

UNREVISED

B1

JOINT COMMITTEE
ON INDIAN CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

[SESSION 1933-34]

RECORD OF DISCUSSIONS

between the Joint Committee on

INDIAN CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

AND THE DELEGATES FROM BURMA

Die Mercurii, 6^o Decembris, 1933

Die Jovis, 7^o Decembris, 1933

*Ordered by The House of Lords to be Printed
28th November, 1933*

*Ordered by The House of Commons to be Printed
6th and 7th December, 1933*

LONDON

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

To be purchased directly from H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE at the following addresses:
Adastral House, Kingsway, London, W.C. 2; 120, George Street, Edinburgh;
York Street, Manchester; 1, St. Andrew's Crescent, Cardiff;
15, Donegall Square West, Belfast
or through any Bookseller

1933

Price 2s. od. Net

H.L. 6 (II)

H.C. 5 (II)

Present:

Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.
Marquess of Salisbury.
Marquess of Zetland.
Marquess of Linlithgow.
Marquess of Reading.
Earl of Derby.
Earl of Lytton.
Earl Peel.
Lord Middleton.
Lord Ker (Marquess of Lothian).
Lord Irwin.
Lord Snell.
Lord Rankeillour.
Lord Hutchison of Montrose.
Major Attlee.

Mr. Butler.
Major Cadogan.
Sir Austen Chamberlain.
Mr. Cocks.
Sir Reginald Craddock.
Mr. Davidson.
Mr. Isaac Foot.
Sir Samuel Hoare.
Mr. Morgan Jones.
Sir Joseph Nall.
Lord Eustace Percy.
Miss Pickford.
Sir John Wardlaw-Milne.
Earl Winterton.

The following Delegates from Burma were also present:—

Sra Shwe Ba.
Mr. C. H. Campagnac.
Mr. N. M. Cowasji.
U Kyaw Din.
Mr. K. B. Harper.
U Chit Hlaing.

U Thein Maung.
Dr. Ba Maw.
U Ba Pe.
Dr. Ma Saw Sa.
U Shwe Tha.
Mr. S. A. S. Tyabji.

The MARQUESS of LINLITHGOW in the Chair.

Chairman.

My Lords and Gentlemen: The business this afternoon is a general discussion of the issue of Separation. I should suggest that the Committee hears a series of statements from the Delegation, and that both the Committee and the Delegates should as far as possible avoid by question or otherwise interrupting these statements; and, after the statements have been completed, that we should undertake a general discussion of the question.

U Kyaw Din.

My Lord Chairman, my Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen: It is the general wish of my brother Delegates that I should open the deliberations on this question of Separation and anti-Separation. At the very onset, I wish to make myself clear. Any opinions I hold, any views I put forward, any feelings or sentiment I express, are my own as a Burman, and as a Delegate they do not reflect the views of the Government of Burma, of which I was a Member a few weeks ago only. As I submitted to you yesterday, my Lord Chairman, this question of Separation and non-separation has been discussed on the floor of the Legislative

Council of Burma and discussed almost threadbare. The Reports of those discussions were submitted to you completely and as the issue is not so comparatively broad, I may be pardoned if I repeat some of those arguments before you to-day. It has been said in responsible quarters even that the Burmese people were not in a position and were not able to decide for themselves on this question. I venture to submit, my Lord Chairman, that this is far from being correct. We are very decided in our opinion; we are fixed in our aims and in our desires. Perhaps those who do not enter into our spirit, into our feelings, probably do not follow us as we want them to, and if this afternoon I could give you a glimpse of our ideals, of our aims, of our aspirations, I should consider myself justified for having undertaken this long journey of 7,000 miles with an English winter at its end. To enable you to understand us I should like to place before you two fundamental considerations. On those two fundamental considerations the whole of our aims and our entire desires are based. The first is that the Burmese are a nation and a people. This may sound obvious, but from the literature that was sup-

6° Decembris, 1933.] GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

plied and piled upon us, and from the cursory glance I had over that literature, I came to the conclusion that at least the Indian Delegates did not quite realise that. When I say we are a people and a nation, I distinguish our people from that of India in this respect: India is a very big continent. The Bengalese, for instance, cannot claim themselves to be a nation or a people. Every little community, every member of a sect or religion, will remain in a watertight compartment as it were. Therefore, their only way of political emanicipation is by way of a Federation of these different watertight compartments, whereas Burma is different. Every Burman remembers and cherishes that memory that he is a member of a whole. The second fundamental idea is that every Burman remembers that not very long ago, only 47 years ago, he had a King of his own; his nation was a nation that had an honourable seat amongst the family of nations. His songs, his lyrics, his folklore press him on to that, remind him of that fact; and the great idea of his life is to strive on so that he may gain to that status, so that he may form a separate unit, so that he may form one political entity. It never enters into his mind, not even in his dreams, that he would form a unit, a minor unit of a great Federation of different peoples. Those are the fundamental ideals, hopes and aspirations of Burma. If that is so, one would naturally ask, why do you want a separate unit yourself when you have got the chance now? My answer to that, my Lord Chairman, is this: Because our ideas are so fixed, our desire to form a separate unit, so ardent, our hopes of attaining that unity are so great that we are prepared to sacrifice that for the present moment, if we find that the ways and means offered to us of attaining our ideals do not come up to the standard which we have set up. That, I venture to submit, my Lord Chairman, is the beginning of the anti-separationist League and ideals. "If that is so," it may be asked, "why did you then 18 months ago start this movement?" As I submitted to you we had our doubts, we had our fears and those doubts and fears were shared not only by us but by the Government of Burma itself. May I invite your attention to the despatch of the Government of Burma dated the 13th August, 1930?

The Government of Burma expressed those doubts and fears in this language: "The Government of Burma could not possibly agree to separation on any other terms, and they trust that His Majesty's Government will see fit to set at rest any doubts that may still exist on the subject. They attach importance to the point, for the allegation is frequently made in that section of the Public Press of Burma which is opposed to the recommendation of the Statutory Commission that the British Government will seize the opportunity of separation to reduce Burma to the status of a Crown Colony." Those were the doubts and fears of the Government of Burma. Those were the doubts and fears which I shared fully and which prompted me to start this anti-separationist League. I may inform you, my Lord Chairman, that I stood for election on the Anti-Separationist card. Without any organisation, without any political organisation or funds, the Anti-Separationists came in; half a million voters stood by them and urged them to go on forward. At that time we had only the statement of the Right Honourable The Prime Minister with regard to what is going to be our future. Those doubts were further strengthened when I recall to my mind the little incident the Burma Delegates had at the first Burma Round Table Conference. One of the Burmese Delegates (he happened to be an Englishman) expressed the hope that any political advancement made to India would apply to Burma; he was promptly ticked off and he was told that what was held out to India was meant for India and need not necessarily apply to Burma. That increased our fears. That expressed the opinion as put forward by the Government of Burma. It was at no time contemplated, as I submitted, that we would form part, a small unit, of a great Federation. At the very beginning when we started this movement nearly 18 months or 20 months ago, some of the papers described us as "Federationists." We immediately repudiated it—that we were not Federationists but that we were anti-separationists on the basis of the Constitution as outlined by the Right Honourable The Prime Minister. At that time I would ask you to bear in mind that we had before us only the statement of the Right Honourable The Prime Minister;

6° Decembris, 1933.]

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

the Indian question had not been discussed. Although it had been to a certain extent discussed, yet it had not been announced what India was going to be provided with. Remembering all these facts our policy was that we would wait and see what was going to be given to India. You will notice, my Lord Chairman, from the Resolutions and from the discussions that were made in December last year, when this first question was put to us, we felt, and I still think we rightly felt, that the choice given to us was extremely narrow; not that we did not understand the implications, but we thought to ourselves: We will express our own desires and our own wishes instead of answering the questions put to us. That is the reason why we passed that Resolution unanimously; that was the opinion of the whole of Burma. If I may repeat in substance the Resolution passed by us on that occasion it comes to this, three points: First, that we would oppose separation on the basis of the Constitution as outlined to us: that we would continue to oppose separation unless and until we get both at the Centre and in the Provinces the same amount of responsibility as is granted to the Indian Provinces. We would further emphatically oppose Federation with India unless we get certain terms and conditions. One of those terms and conditions was the right of secession. The right of secession at that time to my mind was a very small item, but the greater considerations that weighed with me at that time were financial rights, financial justness, rights which were due to us as a part of the Indian Federation, but those rights were due to us because of the peculiar position we occupy in respect to India. Those were the three principles which we enunciated. You will further notice, my Lord Chairman, that on the second occasion when the deliberations were made barring myself there was no discussion at all on this question of separation or non-separation. Since then, time has changed; things have been made clearer to us, and one would naturally ask: "What is your opinion to-day? No doubt, probably, you were justified in 1930, 1931 and the beginning of 1932, to hold the opinion you did, but how about it now?" I should like to put the present position in these words. I cannot do better than by referring to a state-

ment of the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India made in the House of Commons on the 20th March, 1933, with this one little addition: "To put it summarily: the same range of opportunity and function that it is proposed to devolve in India either upon the Federal Legislature or the Provincial Legislatures is in the case of Burma to be devolved upon the Burmese Legislature; the same subjects that in India are proposed to be reserved to the Governor-General would in Burma be reserved to the Governor, and the same special responsibilities that in India are to be imposed on the Governor-General or the Provincial Governors, as the case may be, will in Burma be imposed upon the Governor. That is a statement in general terms, and inevitably there will be some modifications and differences in detail due to the differing circumstances of the two cases; but, broadly speaking, the two sets of proposals do correspond closely enough to comply fully with the statement made by my predecessor in this House on the 20th January, 1931, that the prospects of constitutional advance held out to Burma as part of British India will not be prejudiced by a decision to separate, and they correspond so closely as to satisfy also, I should have thought, the stipulation made by the Burma Legislative Council in its resolution of the 22nd December for the immediate transfer to popular control of at least the same measure of responsibility, and the same subjects and powers, as will be transferred to popular control in the Indian Federation both at the Centre and in the Provinces."

This statement cleared away some of the doubts, some of the fears; it clears the atmosphere, but there is still one little one left to my mind, and it is this: Yes, we will get it now. How about 20 years hence? Will we get the same advancement that India will get during that period? That is not yet clear. That is one of the fears, and one of the doubts. Probably in the course of the discussion on the constitutional aspect of the problem that question will arise, and probably we shall be in a position to discuss that matter, but, in the meantime, I should like to say that our hopes and our aspirations are that we should form a separate unit, one political entity, an equal partner in that great commonwealth of nations known as the British

6° Decembris, 1933.] GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Empire. With these words, my Lord Chairman, I would close my remarks.

U Ba Pe.

My Lord Chairman, I am very glad to hear the remarks of my friend U Kyaw Din, who stood at the last election in opposition to us as an anti-separationist. I am glad that he has now come to the same view as ourselves, that separation is the salvation for the country.

U Kyaw Din: No.

U Ba Pe.

He is out for the same status, namely, a separate unit, not as a province or unit of Indian Federation, but a separate unit of the British Empire on the same footing as those self-governing Dominions like Canada, Australia and others. That is to say, he is a separationist. Being a separationist I endorse his remarks as regards the sentiment of the Burmese people on this question. Until 1885 we were a nation on an equal footing with other nations in the East. The sentiment of the Burmese people still cherishes that position. By accident Burma is placed in the Indian Empire to the great financial and material loss of the Burmese people. As a part of the Indian Empire we see every day we are handicapped in all ways. We suffer in finance, in economics and other aspects of our life. We have for this reason been asking to be separated from India, as far as I remember, since 1885. As a matter of fact, the first move for separation was made by the Indians themselves by the Indian National Congress in 1885. We have been agitating for the separation, but up to 1928 or 1929 neither the Burma Government, nor the Government of India, nor the British Government would give a fair hearing to our request. Fortunately the Indian Statutory Commission which visited Burma somewhere in 1928 or 1929 came to our rescue, gave prominence to our legitimate aspirations and gave an authoritative, if I may say so, statement of the case in their report. Since then the separation question has been to the fore in the whole of Burma, but, as pointed out by my friend U Kyaw Din, there is a section of people in Burma who have been influenced by the writings in Burma, to the effect that Burma would suffer if she were separated from India. Another matter about which the Burmese people were very much troubled was the posi-

tion which Burma, supposing she were not a Crown Colony, would attain in the future after separation. Fortunately these points have been more or less settled, and we have now only one course left, and that course is to accept separation and work on the consideration of a constitution for a separated Burma. I may say in Burma there is no Burman who can be classified as a Federalist, that is, for perpetual and unconditional federation with India. There is no Burman with that view. There may be a few Indians who believe in the federation, but all the indigenous races in Burma are dead against entering the Indian Federation perpetually and unconditionally. My friends of the anti-separationist camp, they too, if I may say so, are separationists and not Federalists. The only difference between us, the separationists proper, and the anti-separationist, is a difference in method and not in objective. We are out for the same objective, the Dominion status, only we differ in method. The difference between me and my friend, Dr. Ba Maw, is the difference between Mr. Cosgrave and Mr. de Valera. So our aims are the same. The method, of course, is different. But the difference in methods is due to uncertainty as regards Burma's future after separation. Since those uncertainties have been removed, I should think there would have been only one method, and the method that is followed by us so far. I can quote *ad nauseam* from the speeches of my friends Dr. Ba Maw, U Kyaw Din and U Chit Hlaing in support of my statement that they are separationists as ourselves, except that they differ from us in methods for obtaining the same objective.

I may say we regard this question of separation and federation as formally settled in Burma, as there is no Federalist, and the uncertainties that led my friends to form their anti-separationist League were also cleared up by the statement made by the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India. On this question of separation versus federation, I do not think there need be much more said. I do not think any one of the Delegates will differ from me when I say that once the constitution that is to be given to Burma is one more or less in line with our aspirations, the question of separation or federation will die a natural death. I do not think I need waste the time of the Committee

6° Decembris, 1933.] GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

much more on the point. I think I have indicated it sufficiently to show that there is no difference of opinion as far as this question of separation is concerned. We are out here for separation, and I am sure my friends opposite will also support me in this aspect.

U Chit Hlaing.

My Lord, as a Member of the Burma Round Table Conference, as a man who had, from the start of the dyarchical institutions in Burma, non-co-operated with the Dyarchical Council, up to the time I was invited to the Burma Round Table Conference, I had been a non-co-operator for the past ten years. Only as an instance, on this separation question I had to co-operate with Government and took part in the Round Table Conference simply because the question of principle of separation of Burma from India had been discussed at the first India Round Table Conference with three Delegates sent by the Burma Government, all of whom are separationists, and none of the non-separationists were made parties to the Delegation. As President of the General Council of Burmese Associations we had to cable to the first Indian Round Table Conference for not allowing us to take part in the Conference. Afterwards we were invited to the Burma Round Table Conference.

At the Burma Round Table Conference only four or five of us stood as anti-separationists, and requested the Conference to refer the matter of separation or federation to the people of Burma. At the end of the Burma Round Table Conference the Prime Minister was good enough to refer the question of federation or separation to the electorate of Burma, with the constitution outlined by him for Burma, if separated, and also the result of the two Sessions of the India Round Table Conference. The Prime Minister's statement, and the result of the two Sessions of the India Round Table Conference were published in English and in Burmese by the Burma Government and distributed in thousands and thousands to the people of the electorates of Burma. This is one of the specimens of it. (*Producing same.*) This is a Burmese copy and an English copy. As the Committee knows full well the Burmese can read and write more than any Indian races, and especially when the Burmese copies are

given to them they can understand the contents of them. On the strength of these publications wherein is contained the result of the two Indian Conferences, the Burma Round Table Conference and the speech of His Excellency the Governor of Burma in the Legislative Council as to how the voting should be done, this was all well known to the people, those being distributed by the Government. Statements have been made in Burma as well as in other places that there have been misrepresentations as regards the terms of secession, the terms of federation and all that. These are not contained in the Government papers that were distributed to the people. Those were the things that occurred to the Members of the Burma Legislature in December, 1932, over a month after the election. The election was on the 9th November. On the 9th of November there was nothing about secession before the electorate. There was nothing about conditional Federation before the electorate. Before the electorate there was only the statement of the Prime Minister, the Burma Round Table Conference, and the two Indian Conferences, and they were all known to the people when they voted. Anti-separationist candidates secured over five lakhs; that means over half a million votes, while the separationists secured 270,000, just a little over half the votes secured by the anti-separationists. That was the result of the election. U Kyaw Din has stated to the Committee that he was an anti-separationist. Since he became a Minister under the Burma Government. I believe he has turned Federationist now. So if such somersaults are to be considered now in the light of their position or in the light of their change of views, would not it be dangerous to say, "What was the result of the election?" The result of the election was that there were more anti-separationists than separationists. There were 42 anti-separationists in the Council as a result of the election: 29 separationists and nine neutrals. That was all known and that was all clear to the Burma Government and to the British Government, too. In fact, the figures were all given clearly in the Burma Legislative Council when a Member of the Council asked the result of the elections at various representations, and that was given. Therefore, I submit to this Committee that His

6^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Majesty's Government has given a pledge to the people of Burma that their desires—their votes—will weigh in respect of separation or Federation, and did not say one single word in reference to the Burma Council's Resolution. They just left it to the electorate of Burma, the people of Burma, and did not say it was to be decided by the decision of the Burma Council. In the course of five or six weeks after the election what was the result? As it has already appeared, as in the instance of some friends here, too, some anti-separationists became separationists or conditional separationists. That had nothing to do with the electorate. The electorate have decided by a large majority that they prefer to federate according to the terms given by the Prime Minister, and that is the decision of the electorate of Burma. I submit that should be binding on the people of Burma and should be sufficient for the British Government to act upon. If, by some unfortunate or fortunate things that happened, some of the anti-separationists became separationists in the course of six months or a year, if that were to be taken as the deciding factor, I think in another six months or a year there will be more separationists in Burma than there were over a year ago. That would be because separationists have the advantage, especially in Burma, so far as their connections with Government are concerned. Anti-separationists have been considered in the eye of the Burma Government to be almost anti-British. That might be considered rather strange, but it is a fact, all the same. In fact, as soon as I got the invitation of the Joint Select Committee to come to England, I wanted to start at once almost and tried to come here. "No," they said, "you must go at a certain time; you must travel in a certain way; you must not travel by a non-British line." I was asked, further, as to why I wanted to come earlier, and as regards how allowances were to be given to me, and so forth. This is the unfortunate position of anti-separationists in the eye of the Burma Government. Particularly so in this respect, because Burman Government's position so far has been in favour of separation right through.

As regards U Ba Pe's statement that there is no Burman Federationist in Burma, that depends entirely on how he defines Federationists. The British Government has given us only two issues to

answer. When I happened to be President of the Burma Legislative Council for eight days there was only one resolution that was put up, and that was a resolution for separation. No other resolution was put up; and I said, "If you have any other resolution, put it." There was none, so I asked the Member who put forward that resolution to move. He said he did not want to move. The result was, I had no other course but to do my duty and to ask them whether they had any amendment to move. Then amendments were put in. When amendments were put in I said the amendments were not in order, and they were dissatisfied and they moved a resolution of non-confidence against me. That shows—and it will be shown now—that there are only two alternatives open to the Burma Legislative Council or to Burma—either to separate or to federate. If you want to separate you must separate on the Prime Minister's statement. If you want to federate you must federate on the Prime Minister's statement. No other conditions can be added, neither can the two alternatives be modified. That was my view as Council President, and I expressed it, and I submit that was a proper and correct view. Now, it has been proved by the December Resolution of conditional federation and conditional separation. The British Government said: "No, this is not the way you should have put it and that is ambiguous." What I submit is, that we have only two courses open, either to separate on the terms of the Prime Minister's statement or to federate on the terms of the Prime Minister's statement. There is no other course. We are asked to take only one of them. Take one of the two. So we tried our best in the April-May Session. U Ba Maw and myself put forward our resolution on the lines of the Premier's statement. The debate went on. We were asked how long it would take. We said it would take 12 days. That was the natural course of events. But, though the rules in the Council gave a speaker 30 minutes, the speeches were lengthened to four hours, five hours, and 10 hours, with the result that, when the twelfth day came, there was no end of it. It was talked out. That was the April-May Session. Then when the scheme for Burma was presented to this Committee and a copy was sent to Burma for the consideration of the Burma Legislative Council, we again put forward our amendment to the

6^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

proposed Constitution, and that is that, of the two alternatives, we would rather take the federal alternative. That amendment was thrown out by the President. Therefore, up to this day, the Burma Legislative Council win. Those who were against separation were not given the right to give their own opinion to prove that we are in favour of federation on the terms of the Prime Minister's Statement, because of these hitches and obstacles that were put in our way. That is the position of affairs in the Burma Legislative Council. What I would submit, finally, to the Committee is that we are only sent here to offer to confer with this Committee, not as representatives of various parties; we were not elected by the people to present their views here, but we were only selected by the Burma Government, and we have come and we are presenting our own views, and that is not binding on the people, because we have not the mandate of the people to speak as such. But what I would submit to the Committee is that the people have already given their votes as an electorate to the question of separation or Federation on the 9th November, 1932, on the lines as given by the Premier and about which pamphlets have been widely distributed in all parts of Burma in Burmese as well as in English; therefore, I submit that the decision is binding upon the people of Burma as well as upon the British Government and this Committee to maintain that that is the decision of the people of Burma. With these words I leave the matter in the Committee's hands.

