid down in Chapter IV of the Indian Emigration Act. Immigration to all foreign countries is regulated by the Immigration Laws of the countries concerned. The provisions are as follows in the following

Union of South Africa

Immigration of Indians for the purpose of permanent residence is prohibited. The following classes of persons are, however, allowed to enter the Union.

- (1) Persons specially exempted by the Minister.
- (2) Persons born in the Union.
- (3) Persons domiciled in the Union. (Domicile is acquired by residence for a continuous period of 3 years and is lost by absence from the Union for a period exceeding 3 years. But in special cases the Minister may authorise issue of a certificate allowing the persons concerned to return and resume residence within a period not exceeding 10 years.)
- (4) Wives and minor children of domiciled persons.
- (5) Persons born outside the Union whose parents were at the time of their birth domiciled in the Union provided that such persons are brought to the Union within 3 years of the date of their birth.
- (6) Holders of temporary permits issued by the Minister, who may enter and reside in the Union for a specified period.

(Indian tourists, students and merchants desirous of visiting the Union may be admitted only in special circumstances on temporary permits).

Ceylon

Immigration of unskilled labour from Calcutta Port is prohibited. But permit is issued for stay for a limited period only in case of skilled labour. No passport is required.

Malaya

No passport is required for the entry of Indians into Malaya and no permit is required for the immigration of skilled labour from India to Malaya. But immigration of unskilled labour is prohibited.

Kenya

Immigration of persons who appear to be without visible means of support or likely to be a pauper or public charge, unless he can prove the contrary within 6 months after his admission, is prohibited. Such persons before leaving the ship on arrival in port must make a deposit of 200 shillings or furnish security for the same amount. The following classes of persons are exempted from the operation of the above rule.

- (a) Wife and minor child of a person who is not a prohibited emigrant.
- (b) Persons domiciled in that colony.

Presidential
address : Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

Passports are required for entry into Kenya.

The Indo-Burma Immigration Agreement

The Indo-Burma Immigration Agreement has met with severe criticisms from all quarters. In the language of Mahatma Gandhi, "it is an unhappy Agreement—it is panicky and penal" and "the Agreement must be undone inasmuch as it breaks every canon of international propriety." The Indian community in Burma strongly resents the Agreement. It is unfortunate that the Government of India's representative was an Indian who was the author of the infamous Agreement. The restrictions on Indians imposed by the Agreement are not justified. Indian capital and labour have played a commendable part in the development of Burma. Even the other day, Burma was a part of India under a unitary form of Indian Government. To-day, Burma is a constitutional unit, distinct from India. That is no reason that India and Burma should move on competing lines with the consequential loss of mutual goodwill which is so desirable. The terms of the Agreement, if examined, will be found highly discriminatory. The present Agreement must be resisted and a better one substituted. Any revision of the Agreement should particularly provide for, amongst others, the following :—

- (1) The seasonal immigration of Indian unskilled labour into Burma for agricultural operations should not be unduly interfered with.
- (2) The issue of permits for re-entry into Burma of Indians who are now in Burma and have acquired landed interests or established trade, business or profession in Burma should be free and unrestricted.
- (3) There should be unrestricted issue of permits for the immigration of skilled labour for the restriction of which there is no case.

The Indo-Ceylon Agreement

The Joint Report of the delegations from India and Ceylon on the question of immigration is open to serious objections. Ceylon has about a million Indians, mostly estate labourers. The galling restrictions on domiciled Indians in Ceylon or Indians' entry into that island are to be deplored. It is satisfactory to note that the Indian Legislative Assembly spoke with one mind in condemnation of the draft Indo-Ceylon Agreement. The fact that the amendment of Mr. Hussainbai Laljee on the said Report was accepted without division in the Indian Legislative Assembly has given a positive mandate to the Government of India to modify the Agreement in important essentials. Mr. Laljee's amendment laid down three principles ; full citizenship rights for certain categories of Indians ; safeguarding of Indian trade interests in Ceylon ; freedom of movement and in choice of employment and opportunity to acquire full citizenship rights for those unskilled labourers who will be permitted to emigrate. The Hon'ble Mr. M. S. Aney, new Overseas Member, assured the Assembly that the Government of India were not committed to any specific proposals and that they had an open mind to evolve an honourable agreement in a spirit of give and take. That is no doubt an encouraging assurance which, I am sure, should be implemented on a fair basis in fulness of time.

Presidential
address: Sir
Bijoy Prasad
Singh Roy.

Conclusion

Before I conclude, I must again offer you my heartfelt thanks for your indulgence and patience. It is not possible to do full justice to the consideration of all the pressing problems of the country within the limitations of a Presidential Address. I have not attempted any such task. It is not for me to lay down any programme; I have merely indicated my views on some of the important political questions of the day. For the pursuit of any programme you lay down after full consideration, I am sure we can count on the help and co-operation of the majority of Indian Liberals. In the sphere of politics the transfer of power to Indians is necessary; in the field of economics, primary efforts should be the augmentation of national wealth with equitable distribution amongst all the dynamic factors of production; in social matters, we should rise from the slough of listlessness and make our society more vigorous and responsive. But signs are not wanting that the political objective is being neglected in the scramble for group-supremacy; that economic legislations are directed towards the growth of class antagonism without paying heed to the creation of national wealth; and that social apathy and instability are perpetuated by a false concept of individualism. We must overcome the spirit of brooding dissatisfaction that prevails in the country. I feel that the time is high for an active rally around the flag of constructive nationalism for the attainment of our objectives. I trust the Federation will keep this in mind.

Bande Mataram,

(LOUD APPLAUSE)

The President: Ladies and Gentlemen, the meeting will adjourn now for one hour and re-assemble at three o'clock. All the Delegates will constitute the Subjects Committee which will meet then. To-morrow the open session will meet at 12-30 P.M., when the Rt. Hon. V.S. Srinivasa Sastri will move the most important resolution on the arrest of the Mahasabha leaders at Bhagalpur.

The session then adjourned for the day at 2-10 P.M.

SECOND DAYS' PROCEEDINGS

The Twenty-Third Session of the National Liberal Federation of India re-assembled at the Sundareswarar Hall, Mylapore, Madras, at 12-30 P.M. on Saturday the 27th December 1941, with Sir B.P. Singh Roy in the Chair.

The President: Ladies and Gentlemen, with your permission I propose to place for your consideration the following condolence resolutions. I request you to pass the resolutions, all standing.

1. THE YEAR'S LOSSES

(a) The late Sir C. Y. Chintamani

The National Liberal Federation of India records with profound grief its sense of the irreparable loss that the Liberal Party and the country have sustained by the death of Sir C. Y. Chintamani. He was an eminent journalist, unwearied public worker and sleepless patriot. The public will long miss his extraordinary memory, unexampled devotion and wide and detailed knowledge of public affairs. The Liberal Party's debt to him is immeasurable as he watched over its prestige and welfare with singular fidelity in the face of great disadvantages and strove hard to maintain its principles and its influence on national affairs.

(b) The late Dr. Rabindranath Tagore

The National Liberal Federation of India laments the passing away of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore as a loss to India of the greatest magnitude. The cause of learning, of the fine arts, especially of music painting and poetry, and indeed of culture of the highest order has suffered a severe loss which the world will not forget for a long time yet. His services to education are scarcely paralleled in the country, while his rare courage and idealism gave public life unique dignity and power. His writings in Bengalee and in English constitute a library rich in wisdom and inspiration and a heritage which posterity will cherish with pride as well as gratitude.

(c) Other Losses

The National Liberal Federation of India places on record its sincere sorrow at the deaths of the Maharajadhiraja of Burdwan, and of Messrs. S. P. Basu of Calcutta and S. B. Gokhale of Nagpur, all three of them men of note who served the country well and faithfully.

The resolutions were passed, the whole audience standing.

2. THE BHAGALPUR BAN

The Rt. Hon. Y. S. Srinivasa Sastri: Mr. President Brother-Delegates. Ladies and Gentlemen, the resolution which I have been asked now to move runs as follows:

Resolution II :
The Rt. Hon.
Y. S. Srinivasa
Sastri

The National Liberal Federation of India deeply deplores the turn that things have taken regarding the Session of the Hindu Maha Sabha that was to have been held in Bhagalpur. The ban placed on it by the Bihar Government is a denial of one of the fundamental rights of citizenship for which there was no justification in the circumstances. The Federation holds that it was the duty of the Bihar administration to afford protection to a lawful meeting of citizens from any apprehended molestation or disturbance. The Federation condemns emphatically the arbitrary action of the Government that has driven the President of the Hindu Maha Sabha and many distinguished members of it into an exceedingly difficult situation in which they have by their conduct earned the sympathy and respect of their countrymen

Resolution II :
The Rt. Hon.
V. S. Srinivasa
Sastri.

As you will appreciate readily, the resolution is worded in mild terms. My speech also supporting it should be properly speaking, similarly worded. I shall endeavour to observe this good rule, but it is just possible that I may here and there overstep the limits of propriety. Our brother from Orissa said yesterday that the vigour of his youth apparently moderated the senility of this gathering. (Laughter). It is true that some of us here are rather old people. I am no exception. Bent and broken as I am, I find in my age I am not the first nor even the second here. I come a poor third. My sluggish blood, I find, runs somewhat more swiftly as I take up this resolution. The ordinary rule is that people must be assisted by Government to perform all their lawful duties and to exercise their lawful rights. It is possible that a section of the people occasionally wishes to disturb the exercise of lawful right by another section of the people; in which case a Government, if it is fore-warned, also fore-arms itself and provides the necessary assistance to those that exercise their rights. I am willing to admit that in certain cases it may not be possible for the Police to prevent a disturbance or hold it in check sufficiently to let the exercise of the lawful right. In such abnormal cases the law permits the Police to ban the lawful meeting and for the moment to let the disturbers of the public peace prevail. Such cases, however are rare, at any rate they should be rare where vigilance is common for the protection of people employed in lawful occupations. At Bhagalpur it was the Hindu Maha Sabha that was to have met. But the Local Administration seem to have apprehended that that meeting would lead to a disturbance of the public peace, and they informed the managers of the Hindu Maha Sabha that it might not be possible for them on the dates mentioned to afford sufficient protection to the Sabha. At the time the Sabha had for its President a gentleman named Mr. Savarkar. That name is familiar to us all. Instead of letting the matter drop there, Mr. Savarkar entered into negotiations with the Government. He was not one of those who break out at once into civil disobedience. He made representations to the Bihar Government that it was a lawful gathering, that it had been planned and announced a year in advance and that it would be very difficult to change the dates or give up the gathering altogether. So negotiations went on for a time. I understand that Mr. Savarkar even corresponded with the Viceroy about the subject. But apparently the Local Government were not quite prepared to meet him as he desired to be met in the matter. But Mr. Savarkar is a man of peace. So he decided that three days before the Bakrid should begin in Bhagalpur the Maha Sabha should have met and concluded its session, thus affording an interval long enough to let passions subside and the city fall to its usual mood. This, however, was too much for the Local Administration, and they decided to ban the meeting until things should settle down as they thought, until January 6. Mr. Savarkar had his patience exhausted by this time. I wish to say a word about Mr. Savarkar personally. Ladies and Gentlemen, I am not very well acquainted with him. I met him just once at the house of our illustrious countryman Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, who was then giving one of his pacificatory Teas. I had expected to see a gentleman perverse and obstinate and loud. But what did I find? I found a somewhat thin-looking, quiet Maharashtra chap, speaking slowly and deliberately, seldom raising his voice, but always apparently in full possession of his mind and knowing exactly what he wanted. I was still more surprised that in his talk all that day there was nothing to remind me of his unparalleled experiences. Those who know anything about Mr. Savarkar know that his life has been marked by the greatest hardships and a considerable amount of what he would think was undeserved persecution. He was for many days in absolute danger of his life and passed through concealment and flight several times over before he found safety. Even after all this I was, as I said, agreeably surprised to find no note of bitterness in his speech—nothing certainly anti-Government, nothing anti-British. I at once conceived a great admiration of the man, which I may say is fully justified by his behaviour during this trying episode. He did all he could to see that the matter passed off quietly, at the same time allowing him and his Sabha to exercise their

unquestioned right of meeting. He, therefore, gave no offence whatever, as far as I could see. Nevertheless the ban was put upon the meeting by the Government, and then Mr. Savarkar and his colleagues decided that they would hold the meeting notwithstanding the Government's ban. Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, there may be differences of opinion as to what he should have done in the circumstances. But I am one of those who hold that, upon the whole, his conduct and that of his colleagues merits the approbation of all independent and honourable citizens. (Cheers). I do not think that they could have done less. They decided to hold the meeting, and in preparation for it numbers of delegates from all over India went there. The Government apparently felt that their order was being treated with contempt, and in order to maintain their own prestige they decided to arrest the people as they came and prevent the meeting from being held. As you know, this was done. Eminent delegate after eminent delegate was arrested. It is interesting to note that amongst those arrested was a prominent citizen of Bengal, one who is the son of Sir Asutosh Mukerjee, himself having been the Vice-Chancellor for a period of the Calcutta University, a man who has taken a distinguished part in the conduct of public affairs and holds an all-India position of great importance. And the singular thing was that at the time he was arrested he had just been sworn in as Finance Minister of the new Coalition Government of Bengal. I wonder whether he signed a single paper or granted an interview. But before that, this call came and he went to Bhagalpur, and the Papers say that he was arrested but that he was most respectfully conducted back to the Province of Bengal, where he is at the moment being held (that is the word I think) between two high officers of Government. He wishes to go back to Bhagalpur, but they want him to turn the other way, to Calcutta. He is not willing, the papers say. There the matter stands at the moment. I expect, however, that the Government of Bihar will now see that they have raised more trouble by trying to prevent this meeting than they would have had to face if they had let it continue. But, Ladies and Gentlemen, see what complicates the situation, for the Government I mean. It transpires that the local Muhammadan community have expressed their sympathy with the organisers of the Hindu Maha Sabha, and further more at least a section of them joined the hartal that the Hindu community organised as a demonstration against the action of the Bihar Government. Well, I suppose the Muhammadan community did not welcome the stamp of disturbers of public meetings that was sought to be put on them. They wish to repudiate it, and they wish to show that they are not a fanatical or an irresponsible set of citizens, and that the Bihar Government fussed unduly about the matter when ostensibly in their interests they wished to put a ban on the Hindu meeting. Furthermore the news to-day is more extraordinary. The news that within the jail there was a small meeting held of those that were detained. Our irrepressible friend Dr. Moonje seems to have been responsible for a number of resolutions to be passed. They have not been yet announced. They will be interesting, I think. At the same time a large meeting seems to have been held of the delegates that had gone to Bhagalpur for the meeting, whom apparently because of their comparative unimportance the Police allowed to be free. They were permitted to hold the meeting, and they have passed a series of resolutions, and the proceedings have been solemnly wired to us already. I will not mention the proceedings nor ask you to endorse any of them. You need not be under any such apprehension. But I wish to point out that if there had been the smallest justification for the Bihar Government's apprehensions originally, they must have received some sort of confirmation as this banned meeting was being held and resolutions were being passed. It does not appear that the local Muhammadan community were greatly disturbed or annoyed by these proceedings. Nor do they appear to have gone there to molest those that were assembled. That, I think, might be taken as withdrawing from the Bihar Government even the shadow of a fear that they might have originally held. Now it appears to me—I do not wish to be hard—it appears to me that without proper reasons the Bihar Government set about doing this

Resolution II:
The Rt. Hon.
V. S. Srinivasa
Sastri.

Resolution II:
The Rt. Hon.
V. S. Srinivasa
Sastri.

perfectly irregular and arbitrary act of preventing the lawful exercise by citizens of their right.

Now it has been said that this body is a non-communal organisation and that we should take no notice of a matter of this kind. I will allow this, that hitherto the Liberal Federation has not taken any action of the kind that we are being invited to take to-day. We have always watched no doubt most interestedly and most concernedly when things of this kind were taking place, believing that our position as a national organisation forbade us even to appear to take a part in communal wrangles or disturbances. But the matter has gone too far. Time after time things of this kind have taken place; and within my knowledge—and it extends over a fairly considerable period—the sufferers and victims have all been one community.

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to say on your behalf without the slightest hesitation that we should never hesitate to act similarly upon an occasion when either our Muhammadan fellow-citizens or our Christian fellow-citizens or for that matter our Parsi fellow-citizens have got into a scrape of this kind. If anything happened to them of the nature that has now happened in Bhagalpur to the Hindu Mahasabha, I do not suppose that we should be behind-hand in going to their rescue to their support. So far as I can see now, this statement of mine and this claim of mine on your behalf are not going to be put to the test, for no Government is likely to take such action. That is I suppose the prevailing belief amongst us, and I wish therefore emphatically to say that while we are willing—I repeat it while we are willing—at all times to stand by any community whose exercise of a lawful right is called in question, we cannot hold our hands and watch while the Hindu community is treated in this way. That is why some of us have ventured to ask your support for this proposition. I have mentioned precisely which community we are supporting and I have mentioned also the community from which the Bihar Government apprehended disturbance to them; and in fairness to that community, I have added as clearly as I can that there does not appear to have been any justification for this apprehension on the part of the Bihar administration. Our Muhammadan fellow-citizens in Bhagalpur do not appear by their conduct then and by their conduct now to have given the slightest room for the fear that has brought about this very awkward situation. Our resolution asks you in the end to condemn emphatically the action of the Government and to endorse in a way the action that has been taken by our Hindu countrymen. On that last point, I wish to say another word. I have already said that in my opinion Mr. Savarkar and his colleagues could not have done less than they have done (Applause). It has been pointed out to us that our friends were disobeying a lawful order of the Bihar Government. Do we knowingly and deliberately support them in that act when we say that they have, by their conduct, earned the sympathy and respect of their countrymen. I do not suppose that any one here will think that we have used strong or inappropriate language in that respect. For my own part, I would go further; but this meeting has always been known for its moderation both in language and in conduct, and I dare not commit it to anything strong. I believe however the words "respect" and "sympathy" are perfectly in keeping with the general seemliness of our proceeding and will not appear to commit us to any course of conduct which might be considered either in the nature of a general truculence or disobedience of lawful commands.

Only one word more of a somewhat general character. I have been no administrator, I have not been in any way responsible for the law and order of any province or any part of a province, but I am always disposed to allow for the defects of those who like my friends here and some friends there have held charge of the heavy portfolio of law and order. It is always a difficult thing, a very trying charge; and I can enter perfectly readily into an understanding of their difficulties. Very often it may become necessary for them to use force, but they are not sworn to non-violence by any means; for it is placed in their hands by an organized Government and they are at perfect

liberty to use it as and to the extent it may become necessary. But in the use of this force, the officers of a Government have to see that the character and the habits of the population they are in charge of are all led into proper channels. If they exercise their function upon such occasions in such a way that the disturbers of public meetings, the men who threaten to misbehave, are encouraged, while those who submit to orders and who are generally mild are penalised, if that kind of thing happens often, then the political education of the citizens takes a wrong turn. People learn the unfortunate lesson that rebellion will pay and that habitual submission to orders will not meet with proper reward. I take it therefore this word of mine will be regarded as a piece of friendly advice to those who are responsible for the maintenance of authority. Authority must be exercised in defence of the right and not in defence of the wrong. Whenever that happens, there is danger that the people will learn wrong lessons and the people hitherto of mild and submissive habits will find that their goodness is taken advantage of by others. And that is not a lesson which if I were in charge of any Government, and in charge of any force, would allow to be created (Applause).

Resolution II :
The Rt. Hon.
V. S. Srinivasa
Sastri

Sir Cowasji Jehangir: Mr. President, Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Resolution II :
Sir Gowasji
Jehangir.

It is unnecessary in these times to remind you that India is in danger and that a portion of this world which at one time we claimed as a part of India is actually being attacked from the air. On many occasions we have pointed out that we live under exceptional circumstances. But to say that to-day is not only truer than it was ever before, but it may actually be called a truism. In such times as these, for anything to happen in India of an unusual character which disturbs the peace of mind of a great political party is a catastrophe. I am one of those who would desire, most earnestly desire, that the war effort should be supported, helped and in every way backed up unconditionally, and I am not afraid from any platform to express that opinion, because I conscientiously believe that it is in the interests of our country (Hear, hear). And however unpopular that sentiment may be, I am prepared to proclaim it from the house-tops for the reason I have given you—and the best of reasons is the interests of our own motherland.

Now, under conditions of this sort, it does appear inconceivable to us that Government should go out of their way to arrest a large number of those distinguished countrymen of ours who have in private, from the platform and through the press, advocated support of the war efforts, men who have gone all over the country preaching the doctrine of 'join the colours, join the army, support the fighting machine of our country' (Applause) and at a time like this, whatever circumstances may prevail, that such men should be arrested is a catastrophe greater to the Government than to the country. (Loud applause). There may be reasons which are not apparent on the surface. We read the papers, and like our Right Honourable friend who has moved this resolution, we judge position, and his remarks and my remarks are based on the facts as we know them. If there are any other facts which are not known to the public, which have not come out to the public, I do not know them. But on the facts before us, it seems to us, to me especially, inconceivable that members of a great political party who have all along advocated, as now, the support of the War effort should be arrested because they wanted to hold a public meeting in a certain town at a certain time.

Now, Sir, it is all very well to talk about law and order. We are a political party which has always been against direct action, because we conscientiously believed that it was not to our interests and the interests of our country. We have been labelled sometimes as cowards because we are opposed to direct action, because we are afraid of the consequence. That is not true. You cannot abuse some of our leaders of cowardice. Some of them, and the best known of them, come from your province. They are great citizens of your great city of Madras. I am sure you know them better than I

Resolution II :
Sir Gomasji
Jehangir.

do. They have always advocated that direct action does not help a political party or the country. But we are in this resolution not supporting direct action. What we are protesting against is that in these very dangerous times for our country and for the Government themselves, the Government ought to have acted more diplomatically, more tactfully, more sympathetically and should under no circumstances have brought about a condition of affairs whereby they are compelled to arrest Mr. Savarkar, the President of the Hindu Mahasabha, and as Mr. Sastri has pointed out, arrest a man who only a very few days ago—may be a very few hours ago—that man who took the oath of office conscientiously and seriously with a full desire and conviction that it was his duty to support the War effort, that man was put under arrest. Can you imagine anything more foolish? Can you imagine anything which lacks imagination more than such action? I will repeat, there may be causes which we do not know. I am not taking them into consideration, I do not know them; but as the facts appear in the newspapers, as the facts appear in to-day's papers, the position seems to be inconceivable.

Now, Gentlemen, I will put another aspect of the case before you. Most of you are aware of the opinion in England of certain sections of politicians. They believe that in these very dangerous and critical times everything should be done to appease public opinion in India. We read these articles which are wired out to us, we hear organisations being formed for this purpose. And we find at the same time that a Provincial Government—mind you when we call it a Provincial Government, it is really a Governor and his two or three Advisers—has taken upon itself the responsibility of bringing about a state of affairs in the country which, except in the minds of these three or four gentlemen, causes resentment in the minds of even men like Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar and the Right Honourable Mr. Sastri. Surely therefore, in the interests of the Government themselves it is our duty to point out to them that if there are men in India who desire conscientiously to support the War effort to-day, to do everything that is in their power regardless of conditions to see that the enemies of Great Britain are defeated, it is the duty of the servants of Government to see not only that they will not in the future make matters much worse for the Government but that they will not make matters easy to such men as are desirous of thwarting the War efforts made in the interests of their own country; and it is for that reason that we desire to pass this resolution. And if our voice will carry even a slight weight, I am quite sure some good may come out of it.

I will just mention one more point before I conclude. We talk of direct action and the resentment that is the cause for that direct action. In my province of Bombay perhaps you know that we had a Congress Government. They brought forward the policy of prohibition. Many of you may agree with that policy, but in support of that policy they desired to suppress free speech and free meetings to express the views of those who opposed that policy, and the Congress Government went so far in Bombay as to suppress some newspapers who were advocating against prohibition, and they refused to allow those newspapers to criticise in any way not only their prohibition policy but even to go into past events or discuss them. While here was a cause or a reason for direct action, most luckily for us, it did not become necessary, for the matter went up to the High Court and it was upset within twenty-four hours. The newspapers were given the liberty to write what they liked and men like myself the freedom to criticise as strongly as I wished the policy of the Bombay Government. So whether it be Congress Government or whether it be a Government by a Governor and his two or three members of council, circumstances may arise no doubt when arbitrary action may make necessary a little stronger measures than we generally adopt; but it should be only for a short time and it should be merely to emphasise the point of view and no more. And that is why I have given you this illustration just to show very clearly that we in no way go back upon our principles, our position in respect of direct action, but that we do support the right of every Indian to meet wherever he likes, provided he does

not make a nuisance of himself, to say what he likes provided it is within the four corners of the law. If anybody prevents him from doing that, then that Indian or body of Indians or any political party has surely the right to protest. Gentlemen, I support the resolution. (Applause).

Resolution II :
Sir Gowanji
Jehangir.

Dr. R. P. Paranjpye : Mr. President, Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I rise to support this very important resolution. Perhaps some of you who know my views on various questions might wonder why I am here, a professed nationalist and a disbeliever in all communal organisations standing before you to support a resolution which has special reference to the actions of the Hindu Maha Sabha. Well, it is because I feel on this question that it is not a communal organisation that is concerned, but a very much wider question of the liberty of every individual in the country to have the full right to give full expression to his own views, and it is from that point of view that this Liberal Federation has taken up this question and wants to assert the right of every citizen of India to have the fullest liberty of expressing his views and of associating with each other in every possible way.

Resolution II :
Dr. R. P.
Paranjpye.

Ladies and Genlemen, I am not a member of the Hindu Mahasabha. I differ from it in certain particulars. But all the same, I feel that the Hindu Mahasabha is perfectly right in the course that it has taken. They have tried by every possible means to meet the Government. It is not that they refused to understand the difficulties of the Government. They tried to meet them in every possible way. I understand that the Secretary of the Hindu Mahasabha was prepared to stop any public processions in honour of their President. They also changed the dates in order to avoid any reasonable possibility of any disturbances on account of the simultaneous celebration of the Bakrid and the meetings in connection with the Mahasabha. All these actions on the part of the leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha were as nothing to the Bihar Government. They were carried away by a policy of—I am almost going to say—cowardice before they apprehended any discontent on the part of the Muslim part of the Bihar population. As a matter of fact, it turned out—from what is seen of course in the newspapers—that even the Mussalmans did not agree with the Government's policy. They appear to have taken part in the hartal consequent on the arrest of Mr. Savarkar and the other leaders, and they did not apparently agree with all the steps that the Government have taken. The person most concerned here is of course Mr. Savarkar. People know a great deal about Mr. Savarkar and Mr. Sastri has spoken to you his impressions of him. My own acquaintance with Mr. Savarkar goes a long way, about forty years back, when he was a student under me in College while I was a Principal. I had occasion then to take certain disciplinary steps against him (Laughter) and to a certain extent I claim to know something of the life of Mr. Savarkar. All the same on this occasion he has behaved as a real self-respecting and partiotic person should (Applause). One should not judge of Mr. Savarkar from simple newspaper reports. He bears me no grudge and I bear him no grudge for anything that happened in his life some forty years ago. As a matter of fact, when about a few years ago I first saw him after his release, he felt as a pupil meeting his old Guru. And in recent times his attitude on various public questions has been such as every liberal here can almost fully endorse. In particular, in the matter of our attitude towards the War Mr. Savarkar heads the only party in the country, outside of course our Liberal Federation, which says that India should whole heartedly support the War effort, take the greatest possible advantage if you like of the War and enlist in large numbers in the Army and help in prosecuting the War to a successful conclusion.

But, the party in deference to whose wishes the Government apparently issued this ban against Mr. Savarkar is not so whole-heartedly in favour of war effort. They are going to make conditions before they can put themselves whole-heartedly in favour of war. Mr. Savarkar had previously given expression to his views, and the speech he intended to make had also been

Resolution II :
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Resolution II:
Dr. B. P.
Paranjpe.

published, and I challenge anybody to take any exception whatever to the attitude that Mr. Savarkar had taken to war effort.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Government openly have told us that the simultaneous celebration of Bakrid and the Hindu Maha Sabha session was likely to lead to grave communal disturbances. First of all, as we all know the celebration of a festival begins and ends with one or two days particularly consecrated to it. The Hindu Maha Sabha agreed to have its session finished three days before the beginning of Bakrid. The Government further tell us that they are unable to provide the necessary police protection to preserve peace in Bhagalpur. Now that shows that the Government are practically abdicating their duty of preserving peace and tranquillity in the country. Not only that. They perpetrated a wrong in stopping this Hindu Maha Sabha session, but in order to continue in that wrong they have provided in Bhagalpur a far greater police force and a military force in addition to enable them to continue and persevere in this wrong. Can there be a greater muddle-headed and wrong-headed thing than that? (Laughter).

Ladies and Gentlemen, I do not propose to go into the communal aspect of this question in detail. But it is felt by almost everybody in India that the Government are following a policy of undue appeasement in regard to one section of the people and a policy of defying a much larger section of the community. Now the policy of appeasing the Muhammadan community has so far not proved a success. As a matter of fact the policy of appeasement has nowhere led to success. England tried that in the case of Czecho-Slovakia and other countries. It never stopped war ultimately coming. I do not believe that if the Muhammadans are bent on creating trouble, any policy of the Government is going to stop them, and I do not think the Government should follow such a policy of undiluted appeasement of one community, alienating a very much larger community. Perhaps the former community is very vocal; but the other community is also a very strong and numerically larger community. And the Government, if they continue in acts of this kind, will find their task becoming very much heavier as days go by. In these days they cannot carry on even their war efforts with the consent of only one community—and that consent perhaps only half-hearted—and with the other community entirely against the Government on account of their wrongful actions.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in this case the Government have got no solid foundation for their action. What they ought to have really done and what I would have done if I had been responsible for law and order in Bhagalpur would be to take security from the people from whom they expected trouble and not from the people who were going to meet there for peaceful expression of their views. If the Government apprehended that certain unreasonable people in Bhagalpur or elsewhere did not want the Hindu Maha Sabha to exercise its lawful rights, it is those people that should have been held responsible and not Mr. Savarkar or Mr. Mukherjee or people of that kind who have been arrested on account of defiance of these lawful orders. These are people of the highest position, and the Government really should have thought twice and a hundred times before they went in for action of this kind. Ladies and Gentlemen, I think actions of this kind are not likely to do any good to the Government and their war effort or to the country in future. We have been advocating fundamental rights for everybody. But this is a denial of fundamental rights, and I think that the Hindu Maha Sabha leaders are perfectly right in acting as they have done. Even I, though opposed to communal organisations, occasionally feel that this is a time when I should keep back my fundamental differences with the Hindu Maha Sabha and express in some tangible way my sympathy with the Hindu Maha Sabha in the trial which it is facing. An ancient Latin poet has said that the Gods make those people mad whom they wanted to destroy. The Gods have made the Bihar Government mad. Let us hope that the Gods don't wish to destroy the British Government, because with their

destruction is also involved the destruction of our own country ; and I hope therefore that the Government will become wise very soon and retrace as soon as possible the very wrong-headed steps they have taken so far and try to conciliate not only one community which tries to set at naught every principle of order and freedom, but allow that same order and freedom for all communities in this country.

Resolution II :
Dr. R. P.
Paranjpye.

The resolution was then put to vote and carried unanimously.

3. PAKISTAN

Mr. E. Vinayaka Row : Mr. President, Brother-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, the resolution which I am asked to move is in these terms :

Resolution III :
Mr. E. Vinayaka
Row.

The National Liberal Federation of India is emphatically opposed to any idea of dividing India into Pakistan and Hindustan on communal basis. Such a division in the opinion of the Federation is anti-national, inimical to unity and cohesion of India and entails the danger of disintegrating the national units, resulting in complete disruption of the nation.

I am a Liberal strongly committed to Liberal principles. You and I, Liberals, do not wish to admit the validity of any claim, any political claim, that is based on communal grounds. In 1909 when for the first time the principle of communal representation was introduced in Indian politics, all thoughtful men thought that it was a temporary expedient just to pave the way for these claims being eliminated altogether after a very short period of experimentation. But when once these wrong things are permitted to come in, they have in the nature of things a tendency to grow and grow. The appetite grows on what it feeds at every stage. When reforms came to be considered later in 1919, these claims were further accentuated, and in 1935 when the present Act was passed they assumed the shape that they have. I do not want to go into all the details except to point out to you that at every stage of constitutional reform the Muslim demands were put higher and higher. What were three points became ten points; what were ten points became fourteen points; and ultimately people thought that by making small concessions the constitutional reforms which they were so anxious to have would be theirs. The Government, instead of pointing out that these communal concessions were increasing and that it would be against national interests to permit their continued increase, encouraged these communal claims being put forward in an increasing measure at every stage. If the North West Frontier Province should be separated and made into a Governor's Province,—conceded. If Sind should be separated, though a deficit Province and the Central Government had to give a subsidy of a crore of rupees every year,—conceded. If weightage should be given and separate electorates should be retained,—conceded. If in the services in every grade of it, including railway employees I suppose, the Muslims wanted a particular percentage,—conceded. Whatever be the objections which were put forward from a national point of view, from a purely political point of view untainted by communal considerations, all these objections were simply brushed aside. And after all the points that were asked for at the Round Table Conference were conceded, practically all of them, Mr. Jinnah and the Muslim League have now added the latest demand of Pakistan. We cannot deal with this resolution of Pakistan without making pointed reference to the enunciation of Pakistan by the sponsors of that movement and examining the details of that proposal from a national point of view. I do not examine it, Gentlemen, from the point of view of Hindus; I do not examine it from the point of view of any other minority community. I examine it from a national point of view, taking into account the welfare and political progress of all the communities that form the Indian Nation. In 1930, I believe, for the first time Sir Muhammad Iqbal made his enunciation of some nebulous concept of Pakistan. At that time the letters of that word had a kind of esoteric meaning. Pakistan perhaps meant, and it is said that it

Resolution III :
Mr. E. Vinayaka
Row.

did mean—P for the Punjab A for Assam K for Kashmir S standing for Sind, and Tan for British Baluchistan. I am told that the word Pakistan is really a way of combining all these Muslim populations or Muslim areas into a single homogeneous unit. Well, there is no harm if really a big political problem is going to be solved in having a rational redistribution of areas, provided it does not interfere with the financial stability or the security of the country as a whole and does not create and encourage additional and more difficult communal problems which may have to be solved all over the country by concessions similar as they may call it. But what does Mr. Jinnah say. Sir Muhammad Iqbal's definition was followed up, I believe in 1933, by a statement by a gentleman called Rahmat Ali, he has recently issued a pamphlet reminding people that in 1933, eight years ago, he put forward a kind of scheme for the benefit of the Muslim community. And it took nearly seven years for the Muslim League to recognise the necessity of its officially adopting the scheme put forward by Mr. Rahmat Ali, with the variations which the Muslim League thought necessary. In that scheme for the first time Mr. Rahmat Ali did not start with the north western areas only. He said: "In the east, in Bengal, we have a predominantly Muslim population in contiguous areas. They should be also constituted into a separate Muslim zone and given a separate status as a state." He did not stop there. He went further and said: "On account of historic considerations and the position which events have created in Hyderabad there is a Muslim state which must be continued as a Muslim state"—though the Muslim population in Hyderabad State is only 10%, and 90% of the population are non-Muslims. If you have a minority of population, put forward historic grounds and historic claims; if majority of population, put forward the claims of ordinary arithmetic. Anyway, heads I win; tails you lose—that seems to be the line adopted by the enunciation of Rahmat Ali.

Then there came this trouble,—the Muslim League had not been committed until December 1940 to any definite scheme as to what Pakistan meant and what they were prepared to advocate. It was said that a committee was appointed to draft the scheme of Pakistan. Individual members published their own schemes; and if these were very adversely criticised, they would say: "These are our personal views; they do not represent the views of the committee appointed or of any Muslim League organisation." Before the resolution of December 1940 was passed by the Muslim League, Mr. Jinnah enunciated two astounding propositions which no Liberal will be willing to concede. First he said in published statements that he did not believe in democracy. If he did not believe in democracy, he did not vouchsafe to say if he believed in absolute monarchy. Did he believe in any other form of government which he would recommend in connection with the Pakistan scheme which he was going to adumbrate? The second thing he said was that Muslims in this country, 66 millions of Muslims in this country, were a separate nation; they had nothing in common with the Hindus; they were in fact a separate nation; they had realised a new consciousness that they were a separate nation, and they took everything that was necessary to follow up this realisation to its logical result. Now the Hindus, he said, were a separate nation, because in India if you take away the Muslims, what remains?—the Hindus with a sprinkling of other communities. And he said, the Congress represented the Hindu community and every other body represented the Hindu community. And incidentally in one of his speeches he referred to the Hindu Maha Sabha and the National Liberal Federation, which had the courage or the boldness to condemn him on the scheme of Pakistan at the Calcutta session, as mere political Batchas who did not understand the full implications of the statement that the Muslims were a separate nation and they wanted separate homelands. Now having prepared the Muslim League with these preliminary things at Madras at the Muslim League Conference in December 1940 the League changed its creed officially and a resolution was passed which luckily is available to us for discussing the true merits of this Pakistan idea. You will kindly forgive me if I take the liberty of reminding you of the terms of that resolution, because I find

even in well-informed circles a great deal of misconception prevailing about the Pakistan idea which the Muslim League are advocating. They have changed the creed of the Muslim League. The new creed is in these terms :

Resolution III :
Mr. E. Vinayaka
Row.

"The aims and objects of the All-India Muslim League shall be (a) the establishment of completely independent states formed by demarcating geographically contiguous units into regions which shall be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Mussalmans are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India, shall be grouped together to constitute independent states which shall be free national homelands in which the constituent units are autonomous and sovereign."

I will first deal with this paragraph of that resolution before I take up the remaining two paragraphs of it. They say that in the Punjab and contiguous areas there is a predominantly Muslim population, and in Bengal there is a predominantly Muslim population; these shall be separately grouped into autonomous and sovereign states. The Muslim population is barely 13 millions in the Punjab proper. If a separate zone should be ear-marked there they will have in the Punjab 13 millions, in the North West Frontier 2 millions, Sind 3 millions and Baluchistan 1/2 million. Altogether it will be a Province of 18 millions, practically to the west of the Indus and a few districts to the east of the Indus tagged on to it. On either side of the Indus there will be the State, the ruler of which is a Muslim prince. And in eastern Bengal the Muslim population will be 27 millions. They want that these 27 millions should be the eastern Muslim state, and the other 18 millions the western Muslim state. The resolution does not say whether these two will federate among themselves or whether these two will federate with the other Provinces in British India. They have left also the 18 millions of Muslim population that will be found distributed all over India besides these two territorial areas. There is in the resolution of the Muslim League a reference to sovereign powers and completely independent powers. Lest there be any doubt as to what is meant by that, Mr. Jinnah has made a great comment upon this. What exactly the inspired author of this resolution means is made clear by him. He says: "Let me tell you as clearly as I can possibly define it, that the goal of the All-India Muslim League is this: We want the establishment of completely independent states in the North-West and Eastern zones of India with full control finally of defence, foreign affairs, communications, customs, currency and exchange, etc. We do not want in any circumstance a constitution of an All-India character with one Government at the Centre. We will never agree to that. If we once agree to that, let me tell you the Muslims will be absolutely wiped out of existence. We shall never be tributaries of any power or any government at the centre so far as the north-west and eastern zones of our free national homelands are concerned."

That really means that the north-western state will be one independent sovereign state—not federated with either the eastern Muslim state or any of the other states in British India, not even with Hyderabad. The eastern state also will remain like that. The Muslims in other areas will remain where they are unless an exchange of populations on an unprecedented scale is arranged which is impossible.

Let us consider whether this is practically possible. First, any such cutting away of British territory from British India cannot be done except by Act of Parliament, unless other methods of such division are encouraged and adopted and they succeed which is impossible. Nothing is stated whether these two separated zones will be Dominions enjoying Dominion status and owing allegiance to the British Commonwealth. This resolution is silent about it. No Act of Parliament will be a question of practical politics if an attempt is made to cut out these two areas from British India and leave them out of the Indian Federation as well as the British Commonwealth.

Resolution III:
Mr. E. Vinayaka
Row.

That is impossible. Assuming that for some diplomatic reasons we do not really know—British politicians who seem to make concessions at various stages for some reasons—they may even take the extreme step of granting Mr. Jinnah's demand for some reason, what will be the fate of the defence of not only the north-western Province and eastern Province, but of British India as a whole? That is a point that has to be considered. Till now 62% of the Indian army was recruited from the Punjab. A large number of them were Gurkhas, some Muslims. On the whole nearly 30 to 32% of the Indian army were recruited from the Muslim population of the Punjab. And a great deal of the military expenditure, which was nearly 55 crores annually, was spent in the Punjab for contracts, for frontier defence and various purposes. The contribution by the Punjab to the central revenues was only one crore and odd. Now, will this north-western Province have adequate financial resources or adequate military strength to maintain and safeguard its own security? If it failed in that the security of Hindustan will be immediately in danger. And further, with the new developments in warfare in air and on land, to have a separate state on the western border of Hindustan will be militarily a very difficult proposition. If there should be hostility on the part of the western state, it will not be possible to defend and maintain the security of Hindustan proper. Now, gentlemen, for these reasons it is impossible to have a north-western state carved out and maintained with efficiency.

The second part of the resolution is this, and here is the trouble, more trouble than in the first part. "The adequate, effective and monetary safeguards shall be specifically provided in the constitution for minorities in the above-mentioned units and regions for the protection of religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them." The Mussalmans state that their culture and their interests will not be adequately safeguarded by any assurances that may be given by a federal constitution in India including these states as constituent units, but in the same breath they also tell us that it is impossible to have a purely homogeneous Muslim population either in the western or in the eastern state. Necessary safeguards there must be for communal and religious minorities within the State; we assure them under the constitution the fullest protection. But what is good reason for them must be good reason for those minorities who are asked to accept the assurances. Suppose these assurances are not maintained; what is the machinery which will be available to the minorities who those provinces to safeguard their interests, for which a guarantee is given in the constitution? Nothing is indicated in the constitution itself. A separate constitution for Pakistan as a sovereign unit—does Mr. Jinnah contemplate at a later stage all these units becoming parts of a bigger federation? Then it is inconsistent with his claim to have an autonomous and sovereign State. The problem is brizzling with constitutional and legal difficulties. I submit that the only solution that can be had for these safeguards not only for Mussalmans but also for other minorities will be an All-India Federal constitution including all Muslim areas. For administrative reasons you can have some small adjustments, some transfer of a few districts from one area to another, but any tinkering with the main conception of a federal constitution for India on a democratic basis, any attempt to deviate from this well-known track, will lead us into great difficulties.

The third part of the Muslim League resolution is this: "That in other parts of India where the Mussalmans are in a minority, adequate, effective and monetary safeguards shall be specifically provided in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them." This third part of the resolution deals with the eighteen millions of Muslim population which cannot be assimilated either in the North-West state or in the North-East state. What is the constitution and who is to frame this constitution to deal with the eighteen millions? And what is the Pakistan state which will be autonomous and sovereign? How

is it to have inter-State relations politically with the Federal constitution which must necessarily be adopted for Hindustan? That again is a difficulty which Mr. Jinnah and his supporters have not adequately met or dealt with.

Resolution III :
Mr. E. Vinayaka
Row.

There is only one more matter and that is a more serious matter. The whole conception of Pakistan is based upon the idea that the 27 millions of Mussalmans in Bengal are going to support the scheme. It appears that Mr. Fazl-ul-Huq who appears to be the leader of the majority of the Muslim population in Bengal—because he has been able to form the Ministry—does not command the support of the Muslim League, and now the League has expelled him. There is no use saying that he is a loyal supporter of this idea when he is not himself in the League, or that he will implement the policies of the League. Therefore the idea of an eastern Muslim State as an independent State has already ceased to be a practical proposition, because those who were for it have now declared themselves against the Muslim League and the League itself has placed them outside the League. Again, there is not even a reference to Hyderabad in this resolution. So, what is left is only a claim on behalf of the eighteen million Muslims in the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, etc. Already, the North-West Frontier Province is getting a sum of Rs. 1 crore as subsidy from the Government of India, and if the Punjab, the North-West Frontier and the Sind become a separate Muslim state—well, the finances of these provinces are already so inadequate that it will be impossible to have a civil or military administration which will be necessary for guarding the frontiers of the Muslim State and also of Hindustan proper.

So, Sir, from a national point of view, it will be a national danger if this movement for Pakistan is encouraged to gather strength. And in the interests of the Mussalmans themselves, they should be weaned away from this alluring thing which has been taking hold of them. And we shall be helping every citizen in this country by making it clear that this Pakistan ideal is a mirage that should not be pursued any longer. (Applause).

Dr. G. S. Mahajani : Mr. President, Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am primarily a professor, I am only a child in politics. I shall not therefore look at this question from the political point of view and discuss it, but shall discuss it on a rather academic plane. As it appears, Mr. Jinnah has perverted the theory of nationalism and this resolution of the Muslim League which threatens the integrity of the nation has taken the support of the principle of nationalism in support of a sub-nationalist movement. What we are most concerned about this movement is not that it will be successful to-day or that it will be granted afterwards—that is not my fear at all—but I do not desire that we should take a lead from Mr. Fazl-ul-Huq or anybody else because they are all broken reeds. What we should concern ourselves most on this occasion is this that whatever the motive of the Muslim League in propounding this movement, I am aware that some people still hope that it is nothing more than a propaganda stunt, that it is only a bargaining point—still, it will not be politic on our part to take that view and rest satisfied. The most important point is that the youth of this country are being indoctrinated year by year into a very vicious principle which threatens the very integrity of the nation. All parties in the country by this time have admitted the very salutary principle that the youth of the country should be left alone to pursue their study and form their own judgments and take part in life and its troubles only afterwards. Just as the British Government have always favoured the principle of continuity in foreign policy, I say that all parties in this country have already made their resolve that the youth of the country, the younger generation, which is a sacred charge in our possession, should be left to form its own judgment in due course of time. But unfortunately during the last two or three years, you find the Muslim League and the President of the Muslim League have thought it fit to encourage student conferences. Only

Resolution III :
Dr. G. S.
Mahajani.

Resolution III :
Dr. G. S.
Mahajani.

very recently, there was a conference at Nagpur addressed by the Muslim League President, last year, there was another conference held at Lahore, and at these conferences resolutions were passed supporting Pakistan. I believe, gentlemen, that is the greatest danger to our country, viz., that the youth of the country are being encouraged in this idea. After all, it may be that this is nothing more than a political stunt which may disappear after some time, but the greatest danger which I as an educationist perceive is that our youth are being brought up in a vicious doctrine, and it will be very difficult to get rid of this mentality after some time. It is possible to prove or disprove that this is only a perversion of nationalism. I shall prove it in a minute that this is a very illogical idea, but when this idea once takes root in the minds of young impressionable lads, it will be very difficult to remove it or uproot it. Therefore, I think that barring the resolution on the War, I think this resolution is the most important and should attract our attention. When the War has been concluded, we may sit down and draw up a constitution for the country, whether it be a constituent assembly as some people put it or a constituent convention as others would like to put it. Anyway there will be only two issues on the field; one that held the field before the year 1935, i.e., to get independence for this country, or in other words to get for this country the same status as is enjoyed by any unit of the British Commonwealth of Nations. That issue has now been more or less solved and the Liberal Federation has come to a sort of agreement in this respect, and this is the latest interpretation, I think, of Dominion Status. But since the year 1935, another issue has come into the field, viz., that before we draw up a constitution for India, how could we preserve the integrity of the nation. This very outstanding idea has been enunciated by the Muslim League and they say 'Before consenting to anything else, we should have this Pakistan or partition of India into two parts and we will not accept anything else'. So, this has added to our difficulties and the internal problem has become a far greater importance. As has been already stated, this is a perversion of the principle of nationalism and I shall prove how it is so. I do not say that Mr. Jinnah is against democracy; no. He is against what is called a Western democracy. I shall put his case in as charitable a fashion as possible. There are many forms of democracy—the British democracy, the American democracy, the Swiss democracy, and there are other forms which we can sit down and examine. His argument however is that there is lack of unity in the country. Very well. This lack of unity can be traced to the heterogenous composition of the nation. That means there is no common national consciousness. He argues there are more than one nation in this country. So it is a multination theory, and there are more than one nation, why have friction? Let us live apart, let us live in peace, let us not come into conflict with each other, let the Hindus occupy provinces with their own culture—and that is his view. Now, the right theory of nationalism is not to live apart from each other but to live together successfully without any friction. I shall invite your attention to this point, before the year 1870, the movement in Europe—I shall not go deep into it—was to make the European nation a unit. After 1870, a subnationalist movement started in Belgium, in Czecko-Slovakia, in Sudetanland, in Norway and Sweden. Again in 1890, on the same principle of self-determination or nationalism, the old Australian empire broke up into five or six different states. I say that the separatist tendency started when the sub-nationalist movement started. The Pakistan movement in our country is only a particular instance of this sub-nationalist movement. It is a wrong movement; and it is only in the formation of a large federation that the solution for this problem lies. I do not think this movement is likely to continue after the War is over. Our own concern at the present moment is, how to save the youth of the country from being indoctrinated into this idea. It has been said that separate electorates are responsible for this idea. You may remember the joint memorandum which was submitted to the Joint Parliamentary Committee by the British Indian delegates. The memorandum was signed by members drawn from all parties, all communities and all schools of thought,

and it was a scheme which demanded the right of the nation. When however the 1935 Act was passed, we found it was quite different. The 1935 Act contained two important parts, the Provincial part and the Federation part. That shows that the Act was conceived on the idea of essential unity of the country. I do not therefore subscribe to the view that the British Government have engineered this Pakistan movement—No. The 1935 Act was in answer to the demand for separate electorates from certain quarters, and in totally rejecting that Federation idea which was based on the essential unity of the nation, the situation lent itself to the starting of the sub-nationalist movement, the Pakistan movement.

Resolution III :
Dr. G. S.
Mahajani.

Gentlemen, it is not possible for me to go into the solution of the problem or how it should be dealt with. But if I have my own way, I would show that the problem arose because somehow we failed to share the power given to us under the 1935 Act along with the important minority communities in the country. It is necessary to quote one or two sentences from the speeches of important Muslim leaders which will show that the root cause of the Pakistan movement lies in the fact that we have not had the courage to satisfy or appease important minority communities. When last year the Nawabzada Liaghat Ali Khan addressed the students of Lahore, he mentioned this; he is the Secretary of the All-India Muslim League and his statement is entitled to consideration at our hands. He was asked why it was that this problem of the partition of India had come to prominence at the moment, and he replied :

“ Fifty years ago, India had no share in the administration of the country, and the communal problem grew with the transition of powers and responsibility to Indian hands and the unwillingness to share that power with the Muslim ”.