U Thein Maung.

My Lord Chairman, I beg to take you as briefly as possible through the history of the demand for separation and to discuss at the same time first the reasons for the demand; secondly, the question as to whether there has been any change of public opinion as regards separation; thirdly, as to what have been the causes of the apparent change in the public opinion, and lastly as to what appears to be the only course open now. Shortly after the well-known announcement of the 20th August, 1917, was made by the Secretary of State for India, the Burmese people held public meetings and resolved that Burma should be separated from India. As a matter of fact, strong Delegations were sent to wait upon the Secretary of State for India and the

Viceroy in connection with the people's demand for separation from India. The demand then was so intense that the Indians in Burma felt that they should not interfere. My honourable friend, Mr. Tyabji, who is here as a member of the Delegation, moved at a meeting of the Burma Provincial Congress Committee in 1916-17 that the question of separation was one for the people of Burma to decide. That was a question in which Indians could not interfere. The result of the agitation in favour of separation in those days, my Lord Chairman, was a paragraph in the Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms popularly known as the Montford Report, being a Report of Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford—I am referring to paragraph 198 of that Report. They say: "We have not included Burma in our survey except in so far as while the Province remains part of the Indian Polity, it is necessary to provide for its representation in the Central Government. Our reasons are that Burma is not India. Its people belong to another race, in another state of political development, and its problems are altogether different. For instance, the application to Burma of the general principles of throwing open the Public Service more widely to Indians, would only mean the replacement of one alien bureaucracy by another." The Burmese people also sent two deputations to wait on the Secretary of State for India in connection with the proposed Constitutional Reforms in the years 1919 and 1920, and in those days the people were unanimously in favour of separation, and the deputations presented what was then called a monster memorial demanding the separation of Burma from India. The Joint Select Committee on the Government of India Bill, 1919, also left out Burma to begin with for separate treatment. I am referring, my Lord Chairman, to the Report of the Joint Select Committee on the Government of India Bill, paragraph 8. They say, "There remain certain other topics which do not conveniently fall within any particular clause. The first of these is the treatment of Burma, and after hearing evidence, the Committee have not advised that Burma should be included within the scheme. They do not doubt but that the Burmese have deserved and should receive a Constitution analogous to that provided in this Bill

6° Decembris, 1933.]

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

for their Indian fellow subjects. But Burma is only by accident part of the responsibility of the Governor-General of India. The Burmese are as distinct from the Indians in race and language as they are from the British." That was in the year 1919-20. As I have submitted before, my Lord Chairman, the Burma deputations urged for separation according to the mandate that had been given by the people of Burma unanimously; at the same time they had to fight in those days against certain Constitutional schemes which were popularly known then as the Craddock Schemes: those schemes having been set up in rivalry to the reforms proposed by the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy. We did not succeed in those days in our agitation for separation, as our attention was constantly diverted by the struggle against the rival scheme. With reference to this my honourable friend, Dr. Ba Maw, who is a Member of the Delegation and who is a very prominent leader of the anti-separationists, observed in the Burma Legislative Council: "We all know that 10 years ago, 15 years ago, and as every separationist Member of the House will admit, even 20 years ago, when Burma was clamouring unitedly with one will and with one desire for separation, the British Government never condescended to lend its ear to that cry." My Lord Chairman, here is an admission that we have been united, 10 years ago, 15 years ago, 20 years ago, with one will and with one desire in our clamour, as he puts it, for separation. Since then, my Lord Chairman, the Indian Statutory Commission under the Chairmanship of the Right Honourable Sir John Simon has visited the country and the Government of Burma submitted a Memorandum on separation to that Commission, setting out all the points in favour of separation, all the grounds that have been urged by the people of Burma from time to time in support of their demand for separation. They pointed out in the course of that Memorandum first that: "Sufficient consideration has not been given to the special circumstances and needs of the Province by the Indian Legislature and by the Government of India." Secondly, they pointed out that "the representation of Burma in the Indian Legislature has been too weak to exercise any influence in the Legislative Assembly" and they say "from the nature of things Burma has not and never

can have any effective voice in shaping policy in the Indian Legislature." Thirdly, they pointed out that "the disabilities of Burma are already beginning to assume a more positive form; it was becoming increasingly evident that Burmese interests sometimes diverged very considerably from those of India," and they referred to the policy of discriminating protection that has been adopted by the Government of India much to the detriment of Burma. They mentioned the protection of the Indian steel industry, the paper industry, and they also referred to export duties on rice, hides and skins, and in this connection they ended up by observing that "The interests of the two countries have already begun to diverge and clashes are likely to become more and more frequent, and it is inevitable that when there is a clash the interests of the smaller country must go to the wall; the smaller country must be overshadowed by the larger. Indeed, there is a danger that our individuality will be submerged." Then, the Government of Burma went on to point out that caste is the one vital structure which Hinduism has dealt her and that it is the negation of everything that constitutes a nation and that these difficulties do not exist in Burma. The Burmans, they say, in fact, approximate far more closely to the ordinary conception of a nation than the Indians and the Constitutional problem, if separated from that of India, is at once reduced to manageable proportions and becomes far simpler. Then, they proceeded to point out that separation would enable Burma to cut herself free from many perplexities which need not really concern her. Then, they also pointed out that Burmese contributions to the Central Government were unduly heavy and that though the incidence of taxation per head of the population is heavier in Burma than in any other Province the Province is still the most undeveloped part of British India. Then, they concluded by saying that the closer British India approaches to responsible Government the less justification there is for a position in which Burma is included in British India for reasons of administrative convenience. They supplemented their grounds for separation in a separate note, a note on the financial settlement effected by the Meston Committee. In that Memorandum, my Lord Chairman, they pointed out how badly Burma has fared under

6^o Decembris, 1933.] GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

the various financial settlements with the Government of India, and they pointed out that the Burma taxpayer is making a contribution of a very substantial amount for the benefit of India. There, in addition to the export duties on rice, hides and skins, they referred to the unfairness of excise duties on petrol and kerosene oil, and the income tax. They summarised the position in this paragraph—paragraph 41 of the Memorandum: “The picture which is outlined in the preceding paragraphs is that of a Province in which the incidence of both Central and Provincial revenue is far in excess of that in other Provinces; which furnishes Central revenues that, in comparison with those furnished by other Provinces, are increasingly large and rapidly expanding: in which is levied Provincial revenue that, though large and containing receipts of heavy amount not levied in other Provinces, is in comparison with Central revenue inelastic; and in which Provincial expenditure has in recent years expanded with great rapidity. This expansion has been occasioned, not only by the conditions common to all Provinces under a reformed system of Government, but also by the absence in Burma of the standard of material and administrative development which had been attained in other Provinces.” The Statutory Commission, my Lord Chairman, heard evidence and travelled very extensively in Burma, to see whether there was a genuine public opinion in favour of separation. This is what the Commissioners themselves say in Volume I of their Report at page 77: “The Statutory Commission has visited Burma, and taken evidence there; it has travelled, by rail and by water, considerable distances, and has taken the opportunity of seeing what it could, both of the village life and of the industrial enterprises of that country—the oil fields, the great port of Rangoon, the former capital Mandalay, and some other towns in the Irrawaddy Valley. We must endeavour to bring home to the British Parliament and the British people in what the difference between Burma and the rest of India essentially consists,” and then they proceeded to adumbrate their points about the difference between Burma and the rest of India. Then, my Lord Chairman, in their Report the Statutory Commission stated: “We have come to a definite conclusion that nothing but the most overwhelming con-

siderations could justify the continued retention of Burma within the Government of India.” I am quoting from the report at page 184. Their reasons for the recommendation are, firstly, that there was a strong demand for separation; secondly, the Constitutional difficulty of giving Burma a suitable place in any Centralised system; and, thirdly, divergence of interests between the two countries. They actually referred to the discriminative tariff policy and instances in which the interests of Burma had been overlooked by the Government of India. I submit, my Lord Chairman, that all these reasons given by the Statutory Commission for separating Burma from India are still valid. Incidentally I may point out that both the Government of Burma and the Statutory Commission recognised that there were anti-separationists or, rather, so-called anti-separationists, and they gave their explanations for the existence of such persons; for instance, the Government of Burma in its Memorandum on separation, at paragraph 3, observed: “Some Burman political leaders believe that by maintaining the connection between Burma and India, Burma will get self-government more quickly than if it stood alone; but even these politicians desire merely to postpone the question of separation and no one in Burma believes that the Burmans will acquiesce permanently in being governed by a self-governing India. If so, ultimate separation is merely a question of time.” Then the Statutory Commission also observed at page 184: “We ourselves have little doubt from what we saw and heard in Burma that so far as there is public opinion in the country it is strongly in favour of separation; that among thinking Burmans the great majority desire separation immediately, and that it is only the elements which derive their political inspiration from corresponding Indian sources that would postpone separation, for they believe that Burmese political progress may be hastened by a further period of association with India.” My Lord Chairman, the observations are still correct that those who style themselves as anti-separationists are really not anti-separationists, in the sense that they would join the Indian Federation unconditionally without an intention of seceding therefrom. They are only holding out in the hope that they might get a better

6° Decembris, 1933.]

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Constitution by remaining for some years more in the Indian Federation. The recommendation of the Statutory Commission was that Burma should be separated from India immediately and that an announcement to that effect should be made immediately. The Burma Legislative Council welcomed the recommendation. As a matter of fact, the Legislature of Burma passed a Resolution in favour of separation on the 18th February, 1929, just to give the assurance to the Statutory Commission, although that assurance was hardly necessary, that it was the genuine desire of the people that there should be separation from India, and on the 9th August, 1930, the Burma Legislative Council passed a Resolution thanking the Royal Statutory Commission for having recommended separation in accordance with the wishes of the people of Burma. The Government of Burma also supported the recommendation, and the Government of India in their despatch on the Report of the Statutory Commission also accepted separation in principle. I am referring to page 83 of the despatch. At page 84 thereof the Government of India say: "We endorse the view expressed by the Commission that so far as there is public opinion in Burma it is strongly in favour of separation. We support in principle the proposal that Burma should now be separated. We accept the view of the Commission that there is nothing to be gained by postponing separation to any later stage in the Constitutional growth of British India. If separation be accepted in principle, the present revision of the whole Constitution of government in British India supplies the appropriate occasion for making the change."

Then, my Lord, we come to the Indian Round Table Conference, and your Lordship will remember that there was a Sub-Committee No. 4 dealing with Burma, and that Committee recommended separation, and that recommendation was noted at a full meeting of the Indian Round Table Conference.

While I am dealing with the Indian Round Table Conference, my Lord, might I refer your Lordship to an observation made by Lord Peel at page 196 of the proceedings. His Lordship observed: "I spent some little time in Burma last January. One always gains much more from personal observation than from any number of blue books. My experience

was, during the weeks I spent in Burma, that there was an extraordinarily strong and widespread desire to be separated from the Indian Empire." My Lord, here is a statement corroborating the report of the Statutory Commission on personal observation.

Then, my Lord, we come to what appears to me to be the turning point in the history of the demand for separation. The All-India Congress at Karachi in April, 1931, resolved, as pointed out at page 4 of the sketch on Constitutional Developments in Burma: "This Congress recognises the right of the people of Burma to claim separation from India and to establish an independent Burman State." What is important is in the rest of the resolution "or to remain an autonomous partner in a full India with a right of separation at any time they may desire to exercise it."

Mr. Isaac Foot: What date was that, did you say?

U Thein Maung.

That is March-April, 1931. That was the turning point. There is a definite statement that the Indian Congress was prepared to recognise the right of Burma to secede from the federation at any time, and that offer was repeated in the course of the Budget debate in the Indian Legislative Assembly on the 17th March, 1932. As stated at page 5 of the Sketch on Constitutional Developments the generally expressed opinion was that no obstacle should be placed in the way of allowing Burma to decide either for separation or for federation: that a decision of Burma to enter the Federation should not be irrevocable, and that the question of separation at some future date should not be ruled out. My Lord, the Resolution passed at the All-India Congress at Karachi was absolutely non-official so the seal of authority was put on it by the Indian Legislative Assembly in March, 1932. I submit, my Lord, that what was done then has been the real cause of the apparent change in public opinion.

U Chit Hlaing: Hear, hear!

U Thein Maung.

My honourable friend, U Chit Hlaing, actually says hear, hear, at this stage. I am glad that thereby he is admitting by implication the correctness of my observations. Your Lordship will see that this discussion in this Legislative

6^o Decembris, 1933.] GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Assembly was some months before the general election. The result was that the country was told in the course of the election campaigns that there would be this right to secede from the Federation at any time at the will of the people of Burma. My Lord, may I stop here for a moment to discuss the attitude of the Indians by way of explaining the resolution passed at Karachi and the trend of discussion in the Legislative Assembly? As the Government of Burma have pointed out in the views of Local Government on the recommendations of the Indian Statutory Commission, 1930, on page 306: "The Indian community naturally regards separation with dislike. For obvious reasons they would prefer that Burma should remain part of British India, and also no doubt partly as the result of recent disturbances in Rangoon, they look forward to separation with some apprehension."

The Government of India also in their despatch at pages 82 and 83 looked at separation from a purely Indian point of view. They observed at page 82 that "it would not be safe to accept at present the Commission's finding that separation could fairly be effected in such a way as to do no financial injury to India." Again they observe a little lower down on the same page: "It would still be necessary to assess the economic effect on India of a separated Burma." So my Lords see that the apprehensions of Indians in Burma were to a certain extent shared by the Government of India also. Having regard to the apprehensions of Indians over the question of separation there can be no wonder that there should be this resolution passed at the All-India Congress at Karachi, that there should be this offer made in the course of the Budget Debate in the Legislative Assembly. However, in fairness to a certain section of Indians who are so ably led by my honourable friend Mr. Tyabji, who is on this Delegation, I must refer, my Lord, to another passage in the Local Government's views on page 306. The Government of Burma observe: "As far as the attitude of thinking Indians resident in Burma is quite correct. They recognised that if Burmans generally, after full consideration of the issues involved, desire that Burma should be separated from India, that desire should be acceded to unless it can be demonstrated that

for financial, military, or other reasons separation is not a practicable proposition. Most of them recognise, too, that it will be difficult to establish a caveat of this kind in face of the recent conclusion of the Commission, and it is probable that they will concentrate mainly on securing protection for their interests in the new Constitution of Burma." The same views were given expression to by Mr. Tyabji in the Burma Legislative Council. He said: "I stood for election on the neutral ticket on the understanding that I would not cast my vote either for separation or federation, and after the question was decided, that I would do my best in the interests of Burma and for the constituency which I have the honour to represent. I decided, Sir, to take up this attitude not this year for electioneering purposes, but since 1916-17, when at the Burma Provincial Congress Committee I had the honour to move a resolution stating that it was for the Burmese people to decide whether they would separate from or federate with India. The Indian National Congress, at many of its sessions, has passed similar resolutions, and the great leaders who have come from India, amongst whom was Mahatma Gandhi, stated to the Indians in Burma, that in their opinion, the Indians should be neutral on this question. This position of neutrality, Sir, has been generally accepted for many years, so much so that in this Council, almost on every debate on the separation question, the Indian Members have taken up a neutral attitude. Therefore, Sir, I represent that party of Indians living in Burma which, though claiming the full right of citizenship, forgo that right on this issue voluntarily and gladly, to uphold the principles of self-determination for smaller nations. If the Burmese people decide in effect to separate from India, I would tell this House; that India as a whole (of course, there will be dissentients, Sir) will not feel aggrieved. They will wish Burma godspeed to her destination and to her desired goal and to that liberty which is the birthright of every nation."

My Lord, as I was submitting, to your Lordship, there was an inducement held out by the Indians by their resolution at the Karachi Congress and by the discussion in the Legislative Assembly. There was an inducement held out to Burma to join the Federation, with hopes

6^o Decembris, 1933.] GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

of secession with a better Constitution in the near future. I submit that inducement has warped. Hence the apparent change of public opinion. In addition to that inducement, there was general dissatisfaction with the suggested Constitution for a separated Burma as outlined by the Right Honourable the Prime Minister at the end of the Burma Round Table Conference. I submit, my Lord, that those are the real reasons for the apparent change in public opinion. Then there came the General Election, of which my honourable friend U Chit Hlaing has spoken at some length. I only wish to say, in reply, that at the General Election the right of secession was taken for granted.

U Chit Hlaing: No.

U Thein Maung.

My friends say No.

U Chit Hlaing: Where is it?

U Thein Maung.

But I know for a fact that in the course of the electioneering campaign the right of secession was referred to as a matter within practical politics, and for their authority they gave the resolution of the Karachi Congress and the discussion in the Legislative Assembly. They also told the country that necessary modification of the Indian Constitution to suit the conditions of Burma could be obtained. They also dilated on the defects in the Constitution that had been outlined for Burma by the Prime Minister. In addition to this, there was the Indian influence, or rather the influence of that section of the Indian Community which was against separation, making itself felt during the General Election. In this connection, my Lord, I beg to refer to the Report on the Administration of Burma for 1931-32, page 10. There the Government of Burma observed: "The Indians formed an association known as the Burma-Indian Association, for the purpose of protecting their interests in Burma, and they are currently believed to have given financial assistance to some anti-separationist leaders." So my Lord Chairman, the result of the General Election was affected by the proposition that there would be this right of secession at our pleasure at any time, by the proposition that suitable modifications in the general Constitution would be made for Burma, and the general dissatisfaction with the Constitution outlined for Burma also had a good deal to do with the result

of the election. But what was the decision given by the people of Burma in the General Election? My submission is that they simply decided they were not prepared to accept the Constitution as outlined by the Prime Minister for a separated Burma. That is the only reason why there should have been these resolutions of the Burma Legislative Council, which would at first sight appear to you to be perfectly meaningless, but read in the light of my submissions, your Lordship will see at once that all these resolutions in the Burma Legislative Council are unanimous in opposing unconditional Federation and in demanding a better Constitution for separation.