And here is a sentence which has been taken from Mr. Jinnah. He says.

“ There was no reason why it was not practicable for a Muslim League member to be appointed a Minister ”.

The other day Mr. Jagadish Prasad wrote an article in the Twentieth Century and he mentions there that it was a mistake in the United Provinces not to have had a Muslim included in the Provincial Cabinet. That may be so, we are not concerned with the mistakes of the past, but I believe it is quite possible to convince the Muslim League and other minorities that under a form of democracy—not a negation of democracy—it may be of the American type or of the Swiss type or a slight modification of the British type—it may be quite possible to appease or satisfy their aspirations and therefore it is unnecessary to disintegrate the nation as it now is.

One word more. The solution which has been suggested by Mr. Jinnah does not solve the problem, because if one nation is divided into two, there will then be different states with the same minority problem in each of them as now. If however you transfer a large population from one state to another and make it homogeneous, even then it will not be homogeneous, because legally it will not be possible. You cannot prevent people from going from one state to the other, and therefore solution mentioned by Mr. Jinnah is not a real solution.

I have great pleasure in supporting the resolution which has been ably moved.

The President : The resolution has been moved and seconded. I shall now put it to the vote.

Resolution III :
The President.

The resolution was put to vote and carried unanimously.

Resolution IV:
The President.

4. SEPARATE ELECTORATES

The President: Gentlemen, we shall now take up the fourth resolution on the agenda. I request Dr. Altekark to move the resolution.

Resolution IV:
Mr. M. D.
Altekar.

Mr. M. D. Altekark: Mr. President and friends, I am not a Dr. Mr. Altekark will do.

The resolution which I have the honour to move relates to separate electorates. It runs thus:

"The National Liberal Federation while agreeable, to the safeguarding of the interests of all sections of the people, considers that the aim of India's political evolution should be a democracy not based on considerations of race or creed, and therefore, the Federation is definitely opposed to the permanent existence of communal electorates and the present communal award, at the same time as it would not be practicable to effect this reform immediately owing to existing conditions, it considers that steps should be taken towards the elimination of separate communal electorates by the creation of joint electorates with reserved seats for a definite period."

As you will see, the resolution resolves itself into three parts. In the first place, we express the view that we are prepared to safeguard the interests of the minorities, secondly, we want a democracy to be established in this country; and thirdly we want that the separate electorates should go. They cannot immediately go under the present circumstances, and therefore we say that they should be substituted by joint electorates with reserved seats.

All that I want to say about this resolution is this: A good deal of mischief which has assumed a dangerous form at the present time, can be traced to the introduction of separate electorates in this country. It formed the basis of the idea that there are interests in this country that cannot be represented except by people who are primarily interested in them, and those interests are based on religion, creed and community, with the result that a certain amount of religious fanaticism entered into the consideration of this question and nationalism to that extent spent itself out. It was I think in the year 1915—I very well remember at the Bombay Congress, it was the first Congress—that this subject came up before the Congress and I was one of the five young men who wrote a letter to the President that under no circumstances separate electorates should be even considered at the session. The five of us were considered to be fools and the Secretary, my late lamented friend Mr. N. M. Samarth, a very frank man, told me so. Then, in the year 1918 at the first meeting of the Liberal Federation where this subject came in a more definite form, I was one of the few persons who tried to protest against it in the Subjects Committee. Then we were told—not that we were fools, but—that we were un-practical people and there was no use protesting against it at that stage. Several years have gone by and here we have come to the stage again when the Liberal Federation is protesting against the existence of separate electorates. I do not want to say that we have grown wiser, but certainly experience has taught us many things, and particularly this that if our nation is to be developed or evolved out of various elements, there is great danger in introducing a system by which race, creed and religion, should have predominant importance. What will happen under the present system is this: if a particular community has got separate electorate and can send its own representatives, generally the most fanatical men in the community have greater chance of being elected rather than reasonable people in that community. In India it is a great necessity that reasonable men should come together to look after the interests of the country. Fanaticism has done its worst in this country and I would not prolong the period of operation of this fanaticism. What has actually happened is this: it is because of these separate electorates that fanatical people have been elected as representatives, and if separate electorates are taken away

probably such men will not be elected by all the people coming together. Therefore it is high time, though late in the day, that we tried to put a stop to this. Incidentally, in this resolution we also say that we want a democracy. We live in days when democracy is being questioned on all sides. When the very existence of democracy in this world is in danger and when we are told by important politicians in different countries that democracy has been worked but has failed, we are pleading for it, because one of the chief objects of democracy is freedom of opinion. According to some leading politicians, however, this freedom of opinion works a great amount of injury. In the speech of Mr. Winston Churchill made to the American Senate the other day, reported in to-day's papers, he says: "we taught young people that war was wrong and if we went in for it, it was not right"; "but in Japan and other countries, young men were being taught to become soldiers and to kill people."

Resolution IV:
Mr. M. D.
Altekar.

Now in this way democracy is being assailed on all sides. Of course, luckily for us, Mr. Churchill is fighting for democracy, though he refuses to carry India with him in that great adventure. We in this country are, it is true, full of races and creeds, and our ambition has been, from the very inception of the Indian National Congress, that we should create a common nation out of these various elements. Either we must admit publicly that we have given up that ambition, or must do everything in our power to pursue that objective, and the objective is worth pursuing. Democracy means the rule of the majority. That is quite true. But rule always means reasonable rule. Just now we have heard from the beautiful speech of the Rt. Hon'ble Sastri that authority must be exercised for the preservation of right and not for the preservation of wrong. So it may be majority rule or any kind of rule. Why take for granted that majority rule will be only in the interests of that particular majority which is ruling? Day to day administration must be in the interests of all the people. Therefore it is very necessary to teach the doctrine to the people that our interests are common and that unity is essential. It has been said by all that the days are gone when we could exist as small nations. We have to be a federation or something like that. India is a big enough country to be a federation. It can be another United States in the world, and in this country it is the common interests that should be supported on all sides. Separate electorates come in the way of this kind of doctrine.

With regard to the last point in this resolution, it is stated here that as a matter of practical politics it may not be possible to remove separate electorates immediately. You know very well that in politics very few things can be done immediately. Whatever we may say about it, it takes a certain time. In the meanwhile something should be done, and what is that? We say that joint electorates with reserved seats should be substituted. Joint electorates ensure that a reasonable man will be elected; he has a greater chance than in a separate electorate. And the system has worked well in certain respects, not in respect of the Muslim community, but with regard to sub-sections of the Hindu community, with seats reserved for women, depressed classes and so on. So, that system as an intermediary stage should be taken before separate electorates can be done away with. If I had my way, I would eliminate separate electorates right away. But that is not possible. That is not practical politics, and we are eminently practical politicians, as you all know very well. And therefore this moderate advice is certainly all to the good, and I request you to pass this resolution.

Mr. Dalip Man Singh: Mr. President, Brother-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Altekar has moved this resolution very ably, and there is not much to say on the subject. We all know that separate electorates have done a very great mischief. We can never bring about national unity and India can never become a nation so long as these separate electorates exist. If we go to any constituency we see that on account of separate electorates only those people are elected who are very orthodox and most fanatic, and

Resolution IV:
Mr. Dalip Man
Singh.

Resolution IV :
Mr. Dalip Man
Singh.

really Liberal people have no chance in separate electorates. The result is that the relations of the various communities are getting more and more bitter. These separate electorates have been in existence for over a quarter of a century, and we see that instead of bringing about any good effect, their only effect has been to embitter the feelings of the different communities. For that reason it is highly necessary that they should be done away with as early as possible.

This is a very comprehensive resolution, and it has been suggested that by removing separate electorates we do not mean that the minority communities will not have sufficient representation. Separate seats will be reserved, and by joint electorates we will be able to have the best possible men. Gentlemen, it is a great pity that on account of separate electorates in even small towns the feelings between the various communities are very strong. Go to any village. You see Hindus and Muslims living side by side in a very cordial way, and they have not the slightest hesitation in addressing each other as uncle and nephew. They live like close relations. But if you visit a city, there you will find that the feelings are quite different, and it is very unfortunate that separate electorate is having its effect on the various castes and sub-castes of the Hindu community itself. For that reason it is very essential that it should be done away with as early as possible. With these few words, I beg to second this resolution.

Resolution IV :
The President.

The President: I have just received notice of an amendment from Mr. Subbarayan to this resolution. He should have moved it in the Subjects Committee or should have given sufficient notice here. As he has not done either, I have to rule out the amendment, I regret to say. I shall now put the resolution to vote.

The resolution was then put to vote and passed unanimously.

The session then rose for the day.

THIRD DAY'S PROCEEDINGS.

The Twenty-third session of the National Liberal Federation of India re-assembled at the Sundareswarar Hall, Mylapore, Madras, at 12-30 P. M. on Sunday the 28th December 1941, with Sir B. P. Singh Roy in the chair.

5. THE WAR

Resolution V :
The President.

The President: May I request Sir Chimanlal Setalvad to move the resolution on the war?

"The National Liberal Federation of India feels that the war of aggression started by Nazi Germany, supported by Fascist Italy and Imperial Japan has proved to be a great menace to freedom, peace and tranquillity in the world. The Federation is of the opinion that the forces of progress and Justice in this conflict are represented by the Allied Powers such as Great Britain, America, Soviet Russia and China.

The Federation feels that the present Far East War situation has brought India into the front line of the conflict and therefore appeals both to the Government and the people to view the situation realistically, and mobilise the resources of the country in men and material, to protect the lives of India's teeming millions from the imminent danger which threatens the country. At the same time it feels that the unity between the Government and the people required for the necessary effort will not be possible unless a new psychological atmosphere is created by a change in the policy of His Majesty's Government towards India, which is urgently called for."

Resolution V :
Sir Chimanlal
Setalvad.

Sir Chimanlal-Setalvad: Mr. President, Brother-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, the resolution that I am asked to move is in print, and you have seen it. As you all know, we are now living in very anxious times. By the

entry of Japan into the war, the war has come to the doors of India, and you all know, at any time any of the towns of India may be attacked by air or sea. Under these circumstances the resolution asks the people and also the Government, to which I will come a little later, to realise the gravity of the danger and to take all necessary measures for the protection of our motherland. But it appears to me that our people have not awakened yet to the seriousness of the situation. We are still quarrelling amongst ourselves. We are still defending Pakistan. We are still defending separate electorates. We are still debating the entry of Indians into Burma when Burmans are running away from Burma. I think, instead of going into all those questions and quarrelling over them, those questions for the moment should be all put in cold storage, and India should realise the real gravity of the situation and take immediate measures such as we can to defend the country. But unfortunately, Ladies and Gentlemen, what do we find? We find this: The virtual dictator of the greatest political party urges non-violence under any circumstances and asks his countrymen to allow themselves to be slaughtered by the enemy if he comes to India and offer him no resistance. Other people follow the cue of this great dictator of the great political party. We find this, for instance in Bombay, the Municipal Corporation of that city refusing to or delaying to take A. R. P. measures with regard to thousands of school children attending municipal schools. They are doing nothing to protect and guard the water supply of the city or to provide alternative means of such water supply. There are others, Ladies and Gentlemen, who are talking of Independence, Dominion Status and what not and trying to bargain: "If you promise independence we will join in the war effort." All the people, I am afraid, are living I don't know where. They do not realise the real situation. Our interests for the moment are bound up with the interests of England. If England fails, what happens to India; what happens to your Dominion Status; to your independence, your Pakistan, and all the rest that you are crying for? All that will be in the melting pot and you will be driven back, it may be, hundreds of years. We want, therefore, by this resolution the people of India to realise the gravity of the situation and to do all they can to join in the war effort in order to save their wives and children, their countrymen, their property and everything that is dear to them. For, be sure of this, Ladies and Gentlemen, unless this war is won India will have a very bad time of it indeed. When I am saying this I am not unmindful of the fact that Britain has behaved badly with us—I may say very badly with us in the past. If Britain had fitted us for defence, if Britain had trusted us, to-day India could have raised forces consisting of millions that would defend not only India but the Commonwealth and Britain herself. But, regrettable to say, she had not done that; had not industrialised India in the manner she should have done, in which case India would have been the real arsenal of the Commonwealth. Ladies and Gentlemen, while we have legitimately all that indictment against England, we have for the moment to remember only this, that all these controversies under the present menace have to be put into cold storage and that we have all to work together to defend our countrymen defend our property, defend our lives. In doing so, you will not be obliging Britain. The war is at your doors, and you are called upon by this resolution to realise that situation and to exert yourselves in every manner possible to defend your country.

Resolution V:
Sir Chimanlal
Setalvad.

While we do this, Ladies and Gentlemen, the resolution also tells the British Government to be realists in this matter. No doubt, as I have said, it is to our own self interest to exert ourselves to help Britain in winning the war. But at the same time, it cannot be forgotten that human nature is human nature all the world over, and that in order that war effort in India may be intensified, that the people may get enthusiastic for war work, it is necessary for the Government to make a proper gesture and ensure to India by definite promises and acts that at the end of the war the position of India in the Commonwealth will be that of perfect equality with every other Dominion and with Britain herself.

Resolution V:
Sir Chimanlal
Setalvad.

It is in this spirit, Ladies and Gentlemen, that we have drafted this resolution and placed it before you, and I have great pleasure in moving and commending it for your acceptance.

Resolution V:
The Hon'ble
Mr. H. N.
Kunzru.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. N. Kunzru: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad has very lucidly explained to you the meaning and object of the resolution which he moved and which I have the honour to second. Popularly speaking, this resolution might be called the war effort resolution. I would like to point out what in my opinion our real efforts ought to be. The situation in Malaya has exposed our utter helplessness from the point of view of defence. Rangoon has been bombed and questions are being asked in this country, you know, as to what the fate of India will be in the near future. It is feared that some Indian cities may be bombed in the same way as Rangoon has been. It is feared further that there may be even more serious dangers to be faced by us. If, however, as Sir Sivaswami Aiyar has pointed out we are to start making our preparations for our defence now it will take years and years for us to make them complete. It is of course necessary that our preparations for our defence should go on actively even at the present time and that we should do the utmost we can for maintaining the security of our country and protecting the lives of our people. But while the training of soldiers, the appointment of Indians as commissioned officers and the production of war materials are all necessary, what is even more essential than all these things is the development of the national spirit. What the power is that can be given to us by the development of this spirit is well illustrated by the example of China. China is practically defenceless. It is yet totally unable to meet the Japanese on a footing of equality. Nevertheless it has been able to keep the flag of independence flying during the last four years and a half. No reverses have broken the spirit of the people. Their will to resist is as firm as it was when the Sino-Japanese war broke out, and it is the existence of a determination among the Chinese to protect their national existence by every means in their power that constitutes the greatest protection of the Chinese, and it is this spirit that we must develop above all things if we want to make India fully secure against all hazards. We still hope for the best. We are not down-hearted. We are not in the least inclined to be panicky. But we must put first things first particularly at a time like this and realise that our greatest bulwark can only be the existence of a national spirit amongst the people and its development to the fullest possible extent, so that Indians may be prepared to bear all hardships rather than accept the rule of another party. We have ever since the war broke out been pointing this fact out to the British Government and have done all in our power to show that, while our feelings towards Great Britain are friendly and we are prepared to offer it our utmost help in the prosecution of the war, if we are to be enabled to give effect to our desire and to persuade our countrymen to do all they can to bring the war to a victorious conclusion—there is a duty and an urgent duty to be performed by the Government also. As the resolution points out, the making of the efforts required for our protection needs the co-operation of the people and the Government. We fully recognise the nearness of the danger and we are prepared to do our very best to protect the lives of our people. But there is a limit to what we alone can do. If our effort is to be fruitful, if it is to yield all that is expected of us, Britain which has so far been non-co-operating with us with a vengeance must be prepared to shed its old prejudices and work hand in hand with us. Yet it must be a matter of regret to every well-wisher of India and Great Britain to find that notwithstanding the seriousness of the situation, notwithstanding the urgency of bringing about unity between the people and the Government, the British Government are doing all they can to impress on India their determination to maintain their old policies unchanged and to continue their rule on the old basis. The speech of the Prime Minister in connection with the Atlantic Charter and the recent speeches of Mr. Amery and Lord Linlithgow serve to show how unwilling the British authorities are even at the present time to

face the realities of the situation and to fight as whole-hartedly in defence of freedom and democracy as they profess to be doing. The other day when the leading conservative paper of Great Britain, *the Times*, regretted the delay in the release of detenus and expressed the hope that their release would be only the first step in the development of the policy of conciliation, we thought that it was reflecting the views of the authorities. But we unfortunately found that notwithstanding the unanimity among newspapers of all shades of opinion in Great Britain regarding not merely the desirability but the necessity of a change in the attitude of Britain towards India, the British Government still talk of the offer, the so-called offer made by them in August, 1940. That offer has satisfied no section of the people. Yet the British Government are so convinced of the soundness of the policy and attach so little value to the co-operation of the people that they refuse to concede our demands, notwithstanding all the dangers involved in the continuance of their present attitude to maintain the policy underlying the constitution of 1935 which was out of date even when it was announced. We used to hear a good deal about the goodwill of Britain generally and of Parliament in particular towards India. But we wonder why that goodwill was not translated into action, why it did not take forms which the people of this country could appreciate. Well, I am glad to find that the Members of Parliament are bestirring themselves just now; they are evidently realising that it is not enough that their hearts should be filled with friendly sentiments for the people of India but that it is necessary that they should bring pressure to bear on their own Government in order to bring about an immediate change in their angle of vision. Judging from the newspapers, not merely the Labour and Liberal Parties, but even an important section of the Conservative Party is dissatisfied with the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards India, and the back-benchers or at any rate some of them are thinking of meeting the Prime Minister in order to press him to announce a new policy so as to make the people of India feel that their interests and those of Britishers are the same at this juncture.

Resolution V:
The Hon'ble
Mr. H. N.
Khanlu.

Mr. President, let us hope, in the best interests of the world and not merely of India or Great Britain, that the efforts which Members of Parliament are making at the present time in order to press the British Government to approach the Indian question from a new standpoint and to give Indians more definite assurance than they have up to the present time that British victory would lead to Indian freedom—I say let us all wish those who are engaged in this vital task, every success. Nothing will give us greater pleasure than to know that a change in the policy of the Government such as large sections of nationalist India have been asking for a long time, particularly since the war broke out, will be an accomplished fact very soon and that it will result in so changing the political atmosphere in this country as to make the differences that exist at present between the people and the authorities a thing of the past. The recent speeches of Mr. Amery and Lord Linlithgow however do not hold out an early promise of a change in the British policy. If a year ago the authorities expressed their unwillingness to change even the character of the Executive Council in any measure and if the course of the War and our own determination have now made them revise their decision and bring about a change in their policy under the pressure of present events, I have no doubt that future developments and our continued efforts to win our rights will produce equally desirable results and that we shall very soon be able to say that we were engaged in fighting for the defence, not of Great Britain or the European countries overrun by Germany, but for our own defence. It is for this reason, gentlemen, that the resolution, while asking the people of India to realise their duty at the same time impresses on the British Government the need for bringing about unity between themselves and the people by making that change in their policy which is urgently called for. In view of the attitude that the leaders of our party have generally taken in regard to the War and the value attached by Indians to freedom and democracy, the British Government ought to be convinced that their past policy of keeping India dependent for

Resolution V :
The Hon'ble
Mr. H. N.
Kansru.

her defence on Britain was wrong and that every addition to the defensive strength of India would mean a corresponding addition to the defensive strength of the British Commonwealth of Nations. We trust that this hope will soon be realised and that Britain even before achieving striking victories in the field will be able to obtain the greatest moral victory that she can by making India free and thereby convincing the world that she is fighting to-day not for the protection of her own interests but for the cause of justice, freedom, democracy and peace throughout the world. (Loud applause).

Resolution V :
Mr. K. Bala-
subrahmanya
Ayyar.

Mr. K. Balasubrahmanya Ayyar: Mr. President, Brother-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am here to support the resolution, but I shall not trench very much upon the time which the President has allotted to me. Not many words are needed from me to commend this resolution to your acceptance.

The resolution asks the people to realistically view the situation and at the same time it appeals to the Government for a large-hearted statesmanship. Insistence is laid by us, the delegates assembled here, on both these aspects of the question; one cannot be emphasised too much at the expense of the other. That is the main principle of the resolution which I request brother delegates to remember. Mr. Winston Churchill, our Prime Minister, grew into poetry when he drew before his audience a picture as to how the Russian people would defend their hearths and homes and how the peasants and labourers of Russia would defend their country. He was able to command that poetry because he felt that there was unity between the Government and the people of that country, however much he might hate the idea of Russia and the policy of that Government and however much we also here, as Liberals, might dislike it. One thing however was clear that in Russia, the Russian peasant and the labourer felt that they were defending their own country, their own hearths and homes and their own women and children. The time has come when we have to feel like that here. The resolution asks us to mobilise the resources of the country in men and material. Of course we in Madras have given Rs. 170 lakhs and we pride ourselves on the fact that we have given the most for the War, but where are the men available for the War? The people must feel their manhood, and for the purpose of creating a national spirit in us, we ask the Government to see that this country is made free soon even at this late hour, so that we may feel that when we are fighting this War we are defending our own hearths and homes. It is in that spirit that we have made the appeal to the Government and to the people alike.

Brother Delegates, I do not think I am letting out a secret which may be unpalatable to some gentlemen here if I say this—I see the Chairman of the Propaganda Sub-Committee of the Provincial War Committee here—that in Madras the Propaganda Sub-Committee felt it very difficult to carry on the work of recruitment for the War, because they felt that the proper atmosphere has not been created by the Government and that the August offer remained still an August offer (Loud Laughter) without being implemented by proper action by the authorities both in England and in India. Therefore, in passing this resolution, we want the delegates to remember this: that while we should be enabled to realise our manhood, we should also fight for our country at the same time. There is enough work for us all, whether we want to be violent or non-violent. We have to be either violent or non-violent for our own self-defence, but let us not be talking about the philosophy of violence or the philosophy of non-violence when there is immediate danger of attack from outside. As I said, there is enough work for us to do—whether we adopt violence or non-violence—in regard to the improvement of our conditions. For instance, non-violence can be adopted for the purpose of seeing, when there is internal disorder in the country, that peace is restored. It is not enough for us to feel that some old A. R. P. gentlemen with steel helmets on are going about the country—that is not the only thing to be done. There is a lot of work to be done in order to bring

about unity amongst our own people. At the same time we have to take the lesson which the War has impressed upon us, viz., that the whole nation should be mobilised and that industries should be developed, and if this cannot be done, I am afraid the War cannot be fought to a successful issue. (Applause).

Resolution V:
Mr. K. Balasubrahmanya Ayyar.

Mr. Nausir Bharucha : Mr. President, Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, in this War when France was about to collapse, her Premier said that the real need of the hour was clear-thinking. We have asked in this resolution that the people should take a realistic view of the situation. I am afraid that unless we start taking a realistic view, there is no possibility of appeal being heeded by the people. The advent of Japan into this War has so radically altered the situation that it will be misleading to say that we are not at this moment in grave danger. There was a time when we could look with complaisance upon Singapore and could believe that in no circumstances Japanese warships could negotiate south of Borneo because we then laboured under the impression that a formidable allied fleet was there to prevent the passage of enemy vessels. Two months of War with Japan has made India conscious of War in a manner that two years of war with Germany has not done. To-day let us view the situation in a spirit of realism, if we do that, we are sure to recognise that the shores of India have been exposed to the danger of enemy attacks. It is possible for Japan to-day to send out her aircraft carriers to pass through the sea between Borneo and Celebes, go south of Java and Sumatra, re-fuel at Penang—which has since fallen to Japan—and carry on depredations on any of the Indian cities which they may choose to attack. Let me tell you that we will be labouring under an illusion if we feel at any moment that the Japanese commander is so very sympathetic to us that he will not attack our cities which constitute the bases of supply to the Far East and the Middle East. No amount of preaching of non-violence and no amount of non-co-operation with war effort, not even declarations that our cities are open cities—for the matter of that India is an open country—will stop Japan from bombing our cities. So, we will be labouring under a false impression and we will not be taking a realistic view of the situation if we believe that Singapore should fall before any severe attack can be launched upon India. My friends who have spoken before me have stated why we should change our attitude towards the War effort; some of you ask: why should we change our attitude, why should we display any needless measure of enthusiasm if Britain has not changed her attitude; what has transpired since the last year which induces you to believe that we should throw ourselves whole heartedly into this struggle? Working that way means that we fail to appreciate in real perspective the facts that have resulted from the entry of Japan into the War. There was a time last year when we could sit and tell Britain "Well, unless you give us freedom, we shall not fight for you". You could well say that then and Britain also could tell you that 'If you are going to fight for the freedom of the countries which have been overrun by Hitler, by all means you shall have freedom'. But to-day we are no longer the choosers—that is the realistic view of the situation. To-day we are fighting not for independence but for our very existence. Pakistan, complete independence, Dominion Status and all else, while important in themselves, sink into relative insignificance when you view the whole thing as one and regard it as one big drama where the entire destiny of the world is thrown into the melting-pot. I say that is the view that you should take. Now look at Britain, what did she do when Russia was attacked? The British people did not agree with the Communist policy in Russia, but did they think of all those big differences? No. They took a realistic view of the situation and said: 'we detest communism, but we know that the fight with Russia which Germany is making is our struggle and it is for our very existence that we should be friends with Russia'. And they sent their spare bombers to the Russian front, badly as they needed the same themselves. That was the realistic view which the British people took at the time. I therefore appeal to you that you should leave aside for the moment laying too

Resolution V:
Mr. Nausir Bharucha.

Resolution V:
Mr. Nausir
Barucha.

much emphasis on the point that Britain has or has not done certain things. I say 'Hang Britain, Hang independence, Hang Dominion Status, save yourself'. That is the policy you should adopt. If independence is worth dying for, certainly it is worth living for and worth fighting for. The first and foremost duty of each one of us is to see that the destruction of the teeming millions—to which you have referred, Sir, and which has been the problem so very realistically discussed in the different capitals of Europe—is to be avoided at all costs, Ladies and Gentlemen, when we talk of withholding support to the War, we are labouring under another impression, and that is the very great help we are giving to Britain. But so far as our contributions are concerned, I think they are enough to carry on the War only for eighteen hours. So far as the Defence Loans and Defence Certificates are concerned, the amounts we have given to them will be sufficient to carry on the War say for a week. That is not a very great support without which Great Britain will collapse. Britain will not collapse even if Burma, Bengal and Assam are taken by the Japanese. Britain will not collapse even as mighty France has collapsed. Do you think our support to the War is such that unless Britain gives you this Independence, you can still say to her that we shall not help her or even protect ourselves? Ladies and Gentlemen, I appeal to you to take a more realistic view of the whole problem and also point out to the people that if they take such a view, it is not correct. Therefore, when you all go to the remote corners of the country, spread this message which is contained in the resolution, viz., that in fighting this War, we are not obliging Great Britain, we are not really struggling for democracy and for being placed in the same position as Czecho-Slovakia or Greece, but that we are fighting for our very existence. (Applause).

Resolution V:
Mr. T. G.
Gadre.

Mr T. G. Gadre: Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, the proposition has been moved by Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Kunzru and supported by Mr. Bharucha. You will naturally think that nothing more need be said on the subject and perhaps you expect me only to support it by way of giving my cordial support to it. I would have done so had I not felt that I should place before you one or two very important points. I want to draw your attention particularly to that part of the resolution in which it asks the people "to view the situation realistically and mobilise the resources of the country in men and material, to protect the lives of India's teeming millions from the imminent danger which threatens the country." Mr. Bharucha has realistically pointed out to you that the house is on fire, that India is about to be attacked from the eastern side. Tomorrow we may hear that Burma is attacked, that Rangoon has been actually burnt, or even something worse. We will have to defend ourselves, our homes and our people. Let us not wait for the Government to do it, let us not wait for the help that they are going to give us, let us take a realistic view of the situation.

You know, Gentlemen, there are two main political parties in India that are hesitating to offer full co-operation with the Government in this matter and are still debating the future Reforms or Pakistan and things of that kind—I need not mention the parties by name. Only the other day the President of the Muslim League said, we won't co-operate. The other political party says, there was the Poona offer, it was not accepted. Let us leave out these things, let us think of protection first, the protection of our property, of our women and children and our country. India belongs to us all, and it is the duty of every Indian to protect our homeland. There is a certain section of the people, to whatever community or political party they might belong, who would sit at home, but we, as Liberals, have to do what we can in this direction. In our province, myself and others who are Liberal-minded and who are of this view, are co-operating with the Government in the matter of recruitment, the Civic Guards, the Territorials and the University Training Corps, and our experience is that in the suggestions made by us in the Provincial War Committee and District War Committee the local authorities and the Governor are taking responsibility and are sharing

some of our difficulties also. There were two boys from Akola, one a junior pleader who has now been given a commission at Bangalore and the other is my relation's son, who is now at Mewar in the Government School. Some of the boys have come from Akola, from Nagpur and from Amraoti and they have been given emergency commissions. Our recruiting commission has given 6,000 fighting men to the army. The Hindu Mahasabha also are exhorting the young men to join the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, and also to join the Civic Guards and the Territorials. Well, this is the way in which you can carry on work for the defence of the country. Ask the young men to come forward, whatever the Government may or may not do. You cannot sleep at a time when your mother country is in danger. You will get the commissions and your leaders will see that you get the commissions. When your young men do not get the commissions, well, ask them to join the ordinary ranks. This is the time for you to save your own people, if you fail to do so, you will repent in the end. At the end of the War, I am sure we are going to get our freedom, or we will win our freedom. This is the time when every one of us must come forward and join the army in all its ranks. For this kind of sacrifice, are we not likely to get anything at all? Let us take a realistic view of the whole situation. I am quite sure we are all quite capable of defending ourselves. Our President here belongs to the warring community, and his very name 'Bejoy' and he will bring victory to us, and under his leadership we are sure to win our freedom at the end of the War. (Applause).

Resolution V :
Mr. T. G.
Gadre.

Mr. Burjor J. Shroff : Mr. President, Brother-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I will not take your time but confine myself to certain points in connection with the psychological atmosphere that is to be created and how that psychological atmosphere can be created. You all know that Mr. Churchill is one of the best and foremost master of psychology in the world. Every time he speaks, he talks of will power. He being a great psychologist, we appeal to him that he should look into the realities of the situation, that as a psychologist he should study the Indian mind, study what are rankling in the Indian heart, and find out how to organise and how to utilise the resources of India, her men and material, and what is most important their enthusiasm. People there are who are anxious to work and people there are ready to defend their land, their Commonwealth, provided—there is one important proviso that is placed—we are placed not as camp followers. How can we fight ably, in a competent manner, in a singular way, without being properly equipped by a sense that we are free citizens of the British Commonwealth of Nations? Mr. Churchill can, and there is no other person in the British Commonwealth who can bring about a psychological change in the Indian atmosphere by granting us freedom at once. So many important constitutional changes have been made in Parliament. Very urgent and emergent measures have been taken; whereas for India, they say: "We will do it after the war." It is simply beyond our comprehension. Only the day before yesterday Mr. Churchill has said that we should have Olympian fortitude. We can have it more than he can imagine. But where is the psychological atmosphere which can make us bubble with enthusiasm to fight and fight with enthusiasm? But we are taken as slaves. Here comes the question of our own self-interest; that is, preservation of our own lives, preservation of our ancient temples and monuments and mosques and such other things. A thousand years ago temples were demolished, and what was the condition at the time? Do you wish a repetition of the same condition by the Japanese bombing your country? Say, if you are prepared to have Japanese bombers coming within your borders and demolishing all the ancient monuments of thousands of years' standing. Then you can have freedom: So I repeat that it is a fight for our own preservation, and whatever Britain may do or not do, we must all rush forward, go forward at whatever risk. We should not allow ourselves to commit *hari kari* by remaining stagnant and not fighting for our own lives. We should not allow our homes and other things to be destroyed by the Axis powers. So I support this resolution.

Resolution V :
Mr. Burjor
J. Shroff.

Resolution V :
The Hon'ble
Mr. P. N. Saprū

The Hon'ble Mr. P. N. Saprū : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, in this resolution we have expressed our deep sympathy with and ideological support of all progressive powers, Britain, the Soviet Union, China and the United States of America. We abhor, loath and detest Nazism and Fascism. We have not an iota of sympathy with totalitarianism in any shape or form. We look upon Imperial Japan as no better than Nazi Germany. In fact, I think, in some respects it is even worse than Nazi Germany, because it has been attempting for years past to subjugate a country with which we have much in common, with whose people we deeply sympathise, a country which has put forth a most heroic resistance, a resistance which has elicited the admiration of all civilised men even in this brutal age.

But, gentlemen, the ideological support or ideological sympathy which we are prepared to offer to Britain whole-heartedly, freely, without any mental reservation whatever, can fructify itself if Britain will do the right thing by India. For, men fight best when they fight for an ideal. The other day I was reading an article in the "New York Nation" and the writer, discussing the Russian situation, paid a great compliment to the Soviet people and the heroic resistance they had put forward. Analysing the causes which had made the Soviet Union put forth the resistance that it had, the writer came to the conclusion that the Soviet Union fought so valiantly, as it had an ideal to fight for. Now our great difficulty with the British statesmen has been that they have not cared to appreciate the necessity of preserving, of strengthening the morale of the civilian population in a war of this vast dimension. You can preserve and strengthen the morale of the civilian population if you have their co-operation, and I think we shall be living in a fool's paradise if we think that there are not parties in this country which count which are not prepared whole-heartedly to support the war effort because they are not convinced that Britain is ethically right in refusing India freedom at this critical juncture. She has made no unequivocal declaration in regard to the future. She is not prepared to take immediate steps to nationalise the Government so far as the present is concerned. How then can people feel enthusiastic about preserving the *status quo*? That, I think is a psychological difficulty which Britain must appreciate. Let Sir Chimanlal Setalved go and appeal to the people with whom he comes into contact and find out whether enough enthusiasm has been created by British policy during the last few years for war effort. I would like to give of the best that I am capable of in this fight for human freedom, as I detest, as I said, the whole ideology, the whole philosophy of Nazism. I detest it. I look upon Mussolini as the murderer of Abyssinia. But I want freedom for my country. I want to feel that in fighting for this war I shall be fighting for the enlargement of human freedom. I want to feel that in fighting for this war I shall be fighting for the freedom of my country which is sacred to me. I do not want to fight for the preservation merely of the *status quo*. I want to fight for some noble, some worthy ideal, and this is a feeling which is dominant in minds of our countrymen. (Cheers). I therefore trust, and we have in the last part of our resolution emphasised, that while it is the duty of India unequivocally, without any mental reservation, with absolute fidelity to the cause for which Britain is fighting, to offer its whole-hearted, its fullest support in men, material and money, it is equally obligatory on the part of British statesmen to realise that this help, this total effort which a total war necessitates, will come only when Britain does the right thing by India. What that right thing is, you will find in the next resolution. We have put forward a moderate demand. We are genuinely anxious that we should be enabled to co-operate wholeheartedly on terms consistent with the self-respect of our country. With these words, Sir, I would like to give this resolution my heartiest support.

The resolution was then put and passed unanimously amidst acclamation.

6. CONSTITUTION

Resolution VI:
Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar.

Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar : Mr. President, and Brother-Delegates, the resolution which I have been asked to move runs as follows :

- (a) The National Liberal Federation of India protests against the Prime Minister's Speech excluding India from the scope of the Atlantic Charter and the recent speeches of Mr. Amery and Lord Linlithgow reiterating the determination of His Majesty's Government to make no change in their policy towards India.
- (b) The Federation while regarding the recent expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council by the appointment of additional Indian members as a step in the right direction, considers it as entirely inadequate to meet the needs of the situation. It is of the opinion that the Central Government should be so reconstructed as to have a fully national character. The executive Council should consist entirely of non-official Indians who should take charge of all portfolios including those of Defence and Finance. The reconstructed Government should deal with all questions of policy on the basis of joint responsibility, and the British Government should not ordinarily interfere with any policy that has the support of the Indianised Executive and the Central Legislature.
- (c) In regard to all Inter-Imperial and International matters the reconstructed Government should be treated on the same footing as Dominion Governments. The Federation further demands that in order to remove the doubts and apprehensions that have been created as to the genuineness of the intentions of His Majesty's Government regarding the future constitutional status of India, it should be immediately declared that India will enjoy the position of equality in regard to both status and functions with England and the Dominions within a period not exceeding two years after the conclusion of the war.
- (d) In the opinion of the Federation, the gravity of the International situation makes the acceptance of the demands put forward above, a matter of urgent importance. It is necessary at this juncture that the Government should take bold and statesmanlike steps to bring about a unity between the people and the Government in the best interests of both India and England.

This resolution, gentlemen, is consequential upon the resolution we have already passed. In that resolution we say that the necessary psychological atmosphere should be created for the purpose of producing the necessary effort to deal with the present situation. I do not think it can be fairly said that there is anybody either among us or outside who has failed to realise the gravity of the situation. I may adduce one proof, and that is the exodus that is taking place from Madras and I believe also from Calcutta. That shows that people, realising the dangers of the war, are anxious to protect themselves by running away. I do not think that we can have any better proof of the fact that they all realise the dangers of the situation. I do not think that it is fair to say that we have not realised the gravity of the situation.

The real question is not whether we have realised the gravity of the situation or not, but what are the steps to be taken to deal with the present grave situation. Now in this resolution we point out what, in our opinion, are the various steps. It has been pointed out to you by Pandit Kunzru speaking on the last resolution that the most important thing in dealing with a situation like this is to create the necessary psychological atmosphere. If the people feel that in putting forward efforts to carry on the war and to mobilise all their resources, they are fighting really for themselves for their country, that will arouse far greater enthusiasm than has been aroused

Resolution VI:
Sir P. S. Siva-
swami Ayyar.

among the people. It is more a question of creating the necessary psychological atmosphere. What are the means which we should take in order to bring about the change in the psychology? Is there anyone who can say that the people are not alive to the dangers of the war and to the necessity of protecting their hearths and homes? I think most of them are. But the question is what steps should we take at this juncture, and then the further question is who is responsible for devising suitable measures. Does it lie upon the people alone or upon the Government? We have committed ourselves in the last resolution to the position that it rests both upon the Government and upon the people. We are here not merely to exhort the people to do their duty by the country and by themselves, but also to point out everything necessary to create the necessary enthusiasm in the minds of the people for the defence of the country. I have sometimes addressed assemblies of young men and when I have appealed to them—not now but on former occasions—to join in the territorial forces or in the battalions for the defence of the country, I have been asked: “Whose country? Is this our country? Of course it is a most foolish question; you cannot say that it is not our country. But that shows the feeling among young men and it often makes itself audible when you have to address them. You must make them all feel that in endeavouring to fight this war we are already fighting for our children. And I believe it will be conceded by all that for this purpose it is necessary to create a feeling of unity of interests. Now is there that feeling of identification between the people and the Government at this time? Is there anyone in this hall or outside who can say that there is a feeling of identification of interests between the people and the Government? I doubt very much whether there is anyone who can say that there is this feeling of identification. Perhaps the Government may say: “We are the people. We represent the people.” But that kind of talk will serve no purpose. Do the people feel that their interests and the interests of the Government are identical? I do not believe there is anyone who will venture to hazard that the people at large feel that there is an identification of interests between the Government and the people. It will be a very rash statement to say that there is such a feeling among the people. If there is a feeling of identification already there is no need to pass the last resolution or this resolution or any resolution. It is because that feeling of identity of interests does not exist at the present time that we appeal to the people and the Government to bring about the conditions necessary to produce that feeling of identification between the Government and the people. If it does not exist now, what are the means to be taken to produce it? Is it merely by our preaching to the people, by our exhorting them to do their duty by the country, by our dinning into their ears that the Government and we ourselves are one and that there is no difference of interest between us and the Government? Is it by our repeated assertions that there is a unity of interests between the Government and ourselves that we can produce this necessary condition in the minds of the people as to unity of interests?

Therefore we are justified in pointing out what steps are necessary to bring about a change in the mentality of the people as to the existence of unity of interests. And that conviction of unity of interests can only be brought about by measures of the kind that we have formulated in this resolution.

Now in this resolution, I may point out that we are not asking anybody to frame a constitution at this time or to go into the details of the constitution. We all know that during the period of war it will not be possible to settle the details of the new constitution or any other measures apart from those which we have put forward in this resolution. We have confined ourselves only to a few important suggestions and we fully realise the impossibility of framing a constitution. But we only point out the measures which it will be practicable for the Government to introduce even during the war.

I now say a few words about the various classes of this resolution. The first clause, clause (a), refers to the fact that the Atlantic Charter, as framed

by Mr. Winston Churchill, excludes the case of India. The language of the Atlantic Charter is this; clause 3 says: "They respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them." The second part of this paragraph may be taken separately from the first part or might be added together. The first part by itself—"They respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live"—may include Indians. But that it is not the intention of the framers of the charter to include India is clear from the second part and from some of the speeches which have been made by Mr. Winston Churchill. They say: "They wish to see sovereign rights and self government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them." That shows that they wish to confine the Atlantic Charter to those who have been recently conquered by Germany and deprived of their independence. In a later speech of Mr. Churchill he says: "The joint declaration does not qualify in any way the various statements of policy which have been made from time to time about the development of constitutional government in India, Burma or other parts of the British Empire..... We have pledged, by the Declaration of August 1940, to help India to obtain free and equal partnership in the British Commonwealth with ourselves, subject, of course, to the fulfilment of the obligations arising from our long connection with India and our responsibilities to its many creeds, races and interests." You will see how cautiously these sentences have been framed. It shows that they are not unconditionally prepared to guarantee the freedom of India. When I speak of freedom, I am not thinking of independence. What I have in mind by the word 'freedom' is the same freedom as the Dominions and England enjoy, the same status as those great countries enjoy and the status of free and equal partnership as the position justifies. See how carefully they have hedged round their promises. They say that this joint declaration is on a different footing and they say it is subject to the fulfilment of obligations arising from their long connection with India. Mr. Winston Churchill knows how difficult, if not impossible, is this condition which he has annexed to his declaration. Suppose it is not possible to come to an agreement, has the Government no further duty? Has it simply to fold its hands and keep quiet? I think Britain has got an obligation to find a solution for the difficulties which we in India have to face in our present conditions in which the various communities have assumed attitudes of totally different character. The Government always go back to the declaration of August 1940 and they constantly harp upon it. In that declaration of 1940, it goes without saying that they could not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of Government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life. Nor could they be parties to the coercion of such elements into submission to such a Government." In plain words, it amounts to giving freedom to the Muslim community—at any rate that is how it has been understood by the Muslim community in India. There can be no other interpretation possible, and it is this offer of August 1940 that the Government are constantly harping upon. Now that shows that the Government are not prepared to change the attitude which they adopted in August 1940. They often point out that so long as the differences between the two major communities remain unbridged, nothing can be done. But is it the right thing? Government have even departed from that attitude to some extent, for instance, they said at one time: "though the differences have not been bridged, we think our duty does not stop with merely expressing our regret at the inability of the communities to reach a solution," they have also said that notwithstanding the failure of the two communities to reach an agreement, they have resolved to take a step forward by the expansion of the executive Council. What we are suggesting now is merely to further extend this policy of expansion of the Executive Council. Instead of having two members to take charge of some of the harmless portfolios,—some of the portfolios do not generally incite any enthusiasm amongst the people—they should Indianise the whole Executive Council and

Resolution VI:
Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar.

Resolution VI :
 Sir P. S. Siva-
 swami Ayyar. :

put in charge non-official Indians who will command the confidence of the people. When I say 'in whom the people have confidence' I do not mean they should be elected representatives of the people. The Government have succeeded in finding suitable men themselves, and there is no complaint that those men have failed to rise to the responsibilities of their task. What we are now asking is that instead of stopping short of Indianisation of only some of the portfolios, they should entrust all the portfolios to non-official Indians. Is there any harm in handing over these other portfolios also to non-official Indians? I don't think that anybody will say that none except a European member or a European I. C. S. member can do justice to the duties and responsibilities of these portfolios, viz., Defence, Home, Finance and so on. The Government can easily find competent Indians to take charge of these important portfolios just as they have been able to find men for the other portfolios. We are not making any extreme demands in asking that there should be a complete Indianisation of the Executive Council.

In Clause (b) we say that the Executive Council should consist "entirely of non-official Indians who should take charge of all portfolios including those of Defence and Finance". Now the complaint or the criticism that we have heard recently from all quarters of the Indian public, from all sections of the Indian public, is that the key portfolios have not been handed over to Indians. There is no indication of any willingness on the part of the Government to hand over or transfer real power into the hands of Indians. That I think is a complaint which every one must admit is thoroughly well-founded. They are unwilling to transfer departments like Defence, Supply—I do not minimise the importance of Supply—but they are willing to hand over portfolios like Publicity, Overseas, Health, Education and things of that kind. But nothing will satisfy the country that the Government are willing to transfer substance of power to Indians as the transfer of portfolios such as those mentioned in clause (b) of our resolution. I do not think myself that the Heavens are going to fall if power is transferred to Indians or that Indian Ministers will fail to realise their responsibilities to the country at large. Such a thing will make the people feel that the Government are fully of a national character. So, that is what is meant by (b).

In regard to Clause (c): "In regard to all Inter-Imperial and International matters, the reconstructed Government should be treated on the same footing as Dominion Governments", I think we are not making any very extravagant demand. These are changes which can be brought about administratively, without any change in the constitution. We make also a further demand that "in order to remove the doubts and apprehensions that have been created as to the genuineness of the intentions of His Majesty's Government regarding the future constitutional status of India, it should be immediately declared that India will enjoy the position of equality in regard to both status and functions with England and the Dominions." These are steps which it is necessary to take in order to remove all doubts in the minds of the people as to the sincerity of the promises made by the Government. They want deeds and not words, as it has often been stated. Mere declarations by the Government in the future are not sufficient. Let them say that "as a guarantee of our intentions, we are now going to transfer all the portfolios to Indian hands."

Another request that we make in Clause (b) is that when the reconstructed Government has been Indianised in the manner specified in the previous portion of the clause, "it should deal with all questions of policy on the basis of joint responsibility and the British Government should not ordinarily interfere with any policy that has the support of the Indianised Executive and the Central Legislature." There was a similar question raised when Provincial Autonomy was given. The gentlemen who were appointed Ministers under the system of Provincial Autonomy insisted upon an undertaking by the Governors that they would not ordinarily interfere with the day-to-day administration of the Government by the Ministers. The Govern-

ment hesitated for some time, but eventually they conceded the demand. They said that ordinarily they won't interfere. Here, when we say they should not 'ordinarily' interfere, it does not mean they should always refrain from interfering, even if there should be just cause for overriding the wishes of the Cabinet and its advice. This is only as an interim measure that we have made this suggestion. Of course there may be questions like this: whether the Viceroy should have the power of overriding the wishes of the Legislature or of the Cabinet, but such questions are constitutional questions into which it is not necessary for us to go now. It may be that in the English constitution itself there is no provision that the Crown should not interfere with the decisions of the Cabinet, but there have been conventions which have been honourably observed by all the powers which function in the British constitution. It has been said that the word 'ordinarily' is very elastic and it may bear an interpretation that there will be no interference, also that it is elastic enough to allow interference, to permit interference, or some such things. I do not think that is a fair way of interpreting the clause. The word 'ordinarily' suggests an honourable understanding and a convention between the Government and the people or the Ministers. I admit that the words here are elastic, even fluid, but that is the virtue of this resolution, that it is elastic, and does not rigidly commit the Government to a policy of complete non-interference under all circumstances, or to a policy of interference in all emergencies. The resolution as it is framed hits the golden mean and I think it is in keeping with the spirit of the convention of the British constitution, leaving a very large amount of fluidity and elasticity; and I think there can be no reasonable objection to the resolution as it is framed.

Resolution VI :
Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar.

The last Clause (d) simply refers to the fact that no amount of repeated assurances or promises that Dominion Status will be granted to us after the War will induce the people to put trust in the declarations of the Government. People want a positive translation of the promises of the Government into deeds.

I would only say in conclusion that far from failing to realise the gravity of the situation, we have realised it and we wish it should be realised not merely by the people but also by the Government. That is the sum and substance of this resolution about the constitution. With these words, Gentlemen, I move the resolution. (Loud applause).

Sir Vital Chandavarkar : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, I rise to support this resolution and I feel very happy that we were able to persuade Sir Sivaswami Ayyar, the most upright, the most learned of our public men not only in this province, but in this country (Hear, hear). Whenever he speaks or writes about anything, you can take it for granted that he will never speak without studying all aspects of a question. And those of you who listened to him to-day will agree that in spite of a little infirmity due perhaps to age, he has shown his old form in very lucidly clarifying all aspects of this resolution. You can realise that he feels very strongly about it. We all feel very strongly about it. In some sections, there is a feeling that we ought not to waste our time in discussing other questions when the War is at our door. To these friends I would say that the War cannot be considered as an isolated question (Hear, hear). Even in England, if you read some of the weekly papers, and even in Parliamentary Debates, you find the way the British run the War is business and politics as usual. Of course there is a different atmosphere there, but they don't put aside all questions which affect the interests of the people and say 'let us hand over the whole thing to the military people and let them run the War.' There is a feeling also that we should not have dealt with the Indo-Burma and such other questions. I do not think the Government of India share this opinion, because at the last Assembly session an attempt was made—at that time Japan had not declared War, although we knew it was coming—to see that the Indo-Ceylon question was postponed and that the Indo-Burma question

Resolution VI :
Sir Vital
Chandavarkar.