Now, my Lord Chairman, we come to another stage, at which we have to consider whether Burma should be separated from India or federated with it. As observed by His Highness the Maharajah of Alwar at the Indian Round Table Conference, page 196, and in the Simon Commission Report, if there is anything emphatic, anything definite, it is about the separation of Burma. The Commissioners say: "We come to the definite conclusion that nothing but the most overwhelming considerations could justify the continued retention of Burma within the Government of India." Now, the question before us is whether it can be said that there are overwhelming considerations for the retention of Burma within the Government of India. In other words, the question is: Has there been a genuine change of public opinion as regards separation? Has it veered round in favour of Federation? I submit, my Lords, that the answer is No. As pointed out by my honourable friend, U Ba Pe, there is no one who is really an anti-separationist in Burma. In this connection, if I may quote my honourable friend, U Ba Maw again, he said in the Burma Legislative Council: "There is at present a great deal of discussion regarding the actual meaning of the term 'anti-separation.' Several people in the House as well as outside have tried to give all sorts of meanings to the term. I personally have been subjected to the most scurrilous attacks for my definition of it. There are actually influences outside the House as well as inside working to commit a fraud on the country by misusing the term 'anti-separation' and giving it an extremely literal meaning in order to make 'anti-separation' mean unconditional and perpetual Federation

6^o Decembris, 1933.] GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

with India. In these circumstances, Sir, I consider it is extremely important for the purpose of a proper and fair discussion that the House should know the real meaning of this term. Sir, that meaning is in those Jubilee Hall resolutions that is the definite voice of the anti-separationists of Burma, and any meaning that goes beyond the Jubilee Hall resolutions is a betrayal." My Lord, you have got the Jubilee Hall Meeting referred to by Dr. Ba Maw at page 6 of the Sketch of Constitutional Developments in Burma. My honourable friend, Dr. Ba Maw, later on in the same speech admitted that the Jubilee Hall resolutions are nothing more than an attitude of protest, and as for my honourable friend, U Chit Hlaing, and the party that he leads, they are not anti-separationists in the real sense of the term either. U Chit Hlaing said in the Burma Legislative Council on the 16th December, 1932: "Another matter on which I wish to speak is the allegation by the honourable Finance Member that I am a perpetual Federationist. I do not know from where he heard this. Since the time separation came to be talked about, three or four years ago now, I said that we should federate with India only when we could get what we wanted, and also at the Jubilee Hall Convocation on 12th July, at which I was the Chairman, I declared that Federation with India would only be agreed to provided we get what we wanted. It does not mean perpetual Federation, but Federation only when we get our demands. I do not mean unconditional Federation as mentioned by the Prime Minister." Then, he again observed, on the 22nd December, 1932, "Some say that they are not permanent Federationists; no, there is none. There may have been misunderstanding. So far as that is concerned, I personally have no mind to federate permanently. I do not entertain such an idea now nor shall I do so in future. Far be it from me to have a desire to federate permanently with India. I have no intention of federating permanently even with the British Government. I have said this not only here but also at the Burma Round Table Conference." So, my Lord, the position remains that there is not a single Federationist in Burma; we are all unanimous in favour of Separation. The difference between us is only as to the question of time. We separationists say that Burma should be separated now,

but the so-called anti-separationists wish to remain in the Federation for some years, hoping that they would be able to get out of the Federation in the near future with a better Constitution. That is the only difference between us. My Lord Chairman, what I regard as the key to their attitude can be found in the speeches of my honourable friends U Chit Hlaing and Dr. Ba Maw. For instance, U Chit Hlaing said in the Burma Legislative Council on the 22nd December, 1932: "In my opinion, if the British Government have a real desire to separate Burma from India they should give her a Constitution superior to the one outlined for India." My Lord will see at once that there is here a little confusion of ideals. We agitated for separation; we sent deputations in 1916, 1917, 1919, 1920, and so on; we asked for separation; but, when separation is held out to us, U Chit Hlaing thinks that it is the desire of the British Government to separate Burma from India, and acting on that assumption, he says: "If the British Government have a real desire to separate Burma from India they should give her a Constitution superior to the one outlined for India." Then, to come back to my honourable friend Dr. Ba Maw, there being only two anti-separationist parties, one led by U Chit Hlaing and the other by Dr. Ba Maw, as regards the right of secession, Dr. Ba Maw said, on the 21st December, 1932, in the Burma Legislative Council: "My opinion is that this threat regarding the right of secession is absolutely illegal and is contrary to all the promises given to us by the British Government. If the British Government insists on maintaining that attitude, if it insists on declaring that the right of secession will not be a subject for discussion at any Conference, then I do say it will be absolutely useless for us to enter into any such discussion, because it will end in failure. Governments and Secretaries of States in their days of brief authority may make solemn declarations, but history proves that Governments have been known to fall, and policies change even in an unchanging East. The Secretary of State may make a certain declaration, but that declaration is not immutable; it can alter with a change of Government or a change of policy, so our final position as regards the right of secession is this: We refuse to admit that this right does not exist; we claim that it is

6^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

an inherent right that no law can alienate. We say that if Burma enters the Indian Federation it will be on the basis of a contract among the Federating units. We deny the right of the British Government to interfere in any mutual arrangements among the Federating units, and we deny that there can be any statutory enactment refusing us our rights. All that we ask is that our rights to enter the Indian Federation, and by this right of entering also to secede from it, should be given formal and statutory recognition in our future Constitution. If no such recognition were given, this would not prevent us from still claiming it. As I have already mentioned, Indian politicians have expressed their attitude towards the right. U Soe Nyun has read out certain passages, but I say that those statements merely reflect a certain section of Indian political opinion. U Soe Nyun even will not claim that the statements he has read out reflect the whole mind of political India. These statements were made some time ago." So, my Lord will see that in spite of announcements by the Right Honourable the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for India, my honourable friend, Dr. Ba Maw, and his Party still believe that there would be this right to secede from the Federation at any time. They were obviously relying on the Karachi Resolution, observations made in the Legislative Council, and as regards opinions expressed by some Indian leaders, they say that they do not represent the whole mind of political India, and, if they do, there might be a change of opinion in favour of secession. My Lord will see that they were really hoping against hope with reference to the right of secession. Then, Dr. Ba Maw again observed, in the course of the same speech "U Soe Nyun has tried to alarm the House by reading out statements regarding the tremendous difficulties that Burma is likely to meet, if and when it contemplates leaving the Indian Federation. I admit that the difficulties will be tremendous, but U Soe Nyun must also remember that those difficulties were no more tremendous than the difficulties that he and I and all of us will meet in trying to achieve full responsible Government." So, my Lord, Dr. Ba Maw, the leader of one anti-separationist party, still believes in the right of secession, and he also made it clear in the course

of the same speech that he was not for unconditional Federation. He said there should be financial adjustments on a contract basis; that a separate debt account for Burma should be kept by the Government of India so that there would be no difficulty as regards accounts when Burma wanted to secede from the Federation. He also said that Burma should have compensation in some form or other for the protective duties that had been created for the benefit of India. He further observed that every Burmese subject should be in Burmese hands unless a case is definitely made out in favour of the Central Government and suggested reconsideration of the division of subjects into Central and Provincial for the benefit of Burma. So, my Lord sees that the anti-separationists are holding out against separation on the Constitution as outlined by the Prime Minister, because they still believe that there would be this right of secession. They still believe that they would have the support of Indian leaders when they wanted to leave the Federation; but, my Lord Chairman, amongst the papers that were placed before us since our arrival, we have found records of statements made by the Members of the Indian Delegation to this Joint Select Committee on the question of separation or Federation, and those statements make it perfectly clear that the Indian leaders are not prepared to concede any right of secession to Burma. That being so, and since there is no one in Burma who is willing to federate with India unconditionally and permanently, my submission is that we need not go on to discuss the other conditions which were stipulated for by Dr. Ba Maw for Federation. The position now is that hopes aroused by the Karachi Congress and the Indian Legislative Assembly have now been proved to be false, and opposition to unconditional and permanent Federation is unanimous. I am glad to submit to my Lord that if there be any unanimity in this Delegation it is the unanimity in opposing unconditional Federation, and since conditional Federation with modifications of the Indian Constitution to suit the conditions of Burma and the Burmese people are impossible, I submit that the only alternative, the only course that is now open, is separation. My Lord Chairman, separation will raise the status of Burma politically and financially. Burma will profit to the extent of about 3 crores

6^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

of rupees every year. In this connection, a reference may be made to the sketch on Constitutional developments at page 12 and the Report of the Statutory Commission, page 187. Furthermore, after separation, Burma will have fiscal autonomy and will be able to enter into trade agreements. In this connection, both the Governments of India and Burma have recognised the desirability or necessity of a trade convention between India and Burma, and when Burma is free, she may be inclined to enter into trade agreements with countries like Ceylon, and others, since she is bound to benefit by such agreements, and after separation the Burmese people will be enabled to preserve their own race, for example, by regulating emigration, and, if Burma be separated now, the Indian Constitution, which has to be so evenly balanced on account of the varying interests and factors, will not be disturbed in the future. In this connection, I wish to refer to page 5 of the sketch on Constitutional developments where the Secretary of State for India has pointed out: "Apart from the fact that the admission of any such right, that is the right to secede, would be a negation of the whole idea of Federation, secession would be objectionable on account of its effects on such important and delicately adjusted matters as the distribution of representation in the Indian Polity and in the size of the Federal Legislature. Moreover, secession by Burma after an interval would reopen at that stage the whole question of the Constitution of that country, the settlement of which would still remain a matter for determination by His Majesty's Government, and this is a contingency that His Majesty's Government are not prepared to contemplate." I submit, my Lord Chairman, that in the interests of Burma and also of India the British Government's Provisional decision in favour of separation might be endorsed. The aspirations of the people of Burma are two-fold: First, to be a separate unit in the British Commonwealth, and, secondly, to have full responsible Government, with the status of a Dominion. Separation will satisfy one of the aspirations and we hope that the other aspiration might be satisfied to a very large extent on the advice and recommendation of this Committee after we have discussed the Constitutional Proposals. My honourable friend, U Kyaw

Din, observed that he is satisfied for the present, but he has his own doubts as to the future. He is afraid that the Constitutional progress of Burma in future might be impeded on account of her separation from India.

In this connection I am prepared to accept the statement made by the Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons. He said: "They" (that is the Government) "wish it to be understood that the prospects of constitutional advance held out to Burma as part of British India will not be prejudiced by this decision, and that the Constitutional objective after separation will remain the progressive realisation of responsible Government in Burma as an integral part of the Empire." I hope, my Lord, that in regard to separation this Committee's recommendations would dispel all such doubts as may be entertained by my honourable friend, U Kyaw Din, and people like him, and that it should be made perfectly clear, for instance, in the Proclamation inaugurating the reforms that separation of Burma from India should not in any way impede her constitutional progress towards full and responsible Government. That is all I have to submit, my Lord.

Dr. Ba Maw.

My Lord Chairman, I realise that I have a somewhat difficult duty to perform, and, before I proceed to its performance, I wish to restore this discussion to reality and, for that purpose I wish to make three preliminary observations. My Lord, we who have come from Burma have adopted a peculiarly Burmese method in our election campaign as well as in the interpretation of words. As I listened to my honourable friend, U Thein Maung, I realised the tremendous difficulty that My Lord and the Honourable Members of the Committee will meet in evaluating the various terms and coming to a proper finding on the most important issue from our point of view. For this purpose, my Lord, I hope you will allow me to make three preliminary observations. The first observation is that if this discussion is not to be fruitless (if we are to render any assistance to the Members of this Committee) we must define the terms "separation" and "federation", and give my Lord and other Members of the Committee the Burmese meanings, the meanings that we have attached to the terms "separa-

6° Decembris, 1933.] GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION [Continued.
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

tion" and "federation", and the way in which we have used those terms in our last general election. The second observation which I wish to make, with my Lord's permission, is that, as I read the meaning of this invitation that the Committee was kind enough to issue to me, our business here is that we have been nominated by the Government of Burma not to express our own individual opinions, but to express the opinions, feelings and convictions (whether they are right or whether they are wrong) of the masses of the people whom we represent, and from this strict point of view I do feel—I may be wrong, my Lord, or I may be right; it is for the Committee to say the final word—that we are not here appearing to place before my Lords certain learned arguments, but to render my Lord and the Honourable Members of this Committee assistance by placing before them all the real facts, the real feelings, whether they are right, or whether they are wrong, of the masses.

In this sense, my Lord, in short, I do submit that it is our duty to assist my Lord and the other Members of the Committee to reach the real mind of the country apart from all this logic chopping.

The third point that I wish to make is this: The supporters of separation up to this point have dwelt in a very lofty and noble way on ultimate aspirations. I do wish to save the discussion from what I beg to submit would amount to an analogy of the present Irish morass. I do wish to submit, my Lord, that we are here to help my Lord and the Honourable Members of the Committee to consider a very limited and a very practical question, the question being that two alternatives are offered to Burma—separation on the basis of the Prime Minister's proposed constitution, and federation on the basis of the White Paper. Therefore I will not indulge in dreams that we all know have led to disaster in other parts of the Empire, but I will try to adhere to realities, and to present my case as a real case apart from talks of old Burmese Kings, apart from talks of Burma's independence and things of that sort.

In this connection I must say, with the greatest respect to my friends U Kyaw Din and U Ba Pe, that the value of their statements to my mind is absolutely vitiated by the fact that they have based

their entire case for separation on dreams of an independent Burma.

Any analysis, or any attempt to go beneath the surface of that argument, will reveal their real mind, namely, that separation to them mean an independent Burma, a Burma that can develop her nationhood, that can raise ideals that are absolutely contradictory to any ideal, however lofty, that the British Empire can present to us. Therefore, my Lord, I do wish, first of all, to clear the air a bit and to say that we are here, as far as I understand the terms of my invitation, to assist this Honourable Committee in answering a certain specific, a certain concrete issue, namely, that as between two alternatives separation on the basis of the Prime Minister's constitution, and federation on the basis of the White Paper proposals for India, what will Burma choose?

Now, my Lord, U Chit Hlaing has dwelt somewhat on the historical aspect. He has tried his very best to create a historical background to this discussion, and, as I have already submitted, my Lord, I feel that it is my duty to assist the Honourable Members of this Committee to understand the Burmese situation. We, my Lord, live and work and think in a country which is 8,000 miles away. Our terms of thought are not the English terms of thought. We have interpreted certain words in our own way. U Thein Maung, with absolute skill and absolute honesty, has presented to the Committee the interpretation of "Federation" as an ideal, but what U Thein Maung has thought fit not to inform the Committee is the idea of separation as it occurs to the average Burmese mind. U Thein Maung dwelt at very great length upon the persistent attempt to obtain federation in days past. He thought it proper to read out a certain passage from the speech that I made in the Burma Legislative Council. I do wish he had proceeded a bit further, because that would have helped my Lord and other Members of the Committee to understand what really was in my mind at the time that I made that statement. I go further, and it is the latter part that gives the real meaning to my statement, and U Thein Maung thought fit to suppress that particular latter part of my statement.

Chairman: Will you give the date of that reference so as to connect it with the other?

6^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Dr. Ba Maw.

It is the speech that I made in the December Session of the Burma Legislative Council, my Lord, at page 258. I go further and say: It is remembered that Burma in the days of its political youth asked for separation, and for not much else, and it is to be separation, but on British terms and not on Burmese terms. I do realise the fact that when our political life began in Burma we began in a very crude and unsatisfactory way. I do admit, my Lord, that in those days, for which we Members of the Delegation admit no responsibility, Burmese politicians, if we may compliment them with the use of that term, asked for separation and nothing else. But, my Lord, political thought, even in a remote country like Burma, has evolved, and I will prove its evolution from the statement made by the recognised separationist leader, U Ba Pe. In the Burma Legislative Council on the 11th August, 1930, three motions were considered, and, in speaking in connection with those motions, U Ba Pe, as the leader of the People's Party (U Ba Pe's position is admitted as the leader of the separationists in Burma) said this: "We have three motions now relating to constitutional issues in some form or other. The first was the question of separation, and this motion was passed the other day. The next one was the appointment of a Commission which was passed a few minutes ago." May I explain here, my Lord, that the Commission refers to the well-known Simon Commission—"and the third is the present motion on Dominion status under discussion. All these three motions are inter-related, and, if Government is keen on one and opposed to the other, it will not suit the wishes of the Members of this side of the House. Either accept all the three, or reject them. Separation without Dominion status is of no value to us." U Thein Maung very abruptly stopped at the first stage of the evolution of the idea of separation, but I am referring to a statement made in the Burma Legislative Council by the leader of the separationists on the 11th August, 1930, and on that occasion U Ba Pe was supported by every Separationist in the Council, so much so that all the three motions passed without a division.

Now, my Lord, I do hope your Lordship will appreciate the difficulty of my task. I am trying to assist the Com-

mittee to come to a fair and just conclusion on the facts—the actual objective facts.

The final word, my Lord, rests entirely with the Committee. That is their responsibility, and we fully appreciate that we are here to make statements and to enter into discussions merely for the purpose of assisting the Committee to come to a final decision. But, just as the Committee has its responsibility with regard to the final decision of the issue, we too have our responsibility to present all the objective facts with regard to the issue. As I said at the beginning of my statement, my Lord, we are nominated Members, but there is no reason why we ought to impose upon the Committee our own individual views and arguments. As I interpret my duty, our duty is to go beyond our individual minds and to try as much as lies in our power to collect the objective facts in the country, and to serve merely as vehicles for placing all those objective facts before this honourable Committee.

Now, my Lord, I wish to inform my Lords of the political position just before the momentous statement was made by the Prime Minister with regard to the separation issue. Under the dyarchical system of Government political Burma was divided into two parts. There were the co-operators, and the non-co-operators. The co-operators, represented very ably by U Ba Pe and Sir Joseph Maung Gyi, entered the dyarchical Councils and worked dyarchy. The non-co-operators in the country, represented by U Chit Hlaing, U So Thin and one or two other leaders, refused to enter the dyarchical Council and carried on the agitation in the country. I would lay special stress upon this fact, because the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India, in statements that he has made, has relied very greatly upon two things; first of all, upon the unanimous decision of the Burma Legislative Council—of a dyarchical Burma Legislative Council, and, secondly, upon the findings of the Simon Commission.

Now, my Lord, we all know (it is admitted) that that Burma Legislative Council that passed that resolution in favour of Separation was a Legislative Council that did not represent the entire political mind of Burma, because it did not represent that section of political Burma that is composed of the Non-Co-operators, and the

6° Decembris, 1933.] GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

General Election has proved conclusively, if it has proved anything, that the Non-Co-operators are in an overwhelming majority. Secondly, connected with this is a further fact that the people who undertook to give evidence before the Simon Commission, the people who made themselves vocal and thought it proper at that time to act as representatives of the entire political world of Burma, were people who were Co-operators, people who were chosen by the dyarchical council that represented only the co-operating section of political Burma. Therefore, my Lord, I wish to submit this as a conclusion, that what took place in the dyarchical council in Burma merely represented a section, and that has proved now to be a minor section, of political Burma. Secondly, whatever evidence was placed before the Simon Commission was merely a reflection of that Co-operating mind and the views held by that particular mind. Now, my Lord, in support of this I wish to place before your Lordship and the Honourable Members of the Committee one further fact, that when the Burma Government thought it proper to send a Burma Delegation—the first Burma Delegation—to the Indian Round Table Conference (all nominated members, consisting of Separationists)—on that occasion the Non-Co-operating element (what we call in Burmese *Wunthanus*; that word may be a little difficult; that is why I am forced to use an unwieldy phrase, the Non-Co-operators) submitted a monster Memorial to the British Government making it very clear that they were opposed to separation and that they wanted to federate with India. Then, my Lord, I take it that this was one of the reasons (and there were probably other reasons) why, after very careful consideration of the issue by the Burma Round Table Conference, the British Government, represented by the Right Honourable the Prime Minister, came to the conclusion that in those circumstances it was best to refer the matter to a Burmese electorate. Now, my Lord, this fact is most important for me. This fact, first of all, proves that all the arguments, very learned, very skilful and very one-sided, advanced by U Thein Maung, were dismissed by the British Government, who thought it the best course in the circumstances to leave the decision to the Burmese electorate. If U Thein Maung's present arguments have any force, if

they have any value, my submission, with all respect, is that His Majesty's Government at the time when these same arguments were advanced at the First Burma Round Table Conference would have accepted them and would have acted on those arguments. The fact that those arguments were dismissed, the fact that His Majesty's Government thought it proper to refer the matter to the Burmese electorate, shows that, after the most careful consideration, His Majesty's Government was of the opinion that those arguments had no validity in the present circumstances, and that the only proper course was to obtain a decision from the Burmese electorate.

Now my Lord, I come to the First Burma Round Table Conference. After that His Majesty's Government was kind enough—and we all in Burma very greatly appreciated this kindness—to make a statement through the Right Honourable the Prime Minister, allowing us something, allowing Burma something, that, as far as my reading goes, had never been allowed to any Indian Province. It allowed us a very limited but a very welcome form of self-determination. His Majesty's Government told us that on this particular issue of Separation we could determine it for ourselves; that it would leave the determination of the issue to the Burmese electorate. We were extremely grateful, my Lord, and the entire country responded in an extraordinary way.

Now, my Lord, may I, with your permission, revert to the statement that I have made, that before that announcement the greater part of political Burma consisted of Non-Co-operators; and here, if I may be permitted to do so, I would digress a little, to something that concerns me personally, because it may assist the Committee to understand the situation. That Non-Co-operating Burma, a few months (less than a year) before this announcement, had started a rebellion in Burma that was most disastrous, and that every thinking intelligent Burman deprecated. This rebellion was started by the Non-Co-operators and it led to very very troublous times in Burma. I must here digress a little in order to explain my personal position in that rebellion. I became professionally connected with the rebellion in the sense that I defended most of the rebels in a Court of Law, and in this way I came to understand their real intentions and

6^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

their real desires. After we had obtained this memorable pledge (I can give it no better description) of His Majesty's Government, that the matter would be allowed to be decided by the Burmese electorate, U Chit Hlaing and I—the two of us—personally toured the entire country and got into touch with these Non-Co-operators. I will declare it here: I personally got into touch with these rebels, and I told them that they must give up their Non-Co-operating ways—that here was a promise, as solemn as any promise could be, given by His Majesty's Government, through the mouth of the Right Honourable the Prime Minister, that this decision on an important issue was left in the hands of the Burmese electorate. I personally toured the whole of Burma throughout its length and breadth and personally explained the position to them—that this was a promise as good as anybody or any country in the world could obtain; and on the strength of this solemn statement the Non-Co-operators agreed to give up Non-Co-operation, and agreed to contest the recent elections. As soon as they reached this decision, all the Non-Co-operating Associations got together, and we convened an All-Burma Anti-Separationist Meeting at the Jubilee Hall, the resolutions of which meeting have been referred to by U Kyaw Din. Here I wish to explain, because I have really come to a difficult part of my work, that these Jubilee Hall resolutions were written by me. All their defects, all their failings are entirely on my head; but I do wish to submit to the Committee our real intention and what was at the back of our minds when we framed those resolutions. First of all, my Lord, to understand those resolutions it is important to place before your Lordships a fact that very closely preceded the Jubilee Hall meeting and the resolutions which were passed at the time—at the outside, a week before.