Resolution VI:
 Sir V. S. S. Chandavarkar.

was kept in abeyance. The Government of India told us that the Secretary of State was anxious that these two questions should be settled once for all and therefore the questions should not be kept away from the people. If such wise people as the Government of India and the Secretary of State for India think that in spite of the War being at our very door, these questions cannot be kept in abeyance till the War is over, we ordinary people who are not used to handle very big questions of policy, we cannot be blamed for feeling that all these questions form a part of the War effort. Nobody can challenge or doubt my feeling in respect of the War. Even when speaking from the Presidential Chair last year and from other platforms, I have said that wholehearted effort for the War is our salvation both from the point of view of self-interest—you may call it enlightened interest—and from the point of view of morality and ethics. But that will not prevent me from realising that the first element that is essential for evoking public opinion and public support for War is that we all must feel that the War is ours. I and many of you here and many of my colleagues and even in the Congress I know, although they may not say so openly, feel that the War is our War because if the War is lost, everything is lost. But the vast masses of the people do require certain magnanimous gestures to make them feel that we and England in this War stand or fall together. But unfortunately, owing to the illiterate condition of the country, people are not in a position to look at these questions from a logical or dispassionate point of view, and there is a section of people who are so indifferent and who say, 'what is there whether you are under one foreign rule or under another foreign rule?' To get away from that mentality,—we Liberals who are friendly with England, are anxious to get rid of that mentality,—and in order to get rid of that mentality, we think a supreme effort is necessary to make India realise that England and India stand together in this War. That is why, Ladies and Gentlemen, we are anxious to see that some gesture is made by His Majesty's Government. We believe in British connection, and if we do so, it is because we believe that we have common interests, and that is why we are doing our level best from this and other platforms to make the Government realise—and we have to spend more time and make greater effort to make the Government so realise—that the War is a real War for India, that this is not the time for the Bhagalpur and other incidents, that this is the time when they should take at least the leaders of India into confidence and make the masses of the people, through the leaders, realise that the War is a real war for the safety, prosperity and progress of India, let alone the question of freedom of the world. In this matter, as I said yesterday, the Liberal Party has been adopting a definite line during the past three or four years. It is not necessary for us to refer to the attitude of other parties. The other parties have got their own platforms and their leaders have every reason to make propaganda in regard to their own principles and policies. We have a definite attitude in this matter. The first thing is to make the British statesmen realise the danger in which we are at present, and secondly to make the people realise that the way to look at this War not from a narrow parochial point of view and that in spite of what has happened and what England has done to us, this is the time to make a supreme effort in the cause that is before us which involves the future of India, as much as the future of the Commonwealth of Nations.

Now I am coming to Mr. Churchill's speech. It is a matter of common knowledge that in spite of most depressing circumstances, even last June I was one of the few people who believed—in spite of what was happening in the East—in the ultimate victory of England. A friend of mine came to me and asked me: 'Even now you believe in English victory after the Atlantic speech.' I said 'Yes' 'England will win'. "But Mr. Churchill says the Atlantic Charter is reserved for people who have been overrun by Hitler. Then what harm is there in our saying: Let Hitler overrun India also, because we are quite sure of British Victory and we will continue the British connection, but at the same time, if we are overrun, we may have the bene-

fit of the Atlantic Charter. (Laughter). In the meantime, if there is to be no comparison between British rule and German rule, well, let us have a bit of German rule, so that the people may realise the benefits of British rule with greater reality than any propaganda from any platform can do". What reply has Mr. Churchill given to help me to answer this fellow who really, I could see, was actuated by not very pro-British sentiments. I regret to say, Mr. Churchill has disappointed us. We were all wondering why Mr. Churchill was leaving Mr. Amery to speak about India, while he himself has been speaking about all other questions. As far as India is concerned, he has not opened his mouth. After Mr. Amery spoke, we thought there was an end of the matter, but we found the Deputy Prime Minister, the Deputy Leader of the House coming forward and telling us, there is no distinction as far as the Atlantic Charter is concerned. Then Mr. Churchill spoke for the first time about India and to use a colloquial expression, on the first occasion he spoke about India, he put his foot into it and made a mess of all that England's friends had done to bring the people of India on the side of the War and on the side of England. They are actively no doubt on the side of England, but Mr. Churchill has done a great deal of harm to us but more to the British Commonwealth of Nations. But I, with my staunch faith in Liberalism, am not down-hearted or pessimistic; because if you trace the history of England, there is such a thing which very few countries have got in such marked manner, British conscience; and there are two things common between England and some of our leaders. When the time comes, when they realise that things are taking a wrong turn, that they must do something radical, they have the wonderful habit of making a somersault, and that with no difficulty. If you tell them that they are making a somersault, they will say: "No, we are consistent, we are where we were; your sight is defective; that is all." England has done it in the matter of the partition of Bengal. They have not changed; only your eye-sight is wrong? That is the elasticity of British political method the elasticity you find in the British constitution, and the elasticity we are trying to bring out in this resolution. (Cheers). I have been brought up as a lawyer. I belong to the law branch, though of course now I belong to business. Sir Sivaswami Aiyar argued the case as a typical lucid lawyer. If anybody knows anything about British constitution and history right from the time of the English revolution, he will find that what has saved England from major disasters is their ability of adjusting themselves to circumstances. With no change, their constitution allows revolution to go on from day to day. It is that elasticity which has saved England from big political revolutions. In the last war you found how the cabinet system was expanded. In this war you find British Ministers stationed one at Singapore, one in Palestine, one in Madrid, and one in New York. They are all Ministers. When the occasion demands, they can without legislation and by means of conventions, adjust their constitution to the requirements of the situation. We want to take advantage of that British mentality and tell them: "Don't worry about legislation now. You are used to these methods. You have precedents for it in the past. Therefore if you and we are one as we say in spite of your repudiation (the Liberal Party says) we call upon you to act in that spirit and save India and the British Commonwealth of Nations from disaster." And the demand that we make is very very simple. They have already appointed five or seven Indian Members. They have appointed an Indian who has never held office, as the Leader of the Assembly. That has already created a marked change. They have reversed the decision taken by the previous Executive Council in the matter of purchase of the Bengal, the North West and other Railways. The Indo-Burma agreement, which would have been perhaps signed, sealed and delivered, has been kept in abeyance. As regards the Indo-Ceylon agreement, they are wondering what to do. A very definite change has come about in the mentality of the Indian administration now, and for all that our thanks are due to Mr. Aney and his colleagues. And we say that the three other portfolios with I. C. S. Members should be handed over to Indians not

Resolution VI:
Sir Vital
Chandavarkar.

Resolution VI :
Sir Vital
Chandavarkar.

because we have no admiration for the services rendered by members of the I. C. S. for the last 150 years ; but we say : " You cannot fit in the permanent services of the Crown with the political elements in the Cabinet. It must be either a Service Cabinet or a Political Cabinet." In the two together, either the Services lose their efficiency or the politicians their policy because their policy is obstructed and frustrated. Therefore we ask the Viceroy that the whole Cabinet should be Indianised, and we ask the Secretary of State to get into that elasticity which is the peculiar feature of English public life and adjust himself and tell us what the Viceroy must have told his Members, that ordinarily he would not interfere. Most of my friends, when in difficulty, use two words—' reasonable ' and ' ordinarily ' . I have myself done it in getting over difficulties. (Laughter). But there is a great history behind it, and it is the soul of British genius for getting over things and adjusting themselves. If you ask me what ' ordinarily ' means I am not prepared to define it. But I know what ' ordinarily ' means. I believe in British statesmen, because if they give an assurance with the word ' ordinarily ' , we know that as far as possible they will not interfere. But if interference has to be done or made, they will interfere. Then a crisis arises. Why worry about crisis now ? When a crisis arises the Indian Cabinet and the Secretary of State will know how to settle the affair, and I am sure that the British Secretary of State will yield, as the Viceroy very often has done when there was crisis in the Cabinet as when an I.C.S. was appointed Governor of Orissa.

I wish to say one word more before I finish. We have to be very careful in considering this question of constitutional reform. We have to be careful of many of our own friends. Are we fit for parliamentary democracy, or are we not fit ? We say and I say that we are fit for parliamentary democracy, because that is the only form of democracy that can work reasonably and fairly. That is the democracy which we know as English parliamentary democracy. To people who doubt our capacity for parliamentary democracy, I say that they are doing us a great disservice and playing into the hands of reactionary elements in England. All those questions can be settled afterwards. We cannot be jockeyed into those positions by the bullying tactics of any particular minority or any particular interest. Even if it means that progress will be postponed, that we may have to spend 10 to 15 years, we have to stand firm by certain principles. When the time comes and we sit round a table, then we can have all sorts of adjustments and readjustments to inspire confidence in the minorities. But nobody can be allowed to dictate or bully us. Let us be clear of that first principle.

Secondly, let us not, with due deference to the Chair, talk about such devices as functional representation or other representation. I am not against functional representation as such, because I myself represent a functional constituency in the Legislative Assembly. Even in England there is functional representation, because the representation given to the universities in Parliament is a type of functional representation. But whether that is to be the guiding principle of any constitution we have to think about,—that may be the experience of other countries,—but why go outside England for our guide ? I submit, we should go on this principle of government of the people, by the people, for the people. That, we know and experience shows, can be worked out most effectively and efficiently by the British form of parliamentary democracy. We have been with England for 150 years, and why should we go to Switzerland, America or France for our models ? We are used to this ; we have worked it from the Councils ' Act of 1893. All the later Acts including the Act of 1935 have been based on the principle of parliamentary democracy. And now to try some other method is trying to go backward and re-write the history of India. All those questions can be discussed afterwards. If you have to placate the minorities, don't try to placate them by raising these questions, for nothing will placate a minority except one firm attitude by all the intellectuals standing firm by a certain definite principle of democracy. Freedom should be based on certain principles and not on expediency, because that way lies disaster.

Sir, I have done. I have spoken with a little bit of earnestness and perhaps a little bit of unnecessary vigour. I have done so because I feel very strongly. I belong to the Liberal Party and shall always continue to belong to the Liberal Party, because on two questions we have had a past of which any party can be proud and which, I cannot say, any other party can claim. These are a firm adherence to the principle of democracy and an entire repudiation of the principle of separatism in any constitution of India [applause].

Resolution VI :
Sir Vital
Chandavarkar.

The Hon'ble Mr. P. N. Saprú : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, the resolution which has been moved by one of India's most illustrious and progressive statesmen, Sir Sivaswami Aiyar, and seconded in language of such eloquence by my distinguished friend Sir Vital Chandavarkar, is a corollary of the resolution that you have passed on the war effort. In the last paragraph of this resolution we point out that unity between the Indian people and the British Government is needed at this critical juncture in the life of the two peoples. And in the preceding paragraphs we have indicated the various steps which are needed on the part of the British Government to bring about this unity of spirit, this unity of action between Britain and the Indian people in this critical hour of the world's destiny.

Resolution VI :
The Hon'ble
Mr. P. N. Saprú

Mr. President, we have to have as our immediate objective after the war a status of complete equality both in regard to function and status with Britain and the group of nations associated with Britain. In other words, we have asked for an assurance that within a brief specified period, say, two years, India shall be endowed with Dominion Status. Now, Mr. President, we make no apology for using that very much misunderstood word 'Dominion Status.' Dominion Status is not inconsistent with the fullest freedom, and the Liberal Federation stands for the fullest freedom. (Hear, hear). It will mean not the perpetuation, but the end of British imperialism in this country. It will mean the transformation of an Empire into a Commonwealth of free nations. And surely when at this time we are thinking in terms of larger units it is not wise to restrict ourselves to a catch-word 'independence' and thereby complicate matters further. We have therefore advisedly, deliberately and with full knowledge of what we are doing used the words 'status of equality in regard to function and status with Britain and the British Dominions.' For, remember, that Dominion Status of the Statute of Westminster variety carries with it the right of self-determination. When two people marry, they do not think of divorce, but under the Civil Marriage Act divorce is possible. And separation, secession from the Empire, if that will satisfy our friends,—is possible under Dominion Status of the Westminster Statute variety. We have therefore asked for full transfer of control over all aspects of India's internal and external rights as a nation. The Dominions enjoy, as you will have just gathered from what Mr. Curtin has been saying, the fullest autonomy in regard to foreign and defence matters. Now I wish to emphasise this, that Mr. Amery has made a distinction between status and function, and in the so-called August declaration he has made it clear that it is not intended to entrust India with all the functions of a Dominion. In his latest speech he has said that Britain must retain a measure of control over India's defence and foreign policy. In other words, when Mr. Amery says that he has in his August offer offered Dominion Status to India, he is either deceiving himself or intending to deceive others, because he has done nothing of the kind. What he has offered India is not free and equal partnership in the British Commonwealth of Nations. It is some kind of self-government which British Imperialism can control. It is self-government within an imperialistic structure which he has offered to this country in the August declaration.....(Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar: Local self-government). As my illustrious leader says, it is local self-government, perhaps on a larger scale, on a more magnified scale. Well, a declaration of that kind cannot satisfy the aspirations of a self-respecting people. And if you analyse that declaration you will find that the declaration is not consistent as Mr. Churchill tried to make out in his speech, because he had perhaps made some commitment to Mr. Roosevelt

Resolution VI:
The Hon'ble
Mr. P. N. Saprú.

—I am perfectly certain, there is internal evidence in the speech of Mr. Churchill that India was discussed between himself and Mr. Roosevelt—the declaration of August is not consistent, as Mr. Churchill tried to point out, with the principles of freedom and justice as enunciated in the Atlantic Charter, because India has not been left free to choose her own form of Government. No country can be effectively free, can be really free, unless she has control over her own foreign and domestic policies. You will remember that the question of the transfer of foreign or external affairs to an Indian executive responsible to the Legislature was very much stressed by Mr. Attlee in the draft report which he presented to Parliament. Mr. Attlee suggested that foreign affairs should be transferred to India. What has happened to Mr. Attlee now? He is a prisoner to-day in Mr. Churchill's Cabinet. He cannot openly say what he feels, though his friends of the Labour Party had been reminding him of the promises that Labour has made to India. And also it must be said to the credit of British Liberals that they have been be-stirring themselves on behalf of this country.

The August declaration speaks of British obligations. What are those obligations? Has Mr. Amery ever cared to define those obligations with any precision? Are those obligations to be settled by Britain alone, or are they to be settled by India and Britain at a joint free conference? And when are those obligations to be liquidated? Are they to be permanent obligations, or is there any time, now or in the immediate future, when those obligations will be liquidated? These are questions on which Mr. Amery has chosen deliberately to be silent, and he has been endeavouring to convince the great democratic republic of the United States that the trouble in India is of a domestic character, that it is more between Indians and Indians than between Indians and the British Government.

I would like to say this also: I think that the minorities problem has assumed a shape and form which makes it imperative that there should be complete and final transfer of power. If you go on experimenting with these dyarchical arrangements, you will be adding to the complexity of the communal problem; you will be making the growth of totalitarianism and totalitarian ideas popular in this country; and you will be promoting a civil and internecine strife. Therefore it is imperative in the interests of order and progress that the constitution of India should be put on a permanent basis; and we therefore say that Britain should definitely pledge herself that she will help us to achieve Dominion Status within two years of the termination of the war. This is so far as Britain is concerned. Of course we do not know what the British Empire will be like after the war. If there is closer union between the Dominions and Britain, or if there is a big change in some other direction, then of course our position will be in every respect identical with England and the British Dominions. That is what we have said in the resolution.

So far as the immediate present is concerned, we have contented ourselves with asking for two immediate steps. First of all we ask for complete —I don't like the word 'Indianisation'—nationalisation of the Executive Council. Sir, you always use the word 'nationalisation' in regard to the Indian army, and I think, that is the word we should use, not 'Indianisation'. We have asked for the complete 'nationalisation' of the Executive Council. Now complete nationalisation of the Executive Council is possible within the four corners of the Government of India Act. The Viceroy has paid a very handsome tribute to the eminent men who are surrounding him to-day. Well, I think he would be showing appreciation of their ability and character if he were to surround himself with some other Indians, equally distinguished, along with them in the Executive Council. What is the use of paying a compliment to them when you don't want to pay a compliment to their countrymen? I think they themselves would like a compliment to be paid to their countrymen; they are not thinking so much of themselves. Therefore it is possible to completely nationalise the Executive Council within the

framework of the existing constitution. If you nationalise the Executive Council, the responsibility of that Council to the Secretary of State will not be affected, and I would like to point out that under the existing Act it is possible for the Secretary of State to transfer a great deal of power ordinarily to the Indian Executive and Legislature. Indeed it is necessary, because the Secretary of State is not on the spot. The Viceroy and the Executive Council know the situation much better than he does.

Resolution VI:
The Hon'ble
Mr. P. N. Saprū

Then there is one clause on which I just want to say one or two words with your permission, and that is in regard to India being treated as a Dominion immediately. Mr. Wedgwood Benn in 1922 spoke of India as a quasi Dominion. India was, as you know, a member of the League of Nations. In all International Conferences India has been represented by Indians. What we therefore say is that representation of India at the Peace Conference and all International Conferences should be by Indians who will be responsible to and who will derive authority from this national Government. The Indians selected must not be men who will be responsible to the Secretary of State. Now this does not require any statutory change. As my friend Sir Vital Chandavarkar said, the British constitution is a very elastic constitution, and the very elasticity of that constitution makes it possible for the Government to do all these things. If the Government will take steps on these lines, I prophesy the certainty that they will have the whole of India with them whole-heartedly in this war, and that with the united determination of the united Indian people, they will be able to face with courage and hope the Japanese menace in this country. I am sure that if England does the right thing, she will not only add to her moral stature but also be able to save this country from disintegration. With these words I lend my heartiest support to this resolution. (Applause).

Mr. C. R. Somayajulu : Mr. President, Fellow Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have great pleasure and I consider it my great good fortune to support the main resolution of the Federation which has been proposed and seconded by such veteran Liberal Leaders as Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar and Sir V. N. Chandavarkar and Hon. Mr. Saprū. It was my good fortune to support a similar resolution at the last session of the Federation at Calcutta. The recent declaration of the Prime Minister of England saying that the Atlantic Charter won't be applied to India and the declaration of His Excellency the Viceroy made in August 1940 are the last words on the question of the future constitutional progress of India. The August declaration of His Excellency the Viceroy was rejected by the political parties in India except the Muslim League for reasons known best to itself. The statement of the Rt. Hon. Mr. Churchill has caused grave doubts in the minds of all public men, except those of the Muslim League, that Great Britain was not likely to grant Dominion Status to India at the end of the War. And in order to remove the doubts in the minds of the Indian people, I would advise the Government to declare that India is no longer treated as a dependency but she is being and will be treated as an equal partner like Canada, Australia, Ireland and South Africa, and she will be given the same status and functions as the Dominions enjoy, immediately after the War. As a temporary measure during the War, I suggest that a National Government should be formed by the Viceroy inviting non-communal and non-party leaders to serve in his Cabinet, with himself as the constitutional head of the Government. And in the provinces, if the majority party refuses to accept office, Indian non-official advisers should be appointed in the place of the present Civilian advisers, so that there may be a whole-hearted support by the people of the efforts for a successful prosecution of the War against Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Imperial Japan. I further appeal to His Excellency the Viceroy to transfer important portfolios like Defence and Finance to non-official Indians with a view to get greater support from the people for his policy of expansion of the Executive Council.

Resolution VI :
Mr. C. R.
Somayajulu.

In conclusion, I appeal to my countrymen, especially to Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. M. A. Jinnah, not to prolong controversy

Resolution VI:
Mr. C. R.
Somayajulu.

over phrases such as Independence, Pakistan, etc., since none of them has been granted by the British Government. Let all the political parties proclaim to the world and to the British nation that India is united in her demand for Swaraj for our motherland. Let the Indian people forget for the time being all their political, social and economic differences and help the British Government in the effort to defeat the Nazi serpent and Imperial Japan and to achieve the final victory of the democracies represented by Great Britain, America and Soviet Russia over the Axis powers. India will not achieve complete Independence or Dominion Status under Nazi Germany or even maintain the little independence and the small privileges which she already enjoys under the British Government. I therefore appeal to the people to whole heartedly co-operate in the War effort and see that victory is assured to Britain and her Allies.

Resolution VI:
Mr. R. H.
Khelkar.

Mr. R. H. Khelkar: Mr. President, Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, the resolution that has been so ably placed before you does not require any very great support from me. So far as I can see, the resolution may be split into three different parts. The first part and the first half of the second part really talk about what has been done and our dissatisfaction with it. The third part says in general terms what is necessary in order to remove our suspicions. In the remaining parts of the resolution, we make two types of demand. One demand is for immediate reform and reorganization and another demand is for a declaration of general policy for the future. That is how I have analysed the resolution.

Now, I am not temperamentally disposed to dwell too much on what has been done and the wrongs done to us in the past. After all they have been done and they cannot be undone. It is only the future that concerns me most. I cannot again dwell too much on the general principles laid down in the last part of the resolution. I am therefore confining myself mostly to the remaining portion of the resolution.

One thing is clear that the present critical situation in the War demands that some urgent steps should be taken. I am surprised to find, and there are many who are surprised to find when it is pointed out to them, that so far as the War is concerned, there is a curious unanimity between the claims of Hitler and the claims of those that are out to oppose him. Each party wants to bring in a new world order. We in this country are quite clear that we do not want even a suspicion of Hitler's world order—there is no doubt about it. Therefore, if we are to support the new order of the Allies, I am not quite satisfied with the part we are playing in the War just now. Four hundred millions or nearly one-fifth of the world's total population cannot stay out as mere onlookers and cannot even join as camp-followers when a new order for the world is being made. What is our present position? Both in Imperial and International conferences, our delegations are generally led by permanent civil servants or others who are not Indians—in practice there may be exceptions, but that is the general rule—and that makes a very curious impression upon the foreigners. They think that India consists mainly of dummies and requires helpers from Britain. It is not that kind of feeling that I want for my country. I therefore support this proposition in respect of these two points that I have made out.

We have got very great problems to face at the end of this War and I shall indicate in a few sentences what those great problems are. Our markets for instance have been completely disturbed. We have lost our customers. We are developing our industries, and we want to find new customers for the new products of our industries. Unless we develop our internal markets by one process or another, we have to find markets outside, and if we want to do so, a Peace Conference will give us an opportunity to negotiate with foreign nations. If at the Peace Conference and in similar gatherings, we are represented by permanent Civil servants, members of the steel-frame, I am not quite sure what fate our demands will have. Members of the Civil service, however eminent they are, so far as efficiency goes, in their heart of

hearts they feel—however much they may resent it—they are mere servants. They cannot hit upon bold policies or boldly carry out such policies. The result is that their actions are always halting and the country suffers. My claim therefore is that at such gatherings our delegations should be led, and not only led, but should solely consist of men of character and worth, who are trusted by the whole country. This I feel is the sum and substance of our demand. If our Government itself does not wholly consist of Indians, it is not possible for a delegation, even though it is merely composed of Indians, to feel that confidence in themselves and to claim that respect from delegations of foreign nations (Hear, hear) which they would secure if our Government were a wholly national Government, as Mr. Sapru put it so clearly. I therefore support this proposition with great pleasure.

Resolution VI :
Mr. R. H.
Khelkar.

One thing more I want to say. I do not want to be flippant. One friend of mine suggested to me that when the Council was formed it unhappily consisted of twelve members and a Chairman, i.e., thirteen sitting round the table. Somehow that reminds me of the sentiment that is generally associated with that number. I am afraid the whole country suspects that there is a spirit of duress somewhere, and from their past experience, they have been trained to believe that it is somewhere in the members of the steelframe. Unless the steelframe therefore disappears from the Council, there would not be that war effort coming forth and there would not be that power behind our delegations which will help them to get due consideration for our claims and which will make them offer due guarantees for any claims made by others upon them. A delegation of service men representing only service men cannot deliver the goods, especially when the willingness of the master is necessary to support their actions. I feel great pleasure in supporting this resolution and I hope you will carry it with acclamation. (Applause).

Mr. S. Srinivasa Ayyar : Mr. President, Sir Sivaswami Ayyar and Fellow Delegates and worshippers of Liberalism and Nationalism, pure and undefiled, it is with great temerity and hesitation that I rise to oppose a resolution moved by Sir Sivaswami Ayyar, the noblest patriot of India and the Bhisma of our land (Hear, hear). But I am fortified in my opposition by the consideration that after all, even Bhisma in spite of his patriotism, singleness of purpose, high courage and enormous wisdom, ultimately supported the wrong cause, sided with the wrong party and brought destruction to all the Kshatriyas, thus depriving this land of all its warriors and leaving it defenceless at the mercy of the Aryan conquerors.

Resolution VI :
Mr. S. Srinivasa
Ayyar.

Hon'ble Mr. P. N. Sapru : On a point of order, Mr. President. Has my Hon. friend who wants to oppose the resolution, given notice of any amendment to be moved?

Mr. S. Srinivasa Ayyar : I have given notice in time.

The President : He has not given notice of any amendment, but he mentioned at the Subjects Committee meeting that he would like to have a chance of opposing the resolution, at the open session.

Mr. S. Srinivasa Ayyar : Why all this terror against me? My speech will be the most innocent speech. I am only beginning to speak, and I will remember the opinion expressed by the outgoing President of our Liberal Federation Sir Vital Chandavarkar yesterday, that we ought to remember we are an assembly of non-Muslims, Liberals and non-Muslim nationalists. He also reminded me that we are not expressing the views of Hindus, as such.

Mr. Burjor J. Shroff : I am afraid, Mr. President, we are digressing from the main point.

Mr. S. Srinivasa Ayyar : I do not want to be disturbed. I shall come to the point. I give an assurance to Sir Chandavarkar, to the President and to the Delegates here that I will not refer to Hindu views in the course of my speech, since it acts as a red rag to the bull, to Sir Chandavarkar.

Resolution VI:
Mr. S. Srinivasa
Ayyar.

Gentlemen, we are all engaged in the fight for attaining our freedom and we have to adapt our strategy with reference to the opposition. Who are our enemies? What is the opposition and how is it constituted? We must shape our resolution and our strategy with reference to the forces opposed to us, I say the forces opposed to our freedom, to democracy in India, are our friends of the Muslim League combined with the British i.e., an Anglo-Muslim axis with reference to India. That is what we should remember before we proceed further with reference to our freedom. This Anglo-Muslim axis is similar to the Rome-Berlin axis. Hitler and Mussolini one analogous to Mr. Amery and Mr. Jinnah. Mr. Amery speaks against democracy, Mr. Jinnah also is opposed to democracy. Mr. Amery says you have to create public opinion, because there is no opinion. Mr. Jinnah also says there is no Indian opinion.