U Chit Hlaing: A fortnight.

Dr. Ba Maw.

U Chit Hlaing corrects me—at the outside, a fortnight previous to that Jubilee Hall meeting. On the 27th of June the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India made a statement in the House of Commons. I do not propose to read the whole statement out, my Lord, but the statement was to the effect that in the event of Burma's entry into the Indian Federation, Burma would not be

allowed the right of secession. I am trying to explain a word that has created a good deal of misunderstanding—the word “*emphatically*.” Then, my Lord, we decided to hold this meeting, and in Resolution No. 3 we used the word “*emphatically*”—“*That the Convention emphatically protests against the permanent and unconditional inclusion of Burma in the Indian Federation.*” Against this I do admit, my Lord, that this was not a very happy word to use. I do admit that, my Lord, but as an explanation, for whatever it is worth, I am submitting this fact, that at the time the mind of the whole country was engaged with the statement made by the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons, and the resolution was a direct reaction to that statement, by the Anti-Separationists.

Now, my Lord, we proposed to form an Anti-Separationist League. Against us is brought forward this particular word, that we were “*emphatically*” opposed to the inclusion of Burma in the Indian Federation; but I do most earnestly ask the Committee to consider the other fact. It is not my point of view, my Lord, that I am placing before you, it is the feeling of the country, the point of view of the entire country. Now, my Lord, the Anti-Separation League was created at that meeting and we called ourselves Anti-Separationists. I submit that great importance should be attached to that. We did not call ourselves Anti-Perpetual Federationists; we did not call ourselves Conditional Federationists, but we selected the most obvious title, the word that most described our real feelings, our real attitude, namely, Anti-Separationists. We called ourselves Anti-Separationists, and U Kyaw Din, who has frankly admitted to the Committee that he stood as an Anti-Separationist, attacked Separation. But within a fortnight of his election U Kyaw Din had become a Separationist. I am not interested in that, my Lord, because my only interest is to present to the Committee the real mind of the country. Here were the anti-separationists who proposed to form a league on the basis of the Prime Minister's declaration, accepting the Prime Minister's declaration at its face value, and who proposed to call themselves anti-separationists. From that the Committee will be able to discover what was the dominating thought

6^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

in our minds. The thought that dominated all our minds was opposition to Federation as given by the Prime Minister. Now, my Lord, there is the further fact that at that Meeting and at every other anti-separationist meeting and at the time of the December Session of the Burma Legislative Council, the first Resolution that is always passed was a resolution opposing separation on the basis of the Prime Minister's terms. Now, psychologically, I do most respectfully submit that if my Lord and the Committee desire to know the real mind of the country these facts must be given tremendous weight. Here is a new political party, new for the purposes of election, that propose to call themselves anti-separationists. Here are the two parties that invariably, whenever they obtain a chance, pass as a first and foremost resolution, as a primary resolution in their policy, a resolution opposing separation on the basis of the Prime Minister's terms. Then, we went through the country and fought the general election. Here, I must turn again from the course of my argument and deal with a few points raised by U Thein Maung. U Thein Maung has actually alleged that we were influenced in our policy by a declaration of the Karachi Congress. U Thein Maung has even gone further and alleged that we were influenced by the Indian element. My Lord, what U Thein Maung has not explained to your Lordship and the other Members of the Committee is that first of all a literal translation of the Prime Minister's declaration (there were only two alternatives, one of which was perpetual Federation) was widely distributed throughout the entire country. Fact No. 2, my Lord, is that against the Karachi Congress Declaration, which had no weight whatever with our people, there were the most solemn declarations by the British Government. There were repeated declarations by the British Government that were broadcast through the entire country to the effect that Federation meant perpetual Federation. The third fact is that the separationists in contesting the general elections against us made it one of their strongest arguments that Federation with India would mean perpetual Federation. Therefore, U Thein Maung has mentioned a certain Karachi Congress Resolution. Whether we paid any attention to it or not is proved by the fact that in none of our election posters,

in none of our election pamphlets, did we worry even to mention the Karachi Congress Resolution. I challenge U Thein Maung to produce any leaflet or poster in which we took the slightest notice of the Karachi Congress Resolution. Our cry was that this was a Burmese question, and we must decide it in the Burmese manner. That was the entire burden of all my election speeches and election speeches made by U Chit Hlaing. Now, there is another point; it is such a trivial point that I feel ashamed to be forced to deal with it, but, as U Thein Maung has thought fit to place it before my Lord and the Honourable Members of the Committee, I am afraid I must deal with it. I have already submitted that non-co-operators form the majority in political Burma, as has been proved by the recent elections. Now, before any allegation of Indian influence could be made, the non-co-operators, the G.C.B.A.s and the Wunthanus, have consistently voted against and passed resolutions against the separation of Burma from India on any basis short of full responsible self-government, and then, my Lord, these allegations which have unfortunately entered into this Committee Room can easily be met by counter-allegations. I am sure the Honourable Members of the Committee know the nature of general elections in all parts of the world. Even Great Britain is not free from certain party pledges and party statements that have no meaning after the election is over. An historic case as we know even in Burma is the case of Mr. Lloyd George, having won a general election on the slogan "Hang the Kaiser." Now, my Lord, as to this allegation of Indian influence, we are in a position to support our allegation although I should have been the last person to introduce it into this Committee Room. We are in a position to support our allegation that the local government of Burma took the greatest and most active interest in elections and that every constituency and Government officials were the most active assistants of the separationists. Another proposition is this: Here is a test: We anti-separationists are too poor even to have a headquarters. We anti-separationists could not run a paper. We started a vernacular paper which ran exactly for four or five months and then died a most unfortunate death. The separationists control and organise the papers in

6^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Burma; all the entire Anglo-Burma Press of Burma is to support the separationists, and it is well known that the separationists have got very, very large party funds, and here is a party consisting purely of masses and without any funds, without even a headquarters, without even a paper. We had to fight our battles personally all over the country by issuing cheap posters, cheap in the economic sense, against two parties that have worked in such a way. U Thein Maung has thought it proper to allege Indian influence. I challenge U Thein Maung to place before the Committee, it is his duty, if he introduces such highly controversial and delicate questions into this Committee Room, to place material before the Committee in support of statements like that. He quotes a certain statement from the local government, but with the greatest respect I do say that this report made by the Burma Government has no value, for the simple reason that the Burmese Government is not in a position to make any statement independently on this question. The Burma Government have got themselves so involved in the separation question that any statement made by them is bound to be vitiated. Then, my Lord, we come to the historical resolution of the Legislative Council, the December Resolution. The December Resolution is unfortunately worded; I admit it; I am entirely responsible again for that; but with the greatest respect to this Committee, I do submit that words may be important, but when it comes to crucial issues people go beyond words and try to get the real sense, the real mind of the people. I do admit the word "emphatically" is used there, but we are not the only people who have made such unfortunate mistakes. With the greatest respect, I do wish to point out a far more vital instance of an unfortunate mistake in drafting. I am referring with the greatest respect to the terrible mistake made in the Balfour Report that arose out of the Imperial Conference of 1926, where the Report put in in italics the reference to equality in status among the Dominions, but when it came to the qualifying clause (may I refer to it because it is so important?) "the principles of equality and similarity appropriate to status do not universally extend to function," Lord Balfour and the Members of his Committee forgot to

place these equally important words, the concluding words, in italics, with the most unfortunate results as we all know that have manifested themselves in Ireland and the other Dominions. Therefore, I do admit my fault, but as I am in the company of one of the greatest men produced in modern days, Lord Balfour, I do submit that such a mistake ought to be overlooked. Here it is, after all, in interpreting the Report of 1926, in interpreting the Westminster Statute. Every English Constitutionalist is unanimous that equal stress ought to be laid on the second statement as on the first, and that the introduction of the italics in connection with the first statement is a most unfortunate mistake. Therefore, my Lord, here again when I come to the December Resolution I wish to point out to the Honourable Members of the Committee that Resolution No. 1, the First Resolution, is a Resolution rejecting separation on the basis of the Prime Minister's Constitution, and he goes on to say—it is so important that I ask my Lord's permission to read this Resolution: "That this Council opposes the separation of Burma from India on the basis of the constitution for a separated Burma outlined in the statement that the Prime Minister made at the Burma Round Table Conference on the 12th January, 1932." Here is an unqualified, unconditional (notwithstanding all the fine phrases of U Thein Maung) opposition to separation of Burma from India on the basis of the Constitution for a separated Burma. But we do not stop there; we lay still greater stress on this point by going on in No. 2—"That this Council emphatically opposes the unconditional and permanent federation of Burma with India." Then, No. 3, "This Council will"—it is amusing to U Ba Pe, but I will preface my submission with a frank admission that this word "emphatically" was chosen; we chose it because this Jubilee Hall Resolution was passed within a fortnight of the statement made in the House of Commons by the Honourable Secretary of State for India. It was a reaction to the statement made by the Honourable Secretary of State for India.

Sir Austen Chamberlain: What was the third Resolution? You did not read it.

Dr. Ba Maw.

"That, this Council will continue to oppose the separation of Burma from

6^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

India until Burma is granted a Constitution on the following basis." The first is: "The future Constitution of Burma shall provide for the immediate transfer to proper control of at least the same measure of responsibility and the same subjects and powers as will be transferred to popular control in the Indian Federation, both at the Centre and in the Provinces." The second is: "The subjects and powers reserved to the Governor shall be only for a period of transition and such reserved powers shall be framed and exercised in accordance with recognised constitutional practice and shall in no way prejudice the advance of Burma through the new constitution to full responsibility for her own Government within a reasonable period, and the new constitution for Burma shall further prescribe the manner in which or the time when the said reserved subjects and powers are to be transferred to popular control on the basis of full responsibility." It is rather an unwieldy way of putting the idea of automatic growth. Now, in connection with this, in my speech, because I was responsible for the writing of this Resolution, I have enlarged on this idea: "Reasonable period" is an important part of the Second Motion. There will undoubtedly be much difficulty and dispute in trying to indicate the period but it must be done because this is a necessary guarantee for our future life and a guarantee must, therefore, be quickly given. Full responsible government must be assured us within a reasonable period—reasonable, that is to say, from the point of view of people who calculate time in a simple business way and without any thought of sophisticated complications. Then, my Lord, in this particular part of my speech, I have made it perfectly clear, and the motion was accepted by the entire House, that we were referring to a Statutory provision in the proposed Constitution for a separated Burma, and guaranteeing Burma a Statutory Provision for the principle of automatic growth, that is, to enable Burma to achieve full responsible self-government within a reasonable period. Now, my Lord, this particular interpretation, and the entire Resolution was accepted by the Legislative Council without a division. Further, at that time, on that occasion U Ba Pe submitted another Resolution supporting the principle of separation for Burma. That Resolution was put to the vote and that Resolution

was defeated. These two things took place practically at the same time. Therefore, there is complete evidence of the real mind of the Legislative Council at the time of the passing of both these Resolutions.

Lord *Eustace Percy*: Dr. Ba Maw has not finished reading the third section of the Resolution.

Dr. *Ba Maw*.

No, my Lord, shall I do so?

Lord *Eustace Percy*: It might be just as well, in order to get it all before the Committee.

Dr. *Ba Maw*.

Certainly, my Lord. The third part of the Resolution deals with Federation: "In the event of failure to obtain a definite pronouncement from His Majesty's Government that Burma, if and when separated from India, will be granted the aforesaid constitution,"—now the condition is, as soon as we fail to obtain a definite pronouncement from His Majesty's Government—"this Council proposes that Burma shall enter the Indian Federation with at least the following terms. We have the terms. I will explain that further. (a) Burma shall have the right to secede from the Indian Federation, which it may exercise through its Legislature. (b) There shall be such financial adjustments between Burma and India as may be required by Burma's peculiar local conditions and other circumstances. (c) The division of Central and Provincial subjects in the proposed Indian Federation shall be reconsidered with reference to Burma with a view to provincialisation of additional subjects, special regard being had to Burma's geographical position and its peculiar needs and conditions, and further Burma shall be afforded all necessary facilities for acquiring administrative experience and knowledge of the reserved and federal subjects."

Now, my Lords, I am perfectly prepared to admit that this is not in the present circumstances a practicable Resolution. After all, we must face realities. Whatever we may desire, we as practical men are prepared to face realities, and it will be our duty to accept the final decision of this Honourable Committee. Here is a Resolution that is impracticable in both aspects. U Thein Maung has stressed the impracticability of the Federal part of the Resolution, but he has not at all referred to the absolute

6° Decembris, 1933.] GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION [Continued.
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

impracticability of the part relating to separation. I do ask U Thein Maung to be fair to us. Here is a proposition that is impracticable at both ends. He cannot use the Federal end as an argument against us without at the same time honestly accepting the impossibility of the end relating to separation. I quite admit, I am here to make a sincere statement, that we in this matter have been led away by certain dreams which unfortunately have proved impracticable. An impracticable dream may be against we separationists, but the same argument applies with the same force to the separationists. The separationists, according to the terms of this Resolution, cannot under any circumstances come and make the declaration that U Thein Maung has thought proper to make, namely, that they are separationists. They are separationists on the basis of a Constitution that will ensure Burma full responsible self-government by the process of automatic growth within a reasonable period, and so long as that condition is not achieved they are not separationists. The separationists have very, very cheerfully said that no one is a Federationist in Burma. According to this Resolution, I must admit it, but, at the same time, by the same token, no one is a separationist in Burma. Any man who has subscribed to this Resolution cannot be called a separationist upon the present terms, upon the very restricted terms that are now before the Honourable Committee, because, as U Thein Maung says, His Majesty's Government has issued the final word against conditional Federation. In the same way, His Majesty's Government has issued the final word against the proposition of automatic growth as a part of our Constitution. Again, my Lord, I feel the weight of my duty to present both sides of the case, all the real objective facts. Now, naturally, you will ask me the explanation for this Resolution. I admit that we were led away by dreams. As I mentioned in my speech, this was a declaration of rights; it must be treated as a declaration of rights. Rightly or wrongly, we considered, and we still consider, these to be our rights, but as I have submitted, the final word is with the Honourable Committee. But here was a declaration, and I do not see why these declarations should prevent us from pursuing our policy. Surely, my Lords, the Committee did not consider that the demand of the Princes for the right of secession is any

insurmountable obstacle to the entry of the Indian States into the Federation? I do ask the Committee to treat our demand on the same basis, to give the same value, no more and no less, to our demand for the right of secession as the Committee will be pleased to give to the demands of the Indian Princes.

Sir Austen Chamberlain: I do not know what passage Dr. Ba Maw has in his mind which causes him to think that the Committee contemplated that there would be a right of secession.

Dr. Ba Maw.

No, Sir. I am extremely sorry if I have been misunderstood. What I mean is this, that the demand made by the Indian Princes for the right of secession has not been considered as an obstacle to the entry of the Indian States into the proposed Indian Federation. Similarly, I plead that our demand for the right of secession, even if disallowed, should not be considered as an impediment to Burma's entry into the Indian Federation. I place my case on the same level as the case of the Indian States. It is no presumption, my Lord; I place it for moral reasons. Just as Burma, among the Indian Provinces, is the only Province that has been allowed to determine this question by an election, that is to say, if Burma enters into the Indian Federation, it will be a voluntary entry, so also it is a case of voluntary entry for the Indian States. This cannot be said in the case of other Indian Provinces. Therefore, on that moral ground, I say that our case in this aspect is the same as that of the Indian Princes, no more, no less. So, as I have already submitted, here is a Resolution, but there is ample explanation for the Resolution. Every argument that the separationists have used against us based upon this Resolution can cut both ways. This Resolution is as much against separation, if it is literally interpreted, as against Federation. Then, we come to a further stage. After the passing of this Resolution, we were waiting for news from England, and the news came at the proper time. The Honourable Secretary of State for India practically declared—not in so many words—that this Resolution was not a proper answer to the question asked by the Prime Minister, and that it was our duty to supply the British Government with a proper answer, failing which the

6° Decembris, 1933.] GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

British Government would have to consider for itself the best method of removing the barriers to reforms in Burma. As soon as this statement was made, we, the anti-separationists, naturally reconsidered the whole situation. We realised that the December Resolution was a declaration of rights of Indian ideals which really we had to admit had nothing to do with the Prime Minister's question. We realised our duty, namely, to give a specific answer to a specific question, and realising this duty we submitted a Resolution in the April Session of the Burma Legislative Council. Now, my Lord, as regards this particular Resolution, it is extremely simple and I do not see how it conflicts in any way with the Resolution that I have just read out, namely, the December Resolution. The April Resolution states very simply that if our choice is confined to the two alternatives placed before Burma by the Prime Minister we choose the Federal alternative. Now, in connection with this, I do ask the Honourable Members of the Committee to attach weight to the result of the election as well. We fought that election entirely on the basis of the Prime Minister's declaration. There could be no allegation of concealment; there could be no allegation of misrepresentation, for the very simple and sufficient reason that the Burma local government had taken every care to broadcast the full statement made by the Prime Minister, and the Burman local government as well as our opponents, the separationists, had made the threat of perpetual Federation as their principal argument against us. We went to the country and we fought that issue on the Prime Minister's declaration, and the country by an overwhelming majority, as U Ba Pe has pointed out, decided against Federation on the basis of the Prime Minister's Constitution.

Now, my Lord, at this juncture I wish to deal with what U Ba Pe has said. He has said that every Burman is a separationist, but I do, with the greatest respect, wish to warn the Committee to understand that word in the Burmese sense. True, my Lord, every Burman is a separationist, but a separationist, if I may be allowed to use the word, in the Irish sense. His reference to the Burmese King, his reference to her own laws and constitutions, are most conclusive proof of what separation means to the

Burmese mind, and I am supporting it with evidence. They say that we told the country that there would be no perpetual federation. That is impossible in view of all the literature that the local Government have issued, in view of the repeated statements made by the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons, and other statements repeated by the Burma local Government, but there is ample evidence that the separationists fought that election on the basis that separation would mean that every Indian would be expelled from India.

U Ba Pe: No.

Dr. Ma Maw.

That separation would mean (I repeat it) that all the posts in Burma would come into Burmese hands; separation would mean Burma for the Burmans. On this point I have a very excellent authority. I am referring to one of our most successful Governors, Sir Reginald Craddock, in a statement that he made regarding separation even in his time. I am quoting from a speech made on the 14th August, 1918: "But, so far as I have been able to gauge these sentiments, I think that it is correct to say that Burma is proud to form part of the Indian Empire, and has no desire to be separated from India."

Then there is a statement which was published in the "Rangoon Times" on the 28th July, 1921: "The insistence with which the question of separation comes to the fore could not fail to convince us and the public in general that provincial public opinion, which is still but fairly defined on most subjects, is quite emphatic on this one. A little analytical conversation with advocates for separation shows that motives for their advocacy are widely different; for instance, very many non-Burmans support the separationist cause because they are in favour of preserving the comparative tranquillity of this Province, whereas it is under in able" (there is a misprint here; I think it should be "undeniable") "that another section of the separationist thought is intimately connected with the 'Burma for the Burmans' aspiration, and is part of the programme for insularising this country." This was the plank, that they could, under the new Constitution, make immigration laws which would not only expel the resident Indians, but would prevent

6^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

the Indians from coming into the country. I am only pointing out a fact just to prove how the most primitive factor, namely, the factor of race hatred, was the basis of the recent separation campaign. It was all directed at that, as U Thein Maung has himself admitted, and it was greatly the result of a Burmo-Indian riot which took place a few months, or, at the outside, a year from the time when the separation question was raised for the country. That the Burman takes no interest in this separation issue by itself is completely proved by the fact that, throughout the three election campaigns under the dyarchical system of government, in no election campaign did any party make separation an issue. In no election under dyarchy did any separationist party, or any party, make separation an issue, and separation became an issue, and a very real issue, only at the time of the first Indian Round Table Conference, and immediately after the announcement of His Majesty's Government, through the Right Honourable the Prime Minister. This conclusively proves that separation is not such an urgent issue in the minds of the people, and the recent election results show that the Burman attaches not the slightest importance to separation, but he lays all the stress upon an acceptable constitution. I do ask the Honourable Members of the Committee to consider this. In Burma it is admitted that Upper Burma is more purely Burmese in race, in sentiment, in tradition, in every possible sense, and in this particular separation controversy the whole of Upper Burma, with the exception of two constituencies, voted against separation.

Now, my Lord, I am sure my separationist friends themselves will not dispute the fact that Upper Burma represents real Burmese sentiment, and Upper Burma was almost unanimously against separation. Lower Burma to a large extent voted for separation. Naturally the Committee will ask me why. For several reasons, the most important being the fall in the price of commodities, the present economic depression and the average man being hit very badly with the present economic depression sees the Indian taking away his food from his point of view. The agriculturist finds that the Indian is the moneylender from whom he has to raise a direct loan. The man in Lower Burma finds that Indian labour is being employed to a very great extent,

and these were the dominating factors in this position, namely, that a majority of Lower Burma voted for separation. The main reasons in their minds were to eliminate Indian competition, and to eliminate the Indian creditor, what we call the chetti, the man who takes away Burmese lands in lieu of unpaid debts. I ask my Lords and the Honourable Members of the Committee whether these three factors could be cured by separation. Would any responsible separationist say that the agriculturist or the Lower Burman would be satisfied on these three points, namely, that Indian competition would be eliminated by separation; secondly, that an Indian moneylender, the creditor, would be eliminated by separation, and, thirdly, that Burmese lands would revert to Burmese hands by separation? These are the prospects they have in view, my Lord. Their idea of separation is not an abstract idea. Their idea of separation is a real and immediate release from these troubles, and they understand separation in that sense, and, as long as separation does not connote that, they are, in my submission, against separation. These are the real factors which have weighed most with the separationists. My Lord, I believe I have taxed the patience of the Committee to a great extent, but circumstances have forced me to discharge my duty in that way. I have tried to the best of my ability to place all the facts as I see them. I may be right, my Lord, I may be wrong, but I do wish to assure the Committee that I am trying to discharge my duty clearly, and to the best of my ability, because, whatever the other side may say against us, there cannot be any dispute that the masses have voted overwhelmingly against separation, and I beg to submit that what will weigh with my Lord and the Honourable Members of the Committee is the solemn pledge given by His Majesty's Government, that the electorate will have to decide the question for themselves, and the result of the pledge was a general election in which the non-co-operators lifted the boycott and, believing in the pledge of His Majesty's Government, took part in the general election; and, thirdly, that the result of the general election was an overwhelming majority against separation. Of course, I do appreciate the fact that nothing can bind the Committee in its final decisions, but I also believe, my Lord, with all my heart, that a solemn

6^o Decembris, 1933.] GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

pledge given by His Majesty's Government to Burma would be ultimately implemented by the Committee. So I base my entire case, apart from all these explanations that I have given, upon that solemn pledge, and upon the result of that election which took place in consequence of that pledge. I thank the Honourable Members of the Committee very gratefully for the hearing that has been given to me.

Mr. Harper.

My Lord Chairman, the attitude of the European community in Burma to the general issue between separation and federation has always been, and still is, that the choice is one for the people of Burma to exercise. In effect that, of course, means at this present state, in any case the people in Burma who have the duty and the power to influence public opinion. On such general issues as the racial and religious and national and other such issues, the European community have been careful to take neither one side nor the other, but have been prepared to fall into line with the majority choice. The community, particularly the commercial section of it, have taken the view that their most helpful contribution to this problem would be to confine themselves to the practical effects of separation, to study to what extent the material interests of Burma would be affected, both the Burma Government revenues and the livelihood of the Burma people.

In particular, there are three issues which in this connection have seemed to us to be of fundamental importance. Firstly, there is the effect of India's protective fiscal policy on Burma. Secondly, the financial consequences of separation, that is to say, the probable result of the financial settlement which will have to be made, and, thirdly, the question of the trade relations of Burma with India in the event of separation. Taking the first of these issues, the effect of India's protective policy on Burma, U Thein Maung and U Ba Pe have both referred to this point, and I agree with them that the effect on Burma has been that India has protected industries which do not exist, with one exception, in Burma, with the result that the cost of the protected commodities has risen to the people of Burma, and there has been no corresponding benefit to Burma in return. The whole tendency in recent years since this protective policy has been in force in

India indicates that as time goes on India will become more industrialised and will industrialise at a greater pace certainly than Burma, and that the present disadvantages that have resulted to Burma will be perpetuated and aggravated. This, of course, is an argument in favour of separation.

On the second issue, the financial aspect, thanks to the publication of what is known as the Howard Nixon Memorandum, that has had a certain amount of attention in the Burma Legislative Council, though, naturally, perhaps with a limited degree of appreciation of the intricate details of that rather complicated document. In his speech at the conclusion of the Burma Round Table Conference, the Prime Minister promised that what he called a decision on this financial problem would be made and published before the general election which took place in Burma a year ago, on the sole issue of separation versus federation. Unfortunately it was not found possible to fulfil that promise, but the Government of Burma have since published a statement from which it appears that the Government of Burma in an attempt to bring the Howard Nixon figures, or some of them, up to date, arrived at the conclusion that Burma will gain a matter of two crores and 98½ lakhs of rupees per annum. This figure has since been amended by an adjustment in receipts of customs duties and the total is now put at two crores and 70 lakhs. This includes an estimated loss of 93 lakhs by the Burma railways which should, I think, be added back, as losses by railways will not, if railway finance is separated from general revenues, be a charge on the general revenues. If this is added back, this would make the total 363 lakhs, from which there has to be deducted a sum for pensions and a sum for redemption of debt to India. Allowing, say, one crore to 1½ crores of rupees to cover these two deductions, we arrive at a net gain to Burma by Separation of over two crores per annum. This, of course, is only an estimate, but we think it probably enough to indicate that there would be a gain to Burma in this respect by Separation, and with a total Budget of 9¼ crores, as it is at present, one might reasonably describe a gain of two crores, if it is achieved, as substantial. This is another point, of course, for Separation.

I would like to leave that point and turn to what we regard as the most im-

6° Decembris, 1933.]

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

portant of these three issues, that is, the economic issue as represented by the trade relations between India and Burma. We in the European Community have felt it inconvenient, in our attempts to help in this Separation problem, to have been left, as we are still left, without any clear indication by the Council of their choice between the two alternatives which were offered to them; but it is in one sense, perhaps, fortunate that this issue is still open. For we feel that this all-important question of the future trade relations between India and Burma has not so far received the consideration it deserves. It has been rarely mentioned, I think, in the debates in the Council, and, as Members of the Committee will have noticed, it has not been mentioned at all so far in the speeches which have preceded mine. It is a matter of vital and material importance to Burma, and one which, in our opinion, must be fully considered before a reasoned decision on the Separation issue can be taken. The point is discussed at some length in the Memorandum which has been submitted to the Committee by the Burma Chamber of Commerce. I may perhaps be allowed to explain that I am not the author of that Memorandum or of the other Memorandum which is bound up with it, but I shall be very glad to do my best to answer any questions which the Committee may wish to ask on it. Briefly, the position of the trade relations between Burma and India is this. Burma is an agricultural and exporting country, and 48 per cent. of its total exports go to India. That does not include a matter of eight crores of rupees annual remittances to India by Indian labourers in Burma. In return, Burma takes 42 per cent. of its imports from India. It is clear, therefore, that, however slack the ties with India may or may not be in matters of race and religion and the rest, Burma is definitely now an integral part of the economic unit of the Indian Empire. This we regard as a fact of fundamental importance which must not be lost sight of at any time in considering this question of Separation. The Montagu-Chelmsford Report, from which U Thein Maung has already quoted to-day, said that Burma is not India, and the Joint Select Committee on the 1919 Bill stated that Burma was tacked on to India by an accident. But it has to be remembered that that same accident has been responsible for the growth of Burmese economic

connection with India and for the position to-day, that Burma is, as I say, part of the economic unit within the Indian Empire. In 1862, when four divisions of Lower Burma were formed into the Indian Province of British Burma, the total trade of Burma, imports and exports together, with India and elsewhere, amounted to a value of five crores of rupees. Now the trade with India alone is in the neighbourhood of 40 crores of rupees. All that has grown up under the system of Free Trade which exists within the Indian Empire. Whenever, therefore, it is suggested that the accidental nature of Burma's administrative connection with India is a good reason for breaking that connection, it must be remembered that the result of that accident, while not vastly changing conditions—differences of race and others, which existed before that time—has been to forge new links which did not then exist. The problem, therefore, to my mind, becomes this: If there are unnecessary or undesirable ties between India and Burma which should be broken, can this be done without automatically severing other ties which it is vital to Burma to retain? Can Burma be separated politically without disturbing the economic connection? In our opinion, the danger in this case lies in tariffs, and, as the Indian Statutory Commission pointed out, the effect of Separation would, *prima facie*, be that the tariffs of each country would apply against the other. It is never wise, I think, to be dogmatic on the effect of tariffs, but I think this much can be safely said, that they invariably change the channels and courses of trade. In fact, that is often their object. Any effect of this nature which tariffs might have on Burma's exports would be to divert them away from India to the possibly vain search for other markets. Although little appreciation of this danger seems to have been shown so far by the Burmese people (which is perhaps not very surprising, for the Burmese people do not take or have not so far taken a leading part in the business and commerce of their country; that has been left largely to Indian, European and Chinese capital and endeavour), although the Burmese people themselves do not seem to have appreciated this danger so far, the close trade relations which do exist between India and Burma have been recognised

6^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

at each important stage in the development of Indian Constitutional Reforms during the last few years, first by the Indian Statutory Commission, and then by the Burma Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference, of which my friend U Ba Pe was a member, and then by the Prime Minister in his speech at the end of the Burma Round Table Conference, when he said: "It is important that separation should cause a minimum disturbance of the close trade relations between Burma and India, and arrangements will have to be made in regard to these relations before separation takes place." So all these authorities have recognised the need for a minimum disturbance of the close trade relations between the two countries. A minimum disturbance implies some disturbance, and we recognise that if each country is to have freedom as regards its outside tariffs there must be some reactions on the Indo-Burma trade, but so far as the Indo-Burma trade itself is concerned we are convinced that if any tariffs at all are allowed, the result will not be a minimum disturbance. It will be, or will very soon develop into, a serious disturbance which could have no other effect than gravely to reduce the prosperity of Burma. It has been suggested to us in Burma that if the negotiations for a trade agreement to regulate these relations were left to the present Governments of Burma and India—assuming for a moment that it were constitutionally possible for a Province of India to make a trade agreement with the Central Government—those present Governments would be reluctant to agree to tie the hands of their successors by withholding their rights to use tariffs as a means of raising revenue. I think that is a perfectly intelligible reluctance. The Chamber of Commerce Memorandum indicates on that point that a light revenue tariff by Burma and India on the imports from each other might in itself do little harm but it would bring in little revenue and would not be worth imposing as a revenue measure. There they speak of a tariff of 5 per cent. A few days ago I heard the President of the Board of Trade in a broadcast address refer to tariffs of 20 to 30 per cent. as a moderate level, as tariffs go. I do not hesitate to say that if that is what tariffs mean—and it is what tariffs mean—Burma's trade with India would

be severely shaken, if it were made subject to tariffs of that order.

Then there is a wider significance to this question which I must mention; it is of the utmost importance both to Burma and India that if Burma is to be separated from India politically, the parting should be friendly and that relations should remain of as friendly as possible a character. The Committee will know much better than I do how close a connection there often is between economic relations and diplomatic relations. History in our part of the world, unfortunately, shows that it does not take great provocation to arouse feelings of aggressive animosity between Burmans and Indians, and there must, in the case of India, always be a grave danger of friction in economic relations affecting relations of another kind. The key to this seems to us to lie in maintaining the existing freedom from tariffs under which Burma and India now trade together. The question is, how can this be reconciled with the political separation of Burma from India if that is to be the Committee's recommendation? If it is not to be their recommendation, then, of course, under Federation, no change in India-Burma trade relations would arise, so other existing economic disadvantages would be perpetuated. But, if it is to be separation, how is this vital economic connection to be maintained? If it were possible to provide in the Constitution Act that the existing relationship be maintained, even for a limited period of years, we feel that it would in fact be in the best interests of both countries, but this would involve some *pro tanto* interference with the fiscal autonomy of both the new Governments. I do not know how far the Committee are prepared to go in that direction. In case there are insuperable difficulties in such a suggestion, the Burma Chamber of Commerce in their Memorandum have suggested another course. They have urged the Joint Select Committee to do three things. Firstly, to record an emphatic view that it would be in Burma's and India's interests to maintain the existing trade relations and that the relations should be regulated by a trade convention. Secondly, to record the view that in order to avoid interfering so far as possible with the fiscal autonomy of the new Governments, the Convention should be negotiated between the new Government of India and the

6^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

new Government of Burma; and, thirdly, to recommend that the Constitution Act should provide that until that Trade Convention has been concluded by the new Governments, existing trade relations should be continued. We make this request, not by any means because we think it is the surest method of preserving those relations. We think there may be great difficulties in arriving at a satisfactory agreement. Nothing, in fact, could be sure except an *ad hoc* provision in the Act, but we have put our request in this form because we consider it to be the most unobjectionable and the most reasonable measure that we could ask the Committee to support.

If I may sum up then the attitude of the European community in Burma on this separation issue, it is that if the people of the country desire separation and if the existing India-Burman trade relations are preserved, we consider that separation is the right course to adopt. If the country wants separation but those trade relations are not preserved, in our opinion separation could then be effected only at the cost of seriously reducing the material prosperity of Burma and of its

people. Once again, we come up against this uncertainty about the country's wishes. As I said when I began my statement, the European community have consistently left the main issue to the people's representatives, and we had hoped that they would declare their choice unequivocally by a large majority. They have not, I regret to say, so far done so, and for myself, while I have listened to the speeches to-day with the greatest interest, I do not feel that we are much further advanced in knowing what are the real wishes of the majority of the people of Burma. The European community have given me no mandate to express an opinion in favour of or against Federation on their behalf; they have never been unanimous on that subject and they are not unanimous on it now. In the circumstances, therefore, I hesitate to express any opinion of my own. I must be content to conclude by referring again to my main theme, and repeat that, if the decision of Parliament is to be for Federation, it is of vital importance to the material prosperity of Burma that an effective arrangement be made to retain the good will of India and to ensure the maintenance of the existing fiscal relations between the two countries.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned to to-morrow at half-past Ten o'clock.

7^o Decembris, 1933.]

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

DIE JOVIS, 7^o DECEMBRIS, 1933.

Present:

Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.
Lord Chancellor.
Marquess of Salisbury.
Marquess of Zetland.
Marquess of Linlithgow.
Marquess of Reading.
Earl of Derby.
Earl of Lytton.
Earl Peel.
Lord Middleton.
Lord Ker (Marquess of Lothian).
Lord Hardinge of Penshurst.
Lord Irwin.
Lord Snell.
Lord Rankeillour.
Lord Hutchison of Montrose.

Major Attlee.
Mr. Butler.
Major Cadogan.
Sir Austen Chamberlain.
Mr. Cocks.
Sir Reginald Craddock.
Mr. Davidson.
Mr. Isaac Foot.
Sir Samuel Hoare.
Mr. Morgan Jones.
Sir Joseph Nall.
Lord Eustace Percy.
Miss Pickford.
Sir John Wardlaw-Milne.
Earl Winterton.

The following Delegates from Burma were also present:—

Sra Shwe Ba.
Mr. C. H. Campagnac.
Mr. N. M. Cowasji.
U Kyaw Din.
Mr. K. B. Harper.
U Chit Hlaing.

U Thein Maung.
Dr. Ba Maw.
U Ba Pe.
Dr. Ma Saw Sa.
U Shwe Tha.
Mr. S. A. S. Tyabji.

The MARQUESS of LINLITHGOW in the Chair.

Mr. N. M. Cowasji.

My Lord Chairman, the question of the separation of Burma may be examined from three aspects, the political, the financial and the economic. On the political aspect of this question, the leaders of both sections of the Burmese political parties have already addressed the Committee, and I do not wish to take up the time of the Committee by any observations of my own on this aspect of the question. The Indian position has been to refrain from expressing any definite opinion on this question, and to leave the decision to the indigenous people of Burma, but our view, however, is that the preponderating majority in which the candidates who stood on the non-separationist ticket were returned should be taken as the final rejection of the separation issue. Whether or not a case has been made out for the separation of Burma on political grounds, the case against separation on financial

grounds is, in my humble opinion, unassailable. Contrary to the Prime Minister's declaration of the 12th January, 1932, no conclusions have been reached as to the final terms of the final settlement in the event of Burma being separated, and it is unfortunate that there is no authoritative statement on this matter.

The Howard-Nixon Memorandum on the subject was drawn up in 1931 on the basis of the figures pertaining to the year 1929-30. Without entering into any controversy as to the adequacy of the provisions made therein for defence and other administrative charges, I find that the then estimate of the gain accruing to Burma was put down at 378 lakhs of rupees. These figures were brought up to date in a Memorandum published by the Government of Burma in April, 1933. This Memorandum reduced the estimate again from Rs.378 lakhs to Rs.298 lakhs. The figures were mostly estimates of the financial year ending 31st March, 1933.

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Even at the time of publication of these figures it was widely held that the income side was over-estimated, and admittedly the Statement made no provision on the expenditure side for increased interest charges. The actuals now available reveal the extent of the over-estimation. Customs received, for instance, amount to only Rs.416 lakhs, to which has to be added the estimated cost of Excise on Burmese consumption of kerosene, and petrol, which amount to Rs.74 lakhs, bringing the total under the head of Customs Receipts to Rs.490 lakhs. The Government's figure of Rs.545 lakhs is thus Rs.55 lakhs in excess of the actuals.

As regards Salt revenue, the Government figure of Rs.47 lakhs turns out to be an over-estimate by Rs.13 lakhs. No provision has been made, as I have already stated, for the increased interest charges consequent upon the increase in Burma's share of the Indian Public Debt. The Government's estimate of the addition to Burma's Public Debt is Rs.583 lakhs. Moreover, there is the accumulated deficit in the Budgets of the last four years amounting to nearly Rs.7 crores which has been financed by temporary borrowings from the Government of India. It appears that the Government's estimate of Rs.583 lakhs errs somewhat on the low side, and while we have, of course, the very latest figures of the outstanding Public Debt of India, we have not got the correct figures of the unproductive Debt item. On the basis of the Government's figures alone we find that there is an additional debt liability of Rs.13 crores over and above the estimate in the Howard-Nixon Memorandum, involving on the basis of 5 per cent. interest an additional outgo of 65 lakhs of rupees. The income tax figure is based on 1930-31 actuals, but we all know that subsequently income tax receipts have fallen off. Without making any allowances for this and taking into account only the deterioration of Customs and Salt receipts and the additional interest charges, we find that the estimated benefit to Burma in the event of separation, reduces itself to Rs.165 lakhs, out of which has to be met the Debt Sinking Fund instalment of Rs.1 crore and pensionary liability of Rs.70 lakhs, representing the mean of the two conflicting estimates by Mr. Howard and Mr. Nixon.

The position during the first half of the current fiscal year has, if anything,

worsened considerably. The Customs Revenue for the six months ending 30th September, 1933, exclusive of Excise, Kerosene and Petrol, amounts to only Rs.183 lakhs, as compared with Rs.224 lakhs during the corresponding period of last year; a fall in revenue of Rs.40 lakhs.

Whatever might have been the case on financial grounds for the separation of Burma at the time the Simon Commission recommended separation, there is none whatever at present. Admittedly the depression has hit Burma very hard, and the latest figures are in a sense probably abnormal, but it would be unsafe to make any estimates on the assumption that there will be a very substantial improvement in the near future or a rise in the world price level to that obtaining in 1929 or 1930, which alone would justify separation on financial grounds.

While on the basis of the figures available now there is no benefit to Burma by separation, the Province is struggling to balance its budget. Though in March last the budget was balanced on paper it is quite clear that there will be a deficit of at least Rs.1½ crores in the current year. A Retrenchment Committee is no doubt seated to find ways and means of bridging the gap between revenue and expenditure, but it is not possible to forecast the extent of savings they might be able to effect. Already there has been a good deal of economy practised, and the prospect of reducing expenses by Rs.1½ crores in a Budget of Rs.8 crores is none too rosy. It is thus clear that the future Government of a separated Burma cannot look forward to an automatic surplus being realised by the mere act of the separation of Burma, and if conditions do not improve in the very near future they will be obliged to resort to the taxation of Indo-Burmese trade soon after separation, not only with a view to the remission of the capitation and Thathameda taxes and finding the money for the Public Utility Departments, but merely for balancing the Budget itself. I am of opinion that the Government's assumption that Burmese finance will automatically require the assistance of taxation on the Indo-Burma trade is fully justified.