The President: I hope you will confine yourself to the point. I cannot give you unlimited time.

Mr. S. Srinivasa Ayyar. I say, just as Germans are being replaced by Italians in occupied France, whenever we ask for expansion of the Executive Council or for more reforms, the British members are being replaced by their allies the Muhammadans, member of the Muslim League. It does not advance our cause any further. As regards the resolution now before us, I mainly agree with the speech of Sir Chandavarkar. I only oppose two points in this resolution. You say there "while regarding the recent expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council by the appointment of additional Indian members as a step in the right direction", but Pakistan has been introduced in the Viceroy's Executive Council and national representation has been reduced from 66 per cent. to nearly 50 per cent., and the only person whose case has advanced is Mr. Jinnah. And yet, we say it is a step in the right direction. Is anything more—I cannot say foolish, because this audience cannot be foolish, but is anything more—incorrect I ask. I say we are cutting our own throat by adopting this resolution. Why not we adopt the tactics of Mr. Jinnah, his ambition and his insatiable appetite? He is progressing from door to door, whereas we are easily satisfied even with a retrograde step. I think the most suicidal statement ever to be made is, the statement "while regarding the recent expansion..... as a step in the right direction."

Sir, one more point and I am done. I agree with the other portions of the resolution but in regard to portfolios, I am sure Mr. Jinnah will find sufficient loopholes there through which he will ride a coach and four and which he will use for the benefit of the Mussalmans and his forces. I only wish to add that the Executive Council must reflect the proportion of Mussalmans to the non-Muslims in the country. Mr. Jinnah should not use the Muslim strength in the Executive Council to help the Muslim invaders of India. Do you expect him to defend the frontiers of this country in case of a Muslim invasion? And who will suffer—the 230 millions of non-Muslims who constitute nearly four-fifths of the total population. Even in the United States, if a Catholic is elected, from the point of view of loyalty to the public, they rightly hold that he should not be elected to the Presidency. Such a thing is a reasonable safeguard and I therefore say that the portfolio of Defence should be only in the hands of a non-Muslim. You must make that point clear, otherwise Indianisation will only mean Muslimisation which is a jump from the frying pan to the fire for all nationally-minded Indians. Therefore my humble submission is that this proposition should be clearly put and clearly expressed, without any idea of doubt whatever. Mere Indianisation will be only a retrograde step. Therefore we all pray that our next step, if it is going to be a change, must be a change for the better and not for the worse. I submit this clause (b) is opposed to all national, Liberal and just ideas, and therefore ought to be opposed and thrown out by you all. (Cheers).

The President: Gentlemen, the resolution has been moved, seconded and supported. I now put it to the vote.

Resolution VI:
The President.

The resolution was put and carried, only one delegate (Mr. S. Srinivasa Ayyar) objecting.

7. DEFENCE

Hon'ble Mr. H. N. Kunzru: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, the resolution which I have the honour to move runs as follows:

Resolution VII:
The Hon'ble
H. N. Kunzru.

"The National Liberal Federation reiterating its demand for a radical change in the defence policy of the Government feels that the war has shown that for making adequate preparations for the security of India, it is essential that (i) the defence portfolio should be entrusted to an Indian member who commands the confidence of the people and that (ii) the defence forces of India should be organized on a fully national basis. It recognises the progress that has been made with regard to the manufacture of war-materials but is thoroughly dissatisfied with the policy in other respects. It urges in particular (a) that the policy of Indianisation in all grades of the army, navy and air force should be implemented; (b) that the classification of people as martial and non-martial should be given up and the army recruited from all provinces and classes to a greater extent than now."

Sir, the War, as the resolution truly points out, has shown that self-Government has no meaning unless we have the power to maintain it. Our ability to protect ourselves and to continue to rule over our own people will depend to no small extent on the suggestions made in this resolution. It is not merely we, but also Australians, New Zealanders and other people in the British Commonwealth of Nations, that are dissatisfied with the existing state of things. Australia, whose loyalty to the British Commonwealth of Nations cannot be doubted, has practically given notice to Great Britain that she will not allow herself to be guided by policies settled by Great Britain. She proposes to work out her salvation so far as least as this War is concerned, in co-operation with the United States of America. India has no Government of her own and has therefore not been able to pursue her own national policies in connection with development of her defence arrangements. She has all the more reason to be dissatisfied therefore with the existing situation and to lay stress on the fact that not merely our manhood but our very security depends on our ability to defend our shores and frontiers against external invasion. We insist that our defence forces should be placed under Indian control and that they should be nationalised. We lay great stress on the appointment of an Indian as Defence Member, and with perfect reason. Our great misfortune so far has been that the shaping of policies has been in the hands of persons who were not sympathetic to our aspirations and who were unable, therefore, to envisage our problems from the national point of view.

Now we desire that adequate steps should be taken even at this stage to secure the safety of India. It is necessary that the Member in charge of Defence should be an Indian. You have in the previous resolution asked for an Executive Council consisting entirely of Indian, and you have particularly alluded to the Defence portfolio and said that it should be administered by an Indian. This shows that you regard the future arrangement for Defence as an integral part of the constitutional changes that you desire. It has been pointed out to us that it would be against our own interests if we insisted on the appointment of an Indian as Defence Member at present. The war, it is said, stands in the way of the acceptance of our views. I am afraid I cannot admit that this argument has any cogency. A Burman was appointed as Defence Member in Burma after the outbreak of the war. Are Burmans more developed politically than Indians? Are Burmans in a better position to defend their country than the position in which we are in respect of the defence of our country? We are definitely stronger than they in this respect.

Resolution VII:
The Hon'ble
H. N. Kunzru.

for the defence of Burma depends on India. Indian troops have been sent to Burma to ensure its integrity. Well, then, if Burma can be given a Burman Defence Member, I see no reason why India should not be given an Indian Defence Member. Apart from this, whoever the Indian Defence Member may be, he will not take upon himself the recruitment to the army and the training and discipline of the soldiers. He will be as much guided in these matters by the professional head of the army, viz., the Commander-in-Chief as the Home Members in the Provinces are guided by the advice of their Inspectors-General of Police in regard to the recruitment of the police force and its training and discipline. The Indian Member will, however, concern himself with questions of policy, questions to which our resolution draws attention. The very first thing that he will devote attention to is the nationalisation of the Indian army.

Now what does nationalisation mean? This is explained in the last part of the resolution. The army, navy and air force should be Indianised, and the army should be recruited from all Provinces and classes and not merely from certain classes known as martial. Let us take these points one by one. I shall first deal with the Indianisation of the army. I will not go into the state of things that existed before the war broke out. That is known to you all. I will confine myself only to dealing with the situation as it is at present. There is no doubt that since the outbreak of the war, efforts have been made by the Government of India to secure suitable Indians for appointment as commissioned officers. I do not know what is the exact number of Indians who have been given emergency commissions. The Government of India refuse to disclose the figures, but I believe that there are about 2000 Indian emergency commissioned officers now. The number may appear to be a large one, and you may therefore feel that the British Government has changed its policy in regard to the Indianisation of our army. But you will be mistaken if this is the conclusion you arrive at from the figures I have just given you. The Additional Defence Secretary, Sir Gurunath Bewoor, answering a question the other day in the Assembly, said that only 23½% of the emergency commissions had been given to Indians, 1½% had been given to Anglo-Indians, while no less than 75% of the new commissions had been given to British candidates. This does not show that the British Government has changed its previous policy and, profiting by the lesson of the war, made up its mind to place the Indian army under the leadership of Indian officers. On the contrary, it only shows that the British Government is even now prepared to train Indians in large numbers as officers only in the last resort, when circumstances compel it to seek for greater assistance from Indians. This is not the end of the story. The commissions of which I have spoken have for the most part been given in the infantry and cavalry. I do not mean to say that the technical branches are closed to Indians, but every few Indians, so far as I know, have been given commissions, say, in the artillery or in the engineers, by which I mean the sappers and miners. I put a question in the Council of State about the number of cadets under training in the cadet wing of the Indian artillery school at Dehra Dun. The Government refused to supply me with the information I asked for, but were gracious enough at the same time to inform me that only 15% of the candidates in the school were Indians. Can anything show more eloquently the attitude of the British Government in regard to appointments to those branches of the army which require scientific knowledge and which have gained considerably in importance since the commencement of the present war? The position of Indians in the sappers and miners, so far as I know, is no better. It is said that Indians of the right stamp are "not available for these services" which require a greater degree of individuality and initiative and drive than in officers in the infantry and cavalry. These words have been so abused in the past that we shall be on safe ground if we refuse to attach much importance to them. Indians have been praised by the highest authorities not merely for their gallantry in the present war but for their ability to lead their men and to show the capacity for command under the most difficult conditions. How can we then accept the libel that although competent Indian officers may be

available for the infantry and cavalry, they are "not available" for the artillery and the engineers? We cannot for a moment accept this statement and we shall be on perfectly safe ground in refusing to accept it. I have been told that British soldiers promoted from the ranks, although without any knowledge of engineering, are being given commissions in the sappers and miners. One thought that sappers and miners were a highly technical branch and that their officers required specialised training so that they might be fit for the performance of their duties. But if really untrained people, people innocent of all knowledge of engineering, be appointed as officers in the sappers and miners, how can we accept the charge that Indians with the requisite qualifications are not available?

Resolution VII:
The Hon'ble
H. N. KUNJRA.

The illustrations that I have given you will show to you what the attitude of the British Government is even at the present time, and this attitude is seen not merely in connection with the Indianisation of the army, but also in connection with the Indianisation of the navy. The Indian air force will have only Indian officers. British officers will work in the Indian air force only so long as Indian officers of the requisite seniority are not available. The force will be wholly Indianised within a short period of time. But this position has not been accepted with regard to the Royal Indian Navy. The Royal Indian Navy, although a new service, has unfortunately got a long ancestry. It has descended from the Royal Indian Marine, which was practically a monopoly of Britishers. When I say this, I refer to the higher ranks and there the position of Indian officers is not the same as in the air force. It has been laid down that only one out of three vacancies will be given to an Indian. Since the war broke out, Indians have been taken into the various services that have been formed in the Royal Indian Marine. But the Commander-in-Chief disclosed the other day that the proportion of Indian to European officer was 3 to 5, i.e., practically 1 to 2. This is the situation so far as the navy is concerned, and this unsatisfactory state of things exist not because the Indian officers in the mercantile marine or other Indians are not prepared to take up careers in the navy. Here too it is said that Indians of the proper qualifications are not available. To a certain extent, that is true. But the British Government have made no effort to carry on any propaganda and to impress on Indian youths, who are at present more attracted by the army and the air force, the importance of the Royal Indian Navy from the point of view of defence. Had the necessary propaganda been carried out, had Indian young men been appealed to help the Government in the navy in the same way as they have been appealed to in connection with the army and the air force, I have no doubt that the response would have been immediate and enthusiastic. If young men have not come forward in large numbers at present, the fault lies with the authorities themselves. If they were to make up their minds to Indianise the Royal Indian Navy and then appeal to our young men, I have no doubt whatsoever that there would be no dearth of suitable material.

And now, Sir, I shall turn to the last part of my resolution which asks that the army should be recruited from all Provinces and classes. This is an old demand of ours, but one that has not been conceded up to the present time. It was insisted upon by British authorities that India could be defended only by certain classes which could be called martial, and those classes were supposed to be martial in a special degree which live near the north-west frontier. How defective this standard was will be apparent to you all. This theory has broken down under the stress of the present war. The danger which we formerly thought would come from the north-west is likely to come from other directions, for instance from the east; and I would like to know whether the British Government now are prepared to develop the martial spirit of the Bengalis and the Madrasis. If their former theory was correct they should make special efforts to develop the capacity of the people of Bengal and Madras to defend their country. But so far their policy has undergone no new orientation. It is true that the large number of soldiers required by the authorities could not be obtained exclusively from the

Resolution VII:
The Hon'ble
H. N. Kunzru.

martial classes or from a few Provinces. They have therefore been compelled to cast their net wide. But the proportion of men belonging to the non-martial races has so far been very small. About six months ago only 3 % of the new recruits belonged to the classes that formerly furnished no soldiers for the Indian army. Since then the proportion has risen to 6 %. A new army of about a million men has been raised. Let us suppose that from the very beginning the percentage of soldiers belonging to the non-martial classes amounted to 6 %. A little calculation will show us that we could have recruited only about 60000 men from new sources. This virtually means that in respect to this vital demand of ours the British point of view has undergone no change worth speaking.

I have dealt with the main demands which are put forward in this resolution in order that the future safety of India may be assured. I will only say in conclusion that the changes that we have asked for, while desirable at all times, are urgently necessary at the present time. The authorities are calling upon the people to make the utmost sacrifices they are capable of in order to defeat the Nazis and the Fascists. Their appeals will not however carry the same weight as those that may be made by a national government and particularly by an Indian Member for Defence. We cannot refer too often in this connection to the magnificent example of China. The heroic resistance of the Chinese has extorted the admiration of all countries. But how have the Chinese, who till a few years ago were not supposed to have a strong national feeling, come to love their country so much as to be prepared to sacrifice their lives and their property and all that they hold dear rather than submit to the yoke of the Japanese? The result that we see is due to the work done by Marshal Chiang Kai Shek for ten years in spreading national feeling from one end of China to the other; and what he could not accomplish in ten years, the Japanese have accomplished in four years. China to-day feels as it never felt before, and the Chinese are prepared to rise as one man against the invader and to give him no peace till he leaves their shores and allows them to manage their affairs in their own way. They have been able to withstand the might of Japan because of that national sentiment which surges in the breast of every one of them. They feel that they have a national government, and Marshal Chiang Kai Shek is in their eyes the embodiment of their national independence and freedom. If the British Government wish to get from us the utmost support that we can give they should take a leaf out of the book of the Chinese and coolly trust in the Indians, assure India that its freedom is not a matter of years but only of months and weeks, and that in fighting for the defence of Great Britain and the other countries, it will be fighting for its own defence also. If Britain can prevail upon itself to accept this policy, I have no doubt that the results will be as marvellous as they have been in the case of the Chinese.

For these reasons, I support the resolution that I have ventured to place before the House. (Loud Applause.)

Resolution VII:
Dr. R. P.
Paranjpye.

Dr. R. P. Paranjpye: Mr. President, Brother-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have very great pleasure in seconding this resolution so ably moved by my friend the Hon. Pandit Kunzru. I have often had occasions in the past of speaking on this or other platforms on questions of the defence of our country, and to some of us who have thought that this defence question was the most important in our national political situation, it is a matter of melancholy interest that our words spoken many years ago are at present coming true. Unfortunately on account of the divorce of Indian politics from defence matters, most of our political leaders in the olden days did not attach the same importance to this question as to other purely political questions. But while I say this about our political leaders, let me at the same time say that in this matter, our venerable leaders of the Liberal Party, especially Sir Sivaswami Ayyar, cannot be charged with any neglect in this respect. He has been for a very long time insistent upon the

defence aspect of Indian politics and has in season and out of season laid emphasis on this question. I often think that if he were a little younger than he is now, when we suggest that the defence portfolio should be given to an Indian, no better Defence Minister would be suggested than my friend Sir Sivaswami Ayyar. (Applause). There are other instances of this kind. In England, for instance, in the Cabinet, the War Secretaryship is not occupied by a military man, it is occupied by a Civilian; and perhaps the most successful Defence Minister in recent years in England has been Lord Haldane, and had it not been for the reorganization that he introduced into the British Army just before the last War, the last War might have been a little more difficult for the Allies than actually it was. I think therefore that if a Civilian Defence Minister was appointed and he had the charge of the major policies in the matter of defence, our Defence system would not have gone to dogs but would have been more responsible to public feeling, and the general policy as regards Defence would have been more acceptable to the public. Many matters which a technical man from the Army or the Navy is apt to regard from the mere service point of view would be looked at from a wider point of view. Well, take this question of martial and non-martial races. In the olden days, before this War broke out, when our public men suggested that this distinction should go, the military people had only one answer. They said that to have a certain number of soldiers recruited for the army, they must take the best material that was available in the country. And the best material in their opinion came from the North and therefore the other classes were entirely neglected. They did not, in their blindness, see that the question of defence was not concerned only with immediate enlistment of a couple of thousand or a couple of lakhs of soldiers but that for any emergency there ought to be a foundation for the increase of the army to several lakhs and even millions. The policy followed by the service heads of the military department of our country did not contemplate any possibility of this kind. If therefore there had been a non-civilian member in charge of the military department, he would have taken this wider view and would have not only seen that the best material was available but would have made preparations for the expansion of the army to as great an extent as was necessary even by taking for the moment somewhat less competent, if at all, members of other classes in this country. Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, that shows that what appears to be the best possible course from the point of view of immediate necessity is not always the best possible course from a wider point of view; and therefore it is that we emphasise the need for a member in charge of Defence who will be responsible to public opinion, who can voice public needs properly.

Resolution VII:
Dr. R. P.
Paranjpye.

Let me take another illustration. Sir Sivaswami Ayyar and myself were about sixteen years ago members of a small committee on the Auxiliary and Territorial Force, and various questions were considered and I was one of the persons that suggested that the Universities should be allowed to make military education compulsory for all students who were candidates for a degree. Somehow or other we got that committee to give a half-hearted approval to this suggestion and the committee recommended that if any University desired to make this improvement, there should be no objection on the part of the Government. We know that sixteen years have passed since the report was published, and yet no action has been taken in the matter. Several Universities have sent up proposals to Government for the carrying out of the recommendation of the Committee. It was only in very recent days that the University Training Corps have been increased by something like 50 per cent. One of the Universities recently sent up to the Government of India a proposal for instituting a degree or diploma in Military Science; but Government are bringing forward the usual excuse that they have not got the necessary arms for giving the proper training. Government again have taken only a purblind view of such a question. It may be that members of the University Training Corps may not be capable of being sent to the front in a moment, but the military spirit that such training will

Resolution VII: create in the youth of the country is worth far more than the small amount of money that may have to be spent on the expansion of the Training Corps. On such questions again, I say, an Indian member will be more responsive to public feeling.

Dr. B. P. Parasajpye.

I am glad that Pandit Kunzru emphasised the question of propaganda. We are told that sufficient numbers of young people are not coming forth. I will come in a moment to that question; but in any case I do not think that till very recently Government have engaged in any propaganda with a view to encourage people to go in for the military career. I may recall the example of the Indian Civil Service. It was found a few years ago that sufficient number of suitable candidates were not coming forward in England for the Indian Civil Service. Did His Majesty's Government then say that people should no longer be recruited to the Indian Civil Service to the extent required from among Englishmen? No, they sent round a special officer of the Government to all the Universities in the country to lecture to suitable audiences and encourage young men to come forward and compete for the Indian Civil Service. Should not such a thing have been done in our Indian Universities? It is quite true that to a certain extent at the present moment suitable candidates are not coming forward in sufficient numbers for these commissions, but a Government responsible to public opinion should have taken steps betimes before the actual need arose, to meet such a contingency.

Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, while we are blaming the Government for their past sins of omission and commission in regard to this matter, I hope you will allow me to say that it is no good harping on the sins of the past. The danger before our country is pressing and insistent. We must therefore do what we can to remedy matters as soon as possible; and if my words will reach a wider platform, I would say that our young men should come forward in as large numbers as possible to enter upon this honourable and necessary career in the interests of the defence of our country. I have had recently a little experience. Only last month I was engaged in interviewing candidates for emergency commissions at Bangalore, and if I might in a few words give my experience on that Board, I would say that the best candidates that I knew were existing, did not always offer themselves. If they were appealed to properly and if only they came forward, I am sure we would get not 2,000 candidates but about 10,000 of them. At present, however, they are not coming forward in large numbers and the generality of candidates do not belong to the higher ranks of our under-Graduates and college students. For this purpose, the public should encourage our young men to go in for this career. I would earnestly appeal to our young men that the army and other defence services offer a very honourable, useful and patriotic opening for them. I might say, we on that Board did not reject wholesale all the candidates. Altogether about 60 per cent. we took immediately, about 5 to 10 per cent. were sent for a preliminary training, and only about 30 per cent. were rejected. I believe any Board, whomsoever it might be composed of, would probably agree with our opinion about the suitability of the candidates that offered themselves. We have four members on the Board and practically all of us were generally agreed about the suitability or unsuitability of the candidates. I say that this could be remedied by a proper amount of propaganda being made and by a proper change in the public feeling being brought about. This was a board which interviewed candidates only from the southern part of the country, probably from the northern part of the country, greater numbers might have been available; but I think that now, any young man who wants to join and who is fairly qualified by a certain amount of physical and intellectual alertness and education for a commission, would have no difficulty whatsoever in getting a commission.

As regard the point made by Dr. Kunzru about technical services, I might say that comparatively very few people offer themselves for the technical branches of the service, and almost everybody that offered was taken.

The thing is that people have a certain amount of awe and fear about this career and that is due to the fact that the career in this part of the country at any rate has not been very much open to them. People feel a certain amount of fear generally, ungrounded fear, because they have not been familiar with this career. In the Punjab, the matter.....

Resolution VII:
Dr. R. P.
Paranjpye.

Hon. Mr. H. N. Kunzru: I suppose you wanted trained Engineers for the Engineering service?

Dr. R. P. Paranjpye: Yes.

Hon. Mr. H. N. Kunzru: But now you are recruiting men who have got no engineering qualification at all?

Dr. R. P. Paranjpye: We recruited people who had certain kind of qualifications either for the Engineering or for other technical commissions, and the numbers that offered were comparatively few, practically everybody that offered was taken. I hope that more people would come forward in the future. I am trying to do my best whenever I can get at an audience of young men, to tell that this is an opening which they should take to. While we are blaming Government for their sins of omission and commission and also for their not showing sufficient keenness even now, I hope the public will also do their bit and encourage young men to come in for such a career. At present it looks like trying to dig a well when you are thirsty. We cannot help it, but we have got to do it even at such a time. I do hope that the policy of the Government will radically change and that Government will not only change their policy on paper but will also go in for the necessary propaganda, the necessary measures to make the career even more attractive than it is at present. I also hope that the public will see that by sending their young men for a military or naval or air force career, they will be giving their young men a very good career which will make them useful for the defence of their own country.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I do hope that you will all pass this resolution unanimously as it is of the utmost importance for the defence and safety of our country. (Applause).

Mr. Naushir Bharucha: Mr. President, Brother—Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, various points of view have been urged before you as to why our demand for the Defence portfolio being transferred to an Indian member should be conceded. I believe there is one important aspect, one strong argument, which requires to be taken into account. I am not convinced that the European Defence Member, whoever he be, has proved competent or has been alive to the responsibilities which the job has placed upon him. For instance, at the outbreak of the War in September 1939, when most of the European nations were armed to the teeth, it had become plentifully clear that the air-arm was going to be the one mighty factor in the decision of battles. What was the position of India? At that time Germany had 3,500 aircraft and England had only a few squadrons of the R.A.F. At that time, the so-called Indian air force consisted of one squadron only—one squadron means just twelve machines. On the outbreak of the War, it had become patent to everybody that the air force was going to play a major if not decisive part in the War and yet it did not occur to our Defence Member that he should see that India was properly equipped with necessary aircraft and air-force staff. And when on the outbreak of the War, they thought of reorganizing the air force, how far did their imagination go? They said that they would quadruple the Indian air force; that is to say, if they had twelve bombers or fighters, they would have 48. In August or September 1940 when Germany launched a decisive air-attack on England, in one day as many as 189 German bombers were shot down. They should therefore have known at least then that our air force was quite inadequate. I ask if our European Defence Members were so very competent, why they failed to realise the actual position in time and see that the Indian air force was strengthened.

Resolution VII:
Mr. Naushir
Bharucha.

Resolution VII:
Mr. Naushir
Bharucha.

I say it is not only incompetence but criminal neglect on their part. Have they not taken money from the taxpayers and have they not left India absolutely defenceless on account of their unimaginably bad policy and want of ordinary commonsense. It has been argued: 'it is all very well to talk of expanding the air force, but where is the money'? I say in reply that it takes only Rs. 15 crores to get a thousand good fighting machines, India has given four times the amount, and yet the position to-day is that we have not got even 200 aircraft in this country. If there is one reason why the Defence portfolio should be handed over to an Indian with imagination, it is that he would not leave this country at the utter mercy of the enemy which a succession of European Defence Members have left her to-day. If there is an Indian Defence Member in India, it is immaterial whether he is a Muslim, a Parsi or a Hindu; he will have sufficient imagination, he will have the independence to stand up to the British Government and say 'These are my requirements, I must have them; I must have priority in regard to my own country because my countrymen have paid for it and they must have the value for what they have paid'. No European Defence Member will say it. Therefore I say that is one reason why I want an Indian Defence Member. I know there will be difficulties at the moment. My friend just now said that the Defence Member should not be a Muslim; somebody will say he should not be a Hindu; all that is out of the question, we must have an Indian Defence Member and that is all that we want.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in this resolution, there is reference to the fact that we are dissatisfied with the many aspects of Defence policy. On the outbreak of the War, of course we had a Royal Indian Navy, but do you think it had any cruisers, any destroyers, any mine-sweepers? What do you think we had then? We had five sloops and one ship with a total tonnage of less than 15,000 tons. This is what you call Royal Indian Navy. They were sufficient prey for five aerial torpedoes and then we would have no Royal Indian Navy. Could an Indian Defence Member be so very complacent and so unimaginative as to keep the country undefended, when he had to guard a coastline of five thousand miles? He cannot do any such thing. I therefore wholeheartedly support this resolution. There are many matters in which I have definitely said that the people are not helping the Government; but in this matter I particularly feel that it was time the Government revised their policy and outlook. They must take the Indian people into greater confidence, so that if the defence of India is really to be achieved, India should be in a position not only to so protect herself, but should be a source of strength to England herself in this her critical hour. (Loud applause).