My friend, Mr. Harper's analysis of the financial consequences of separation is somewhat different and takes a more optimistic view of the situation than I

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

am inclined to take. The broad conclusion of Mr. Harper is that Burma revenues will benefit to the extent of at least Rs.2 crores net per annum. If I understand the European Chamber's method of calculation rightly it is that they wish to make certain material changes in the method of approach to the problem adopted in the Howard-Nixon Memorandum and subsequently modified by the revised statement of the Burma Government. For instance, Mr. Harper would prefer to treat railway finance separately from general finance, thereby removing the railway deficit of 93 lakhs of rupees from the general budget. The intention is perhaps to carry forward this loss in the railway budget. The reasoning presumably is that in India the railway finances have been separated from the general budget under the 1924 Convention. The authors of that Convention, however, never visualised a situation in which the railway would be working at such a big loss as they are doing at present. What has happened so far is that in the early years of the separation convention the railway made very big profits indeed and put as de substantial amounts to reserve and depreciation funds and, in addition, paid its contribution to the general revenues. During the last three years, however, the railways have been working at a loss, but this deficit has been covered by transfers from the reserve fund and borrowings from the depreciation fund. There is technically no objection to average the result of both lean and good years, but the proposal of the European Chamber to start off with an uncovered deficit in the railway budget, when the railway is 100 per cent. State property, appears to me to be unbusinesslike. Such a position has not arisen in the case of the Indian railways yet, and I do not know what the Indian Legislature would do in a similar contingency with regard to the Indian railway system. I am of opinion that should there be any deficit in the working of the Burma State Railways, the deficit should be fairly and squarely faced and a provision made in the general Budget.

I now turn, my Lord, to the economic side of the separation question, and here I am on somewhat common ground with European commercial opinion in Burma. In fact, I venture to think that the case as presented by Mr. Harper for the Trade convention on the basis of Free Trade between India and Burma, in the event

of separation, is really a case for federation and nothing else. I fully endorse the opinion of the British Burma Chamber, that Burma is an integral part of the economic unit which is contained in the present British India, and any policy which tends towards economic separation instead of economic integration is not in Burma's interests, and we feel convinced that the policy of political separation of Burma from India will result, directly and immediately, in the driving of an economic wedge, the consequences of which it is impossible to foresee. On these grounds I oppose the separation of Burma from India, both on financial and economic grounds.

Chairman: Does that conclude your statement?

Mr. N. M. Cowasji.

Yes.

Mr. S. A. S. Tyabji.

My Lord Chairman, I desire to make my position clear to you. I come here nominated by the Government to represent the Indian Community in Burma, not as a Member representing any constituency of the Burma Legislative Council. Generally speaking, there is no great difference of opinion in the Indian Community, for, though some may not take any active part in working for federation or against it, and others may do so, the general idea prevalent is that separation is undesirable at the moment. The reasons for the undesirability of separation in the opinion of some are connected with the economics of the country. With others, the political effect which they anticipate in a separation regime on the position of India and Burma, is uppermost in their mind. I must confess that the number of those who have become anxious of the political effect of separation on themselves has increased within the last two or three years because of the troublous times that we have had in Burma two or three years ago, and I may also say because anxiety has been caused by the type of electioneering indulged in during the last elections of the Council and which have been referred to by my friend, Dr. Ba Maw. I desire frankly to state that, besides these factors, Indians in Burma have a natural sympathy for federation, and such sentiment requires no apology, my Lord. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that a considerable number of them are on the general electorate and, as such, their

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

votes have been canvassed for and sought by parties standing for election to the Council. Thus, they have received a direct invitation from the Burmese people themselves to take a part in the elections which were held to decide the issue of separation *versus* federation. No apology is needed on that behalf, for they belong to Burma and claim the right to exercise their franchise and political rights in the expression of their views. On the other hand, the three organizations of Indians, the Burma-Indian Chamber of Commerce, the Nada-coutta-Chettiars Association, and the Burma-Indian Association, have expressed no direct view on the question of separation or federation, nor have they directly or indirectly held any propaganda one way or the other. Nor have they spent money in financing any of the parties. Here I will at once deny the charge which my friend, U Thein Maung, made yesterday, that the Burma-Indian Association was formed for the purpose of carrying propaganda against separation and financing the Burmese Anti-Separationist Parties. That statement has been made in a Government Report, and I place before you, my Lord, this idea, that in this manner the Government has to a certain extent played the Indians against the Burmans. I can deny the charge because I myself have been the President of that Association for the past two years, and my attitude on the question is well known to my Burmese friends, and I can assure this Committee that the Burma-Indian Association did not pass a single resolution with regard to the question of separation or federation, did not put up any candidate to represent it in the Council, nor has it taken any active part in the decision of the separation or federation issue. Although these Associations have taken no part in any propaganda in favour of federation or against it, it does not mean that they have no opinion with regard to this question. They do feel, as my friend Mr. Cowasji has just stated, that the preponderating vote given in favour of the Anti-Separationists during the past election should have been a sufficient indication of the mind of Burma and should have indicated to this Honourable Committee the view taken by the people in Burma with regard to the federation and separation question. They do feel an anxiety about their political status in the country. They do believe that financially the position of

the Province will be worse. They do believe that the trade of the country will suffer. With regard to the financial position of the country, my friend, Mr. Cowasji, has just made a statement, to which I do not desire to refer at this moment, but I do wish to say that in the debate that we heard yesterday very little was stated as to what advantages are going to be derived from separation, or what disadvantages will be felt from federation, with regard to social, religious, or political matters. So far, no one has even hinted that connection with India has led to any social or religious disabilities, nor have they stated that if Burma enters the Federation such social or religious disabilities would be felt.

As regards political disadvantages or advantages, very little has been said indeed, except that it is the desire of a part of the Burmese people to create a separate political entity. I say that in this matter it is only a part that desires to separate, and the whole of it does not, and to this matter, my Lord Chairman, I shall refer again.

So far as the economic conditions of Burma are concerned, no advantages have been shown as accruing from separation. What have been placed before this Committee are some of the disadvantages under which Burma is said to have been suffering. These advantages are of two kinds connected with policy, such as matters of tariff, or connected with disadvantages through administrative exigencies, such as the Meston Award and financial conditions arising out of that Award. As regards tariffs, Burma has to pay, but in turn Burma gets business from India to enable it to pay the expanded tariff and the protection that is given to her industries. At the same time, she has gained some advantage in at least two cases in the development of her nascent industries and the future development of the sugar industry in Burma.

My Lord Chairman, with regard to the financial Meston Award, I would only say that its injustice has been universal, and its injustice has been felt not only by Burma, but by provinces like Bengal, Bombay and Madras and most of the others, so that it is not a condition which is singular, which is specific to Burma alone, but it is a condition which has been felt by almost every province

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

and it is, one might almost say, a common condition to all the provinces. The Meston Award has been condemned by almost all the provinces, but it may be stated that under Federation, those conditions would not prevail and would not be perpetuated. My Lord Chairman, it has been claimed that the connection of Burma with India has proved a loss to Burma financially, but in the consideration of this question, when balance sheets are made out and statements are prepared by the Government, facts are forgotten. It is forgotten that India has many overhead charges and she incurs many losses on behalf of provinces; for instance, she has been incurring constant loss for many years on the posts and telegraphs. It is for the benefit of all the provinces, not for Bengal or for Bombay, but the advantage has been derived by Burma also. I might remind you also that India has been stabilising her exchange, and, in doing so, has been incurring immense losses, but that loss also has been incurred not for India alone, but for all the provinces, for all the business, for the Government, and for the people of all the provinces. So that whilst in the balance sheets that are prepared the overhead charges, as I might say, are conveniently kept out, those charges which India undertakes to pay and the Central Government undertakes to pay, and, to meet those losses for the benefit of all the provinces, are not included in such balance sheets in such statements as have been prepared, and, in that, I confess that I feel that the Government of Burma has to some extent been responsible for the creation of ideas amongst the people that India has been very gravely unjust to Burma, whilst I would say that the injustice, if any, is equal to all the provinces and is not singular to Burma itself. In the financial consideration I desire to mention that conditions are constantly changing. We had the Howard-Nixon Report giving us certain facts and figures, but in that Report also there were indeterminate factors which made the Howard-Nixon Report almost out of date in a very short period. Later on that Report was followed by a statement given by the Government of Burma. That was supplemented and was corrected two months after it was put before the Legislative Council. With regard to these statements I have made my remarks in the Legislative Council, and I do not propose therefore to repeat those

remarks here, my Lord Chairman. With regard to the trade conditions, I very much appreciated the statement which was made yesterday by my friend Mr. Harper. I agree with him to a very large extent; but before I come to the question of trade I would agree with my friend Mr. Cowasji that the losses on railways ought not to be treated in the manner that Mr. Harper has suggested; in any case, whether railway finance is kept separately or is combined does not matter; it does not matter whether the money goes out of the right pocket of the Government or the left pocket of the Government; so far as the people are concerned, it comes out of the same pocket, and that is all that the people are concerned about. Therefore the railway losses ought to be taken into consideration when considering the financial position of Burma. With regard to trade, as I say, I very much agree with what my friend Mr. Harper has stated. The trade conditions between India and Burma are so very intimate. 58 per cent. of the total trade of Burma is connected with India and there is no doubt that Burma has become an economic unit so far as India is concerned. Mr. Harper very well stated that the connection, accidental as it was, of Burma with India, has created a vast trade for Burma, and that trade as I stated just now, to the extent of 58 per cent., is connected with India. It is to be remembered that in these days when conventions and agreements between different countries are so prevalent, it will not be easy for Burma to find markets for commodities like rice, timber and oils, which she so freely exports to India. Whilst the export of rice is a very large quantity, I might mention that it forms only 5 per cent. of the total production of the rice of India. Therefore, so far as India is concerned, that trade of rice is not so important to India as it is to Burma. Five per cent. of the total production to India of rice is a quantity which could be made up if she chose to do so, but for Burma, if she loses the market in India, it would mean a calamity indeed. My Lord Chairman, the trade convention which has been proposed by my friend Mr. Harper, I agree with, and as to the three conditions that he has suggested, I feel very much inclined to agree with him upon those also. Together with that, I also feel that it is necessary that a Labour Convention between the Governments of India and

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Burma may also be formed because labour is as important a factor in the life of Burma as the trade factor, and it will be very necessary to arrive at a convention between India and Burma on the labour question, so that the friendly feeling may exist and continue between India and Burma if separation does take place. But, on the other hand, I would like to mention this, that hearing all these speeches I have failed to realise what are the political advantages that are going to be obtained from separation. I have failed to understand what are the economic advantages which Burma expects to gain out of separation, and what are the financial or economic advantages which Burma expects to gain out of separation. On neither of these two accounts can we see any definite advantage to Burma. On the other hand we do see very definite disadvantages which may accrue to Burma from separation, both with regard to her political and with regard to her economic well-being in the future; and I may say this, that even if a trade convention is formed, even if it is for 10 years, what is to happen after 10 years? During these 10 years, mentality in Burma and in India will be created, and we do not know what that would mean to Burma in the future. Burma's trade is, to my mind, very much dependent upon India, and anything that is going to jeopardise that is going to jeopardise the very lives of the people of Burma, and, therefore, to my mind, it is a most risky adventure for Burma at this moment to separate from India. I would suggest further, my Lord Chairman, that there would be some point if the whole of the people of Burma were of one mind in their demand for separation, but we see that the Legislative Council has not been able to give any decisive vote on this question. Even though you may not accept the electorates' decision on the question, yet I would point out that on page 6 of the introduction to the Burma White Paper it was stated: "In his statement on 12th January, 1932, the Prime Minister said, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, that if and when they were satisfied that the desire of the people of Burma was that the Government of their country should be separated from that of India, they would take steps, subject to the approval of Parliament, to give effect to this desire". I do ask this Committee whether it is satisfied that the desire of

the people of Burma is to separate, whether they have given in unambiguous terms their decision, and if that be not so, what is the case for separation then? If the Council has not been prepared to give a decisive vote, it may be that both the parties may feel that their voting power was equal, or I go so far as to say that if a decision had been by a narrow majority, even then, for a vital change of this nature, there was not the justification for the Government to take a decisive step such as separation. Therefore, I ask that the position for a *status quo* has arisen and that be maintained. I do not desire to take up any further time of the Committee and I will end my statement.

Mr. Campagnac.

My Lord Chairman, I have very little to say on the subject. I represent here a very small but, I venture to say, a not unimportant community of Burma—that is, the Anglo-Burman community. I would ask Members of the Committee kindly to refer to the speech made by me at the Plenary Conference of the Burma Round Table Conference for the history and origin of this community. For the present, I shall only say that in the Anglo-Burman community are included Anglo-Indians and domiciled Europeans born or domiciled in Burma. As a minority community we cannot guide but must follow the destinies of the country, and for that reason when the Indian Statutory Commission came to Burma and we had to consider what our attitude would be towards this separation question, we asked ourselves first: "What is the general wish of the people of Burma?" We thought it would be wrong, it would be presumptuous on our part, to flout the will of the people. It has been admitted before your Lordship on all hands that up to that time, up to the time the Indian Statutory Commission visited Burma, there was a unanimous desire on the part of the people of Burma that Burma should be separated from India. Your Lordships have been told that delegations waited upon the late Mr. Montagu in India; that delegations were sent to England to confer with the Secretary of State and to impress upon him that Burma should be separated. There was only one opinion, and that was for separation.

Under those circumstances we considered it to be our duty to advocate

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

before the Indian Statutory Commission that Burma should be separated from India.

In doing that, my Lord, we were going really very much against our own sentiment because many of us have Indian blood in our veins, many of us still have relations in India, all of us are connected by tradition with India. The question which arises now is has anything happened since then; has anything happened since the Indian Statutory Commission visited Burma to make us believe that the people of Burma have changed their minds? My Lord, it has been argued before you that this question of separation and federation was placed before the electorate of Burma, and that the electorate has decided by a very large majority in favour of federation. My Lord, if my community, or if I believed that to be the case, I would not to-day be urging before your Lordships that Burma should be separated from India. But, my Lord, I submit that the issue which was placed before the electorate was really not one of separation or federation. What the anti-separationists voted for was the Jubilee Hall Resolution and that Jubilee Hall Resolution emphatically opposed the perpetual federation with India, in other words, the electorate were induced to believe that they would be allowed to secede at any time, and at their will. We have been told, my Lord, that that resolution was unhappily worded, but there can be no question that that is the resolution which was put before the people of the country, and that was the resolution upon which they voted. In support of that statement, my Lords, if your Lordships will refer to the resolution which was moved or supported by the anti-separationists directly after the elections in the Legislative Council you have the same words appearing, you have the same demand that Burma should be allowed to separate at her own will.

My Lord, if the anti-separationists did, in fact, have a mandate from the country that Burma should enter the federation unconditionally without any right to secede, is it not passing strange, having regard to the fact that they had such a large majority in the House that they were able to put one of their own candidates into the Presidential Chair, that they did not table a clear cut resolution to that effect. But at that Session directly after the candidates had returned from the country no such resolu-

tion was put before the Legislative Council in Burma, and no answer, so far as I am aware (no satisfactory answer) has been given by the anti-separationists for not tabling such a resolution if that was the mandate which was, in fact, given to them at the elections.

My Lord, I do think that there should be no further delay in this matter. I venture to think that if, after the second Burma Round Table Conference, without referring the question to the people of Burma at all, His Majesty's Government had declared that it was their settled policy to separate Burma from India, that statement would have been received with acclamation in Burma. It was only because the people of Burma were induced to believe that the British Government for purposes of their own wanted Burma to separate from India that the majority of the electors were induced to vote for anti-separationist candidates. I do also agree with Mr. Harper and my Indian friends that the parting should be friendly. I agree that there should be a trade convention, but I do not think that while that trade convention is being arrived at there should be any further delay on the part of His Majesty's Government in making a pronouncement. I think that everyone in Burma and in India too wants to know one way or the other whether Burma is going to be separated or not. Once His Majesty's Government has declared in favour of separation then we can go on and have our trade convention and any other conventions which may be necessary, and I hope that the parting will be as friendly as possible. That is all I have to say, my Lord, upon this point.

Sra Shwe Ba.

My Lord Chairman. I am speaking on behalf of the Karen community of Burma. My community is the second largest indigenous community numbering about one and a half million. In the Memorandum submitted by the Karen community to the Statutory Commission on India under the head "Suggestions for the future," which is printed at pages 418 and 419 of Volume XVII of the proceedings, we give reasons for the recommendations that Burma should be separated from India. To save the time of the Committee I will not now repeat the arguments in that Memorandum, to which I respectfully invite the attention

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

of the Committee and request that this Memorandum be embodied in the proceedings. That Memorandum is as follows:

EXTRACT FROM MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED BY THE KAREN ELDERS OF BURMA.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE.

1. *Entire Separation of Burma from India.*—Note (c) of the Appendix to the communique issued by the Secretaries of the Indian Statutory Commission invites suggestions for the future. And we now propose to deal with this aspect of the situation.

Burma should be separated from India for reasons geographical, political and economic. Burma, as a province, forms no part of India. There are indisputable differences in customs, race, religion, language and interests. There can be no question that Burma will grow and develop on gradual and sound lines once she is separated from India.

"Burma is not India. Its people belong to another race in another stage of political development, and its problems are altogether different. For instance, the application to Burma of the general principles of throwing open the public service more widely to Indians would only mean the replacement of one alien bureaucracy by another."

In order to facilitate Separation and to make the transaction fair and equitable to both parties we would humbly request the Indian Statutory Commission to recommend to Parliament that Burma be furnished with accounts showing the amount expended by India on Burma and the amount India has been repaid by Burma during all these past years.

There was a time when the highest Court in Burma was subordinated to the High Court of Judicature at Fort William. In course of time it was felt that we could very well stand on our own legs in this direction and we are so standing now.

Likewise in the matter of Education, our High Schools and Colleges were for a long time affiliated to the University of Calcutta. When, in this matter also, Burma desired to have and work out her own plans for her rising sons and daughters numerous objections (which we need not repeat here) were set up against our becoming a detached entity educationally. The wisdom of our entire separation from the Calcutta University is more than amply justified by numerous

incontrovertible facts. Thanks to the parental interest, broad vision and consuming zeal of His Excellency Sir Harcourt Butler, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., I.C.S., the first Governor of Burma, our University of Rangoon has won our deepest gratitude and claims the unbounded admiration of her sister universities. In this connection, we quote with pardonable pride an extract from "The Anglo-Indian Review" dated Calcutta, March, 1928, which wrote spontaneously as follows:—

"A great disadvantage under which the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Community suffers in India is the absence of a Residential University where the students have the advantage of living a corporate life as in the Western Universities. In fact, it is this disadvantage which deters many of our brilliant young men from going to a University. We have, therefore, much pleasure in bringing to the notice of parents and young men the splendid advantages offered by the University College at Rangoon. The new University buildings are rapidly nearing completion and will be ready for occupation from June this year. The University stands on an estate of 435 acres and is actually a miniature town. It will be one of the finest Universities in the East having every accessory of a modern University and being equipped with its own lighting arrangements, water and sewage equipment, roads, parks, playing fields, rowing and swimming clubs, gymnasium, theatre and a club house."

In the days when we asked for a University of our own, when we demanded the right of shaping and forming our educational policy in accordance with the aspirations and needs of our people and our Province, there were not a few who strongly objected to the severance of our long-established connection with the University of Calcutta, giving all sorts and kinds of imaginary drawbacks and hypothetical disadvantages attendant on the demanded severance. Facts speak louder than words and we are content to leave the facts as they are seen to-day.

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Now, as we ask the Simon Commission to recommend to the British Parliament, *inter alia*, the separation of Burma from India we foresee that quite a number of people will raise their voices against our conception of the future welfare of Burma. We anticipate that the loudest cry will come from India herself. This would be quite natural as no one desires to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs. Continuing the metaphor, we may add that Burma has laid golden eggs for the benefit of India, but India has neglected Burma, has not considered our interests in the spirit of fair play and all this despite the fact that she has been exacting from us a very large portion of our revenues.

Over and above the considerations we have already advanced, there is another and more weighty reason and we beg to stress very particularly this particular aspect of our case. In our considered opinion the separation of Burma from India and that alone will make it possible for the different indigenous races of Burma—the Burmese, Karens, Kachins, Chins and Shans—to be usefully welded into one solid nation. Unless opportunities are open to the indigenous races of Burma to regard Burma nationally—and Burma as a separate entity under the British Crown is the only way—Burma can never progress nationally. As long as Burma is kept dangling on India's dhoti so long will there be no cohesion among the indigenous races of Burma.

We are firm in the belief that just as Burma has wonderfully progressed in the two definite directions we have indicated above—first, in the matter of our Law Courts and then in the line of our educational institutions—since we stood out independent of India, equally wonderfully or still more so shall our fair country progress when as a separate entity, under the fostering care of the British Government, her indigenous races welded into one nation will think not merely in terms of isolated racial pride but in the larger national consciousness of “Burman” citizens and will accordingly work heart and soul towards a common nationhood and a natural ideal.

At the Burma Round Table Conference the Karen Delegates again made known to the Conference that their mandate was for separation. Nothing has happened since then to make us change our views. On those grounds I wish to urge before

the Joint Select Committee that the separation of Burma should be brought about as soon as possible. That is all I wish to say, my Lord.

U Shwe Tha.

My Lord, I wish to make a brief statement in view of the fact that this question has been fully discussed in the Burma Legislative Council. The anti-separationist party came into existence after the General Councils of Burmese Associations Convention held at the Jubilee Hall, Rangoon, in July, 1932. In accordance with Resolution 6 of this convention a new anti-separationist party was formed under the leadership of Dr. U Ba Maw and U Chit Hlaing. The resolution passed at that meeting was to the effect “That this Convention rejects the proposed constitution for a separated Burma, announced by the Prime Minister on the 12th January, 1932, as it falls far short of the aspirations of the people. Secondly, That this Convention opposes the separation of Burma from India on the basis of the proposed constitution for a separated Burma. Thirdly, That the Convention emphatically protests against the permanent and unconditional inclusion of Burma in the Indian Federation.” The policies of the two anti-separationist parties were based upon the resolution passed by the Jubilee Hall Convention. At the general election in November, 1932, the two anti-separationist parties placed before the electorate the resolutions passed at the Jubilee Hall Convention. About 42 members of the two parties were returned as Members of the Legislative Council. During the discussion in the Burma Legislative Council on the question of separation from India or federation with India, the two leaders Dr. Ba Maw and U Chit Hlaing explained the definition of “anti-separationist”. I think it would be important for me to refer to the statement first of U Chit Hlaing in the proceedings of the Burma Legislative Council, December, 1932, page 339. U Chit Hlaing said in his speech: “I do not like permanent federation” (that is one portion) “and now our demand for federation with India is one of conditional federation.” Then Dr. Ba Maw stated in a speech which is reported on page 261, “There are actually influences outside the House as well as inside working to commit a fraud on the country by misusing the term Anti-Separation and

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

giving it an extremely literal meaning in order to make Anti-Separation mean unconditional and perpetual Federation with India." In these circumstances, Sir, I consider it is extremely important for the purpose of a proper and fair discussion that the House should know the real meaning of this term. Sir, that meaning is in those Jubilee Hall resolutions. That is the definite voice of the Anti-Separationists of Burma, and any meaning that goes beyond the Jubilee Hall resolutions is a betrayal. Anti-Separation, as U Kyaw Din has already explained to the House, is a term that is used in no absolute sense but strictly within the reference made by the Prime Minister in his announcement. The first motion gives the full and complete Anti-Separationist verdict. First of all, we are Anti-Separationists in the sense that we oppose the Prime Minister's idea of Separation. In other words, we oppose the Separation of Burma from India on the basis of the Prime Minister's constitution. Secondly, we, with the same emphasis, oppose the idea of an unconditional and perpetual Federation with India. And thirdly, and that is the affirmative, the constructive aspect of the Anti-Separationists' policy, we say that we will continue our opposition of Separation until we obtain an acceptable constitution. Any use of the term Anti-Separation that departs from this particular meaning, the meaning given and fixed by the Jubilee Hall resolutions, is, I say, an act of dishonesty." Therefore the two leaders of the Anti-Separationist party have given us their definition of what "Anti-separation" means. Then U Kyaw Din has also stated the definition of "Anti-separationist." It appears from what I have read that Anti-separation does not mean permanent federation. The Anti-separationists say that they want conditional federation, that is to say, with a right of secession. On this point I may refer to the statement made by the Secretary of State for India, page 5 of the Sketch of Constitutional Developments in Burma. In the House of Commons the Secretary of State for India made the following statement. I need not read it all. "If an Indian Federation is established, it cannot be on the basis that its members can leave it as and when they choose." That is very important.

This was again discussed recently by the members of the Indian Joint Select Committee. The Indian members were

of this opinion, namely, that should Burma join the Indian Federation they could not leave it as and when they choose.

Now the question of permanent federation. If the Anti-separationists were to say that they would federate with India permanently, this is not the mandate of the electorate. Let us refer to U Chit Hlaing's speech which is reported in the December meeting at page 338: "We are only authorised to do what they told us. They gave us their mandate. We can only act according to their mandate, and what is their mandate? The mandate was the resolution passed at the Jubilee Hall Convention." That is to say, that they were only for conditional separation and not for permanent federation.

Now, to sum up the position of the Anti-separationists, there can be no conditional federation, as I have just quoted the statement made by the Secretary of State for India. Permanent federation is not the mandate of the electorate. The result of the Anti-separationists should be separation with a better constitution which the separationists are asking for, so therefore they are in line with the policy of the separationists.

Then the question of separation of Burma from India was brought up before the Indian National Congress as far back as 1885, that is to say, there they said that if the British Government were going to annex Upper Burma the entire country should be separated from India, and since then this question of the separation of Burma has been brought up before the public. There is another question which I should like to state. Dr. Ba Maw yesterday stated that separationist candidates received the support of the Government. I stood as a separation candidate for Akyab East. I did not receive any support from the Government, but I did receive support from Indian voters of my electorate as the domiciled Indians in Arakan are in favour of separation. So from what I have said the people of Burma are in favour of separation.

Sir Samuel Hoare.

I do not propose, my Lord Chairman, to make a long speech. I have already dealt, in some detail, with the merits of certain of these proposals, in the speech that I made to the Indian Delegation on October 10th, a copy of which is I believe in the hands of the Members of

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

the Committee and of the Delegates from Burma. Nor, my Lord Chairman, have I either the desire or the right to say anything on behalf of my colleagues of the Committee. I am speaking, in the first place, for myself and I am speaking, in the second place, for the Government. I am not in any way prejudicing any decision at which my colleagues of the Committee may ultimately arrive. I intend to devote my speech to one object and to one object alone, namely, to remove certain misunderstandings that seem to have arisen in the minds of some of our friends from Burma as to the attitude of the Government. My Lord Chairman, let me say at once that I am not at all surprised that misunderstandings should arise upon complicated issues of this kind, particularly when we realize that we and the gentlemen from Burma are divided by a distance of eight thousand miles. It may well be that speeches that I make in Westminster sometimes have reactions in Burma that their author would not desire. It may also be that we, here in London, eight thousand miles away from Burma, find it difficult always to follow the intricacies of their elections; sometimes we find it difficult to understand completely the inner meanings of some of their resolutions. All the more grateful, therefore, are we to have this opportunity of meeting these Burmese gentlemen here in the same room, of explaining our position to them and of hearing their explanations upon points that we do not at present fully understand. It is therefore a matter of great satisfaction to me and to Members of the Government that we should have heard, in such detail, both to-day and yesterday, the full explanations that have been given both by the representatives of the Anti-Separation Party, U Chit Hlaing and Dr. Ba Maw, and the representatives from the Separation Party, for instance, U Ba Pe and U Thein Maung and their other colleagues. I think we now know a good deal more of the various points about which hitherto we may not have had the fullest possible information. That is all to the good. We are gradually removing certain misunderstandings. Now, there is one misunderstanding in particular that I wish to remove this morning, from the point of view of the Government. I wish to make it quite clear to every Delegate from Burma and to everyone in Burma who is following this question that the Government has no ulterior motive in

its mind whatever. If it comes to a decision for or against Separation, we have no possible axe to grind in the matter. There is no ulterior motive in our minds. Our only desire is to attempt to do the best for Burma itself. Let, therefore, every Member of the Committee and every Delegate from Burma, at the beginning of our Discussions, dismiss from his mind any idea that there may have been in his mind before, that there is some hidden hand behind the expressions of opinion that we may have used in favour of Separation, or that we have some ulterior motive in our minds in making the proposals that we have made in the White Paper that has been circulated to the Committee and to the Delegates. My Lord Chairman, let me tell the Committee the influences that have hitherto worked upon the minds of the Members of the Government. We have been impressed, first of all, by the historical differences between Burma and India. I accept fully what was so ably said yesterday by U Kyaw Din at the beginning of our Discussions, that the Burmese are very proud of their country, they are very conscious of the length and the interest of their history, they do regard themselves as a separate and a very important entity in the world at large. My Lord Chairman, we have been greatly impressed by that historical fact. I myself, when I have had a little time to spare—and it has not been very much—from the deliberations of these various Committees, have recently been reading a good deal of the history of Burma. The more I read of it, the more impressed I am by the fact of the great difference between the history of Burma and the history of India. Next, my Lord Chairman, we have been impressed by the geographical situation of Burma, in face of the geographical situation of India. In particular, as politicians—and I take only this one illustration to show you what is in my mind—we have been impressed by the fact that Representatives from Burma, if they are to attend the Indian Legislature, have to undertake a journey of about two thousand miles that takes, I think 48 hours by sea and about 36 hours by land, and that, whatever may be the arrangements that are made under the Indian Federation, those Representatives from Burma can be only very limited in number. At present I understand that four Representatives go from Burma to the Indian Legislature. Those four Representatives have to travel

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

this very long journey, and when they arrive at Delhi they find themselves as four in face of an Assembly of 150. Now, my Lord Chairman, that is a practical fact that has weighed very much with me and my colleagues in the Government.

Next, we have been struck by what appear to us to be the social and religious differences between Burma and India. I need not dilate upon them this morning; I think they are obvious to all of us—social differences of every kind, religious differences of every kind. In Burma, for instance, there is the absence of Caste and, I am glad to think, also, the absence of that very bitter religious communal feeling that we should so much like to see disappear from the Indian picture.

Lastly, we have been impressed by what seemed to us to be substantial economic and financial differences between the two territories. Some of these differences were very ably explained by Mr. Harper in the statement that he made to the Committee last night. To give an illustration or two, the fact that the industrial development of India is much more highly advanced than is the industrial development of Burma; the fact again, to give a second illustration, that hitherto, judged by whatever tests we desire to apply, Burma has come off badly from the financial point of view as a result of its association with India.

Now, my Lord Chairman, those are the facts that have strongly impressed themselves upon our minds. Those are the facts that have led us to make the statements that I have made during the last two years, and that have led us to make the proposals that we have made in the White Paper. Behind those facts, let me say again that there is no ulterior motive whatever in the mind of the Government. Our only desire is, first of all, to face the facts and, secondly, to do the best that we can in the interests of Burma itself. Now it might be supposed that whilst being impressed by these facts in favour of separation, we had ignored the arguments against separation. That is not so. I am very conscious of the strength of some of those arguments. They seem to me to fall into three categories. First of all, there is a feeling—I do not know whether it is in the minds of any of the delegates from Burma, but I am sure from what I hear from Burma itself, it is in the minds of a good many people in Burma—they are

afraid lest, under separation, they will suffer and they will be fobbed off with a constitution substantially inferior to any constitution that may be given to India. Indeed, my Lord Chairman, they are so nervous upon this point that I have seen many statements made implying that the result of separation will be Crown Colony Government for Burma. My answer to these doubts and suspicions is a very simple one. I merely point to the proposals in the Government White Paper. Any impartial investigator who looks at those proposals will see that there is no connection in the world between them and anything in the nature of Crown Colony Government. Next, my Lord Chairman, there is a widespread feeling, and it has been very ably expressed to-day and yesterday, this morning, for instance, by the two Indian delegates, the two delegates representing the Indian interests in Burma, and last night by Mr. Harper in one part of his interesting speech. There is evidently a widespread suspicion lest, under separation, the trade of Burma, and, as a result, the economic development of Burma, will be seriously compromised. My Lord Chairman, in my view, there is no more important question than the question of the future of Burma trade and the question of the future economic development of Burma. If I felt that separation need necessarily compromise or injure the trade of Burma and the economic development of Burma, I would say that that was an almost unanswerable reason against separation. I believe, however, that when the Committee and the delegates come in greater detail to consider this part of the problem, they will find that under a system of separation it would be possible to safeguard these economic interests and to avoid the dangers that have been suggested to us this morning and last night. For instance, I think myself that we should investigate very sympathetically the possibility of a trade agreement between Burma and India. I realise as fully as anyone in this room the vital importance of Burman trade to India, and Indian trade to Burma. I was greatly impressed by what Mr. Harper said last night as to the possibility of having a *status quo* for a period of time under which no alteration should be made in the relations; an interim period, that is to say, during which a trade treaty for the future could be adequately negotiated. I also agree with what Mr. Tyabji said

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

this morning as to the importance of the labour problem upon the economic development of Burma, and I think there again in due course we shall come to consider that question in greater detail and we must take full account of the anxieties that are evidently in his mind and that I know are in the minds of many other representatives of Indian trade. From the point of view both of Burma and of India, I am sure that the less disturbance that there can be to their economic relations the better it will be for both countries. Lastly, there is a third argument that has been used against separation that we have by no means ignored. I have seen it suggested that Burma has on the whole gained political strength by its association with India, and I would not at all dissent from that view; that having gained political strength in the last 15 years, from the point of view of Burma, it would be wiser not to break the situation, but as the result of maintaining this political association with India, Burma in the future will be able to obtain better constitutional terms than she could obtain now. My Lord Chairman, that line of argument seems to me to presuppose two conditions. It seems to me, first of all, to presuppose the right of Burma to secede from the Indian Federation. It seems to me also to assume the right of Burma to obtain preferential treatment as compared with the treatment of the provinces of British India. Now upon both these points I can state my own view, and I can state the view of the Government; upon neither of them do I wish to prejudge the views of my colleagues upon the Committee, but stating my own views and the views of the Government, I can say very definitely that both those conditions strike at the very root of the permanent Federation that we have been considering for India. It is not that we wish to put a pistol at the throats of our friends from Burma and thrust them upon the horns of an impossible dilemma. It is simply this, that those two conditions strike at the very root of any permanent Federation, and, in the interests of permanent Federation, that is what, after all, the Government have been considering incessantly for the last three years, the British Government can never accept them. My Lord Chairman, it is interesting to note that I do not think a single one of the Indian

delegates who were here until a few weeks ago would accept them either. There was a little talk based upon misunderstanding at one time of the rights of the princes to secede from the Indian Federation. When we went further into the details of the question, we found that the princes made no such demand, and it was quite clear that if they had made such a demand, not a single representative from British India would have accepted it. I was therefore very glad to note a passage in Dr. Ba Maw's interesting speech when he said that the anti-separationists in this respect demanded no more than the Indian princes. I can tell him that the Indian princes made no such demand and that if they had made such a demand, no Indian delegates would have accepted it. Let me again make it clear that these conditions, namely, that we could not admit either the right of secession or preferential treatment for Federation, are not directed in any way against Burma. They are conditions that are absolutely inherent in any system of government that is likely to remain permanent in India. Now, my Lord Chairman, I hope I have said enough to show that first of all we Members of the Government have tried to face the facts and to face the facts impartially, and that we have tried also to take into account the arguments that are used against separation. Until a short time ago it seemed as if opinion in Burma was unanimous in favour of separation; the Simon Commission, the representatives of Burma who sat with the Commission, and the Despatch of the Government of India (incidentally, from the point of view of finance, it might have been very tempting for the Government of India to oppose rather than to support separation). Until, therefore, quite a short time ago the opinion in Burma seemed to be unanimous. Since then there have been these differences of opinion showing themselves. They have shown themselves, but, even so, it does appear to me, and my view is strengthened by the discussions that have been taking place to-day and yesterday, that scarcely anyone in Burma seems in favour of permanent Federation. The chief argument that has been used to-day and yesterday has been the pledge that the Government is assumed to have given here and the result of the general election that took place last November. Let me remind the Committee exactly

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

what did really take place. The Government never said that the general election need necessarily be the final word in the controversy. The Prime Minister was very careful to state both at the beginning of his speech and later on in his speech that the opinion of Burma would be asked and that when we had received the opinion of Burma, then the Government would have to arrive at its own decision; but never on any occasion has the Prime Minister or any Member of the Government abdicated the right of the Government or the right of this Committee or the right of Parliament to come to any decision that they thought fit, whatever may have been the result of the general election. I would remind the Committee of the words that were actually used by the Prime Minister on page 178 of the proceedings of the Round Table Conference. I will read one or two of the material paragraphs: "His Majesty's Government are prepared, if and when they are satisfied that the desire of the people of Burma is that the Government of their country should be separated from that of India, to take steps subject to the approval of Parliament," and so on. Then again there is another passage on page 182, the passage at the bottom of the page: "With this material before them, the people of Burma will be in a position to decide whether or not they are in favour of separation from India. His Majesty's Government consider that the decision might best be taken after a general election at which the broad issue had been placed before the Electorate." That passage quite clearly safeguards the right and indeed the duty of the Government and of Parliament to consider the whole problem after the election had taken place. Our difficulty, and it was a very practical difficulty, was that, rightly or wrongly, it did not seem to us that we did get either from the general election or from the subsequent proceedings of the Legislative Council, the explicit answer that we required to our very definite questions. Not having received this explicit answer, we could not obviously let the question drift on for ever. We felt that it was unfair to Burma and that it was also unfair to India (after all the Burma problem is tied up with the India problem) to leave things indefinitely vague and obscure. In face of that situation, we felt it our duty to put forward our views based as I say upon the facts

as we saw them and with no ulterior motive in our minds; to put those views before this Committee and to ask you gentlemen from Burma to come to give us the benefit of your advice and assistance.

Now, my Lord Chairman, I have completed the task that I set myself, namely, to attempt to remove any misunderstanding that may still exist, that we Members of the Government are partisans in this controversy; that we are ignoring the interests of Burma, and that we are trying to impose upon Burma a constitution which Burma does not desire, for some ulterior motive in our own minds. My Lord Chairman, speaking for myself I am very grateful to the Delegates from Burma for the part that they have taken in this discussion. I shall take note of the arguments that they have so ably put forward, and I believe that when we come to consider the details of the White Paper, chapter by chapter, we shall find that many of the dangers that loom so large in the minds of certain members of the Delegation in the event of separation need not necessarily be inherent in separation but can be amply safeguarded in a separated constitution for Burma.

Chairman: My Lords and Gentlemen, I should propose to proceed now, subject to the approval of the Committee, by a suggestion that Members of the Committee in turn should put questions to the Delegates upon the statements which we have heard. I should propose that the questions and the answers and any discussion which may follow should be published verbatim. Is that agreed?

(The same is agreed to.)

Archbishop of Canterbury: I should only like to ask by way of starting these questions a question which is very general, but which might assist the members of the Committee if it could be answered. The impression left on my mind after listening very carefully to the speeches which have been made by the Delegates from Burma, is that the differences between them do not seem to me to be very fundamental, rather due to those misunderstandings which I hope the Secretary of State may have succeeded partially at least in removing. It is rather difficult, my Lord Chairman, to know to which of the

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Burmese Delegates to address any particular question, but perhaps I might address this one to Dr. Ba Maw, as he spoke very fully on the anti-separationist issue. I gather that it is common ground that there is no desire for permanence of Federation, but there is a common desire for securing a really full constitution for Burma. The question I should like to put is: Supposing that it is quite clear that no right to secede could possibly be conceded to the province of Burma under the new constitution if it is achieved, supposing on the other side it is made quite clear that there is every desire that the constitution of a separated Burma should be on the lines of the Indian constitution, supposing these two points are made quite clear, would not that enable those who hitherto have been anti-separationists to join with the whole Committee in getting down to a discussion of the actual constitution sketched in the White Paper?

Dr. Ba Maw: No, your Grace. On that point, may I refer to the proceedings of the Burma Legislative Council last April? This matter was brought home to us by a statement made by the Secretary of State for India after the passing of the December resolution. Immediately we realised the realities of the situation, we got together—that is, the anti-separationists got together—and after consulting the various constituencies that support U Chit Hlaing and myself, we drafted a joint resolution to this effect, that if our choice is limited to separation on the basis of the Prime Minister's proposed constitution and an entry into the Indian Federation on the same terms as the other Indian provinces, we unhesitatingly choose the federal alternative as being in keeping with the very clear mandate we had obtained from the country. May I add, to elucidate further my meaning, that before and after we had submitted this resolution, I personally toured all the constituencies supporting me and all those constituencies—the various anti-separationist leagues existing in those several constituencies passed resolutions without a single exception completely supporting my attitude.

Archbishop of *Canterbury*: My suggestion is (I think it was partly supported by what U Kyaw Din said) that since then there have been many changes in the situation; there have been many explanations made, many issues have

been made more clear partly this morning by what the Secretary of State has said; therefore, is not the situation somewhat different?

Dr. Ba Maw: On this point, with apologies to U Kyaw Din, may I submit this fact, that although certain members who obtained election on the anti-separationist ticket have changed, the electors have not changed?

Archbishop of *Canterbury*: There was one question I wanted to ask Mr. Harper about his very interesting speech, if I may say so. When you spoke of the trade convention that you desire, Mr. Harper, I was not quite clear whether what you had in mind was that some trade convention should be agreed upon immediately by the existing Governments, and which should be made binding for a certain number of years, or do you mean that the Constituent Act should provide that until some convention had been agreed upon by the new Governments, the existing trade relations should remain?