The President: Gentlemen, the resolution has been moved and seconded and supported. I shall now put it to the vote.

The resolution was put to the vote and was carried unanimously.

8. CONDITION OF AGRICULTURIST

The President: I now request Mr. K. Balasubrahmanya Ayyar to move the resolution on the 'Condition of Agriculturists'.

Resolution VIII:
Mr. K. Balasubrahmanya
Ayyar.

Mr. K. Balasubrahmanya Ayyar: Mr. President, Brother—Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen: The resolution which has been committed to my charge runs as follows:

"This Federation urges upon the Provincial Governments to consider and improve the condition of those engaged in agriculture and take the necessary steps in that behalf by making *inter alia* such changes in the system of Taxation of Land as provincial conditions may warrant, and resolves that Provincial Liberal organisations do consider the details for carrying out this object in the respective provinces".

Brother-Delegates, the President has already intimated to me that I must put my points very shortly before you. I may say that already in the

Subjects Committee there was a feeling that this was purely a provincial question and that each and every Provincial Liberal organisation may deal with it, and that it is not a question which can legitimately be taken up by the All-India Liberal Federation. But as the incidence of land tax and questions of agricultural indebtedness and agricultural economy are generally of an All-India nature, it may be argued with some justification that the All-India Liberal Federation may tackle these questions. There is also another reason for bringing up the resolution now, and that is, that in the province of Madras, the question of land revenue affects a very large portion of the agricultural population and in Madras we have nourished it as a great grievance for the last so many years. It may also be pointed out that taxation on land in Madras is the highest among the provinces and therefore Madras feels this as a keen grievance and Madras wants to see that agriculturists are relieved from oppressive land taxation and from other incidental hardships.

Resolution VIII:
Mr. K. Balasubrahmanya Ayyar.

Now, Brother-Delegates, it has been admitted even by the Royal Commission on Agriculture that the agricultural indebtedness of India is very great—and that is an All-India matter. They have said that the ryots of India are born in debt, they live in debt, they die in debt and they leave a legacy of debt to their successors. These are the words of the Royal Commission on Agriculture. The Reserve Bank of India in the course of their report on agricultural credit stated the other day that the agricultural indebtedness of India stands at the figure of Rs. 1,800 crores. You can easily imagine then how far it is felt by the people as hardship. Even in the year 1904 the late Hon. G. K. Gokhale of revered memory spoke in the Imperial Legislative Council on agricultural indebtedness and stated on the occasion of the introduction of the Co-operative Societies Act that the condition of the agriculturists in the country was steadily deteriorating that it was a matter of legitimate complaint for the whole of the country and that therefore agricultural indebtedness ought to be relieved at once. The Government have no doubt moved in the matter and produced the Co-operative Societies Act, the Agricultural Loans Act and other Acts in the various provinces including Madras; but still in the report of the working of the Co-operative Societies Act for the year 1938, this is what we find: that many agriculturists have not been able to pay, that their houses have been purchased and their lands have been taken. From the figures supplied to us, we find that on the 30th June 1938, the Societies had in their possession a large extent of land measuring 13502 acres and 2654 houses purchased for Rs. 15 lakhs in lieu of debts amounting to Rs. 16 lakhs. This report was issued in the year 1939-1940. Even after the introduction of the Co-operative Societies Act agricultural indebtedness had not been relieved. Some remedies for the relief of the hardships of agriculturists were suggested by the late Mr. G. K. Gokhale so early as 1904, and one of the chief remedies that he mentioned was the reduction of land revenue in those provinces and those tracts or areas where the incidence of land revenue had proved to be oppressive. In Madras, Sir, from time to time we have been agitating this matter keenly. The Taxation Enquiry Committee of 1924—an All-India Committee in which Dr. Paranjpye also took an elaborate part—went into the whole question of land revenue taxation, and it was pointed out that in India alone the rate of assessment was 50 per cent. of the net income and that that was the highest rate throughout the world. So, India alone had the highest rate; in other countries like France, England, Italy, Hungary, etc., the rate varied from 2 to 5 per cent. In Hungary, the rate was 10 per cent. So early as in 1798, Sir William Pitt introduced in England the policy of fixing land revenue at 5 per cent. of the net income. It was in 1798 as a consequence of the policy enunciated by William Pitt in England that permanent settlement was introduced in India, in the province of Bengal. And the Hon. Mr. Gokhale so early as 1904 suggested the introduction of legislation for a permanent settlement, for the reduction of land revenue and for the relief of

Resolution VIII:
Mr. K. Balasubrahmanya
Ayyar.

agricultural indebtedness. What do we find in Madras? Even up till now the rate of assessment of 50 per cent. has not been reduced. There was a committee which sat over the question—the Marjoribanks Committee—during the time of the Interim Ministry. You will find from the report of that Committee what were exactly the difficulties experienced in Madras. The Interim Ministry wanted to become popular and they thought they had a longer lease of life than they actually had; therefore at that time they wanted, by a mere stroke of the pen, to get large popularity among the agriculturists of the country. They remitted land revenue by Rs. 75 lakhs in this province and this remission has also been continued in the years that followed.

Now Gentlemen, the real difficulty about the land revenue taxation is this: land tax has been fixed at 50 per cent, of the net income. In most cases, there is very little net income. So, the Government are really getting a loan from the agriculturist by way of land tax!—i.e., unreturnable loan. As a matter of fact, even the net income which they have calculated and on which they have based the tax is not wholly related to facts. Some thirty years ago they fixed certain gradations of soil, and according to those gradations of soil, they fixed the gross produce of the land. In most cases they are unrelated to facts. As a matter of fact, as cultivation is going on for a large number of years, the land yields less and less. Agriculture, as you know, is an industry which rests on very uncertain factors; and what the agriculturist really finds is that he has not any net income from which he can pay 50 per cent. My friend Mr. T. R. Venkatrama Sastri was a ryotwari proprietor. I do not know if he is now, but I know that he was one for many years; and he has told me that he had paid the tax from his pocket and not from the net income. So, that is the fact. Therefore I am saying that 50 per cent. taxation on land is an oppressive tax. And mind you, Brother-Delegates, agriculture is an industry which largely depends on initiative, enterprise and the prosperity of the cultivating ryot; and if this oppressive tax continues for a number of years, we are sure to find the agriculturists a lean, depressed body of people. Therefore it is that we in Madras have made bold to press before you the question of the relief of the hardships of the agriculturists, especially in the matter of land revenue. We should not rest content with the reduction of land revenue from 50 per cent. to even 25 per cent. Great advocates of land revenue reform here in Madras have held that 12½ per cent. must be the maximum rate of assessment of land revenue. To that extent they have gone; but I say that it must at any rate be reduced to 25 per cent. and we shall be thankful even for small mercies from the Government. We have also asked that the Rs. 75 lakhs remission during the last few years must be made a permanent feature.

Now, Gentlemen, all these things have to be done before the agriculturist can become a prosperous gentleman; and as every question now must be related to the War, I shall conclude by saying that a prosperous, profitable agriculturist is the mainstay of the country. It is from his ranks that most of the soldiers will be recruited. You know that in the eighteenth century when Maharaja Sivaji wanted to establish his empire, he recruited his soldiers from the peasantry in the Maharashtra country; and, as if by magic, the peasants were converted in a day into infantry and cavalry officers, and before their charge, many an army fell. Therefore I say, if the British Government want to get recruits for the army from the agriculturists, they ought to be fed. It has been accepted on all hands—and there are various documents to vouch from the days of Dadhabhoy Naoroji—that poverty and British rule have gone together in India, that up to the present day, the agriculturist has steadily been deteriorating in his condition throughout India, and that the relief of the agriculturist is an immediate necessity and ought to be tackled sooner or later by the British Government.

Gentlemen, I do not want to trouble you further as time is going up. With these few words, I commend this resolution for your acceptance.

Mr. R. H. Khelkar: Mr. President, Brother-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, the proposer has ably and in full detail gone into the question of land revenue taxation. So I do not wish to take any more of your time by dwelling on the technical aspects of the question. I shall remain satisfied by making some remarks on one or two general aspects of the question only. One thing is, till now the poverty of our agriculturists had become a by-word. Recently their numbers have increased so much with the increase in the population of the country that their poverty is not only becoming a by-word but practically becoming, in the eyes of certain foreign experts, a menace to the whole civilisation of the world. If 40 crores of people remain so poor as that, they will carry a cut-throat competition in the markets of the world and sooner or later they will be a menace to the peace of the world. With the increase of population we want more food. The arable land available cannot be increased with as great a speed as the population itself is growing. We must therefore have intensive agriculture, and that is possible only when the man at the plough, at the other end of the scale I may say, does his best and does his work with great enthusiasm. Now most of the enthusiasm disappears mainly because, as statistics have shown, there is a very small margin, if at all, of profit to the agriculturist. There are a number of birds of prey, preying upon the gross produce. The landlord, the village astrologer, the street beggar and so many others, all are preying. But I say, the greatest bird of prey is the land revenue officer. He claims so large a part that he has, really speaking, no right to ask others to be more merciful towards the tenants than he himself is. And that is why I ask the state to reduce its demand, and then of course, by his good example, the revenue officer can say the same thing to the other little birds that prey upon the cultivator. There is no other method of solving this problem. I had something to do, not exactly with the framing of the Bombay Land Tenancy Bill, but with preparing draft proposals for it. I was prepared to forego the whole credit for it;—I have foregone;—if only the first autonomous Government of the Bombay Presidency succeeded in giving some kind of relief to the ground-down agriculturists of my Province. I found, as I find it even now, that though some of the principles of mine have been followed in every change that has been made in the draft rules, the first autonomous administration of our Province has gone the wrong way about it. They were in such a hurry to get popularity that they simply advertised the whole show and never carried out any of the reforms. I am neither a landlord nor a tenant—quite happy. I am a consumer, and my interest is not to set up the landlord against the tenant or the tenant against the landlord. That is not in the tradition of the Liberal Party. As I said to the landlords when the kothi system in my part of the country was being adopted, "As a consumer I have my own interests. I must get my food as cheap as possible, and I know, you landlords are not going to work at the plough. It is the man at the plough that gives me my food, and I must work for him and I must pay for him. I know, he is ignorant. If you are prepared to take the plough, I know you have better knowledge, you can produce more than the poor agriculturist can do. I shall try to give him some other industry." And so on and so forth. That shows that I am not trying to set one class against another. But all the same, agriculture is fundamental, is big in the economic life of this country, and as a question affecting large masses of people and a question that may mean a menace to the peace of the world in times to come, we must without hesitation and without loss of time try to solve this problem. The problem is so complicated, so different from Province to Province that it is not possible in a gathering of this type to suggest any common solution. One common solution is that the Government must lead by withdrawing a part of its demand. And then we request that Liberal organisations in the country should try to frame proposals suited to the particular circumstances of their Provinces and place them for the consideration of the people. There may not be any practical reform possible so long as the war goes on. But the moment the war is over this problem will have to be faced, and faced as early as possible.

Resolution VIII
Mr. R. H.
Khelkar.

Resolution VIII:
Mr. R. H.
Khelkar.

I therefore support this resolution and hope that you will not only pass it here but pass it on in your Provinces, work up the necessary schemes, and work up with some agitation if necessary.

The resolution was then carried unanimously.

The following resolutions were one by one put from the Chair and adopted.

9. WAR AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

- (a) The National Liberal Federation of India strongly urges the Indianisation of the Supply Department in order to win the confidence of Indians.
- (b) The Federation presses on the Government of India and the Provincial Governments the importance of taking advantage of the present conditions to foster the industrial development of the country. It is necessary, in its opinion, for this purpose that special efforts should be made to secure the establishment or expansion of the basic chemical and other industries under Indian control and management.
- (c) The Federation is of opinion that national interests require that special attention should be paid in the country to the establishment of small-scale industries.
- (d) The Federation urges the taking of all possible steps to develop Ship-building, Aircraft, Automobile, Locomotive and other key industries in the country.

10. POLITICAL PRISONERS

The Federation urges that the cases of persons detained under the Defence of India Act or under any other special powers of Government authorising the detention of persons without trial, should be submitted to a committee of High Court Judges in each Province for review, from time to time.

11. CIVIL DEFENCE

The Federation feels great apprehension that the steps so far taken by the Government in organising defence of civilian population against possibilities of air attacks on Indian Cities will, from the point of view of equipment training and personnel, prove neither effective nor adequate to meet the requirements which may be created by such an emergency.

The Federation therefore calls upon the Government to take immediate and more effective measures for strengthening the Civil Defence Organisations in existence, and calls upon the people of this country irrespective of their political principles or convictions to co-operate fully and whole-heartedly in protection of their hearts and homes.

12. REFORMS IN INDIAN STATES

- (a) The National Liberal Federation expresses its full sympathy with the natural and legitimate aspirations of the people of Indian States for civil and political liberties.
- (b) The Federation urges that the rulers of States should without further delay concede to their subjects the rights of security of person and property, liberty of speech and press, freedom of association and worship, as well as representative Government as a prelude to responsible Government.

13. INDIANS ABROAD (INDO-CEYLON REPORT)

- (a) The Federation disapproves of the Joint Report of the delegations from India and Ceylon, as it ignores the solemn pledges and assurances given by the Government of Ceylon, from time to time, regarding the free entry of Indians and their equal legal and political rights with other sections of the population. It is emphatically of opinion that Indians should enjoy the same rights as regards free entry, carrying on business or following a profession etc., as citizens of the united Kingdom.

The Federation is particularly of opinion that (i) no distinction should be made regarding employment under Government and quasi-government bodies between the children of persons possessing a domicile of choice and of holders of certificates of permanent settlement and they should have the same rights of employment as other citizens of Ceylon and (ii) that the rights of Indians already in Ceylon in respect of re-entry, and freedom of choice with regard to employment should not be restricted in any manner.

14. INDO-BURMA PACT

The Federation disapproves of the Indo-Burma Agreement and regards it as inconsistent with statutory and other pledges given to Indians at the time of the passing of the Government of India Bill with regard to the rights of Indians to enter Burma freely to carry on business, to follow a profession etc. In the opinion of the Federation, the agreement nullifies the protection given to Indian business and professional interests, etc., by the Government of Burma Act.

The Federation urges the Government to accept the resolution passed by the Central Legislative Assembly asking the Government that no Order-in-Council should be issued until the Agreement is suitably modified and provisions which are discriminatory and humiliating to Indians are removed.

15. OFFICE-BEARERS AND COUNCIL

By another resolution, the following gentlemen were appointed Office-Bearers and Members of the Council:—

(Vide Appendix D)

16. VENUE OF THE NEXT SESSION

Mr. T. G. Gadre: Mr. President, brother-delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I have very great pleasure in inviting the next session of the Liberal Federation to my Province, viz., the Central Provinces and Berar, the session will be held at Nagpur. Let me say a few words in this connection. Our previous record is very good and satisfactory. We had three sessions in the past. In 1922 the Nagpur session, which was a great success, was held under the Presidentship of our revered leader the Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri. The 1926 session, which also was a success, was held at Akola under the Presidentship of Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar, who happens to be to-day our host and Chairman of the Reception Committee. And the session in 1935 at Nagpur was presided over by Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri. I am quite sure these gentlemen will testify to my little enthusiasm in this connection. So, the previous record, as I said, should be considered to be something hopeful, and next year we hope to do our best in this connection. Ladies and Gentlemen, I again invite the session to my Province whole-heartedly and I have no doubt you will accept it.

Resolution XVI:
Mr. T. G. Gadre

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Kothanda Rao and accepted.

Resolution XVII:
Mr. T. R.
Venkatarama
Sastri.

17. YOTE OF THANKS

Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri : Mr. President, Brother-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, It is now my pleasant task to move a hearty vote of thanks to the President for the way he has conducted the proceedings of this twenty-third session. (Applause).

Before I say more about it, I should like to say something about the proceedings of the last two days. We have passed momentous resolutions. The level of debate has been very high. People have spoken with sincerity and a sense of conviction and we have listened to speeches showing expert knowledge of affairs with some of which I am not personally acquainted myself. To my mind there have been three important matters discussed at this session. There are perhaps other questions which may not loom as large in my mind as they may in other people's minds. I consider the first resolution that you took up as one of very great importance. One may consider that the Bhagalpur resolution was not perhaps, ordinarily speaking in our line, but I am personally glad that you took no narrow view of your rights, or if I may call it so, your duties. It seems to me that there are occasions when questions arise which look like questions with which you have nothing to do, but which are of very great importance from the larger standpoint of the country. We, Liberals, naturally attach great importance to questions of order. I consider personally that order is supremely important. Order is a thing with which we ought not lightly to interfere, but it seems to me that there are occasions when orders, if I may use language in its correct sense, are honoured more in the breach than in their observance. There are occasions when we are called upon to defy an order in order to maintain order in a higher sense (Applause).

Our attachment to the maintenance of order can be shown only by disobedience on such occasions. It seems to me that the order that had been passed by the Bihar Government falls under this category, an order which you can only disobey in order to maintain order in the sense in which Liberals have always maintained, that order should be supported. It is difficult for me to understand how a responsible Government could have passed an order of the kind that the Bihar Government had passed. If I may add one word, I cannot even understand the Viceroy saying that it is a Provincial matter with which he has nothing to do. Immediately following upon an explanation of the kind from the Viceroy, we have known that Mr. Sarat Bose has been transferred to Madras without the knowledge of the Premier of the province in which he was put in jail: Orders have been given by the Central Government without the knowledge of the local Premier who is in charge of Law and Order. I cannot say I have knowledge of constitutional proprieties, but I should think that an order of the kind emanating either from the Local Government or from the Central Government must be first given to the Member in charge of Law and Order before it is executed. When an order of this importance has been passed by the Government without the knowledge of the Member in charge of Law and Order, the Viceroy simply says it is a matter for the Local Government. I want you to contrast these two orders and see how Government lose their sense and pass orders which people like us pledged to the maintenance of order can only say that it is more reasonable to break such orders than to observe them.

The other two resolutions which fall undoubtedly within the ambit of resolutions that the Liberal Federation passes year by year are the two resolutions that relate to the War and Constitution. It seems to me that most of the resolutions that matter, range round those two subjects. In regard to the War, it does not seem to me that among us there is any difference of opinion in the matter of supporting the Allies against the Nazis or the Fascist Governments of Europe. One may go further and say, it is not merely the Liberals but almost every party in the land is conscious of the fact and knows the fact that the Allies should be supported. As far as I can

see, there is no section of people, no considerable section of people, that entertain any doubt about that fact, but they think that certain steps should be taken by the Government in order to make the country conscious of its duty in the matter of co-operating with the Government. On that matter I wish to tell you two things in my personal experience. One is that in the very first year of the War, within six months of its beginning, a European lady friend of mine put to me the question as to why when the Dominions were offering support, India had not given any support to the War at all. I asked her whether she was speaking to me personally, as representing India. "The Viceroy represents India, he speaks in the name of India every time, but if you still ask me the question, I can only tell you this: you have kept us disarmed for so many years that if you put a pistol in the hands of Mr. Venkatarama Sastri, it is doubtful whether he will shoot his own head off or will shoot a friend standing near-by or will shoot the enemy in front—I cannot say that. You have kept us so completely disarmed. That was required for your purpose, you had the advantage of disarming India. Now that an emergency has arisen, you are anxious to have the advantage of having kept us armed all the time. Do you think really that if there were five or ten millions of people armed in this country, this War would have broken out at all?" I tell you the other day I was reading an article in a Journal about Switzerland, wherein it was stated that Switzerland had one-sixth of its people ready to take up arms at any time, and the Journal stated that at the same rate, the United States of America could raise twenty millions out of its 120 millions of population. And if the United States can raise twenty millions, you can easily calculate how many millions the 400 millions of population in India can raise. If you can have in India as many people as can and are ready to take up arms, I submit to you or any one here or outside, that this War would never have broken out at all. Five millions of people armed in India would have prevented the original outbreak of the War and certainly prevented the outbreak of the Japanese War in recent weeks.

One other matter of personal experience I will tell you. This is a matter that touches slightly the difference of emphasis in the speeches that have been made in the course of this session. I can quite understand the anxiety of people that no discussion on any matter should side-track our War efforts. I can quite understand that. At the same time, I want them to realise that it is not our conviction that is going to matter. Our conviction must take shape in the form of a persuasion of the people to see the point of view that we are presenting and make them respond. Therefore, it is not a question of logic; it is a question of feeling. You must not forget that you can persuade the people if you can satisfy their feelings. I listened for instance to Mr. Sapru's speech, it raises the feelings of the people in regard to this War. I myself have been trying to do it, and wherever I went for my professional purposes, I delivered lectures persuading people to come up. At the beginning the response came from here and there, although there was opposition on the part of one or two people, but as time went on, I found the opposition increased. Very few people came on to the platform to put you questions, but people told you privately as soon as the meeting was over and you came out. "You think, Venkatarama Sastri, these fellows do not know anything. Why go about persuading people? They are fighting for their liberty. Do you think we are people who have lost all hope of our liberty?" Well, as a matter of fact, you are told that if Nazis come to India, you won't have freedom to agitate, it may be true. But people ask, if at the end of the War you are going to get freedom to agitate, is it for that that you are carrying on all this propaganda? That is a question that met me almost every time. You cannot persuade people with such mentality. The Government must make a gesture indicating what they intend to do in the future and they can give you evidence now that they intend sincerely to do the thing they promise now. Some such thing is absolutely necessary to make the common people take proper interest in the War. Before the outbreak of the War in the

Resolution XVI:
Mr. T. R.
Venkatarama
Sastri.

Resolution XVII:
Mr. T. B.
Venkatarama
Sastri.

East, that was my personal experience. The Japanese War of course makes such difference, I do not deny, but there are a large number of people in this country who can be persuaded, by the intelligentia; but the propaganda that must go forth cannot be in the name of a few of us, it must go out in the name of the country. Trusted leaders in the country, as one of the speakers referred in the course of a speech, must be taken into confidence, you must persuade the intelligent people that the ultimate fate of this country in regard to freedom is dependent upon the War. That on the successful issue of the War we shall attain our freedom is a thing on which some kind of assurance is absolutely necessary. I am not going to make a speech on the details of the resolution. They have been so ably put before the Conference, and some of you have made powerful speeches. My friend Mr. Sapru made a strong appeal. Sir Chandavarkar made a brilliant speech and my friend Mr. Kunzru always speaks with knowledge of the subject that he talks about, and while I was very respectfully listening to his speech on the resolution Re: Defence,—of which I knew very little—one thing struck me. We were talking of martial and non-martial races—all those terms are terms of the War that has ceased to be. This War is totally on a new basis. The last War was itself different from all previous Wars. This one is totally different from the previous War. It is all a question of the brain, no question of the brawn. Endurance, general health, etc., may be necessary, but intelligence counts more than muscle and personal appearance. A man may be examined by a military officer or a medical officer and passed on as a strong man—he is no use. Armies do not meet each other, they destroy each other without seeing one face in front. Many a time that is what happens. In this War, it seems to me that recruitment must be made from the intelligent classes. It is quite true that people who have long been un-accustomed to be enrolled in the army are people for whom some amount of propaganda would be necessary, but at the earliest opportunity I am quite sure they would acquire the qualities, the courage and the strength of mind necessary for the purpose. I am not hiding from myself the fact that except for necessity, England may still hesitate to arm India. If you had five millions or ten millions of people under arms in India and won the War finally, then things in India cannot settle down again in the condition in which it is to-day. Therefore, people who feel the smallest desire to retain things in the present condition, cannot afford to think of arming India except under very exceptional circumstances. Such an emergency, I think we have reached, and it does strike me that there is a desire on the part of the rulers to enrol as many people as possible for their own purposes and for their own end.

Another question was raised: what will India do if England falls? There is no doubt that our fate is bound up with England's fate. But let England remember that it is not enough to repeat the formula over and over again. They must put to themselves the question: what is England going to do if she loses? England must remember that her fate is bound up with ours, just as we feel that our fate is bound up with Britain's. So the need to strengthen India, to afford her every facility and create an atmosphere of trust in British intentions is essential not merely for Indian purposes but for the purposes of England also. Britain must remember that and do the right thing, and if she does that at the present juncture, I am at one with many who have spoken at this conference that India's response will surprise Britain.

I do not wish to say more about the resolutions except on one matter which Mr. Mahajani referred to. The Pakistan resolution is a resolution, on which I strongly feel. To my mind it is not a question even to discuss. It has only to be mentioned to be dismissed out of consideration. But it is made the subject of propaganda here and elsewhere. It is not that politicians merely propagate these ideas to themselves. They are trying to pervert and corrupt the younger generation and through them succeeding generations, and that this perversion should go on from generation to generation is the footing on which the propaganda is conducted. Of course, education has to

be conducted, and the accumulated knowledge of generations has to be passed on to future generations. The educationists must undertake that task. But today the educationists are not allowed to perform that task. Politicians not merely in India but elsewhere also, as for instance the Nazis, seize hold of young people and as my friend said, indoctrinate them in the ideas which these politicians entertain. That is going on from day to day. There may be conferences. There may be exhortations to people to look at national problems from the national point of view. But you must not forget that there are sectional politicians at work getting into Muslim youths' organisations, Non-Brahmin organisations and so on, teaching them from day to day, and these politicians are anxious and careful that the perversion should take deep root and should pass from generation to generation. That is a thing which is going on. I do not know how that thing could be corrected. I think that people like Mr. Mahajani should write short pamphlets and distribute them among the youth of the country. I do not know whether he can command as much enthusiasm as these people who are out to pervert the younger generation.

Resolution XVII:
Mr. T. R.
Venkatarama
Sastri.

Gentlemen, I have said more than I intended to say. Now I turn to one matter. Our proceedings have been conducted very ably by Sir Bejoy Prasad Singh Roy. (Cheers). Possibly those who have only attended the open session might not know how much patience and forbearance he had to exercise at our Subject Committee. Some of us gave trouble vociferously. He had to put up with it, persuade people to take a reasonable view to pass the resolutions I wish to express the obligations of our Province to the President. It is nothing very unusual for him, for one who has been a Revenue Member of the Bengal Government, to have done so much for Bengal tenants by amendments to the Bengal Tenancy Act and who as a landlord himself has put his principles into practice in the management of his own estate—I am not surprised that he should have allowed a question of relief to agriculturists to be discussed at our Federation meeting, though there was a strong feeling that it was a Provincial matter, with which a conference of all-India should not concern itself. This is not the occasion—I do not propose to raise any question now as to whether it is only a Provincial matter and may/not fall at some time within the jurisdiction of this Federation. An emergency might arise when even Provincial matters ought to be discussed by an all-India body. This proposition having been allowed, I have not had the necessity to raise that point. I particularly wish to record the thanks of some of us for the way in which that proposition has been allowed to be discussed at this conference.

Our volunteers and we, members of the Reception Committee here, have tried to do all we can to make your stay in Madras very satisfactory. But no arrangements will ever be wholly satisfactory. There might be an omission here and there, and I can only say that our guests and our President would take our will for our deed. Only one other thing I would like to say, though only incidentally, on a motion for a vote of thanks to the President. Mr. Venkataraman, the captain of our volunteers, and his collaborators have done good work. They deserve our thanks. And I will only add this, that for the way in which the whole thing has been connected, we should pass a hearty vote of thanks to the President of the Federation. He told me at first that he was leaving to-night, and I was anxious that the whole proceedings should come to a close this evening. I am glad to learn that he stays here for the day and leaves only to-morrow. I would even say that having come so far he should go further south and visit Rameswaram. But one realises the conditions of Bengal since he left and he is anxious to return soon. So we shall not have the pleasure of further hospitality. I move that this Liberal Federation records its vote of thanks to its President for the way in which he has conducted the proceedings and made this session of the Federation the success that it has been. I only wish to add one thing. After having referred to the success that it has been, I only wish to tell you that

Resolution XVII: in my mind the impression is that I have heard no abler speeches than in
Mr. T. R. this session of the Federation and no speeches so good as the ones I have
Venkatarama listened to in this session. (Cheers).
Sastri.

Rao Bahadur M. R. Ramaswami Sivan : Mr. President, Brother-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, my friend Mr. Venkatrama Sastri is a very very clever man. He came here to propose a vote of thanks, but he has reviewed the work of the whole session in a very elaborate manner, of course to our satisfaction and education, as it were. I am not going to do anything of the kind. I am only going to propose a vote of thanks to you, Sir, as President of this Session of the Liberal Federation. Amongst Hindus, it is usual for the older people to give blessings to the younger people. Except Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad and the Rt. Hon. Sastriar, I think I am sufficiently old in this audience (Laughter) to entitle me to convey my choicest blessings to you. Somebody told me when you were proposed to the Chair that you were the youngest to occupy this Chair. I do not know whether you or Mr. Sapru is younger. Anyway, I am glad that you have conducted the proceedings with decorum and all that, I am glad you have held the traditions of the Liberal Party at their high level. There are Liberals and Liberals; there are Liberals who sign the creed of the Liberal Party but who are probably reactionaries, there are Liberals who consider that we have been and we are still continuing to be the Congress. Except for Civil Disobedience and for Passive Resistance, I think we were all along one. Sir, I believe you are glad to occupy the Chair of a political organization which was once filled by people like the late Dadhaboi Naoroji, W. C. Bannerji, Badruddin Tyabji, etc. There was no difference between Hindus and Muslims in those days. I believe even those of us who did not agree with the policy of the Congress continued to have the same affection, regard and esteem for Mahatma Gandhi. We should sustain the traditions of the Liberal organization. I belong to that class of Liberal politicians who think that we are the successors, to rather we are, the Congress. (Hear, hear). Some other people seceded from us because they favoured Civil Disobedience and Passive Resistance, but we continue to be the Congress and we claim to be the successors of Sir Ferozshah Mehta and all those other people who started political work in India. Sir, I must say that you have rightly held the traditions of those leaders of the past.

Only one thing more: I am not going to say anything about the resolutions passed (Laughter). Sir, somebody said you are young. I do not think you are quite young, still I think you are young enough to be a Minister, you are young enough to do substantial work in the administration of the country. You have it in you to do a lot of work, much more than myself or the Rt. Hon. Sastri or my friend and leader Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar. These two gentlemen I have known for a long time and I have held them in veneration for the last about fifty years. I worship both of them as my elder brothers, I bow before them.

Now, we are all satisfied with one thing. We call ourselves the Liberal Party, we have heard the address of the Chairman of Reception Committee, Sir Sivaswami Ayyar, we have heard the address of the President, the speeches of Hon. Kunzru, Mr. Sapru and other eminent speakers. No better speeches than those could be had at any Congress or anywhere else. We are a progressive party and differ from the Congress only in respect of Civil Disobedience and Passive Resistance. We have put forward in our resolutions all that we demand. Once upon a time, years and years ago, we used to pass resolutions saying 'Will the Government be pleased to appoint somebody to this post, etc.' All that is gone. All our resolutions contain what we demand from the British Government. I now wish you all happiness and prosperity, Mr. President. (Applause.)

PRESIDENT'S CONCLUDING REMARKS.

The President's
concluding
remarks.

The President was garlanded in the midst of deafening applause.

The President: Ladies and Gentlemen, there is an item on the Agenda headed "Concluding speech of the President". I can assure you, at this late hour, I am not going to inflict another speech on you. I would however like to make one or two observations and sum up the facts that have emerged out of the last three days' deliberations. But before I do so, I propose to convey my sincerest thanks to you all for the help and co-operation that I have received from you in discharging my duties as President of this august body. Without your help and co-operation, it would not have been possible for me to do what I am supposed to have done.

In this connection, I should thank my esteemed friend Mr. Venkatarama Sastri, Mr. Vinayaka Rao and you, Sir Sivaswami Ayyar, and other members of the Reception Committee for all your kindness and courtesy to me and to all the delegates here. I also desire to thank the volunteers and their Captain Mr. S. R. Venkatraman and the pupils of the National Girls' High School, Mylapore, who provided us the orchestra. Our thanks are also due to our hosts for the very excellent Tea with which they entertained us during the last three days.

I now turn to some of the salient facts that emerged out of our last three days' discussions. Several resolutions were moved, seconded, supported and carried unanimously. But I attach very great importance to at least three resolutions, viz., the war resolution, the resolution on the constitution and the resolution on Defence. Now what is the central fact that has emerged from these three resolutions? They show, and show unmistakably, our anxiety to help the Government in their war efforts. They show unmistakably our anxiety to defend our motherland. And for doing so an atmosphere, a psychological atmosphere, is necessary. Now for that purpose we have made certain suggestions about constitutional changes to encourage and help Indians to take up the defence of their country. That is the salient feature of the discussions of this three-day session. I hope the British Government will bear this fact in mind. In the first resolution, viz., the war resolution, we have suggested that our countrymen and the Government should appreciate the realities of the situation. We at least here very fully appreciate the realities of the situation and we shall leave no stone unturned to impress that fact on our countrymen. But the British Government should also grasp the reality of the situation. I remember, Mr. Winston Churchill made a very significant statement after the fall of France in June or July 1940 that "though we are fighting by ourselves we are not fighting for ourselves." That fact that England is fighting not for herself alone but for others including India would be clearly demonstrated to Indians. That way they should create a psychological atmosphere, for which we are all anxious. Our support to Great Britain in this war is by no means conditional. It is absolutely unconditional. We continue to render whatever support we can give and we are anxious to give more support if possible. But in order to create an atmosphere of goodwill it is necessary that the British Government should come out with an unequivocal declaration about the future political status of India. Once that declaration is made, the whole of India, irrespective of political convictions, irrespective of religion or creed, will stand by Great Britain and help her in prosecuting the war to a successful termination. We, the Liberal Party, are great believers in principles, and we have made it very clear in the course of these three days' discussions that we believe in the principle of democracy and we are against Nazism and Fascism. Ladies and Gentlemen, I feel that the time has come when people are tired of extremism, whether it is Nazism or whether it is Communism. So there is a very great future for Liberalism again. Those who feel that the days of Liberalism are over are very much mistaken. I am inclined to think that people will now come again to Liberalism, and that is

The President's
concluding
remarks.

going to be the only stay of humanity. And it is through Liberalism and Liberalism alone that peace and tranquillity will be restored and democracy again restored to its proper position. (Cheers).

There is one other matter about which I want to say a few words. My reference to functional representation has given rise to some misapprehension, if I may use that word. It is merely a suggestion which I put forward. In fact in my speech I made it clear that I do not want to be dogmatic. I suggested it as an alternative to communal representation. I hope you all realise and admit that communal representation, to which we, the Liberal Party committed ourselves in 1916 in the Lucknow Congress, has done more harm to India than everything else put together, and we want to wriggle out of that situation. That is why I had to make that suggestion. But it is merely a suggestion and nothing more, and I hope it will be accepted in the spirit in which it was made.

I thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen, once more for your help and co-operation and for you, Mr. Chairman, for your kindness and courtesy and guidance. This session of the Federation is now dissolved. [Applause].

Appendix A. Messages of Sympathy

- „ B. List of Members of the Reception Committee
- „ C. List of Delegates

(The above appendices are omitted this year as a measure of economy.)

APPENDIX D.

THE NATIONAL LIBERAL FEDERATION OF INDIA

COUNCIL FOR 1942

PRESIDENT.

1. Sir Bejoy Prasad Singh Roy, Kt., M.L.A., 15, Lansdowne Road, Calcutta.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

2. Sir P.S. Sivaswamy Aiyar, K.C.S.I., LL.D., "Sudharma," Edward Elliot Road, Mylapore, Madras.
3. The Rt. Hon'ble. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, P.C., C.H., "Swagatam", Mylapore, Madras.
4. Sir Moropant Joshi, Kt. Advocate, Nagpur.
5. Sir Raghunath Paranjpye, M.A., D.Sc. "Purushottamashram", Poona 4
6. Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, K.C.I.E., LL.D. 113, Esplanade Road, Bombay 1.
7. Mr. Jatindra Nath Basu, M.L.A. Temple Chambers, 6, Old Post Office St., Calcutta.
8. The Hon'ble Pandit Hirdaya Nath Kunzru, Servants of India Society, Allahabad.
9. Mr. T. R. Venkatrama Sastri, B.A., B.L., Advocate, Mylapore, Madras.
10. Sir Cowasji Jehangir, Bart., K.C.I.E., M.L.A., Nepean Sea Road, Bombay.
11. The Hon'ble Mr. P.N. Sapru, Bar-at-Law, 19 Albert Road, Allahabad.
12. Sir Vithal Chandavarkar, Kt., M.L.A. 41, Pedder Road, Malabar Hill, Bombay.

HON. GENERAL SECRETARIES.

13. Mr. M.D. Altekar, 155, Shivaji Park, P.O. Cadell Road, Bombay 28.
14. Mr. Naushir Bharucha, Advocate, 468, Kalbadevi Road, Bombay 2.
15. Mr. Nibaran Chandra Ray, M.A., B.L., 31/1B, Beadon Row, Calcutta.

NOMINATED BY THE PRESIDENT.

16. Rao Bahadur R.G. Mundle, Yeotmal (Berar)
17. Pandit Manmohanlal Zutshi, 10, Beli Road, Allahabad.
18. Mr. A.S.N. Moorthi, Vishnu Bhuvan, Berhampore.
19. Mr. D. V. Ambekar, Servants of India Society, Poona 4.
20. Prof. R. H. Kelkar, M.A., 289, Narayan Peth, Near Lakdi Pool, Poona 2.

BOMBAY.

21. Sir Homi Mehta, K.B.E., Mehta House, Apollo Street, Bombay 1.
22. Mr. A. D. Shroff, Bombay House, Bruce Street, Fort Bombay.
23. Mr. Nusserwanji H.C. Dinshaw, 123, Meadows Street, Bombay 1.
24. Mr. J.R.B. Jeejeebhoy, Alice Building, Hornby Road, Bombay 1.
25. Mr. Vasantrao, S. Ravut, J.P. French Bridge, Chaupatty, Bombay.
26. Mr. B.D. Lam, Solicitor, 113, Esplanade Road, Fort Bombay.
27. Mr. N. R. Wadia, Motlabai Building, Parsi Bazaar Street, Bombay 1.
23. Mr. D.G. Dalvi, Advocate, Temple View, Hughes Road, Bombay 7.

29. Mr. K. J. Dubash, B.A., LL.B. (Solicitor) 79, Medows Street, Bombay 1.
30. Principal J.R. Gharpure, Advocate, Angre's Wadi, Girgaon Back Road, Bombay 4.
31. Mr. B.N. Gokhale, M.A., LL.B. (Advocate) Opp. Majestic Cinema, Bombay 4.
32. Mr. Jehangir P. Katgara, J. B. Katgara House, Nepean Sea Road, Bombay 6.
33. Dewan Bahadur Chunilal M. Gandhi B.A., LL.B. (Advocate O. S.) Nampura, Surat.
34. Mr. V.M. Apte, B.A., LL.B. Pleader, Dhulia. (West Khandesh)
35. Mr. M.S. Sirdar, B.A. (Oxon) Bar-at-Law, Sholapur.
36. Mr. S.G. Vaze, B.A. Servants of India Society, Poona.
37. Prof. D.D. Kapadia, M.A.I.E.S. (Rtd.) 6 Tannton Road, Poona No. 4.
38. Dr. G.S. Mahajani, M.L.C., Fergusson College, Poona 4.
39. Prof. G.G. Karve, M.A. Fergusson College, Poona 4.
40. Mr. H.G. Gharpurey, I.C.S. (Rtd.) 388, Shanivar Peth, Poona 2.

BENGAL.

41. Mr. H.M. Bose, Bar-at-Law, 1, Mullen Street, Calcutta.
42. Mr. B.B. Roy, M.A., Statesman House, Calcutta.
43. Mr. Satinath Roy, 139, A. Rashbehari Avenue, Calcutta.
44. Mr. P.N. Singh Roy, 15, Lansdowne Road, Calcutta.
45. Mr. Sudhanshu Kumar Mitter, 34/1, Elgin Road, Calcutta.
46. Kumar Rajendra Narain Roy, 79, Upper Chitpore Road, Calcutta.
47. Rai Nagendra Nath Mukherji Bahadur, O.B.E, Ranaghat, Nadia.
48. Rai Keshab Chandra Bannerjee Bahadur, Satrapur, Dacca.
49. Rai Fanindralal De Bahadur, 186, Grand Trunk Road, Uttarpara, E.I.Ry.
50. Manmathnath Sen, Solicitor, 44, Ramkanto Bose Street, Calcutta.
51. Mr. B.K. Chaudhari, 99/1/C, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.
52. Lord Sinha of Raipur, 7, Lord Sinha Road, Calcutta.
53. Raja Bhupendra Narayen Sinha, M.L.C. Bahadur of Nashipur, 54, Gariahat Road, Calcutta.
54. Mr. D.C. Basu-Mallik, 18, Radhanath Malik Lane, Calcutta.
55. Mr. Shivaprasanna Ghose, 75, Beadon Street, Calcutta.
56. Mr. Bhagwandas Kalla, 29, Clive Street, Calcutta.
57. Mr. Shivkissen Bhattar, 30, Clive Street, Calcutta.
58. Mr. Gostha Behari Mondal, Nawabganj, Barrackpur, Bengal.
59. Mr. Nirmal Chandra Ghose, Sheoraphuli, E.I. Railway.
60. Kumar Sarabindu Narayan Roy, 11, Braunfield Row, Calcutta.
61. Mr. D.C. Ghose, Bar-at-Law, 23, Devendra Ghose Road, Calcutta.
62. Mr. Kiran Chandra Dutt, M.R.A.S. (London), 1, Luxmi Dutt Lane, Calcutta.
63. Mr. Anil Chandra Dutt, Solicitor, 6, Old Post Office Street, Calcutta.

UNITED PROVINCES.

64. Pandit Iqbal Narayan Gurtu, Pro. Vice-Chancellor, Benares Hindu University, Benares.
65. Dr. Raj Rajeshwar Bali, O.B.E., Daryabad, Dist. Bara Banki.
66. Rai Bahadur Lala Bihari Lal, Rani Mandi, Allahabad.
67. Rao Krishnapal Singh, Castle Grant Agra.
68. Rai Brij Narain Gurtu, George Town, Allahabad.
69. Babu Bodhraj Saheny, Advocate, Civil Lines, Jhansi.
70. Pandit Krishna Prasad Kaul, Ganga Pd. Memorial Bulding, Lucknow.
71. Pandit Gopi Nath Kunzru, Advocate, Clive Road, Allahabad.
72. Mehta Krishna Ram, Leader Buildings, Allahabad.
73. Mr. Dalip Man Singh, M.A.L.L.B. Advocate, Fatehpur, U. P.
74. Babu Surendra Nath Varma, Advocate, Elgin Road, Allahabad.

75. Babu Vishnu Nath B.A., L.L.B., Advocate, 3, Cawnpore Road, Allahabad
76. Rao Raja Rai Bahadur Dr. Shyam Bihari Misra, 105, Golaganj Lucknow.
77. Mehta Mahipat Ram, Leader Office, Allahabad.
78. Rai Bahadur Pandit Parameshwar Nath Sapru, Advocate, "Surya Bhavan" Fyzabad.
79. Rai Bahadur Babu Ram Narayan, Civil Lines, Cawnpore.
80. Kunwar Sir Maharaj Singh, M.A., C.I.E., M.L.A., Lucknow.
81. Rai Bahadur Babu Bhagwati Saran Singh, "Chandra Bhawan", Outram Road, Allahabad.
82. Rai Bahadur Babu Kampta Prasad Kakkar, Rani Mandi, Allahabad.
83. Raja Maheshwar Dayal Seth, Taluqdar, Kotra, Sitapur Dist.
84. Rai Bahadur Kunwar Guru Narayan, Maurawan, (Unao) Oudh.
85. Rai Bahadur Pandit Badri Dutt Joshi, Vakil, Nainital.
86. Pandit Raj Nath Kunzru, Chili Int. Agra.
87. Mr. Ayodhya Dass, Bar-at-Law, Anand Bhawan, Gorakhpur.
88. Pandit Rameshwar Nath Zutshi, Leader Office, Allahabad.

MADRAS.

89. Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiyar, Chettinad Palace, Adyar, Madras.
90. Rao Bahadur Dr. C. B. Rama Rao, Kanti Nivas, Basavangudi, Bangalore City.
91. Rao Bahadur M.R. Ramaswami Sivan, Coimbatore.
92. Mr. E. Vinayaka Rao, Advocate, 23, East Mada St., Mylapore, Madras.
93. Mr. C.L. Narayan Sastri, Advocate, Vizagapatam.
94. Mr. K. Balasubramania Iyer, "The Ashram", Luz, Mylapore, Madras.
95. Dewan Bahadur M. Balasundaram Naidu, C.I.E., Ritherdon Road, Vepery, Madras.
96. Mr. R. Suryanarayan Rao, Servants of India Society, Royapetta, Madras.
97. Mr. S. R. Venkatraman, Servants of India Society, Royapetta, Madras.
98. Mr. V.M. Nayanar, Servants of India Society, Royapetta, Madras.
99. Mr. C.R. Somayajulu, Journalist, Vizianagaram, S.I.

CENTRAL PROVINCES & BERAR.

100. Dewan Bahadur K.V. Brahma, C.I.E., M.B.E., Advocate, Nagpur.
101. Mr. P. Kodanda Rao, M.A., Servants of India Society, Craddock Town, Nagpur.
102. Mr. N.B. Chandorkar, Advocate, Nagpur.
103. Mr. V.K. Rajwade, Advocate, Nagpur.
104. Rao Bahadur R. M. Khare, Amroti Camp.
105. Mr. S. N. Bhalchandra, Advocate, Yeotmal.
106. Mr. V. T. Deshpande, Yeotmal, (Berar)
107. Mr. T. R. Gadre, Akola.

PUNJAB.

108. Mr. C.L. Anand, Principal, University Law College, Lahore.
109. Lala Jagannath Agarwal, Advocate, High Court, Montgomery Road, Lahore.
110. The Hon. Lala Manohar Lal, Bar-at-Law, Club Road, Lahore.
111. Pandit Hardatt Sharma, Servants of India Society, 17, MacLagan Road, Lahore.
112. Mr. Banwarilal Sharma, Asst. Secretary to the Household Minister, Nabha Govt. Nabha.

BEHAR & ORISSA.

113. Mr. L.N. Sahu, M.A., Servants of India Society, Cuttack.

ASSAM.

114. Rai Bahadur K. L. Farua, Shillong.
115. Mr. Chandra Barua, Jorhat, Assam.

APPENDIX E.

THE NATIONAL LIBERAL FEDERATION OF INDIA, 1941
WORKING COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR 1942

Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy (*Chairman*).

BENGAL.

Mr. J. N. Basu
Lord Sinha of Raipur
Mr. S. N. Roy

BOMBAY.

Sir Chimanlal Setalvad
Sir Cowasji Jehangir
Sir Vithal Chandavarkar
Sir Raghunath Paranjpye
Mr. H. G. Gharpurary
Mr. M. S. Sirdar

UNITED PROVINCES.

The Hon'ble Mr. Prakash Narayan Sapru
The Hon'ble Pandit Hirdaya Nath Kunzru
Pandit Iqbal Narayan Gurtu
Raja Maheshwar Dayal Seth
Sir Maharaj Singh

MADRAS.

The Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri
Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar
Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri
Mr. E. Vinayaka Row

C. P., BERAR & ORISSA.

Dewan Bahadur K. V. Brahma
Mr. P. Kodanda Rao
Mr. L. N. Sahu
Mr. T. R. Gadre

HONY. GENERAL SECRETARIES.

Mr. M. D. Altekar
Mr. N. C. Bharucha } (Ex-officio).
Mr. N. C. Ray

APPENDIX F

CONSTITUTION OF THE NATIONAL LIBERAL FEDERATION OF INDIA,

(As amended at its session in 1941)

1. The object of the National Liberal Federation of India is the attainment by constitutional means of Swaraj (Responsible Self-Government and Dominion Status for India) at the earliest possible date.

The Federation will aim at a higher standard of national efficiency by means of administrative reforms, the wider spread of education, the improvement of public health, economic development, the promotion of inter-communal unity and the amelioration of the condition of the backward classes of the population.

2. The National Liberal Federation will be composed of (i) component organisations which adopt the objects and methods of the National Liberal Federation and are recognised by the Indian National Liberal Council as component organisations and (ii) of individual members who subscribe to the creed of the Federation and are approved by the Council and pay the prescribed annual subscription.

The component organisations at present recognised are: The Indian Association and the Bengal National Liberal League, Calcutta; the Western India National Liberal Association of Bombay; the National Liberal Party, Madras; the United Provinces Liberal Association, Allahabad; the Punjab Liberal League, Lahore; the National Liberal League of the Central Provinces, Nagpur; the Berar Liberal League, Akola; and the Deccan Sabha, Poona.

The minimum annual fee prescribed for individual members is Rs. 2/-

3. The work of the Federation shall be carried on between one annual session and another by a council called the Indian National Liberal Council.

4. The Indian National Liberal Council will consist of

(a) Office-bearers.

(i) The president of the previous annual session who shall be its Chairman.

(ii) The ex-presidents who shall be Vice-chairmen.

(iii) One or more General Secretaries.

(b) Members elected at the annual session to represent the various provinces on the recommendation of the component organisations in their provinces, provided that there shall not be more than 25 from any one province.

(c) Not more than 10 members out of individual members elected at the annual session.

(d) Five members nominated by the President.

5. Each member of the Council will have to pay a fee of Rs. 25 per annum.

6. The members of the Associations which are component parts of the Federation and such other persons as may be elected by their committees and individual members are eligible for membership of the annual session of the Federation. Every member who attends a session shall pay such fee as may be fixed by the Reception Committee.

7. The Indian National Liberal Council is authorized to set up a working committee and to delegate to it such functions as it may deem fit, and further to constitute from time to time standing or special committees to deal with specific subjects or matters. Standing and special committees may co-opt as members Liberal as well as other persons who approve of the general policy of the Federation, but do not belong to any Liberal organization or are not individual members of the Federation. The number of co-opted members may not exceed one-third of the total number of members of a committee.

8. Every Reception Committee shall remit to the General Secretary or Secretaries after the conclusion of the annual session half the amount of the surplus for financing the work of the Federation.