Mr. Harper: Your Grace, it is the latter that we mean. Our object is to get a trade agreement, naturally on the lines on which we think it should be, in a form which will be the most lasting, the most likely to be renewed from time to time as it expires. We feel that the most likely way to ensure a lasting agreement is to get an agreement negotiated between the two new Governments so that it would be their own work and not imposed upon them. If we were to leave it now to the present Governments, it would be difficult, we think, for them to agree to tie their successors in the way, for instance, of withholding the power for any period to impose revenue tariffs, tariffs for revenue measures. We think that those tariffs would in effect be objectionable but that the present Governments would have great difficulty in imposing any condition of that kind on the new Governments; so we would rather it were left to the new Governments to make their agreement and the non-officials would be prepared to help them with what we considered to be the best advice that we can give them, and that in the meantime until they can make that agreement it should be provided in the Act that the existing fiscal relations should continue.

Marquess of *Reading*: I want just to follow up what Mr. Harper has said. Before I do that I would like to ask, my

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Lord Chairman, one question. What we are discussing now, or rather what the Archbishop just put to Mr. Harper, based upon Mr. Harper's speech, is rather more, as I understand it, a measure that he suggests would be required for protection against anything in the nature of commercial discrimination, and also to continue the trade relations existing between Burma and India, and is not part of an argument addressed by him for or against separation. Am I right?

Mr. Harper: We regard this point, my Lord, as so important that, although it is a consequence of separation, it becomes, in our opinion, necessary to consider it as an issue. If our point could not be met then we would think that separation would have great dangers.

Marquess of Reading: That answers the question I wanted to put. Then I must pursue it a little further with you, in order to understand. You speak of a convention, but it is not quite clear to me what is meant by it. I presume what you have in mind is an agreement in the nature of a treaty (a convention if you choose to use the term), that is, terms arrived at after discussion between Burma and India in relation to all trade matters, or a majority of trade matters. That is what you had in mind.

Mr. Harper: Yes, my Lord, that is what I mean.

Marquess of Reading: What is not clear to me is, do you also require protection, or some provision in the constitution itself, or are you intending to rely entirely upon agreement. You have had to consider this, I know. The matter has been very carefully considered, but, of course, it differs very much in some aspects. If you have an agreement it is an agreement for a period of years, presumably, and, of course, it is subject to variation by assent between Burma and India—assume for the moment the two Governments. If, on the other hand, you have a provision in the Constitution, then, subject to any special provision in the Constitution, that would only be alterable by the British Parliament. Do I make clear to you what I have in mind?

Mr. Harper: Yes, my Lord.

Marquess of Reading: You see those are two quite different things, although they are both aiming at a similar kind of protection. Do you follow?

Mr. Harper: Yes, my Lord.

Marquess of Reading: What I am asking of you is, are you asking for both

as a condition upon which you think there should be separation, or are you asking only for a convention which may be reached by agreement. That is what is not clear to me.

Mr. Harper: If it were possible (we do not know to what extent it would be possible) to ensure those relations by a specific provision in the Act we think, as we have said, that that would be in the best real interests of the two countries, but we have not asked for that because, if I have understood your question aright, we do not know how far the Committee would be prepared to go, or Parliament would be prepared to go in restricting the fiscal autonomy of the two new countries.

Marquess of Reading: I think I follow. You would prefer, if it is practicable, and the Committee thinks it should be done, that these provisions should be in the Constitution?

Mr. Harper: Yes.

Marquess of Reading: Because, of course, it gives you greater security?

Mr. Harper: Certainly, my Lord.

Marquess of Reading: But you do not make that a condition as I understand. If that is not possible, then you must depend upon an agreement?

Mr. Harper: Yes, that is the position.

Marquess of Reading: My Lord Chairman, I did not want to go into these questions because I thought they might come up later under trade relations. They are of extreme importance, I think, and the only reason I am pressing now on the matter of principle is just to understand what Mr. Harper's position is in view of what he has told us this morning, but I do not want to go into details with regard to it. The only thing I want to put to you further on the question of convention, Mr. Harper, is have you in mind an agreement or convention to be made by the Legislatures when they are formed, or have you in mind an agreement to be made before the new Legislatures are constituted?

Mr. Harper: After they have been constituted, with a provision in the Act that until that agreement is concluded the existing relations should continue.

Marquess of Reading: That is to say, free trade relations?

Mr. Harper: Free trade relations, yes.

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION [Continued.]
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

Marquess of Reading: But then afterwards you depend on what the Governments may do, with, of course, the Legislatures, under the Constitution.

Mr. Harper: If it is not possible to ensure it in any other way. The surer the way, of course, the better we should be pleased.

Marquess of Reading: I will pursue that now. Later, when we come to discuss trade relations, there are some further matters I want to point out to you and those who are interested—the Indian Delegates especially have an interest in this matter and I will resume it later on, or somebody else may. All I wanted for the moment was to understand your position in relation to separation, and that really, as I understand it, in view of what you have said, put quite briefly is that you would not wish to oppose separation, if you could get proper protection for the trade relations.

Mr. Harper: That is right.

Marquess of Reading: The political part of it you leave aside altogether. That is right, is it not?

Mr. Harper: Yes.

Marquess of Reading: There are one or two questions I wanted to ask Dr. Ba Maw and U Chit Hlaing in relation to what the Archbishop was putting. The position now, at least as I have understood from what has been said, is that you no longer rely upon the terms of the resolution of December, 1932. I mean you no longer rely on it in this sense: you are not abandoning it?

Dr. Ba Maw: No.

Marquess of Reading: But I understand your argument to be, and I am only putting it for this purpose, that apart altogether from it, even if you do not accept that resolution and the conditions you seek to impose there, you are still in favour of federation and against separation. That I what I understood you to say.

Dr. Ba Maw: Yes, that is so.

Marquess of Reading: Therefore, if that is right, the question of the right of secession only arises if it was proposed to give you any such right in the terms that were to be imposed on your entering into the federation. That is right, is it not?

Dr. Ba Maw: That is so.

Marquess of Reading: I only want to be perfectly clear about it, but I think

it follows that even suppose this Committee, after discussing the matter, hearing what the Government have said, and hearing what you have said, came to the conclusion that there could be no right of secession granted, as I understand your point of view now that does not alter your case.

Dr. Ba Maw: Quite so.

Marquess of Reading: It does not alter it; you still maintain it?

Dr. Ba Maw: Quite so.

Marquess of Reading: I thought I understood it, but I was not quite clear. There is only one further point that I wanted to put with regard to that. It follows, I think, from the questions that have been put. Does that mean that, leaving aside special conditions, you are prepared to assent to federation on the same terms as are proposed for India subject to any special provisions that may be made for Burma?

Dr. Ba Maw: Quite so; we mean that.

Marquess of Reading: You leave yourselves in the hands of the Committee for that purpose; is that right?

Dr. Ba Maw: Quite so, but may I explain, my Lord, that we do ask for those special terms in the terms of the December resolution, but, if the Committee is not prepared to grant us those terms, that does not interfere with our desire to enter into the federation in preference to the other alternative, the alternative of separation based upon the Prime Minister's Constitution?

Marquess of Reading: I rather understood that you were saying that, but you have made it beyond all question now, and I need not pursue it. I do not want to ask any further questions.

Marquess of Lothian: Might I just pursue that a little further and ask Dr. Ba Maw or U Chit Hlaing to define it a little more clearly? Have you got the Indian White Paper in front of you?

Dr. Ba Maw: Yes.

Marquess of Lothian: Would you look at page 113, Appendix VI. That defines 64 matters which are going to be reserved to the Federal Government. On page 116, List II, it defines those powers which are exclusively provincial. Am I right in understanding you to say that in the event of this Committee recommending that there should be no special provisions for Burma either in regard to secession or anything else, you would be prepared to accept a provincial Government with the powers in List II only. Is that your view?

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Dr. *Ba Maw*: I did not quite follow.

Marquess of *Lothian*: The point as I understand it is this: You would prefer to have the ordinary powers which, under the Indian White Paper, are going to be given to an Indian Province, rather than the position which is proposed in the Burma White Paper, and you would therefore be content with the list of powers in Burma which are in List II on page 116 of the India White Paper. Is that correct?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: Yes, my Lord. If the Committee decides to give these subjects only to the other Indian Provinces, Burma, from our point of view, will be forced to accept them in the same way as the other Indian Provinces.

Marquess of *Lothian*: In the same way you would have no objection to the special powers of the Governor in Burma, and of the Governor-General as proposed in the Indian White Paper? You would accept those powers in a federation rather than the proposals of the Burma White Paper?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: We should be forced to accept that position if it was imposed upon us—if the Committee decides so.

Marquess of *Lothian*: Your view is, as between the two alternatives of the Burma White Paper and the position of an ordinary province in India, you would prefer the position, without any right of secession, of a province in the Indian Federation? That is your view?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: As between these two alternatives.

Marquess of *Lothian*: Might I ask U Ba Pe a question? You heard yesterday the speech of Mr. Harper, and there have been various documents circulated by the European community dealing with the trade relations between Burma and India. Supposing it did not prove to be possible to arrive at a fiscal convention between India and Burma, and supposing either on the side of India or on the side of Burma the demand was made for full fiscal rights, that is to say, that either side should have and might exercise the right of putting on any tariff against the other, would that affect your demand for separation?

U Ba Pe: No, Sir. I have expressed my view on this question at the First Indian Round Table Conference. If you refer to page 190 of the proceedings you will find that. "The third point is the trade relations between the two countries. As far as possible we want free trade

between India and Burma. India wants our rice, our oil, our teak and other timber, and we want things from India. Burma requires manufactured goods from India, and it is in the interests of both countries not to raise tariff walls against each other. We must live peacefully together and devise ways and means for our mutual benefit. I do not see any difficulty in that direction." That was my view. I still hold to this view.

Marquess of *Lothian*: I think all history shows that when a nation obtains fiscal powers it invariably uses them, and the tariffs get higher and higher, and it is that possibility I want you to envisage. In view of that fact you would still be in favour of separation?

U Ba Pe: Yes.

Marquess of *Lothian*: Even if it did mean very high tariffs between India and Burma on both sides?

U Ba Pe: That is right.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: May I put a question to Dr. Ba Maw and U Chit Hlaing. It is to ascertain as to how the opinions of the Burmese constituents were ascertained? I understand that there was a tour made by Dr. Ba Maw of his constituencies, or the constituencies that had expressed an opinion on this matter. Was that tour before the election or after the election?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: Both before and after.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: A reference was made just now by you to a meeting of your Association in which the question was put: Would they prefer federation or separation in the terms of the Prime Minister's statement. The Prime Minister's statement was the one that was made at the conclusion of the Burma Round Table Conference.

Dr. *Ba Maw*: Quite so.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: And I suppose the terms that were then considered were those that had been explained in the book that was published. You had before you that book showing the recommendations of the Burma Round Table Conference?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: Quite so.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: You had not been able to put before them, of course, the proposals that are contained in the new White Paper?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: I did, because my last tour took place about two months ago. After the April resolution, when there was some dispute in our country about the right of the Anti-Separationist Party

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

to table those resolutions, I took the trouble of touring several parts of the country and I placed before them the paper containing the proposed Constitution by the Secretary of State for India, and the last meeting that I held was a mass meeting at Mandalay, which is the capital of Upper Burma, and I also asked all the various Anti-Separationist Leagues in all my constituencies to consider the new Constitution, and they unanimously decided that, of the two alternatives, they preferred the Federal alternative.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: You have put before us your tour, both before the election and after.

Dr. *Ba Maw*: Quite so.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: The meeting where they decided for federation decided for federation rather than for separation in the terms of the Prime Minister's statement. Have you had another meeting in which they have specifically decided for federation as against separation in the terms of the White Paper Proposals?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: They have had the White Paper explained to them. What was explained to them at a place called Sagaing and Mandalay was that the proposed Constitution was based on the Prime Minister's statement and that there were no material departures, and we took care to explain both these Constitutions to them and, after careful consideration, they decided as I have just explained.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: I would like to ascertain further about these meetings. You have been to a meeting. Has the meeting been an extended meeting, or how long has it lasted?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: As regards the Mandalay meeting, it took three days because it is our custom. The Wunthanus Associations have annual meetings where we consider every possible subject that we consider to be important.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: That would be the meeting of your Association, but I am trying to ascertain (I do not want to interrupt your answer) as to your appeal or your inquiry from the several constituencies. When you have visited a constituency, how long have you had for discussing the matter with the people of that division?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: I personally visited certain constituencies and in the case of other constituencies the fact is this: In my Party there are representatives of

these several constituencies, and after the last April and August Sessions we decided that each of these Party Members should convene meetings in their respective constituencies and obtain a decision from the constituency on this very strictly limited question of a choice between separation on the proposed Constitution and federation as contained in the Indian White Paper and I, as well as the other Members of my Party, undertook this task in all the constituencies supporting us.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: I have some knowledge of appealing to a constituency in this country, and I am sorry to have to press the question, but I want to know what happens when you have been to a constituency in Burma and you have ascertained their opinion upon the Burma White Paper: what opportunity have those constituents of making up their minds upon the virtues or demerits of the White Paper? Do they take the description entirely from you?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: Immediately the Burma White Paper was sent to Burma, the Burma Local Government undertook the task of translating it into Burmese and each of the Legislative Council Members was supplied with a copy of the proposed Constitution, both in English and in Burmese, and there were also several other copies available and we made full use of those available copies.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: I understand that the representatives of the Legislative Council, of course, would have this paper themselves and would be able to give to it the very long time necessary for its understanding. You understand it. It is very complicated. It extends over a very wide area and demands a very exhaustive inquiry before any opinion can be expressed. I want to know if you can tell me what opportunity the average Burman constituent had of forming an opinion upon that detailed statement.

Dr. *Ba Maw*: The Burma White Paper is substantially a reproduction of the Prime Minister's proposed Constitution, and at the time of the recent General Election everybody who worked for us and with us undertook the task of very carefully explaining the terms of the proposed Constitution to the Burma electorate. It was on those explanations that we conducted our election, and, of course, when the Burma White Paper appeared and when we discovered that the Burma White Paper was sub-

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

stantially a reproduction of the Prime Minister's proposed Constitution, we made them understand that fact, and we further undertook the task of explaining any little departure that we happened to discover.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: I have only one further question. I am sorry to take up the time of the Committee. There was one further thing you said. You said the decision of your Association was for federation rather than for separation, in the terms of the Prime Minister's statement.

Dr. *Ba Maw*: Quite so.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: Was that because you did not consider the Prime Minister's statement was adequate to the Burman demand for independence, or because, whatever was proposed, federation would be the desire?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: No. May I explain this, because it is extremely important? Our position is this: We consider the Prime Minister's proposed separation to be a non-Burmese idea of separation, and, as I tried my very best to explain yesterday, of course, "separation" has so far been very loosely and very dangerously used. The term "separation" has meant a mass of loose things to the average Burman. The word "separation" to a considerable number of people still means an independent and a royal Burma. Separation to another section means Burma for the Burmans; and separation for a third section, that is, the economic section, means purely the doubtful economic advantages of expelling the foreigners and of effecting the restoration of all the lands to Burmans. Therefore, we faced the problem in a concrete and practical way. We say that we oppose the Prime Minister's separation because it does not conform with our ideas of separation, and as this form of separation is unsuitable to us we oppose it.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: Following upon that, a supplementary question is this: In appealing to your constituencies you had, of course, not only the spoken appeal, you had the written appeal?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: To a certain extent.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: There would be some written appeal, would there not?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: Yes.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: You were only able by your voice to reach a certain number of the electorate. There must be a great

number to whom you can only send your literature.

Dr. *Ba Maw*: Yes.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: Can you give us your appeal or address or your written appeal made to your constituents, setting out this question of federation as against separation? Have you got any general form of address that can be handed in to the Committee? Was there a common form of address sent out by you?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: I am afraid I have not brought any copies.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: Was not there a manifesto of your Party?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: Yes, there was a manifesto.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: Did that manifesto set out your case?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: We did set out our case.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: And can we be supplied, in English of course, with the manifesto?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: I am afraid we shall have to write to Burma for it; that will take some time.

Mr. *Morgan Jones*: Has the India Office got it?

Sir *Samuel Hoare*: I understand we have got one or two of these manifestos at the India Office, but I am not quite sure whether it is the manifesto that you refer to. I will look them up and see if they are the kind of thing which you evidently desire. We could then circulate it to the Committee and to the Delegates.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: All I would like to have is how the question upon which the answer has been given was put before the electors.

Sir *Samuel Hoare*: I will look and see what we have got.

Earl *Winterton*: If we are going to peruse electoral manifestos there is considerable room for doubt as to the interpretation to be put on the particular words of all manifestos of all parties in all countries.

Mr. *Isaac Foot*: Seeing that a very plain answer has been given, I would like to know how the question was put before the electorate.

Marquess of *Lothian*: On both sides.

Earl *Winterton*: On both sides.

Dr. *Ba Maw*: If you wish to pursue this matter, may I request one thing, that as a General Election is a General Election all the world over, there are all kinds of influences, and in order to understand the real position I submit

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

that the manifestos of both sides in every constituency should be seen in order to see how the Separationists obtained their votes and how the Federationists obtained their votes. I am speaking from bitter personal experience.

Mr. Isaac Foot: We have all got that.

Dr. Ba Maw: I am afraid I shall have to mention one fact, that as the leader of the Anti-Separationists, as the person who was doing the greatest amount of work for the Anti-Separationists, the principal argument against me was that I was a Non-Buddhist, and therefore, as a Non-Buddhist, they should not vote for me. That was the principal argument which I could pursue further with all kinds of gruesome details, but I shall refrain from doing so. At every Separationist meeting, whenever I made an attempt to enter any constituency, I was immediately met either at the wharf or at the railway station with huge placards containing all kinds of most violent language against me, attacking me for my religion, and on this particular point U Kyaw Din will support me, because he happens to be a Non-Buddhist.

Marquess of Zetland: My Lord Chairman, I just wanted to ask a question arising out of something that Mr. Campagnac said. I understood you to say that you thought it was very desirable that whatever the conclusions of this Committee might be on the question of Federation or Separation, an announcement of those conclusions should be made at the earliest possible moment: was not that so?

Mr. Campagnac: That is so.

Marquess of Zetland: Had you in mind that it was desirable that this Committee should come to its conclusion on that point before the Delegates conclude their deliberations with us?

Mr. Campagnac: I think that would be desirable.

Marquess of Zetland: Then might I put the same question to U Ba Pe?

U Ba Pe: That is so.

Marquess of Zetland: Do you think it is desirable that this Committee should come to its conclusions on the issue of Federation or Separation before you leave us, and that a pronouncement should be made?

U Ba Pe: Certainly.

Marquess of Zetland: May I put the same question to U Kyaw Din?

U Kyaw Din: The same thing.

Marquess of Zetland: And U Chit Hlaing.

U Chit Hlaing: Yes.

Marquess of Zetland: In fact there is general agreement upon the point that the Committee should try to come to its conclusions at the earliest possible moment and that a statement should then be made.

U Chit Hlaing: Yes.

Sir Austen Chamberlain: Lord Zetland, will you ascertain (I am not quite certain from the form of your questions) whether it is the wish of all the gentlemen who have answered you that we should reach this decision early in our discussions with them, or whether it will satisfy them if before they leave us the Committee has reached the decision?

Marquess of Zetland: Would you answer Sir Austen's question?

Mr. Campagnac: I think the decision should be arrived at as early as possible, because if the Committee were going to recommend that Burma should be federated with India, then we would have to discuss the Constitution on quite different lines.

Marquess of Zetland: I presume that is the general view.

U Chit Hlaing: That is the general view.

Mr. Tyabji: And we also hold that view.

Marquess of Zetland: In fact, as far as I can judge, the Delegates are unanimous on that point.

U Chit Hlaing: Yes.

Marquess of Zetland: Then a different point. Might I ask Mr. Tyabji this question? I understood, Mr. Tyabji, that while you admitted the financial disabilities from which Burma in common with other provinces of British India has suffered under the Meston Award, you think those disabilities would disappear under a system of Federation? Was not that your point?

Mr. Tyabji: To a certain extent, yes.

Marquess of Zetland: Could you tell us what grounds you have for supposing that these disabilities would disappear under Federation? My view of these difficulties is that they have been due really to the fact that there has not been enough money to go round. Do you think that there would be more money to go round amongst the Provinces under Federation?

Mr. Tyabji: Under the Federation Financial Scheme certain of the taxes,

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

a portion, for instance, of the income tax, and certain excises, would revert as soon as possible to the provinces.

Marquess of Zetland: As soon as possible.

Mr. Tyabji: Yes.

Marquess of Zetland: Could you go a little further and tell us how soon you think that would be likely to take place?

Mr. Tyabji: That, of course, is impossible to say.

Marquess of Zetland: Then there was only one other question I wished to ask, and that was also arising out of something that Mr. Tyabji said. He attached great importance, as I think everybody does, to the maintenance of the trade relations between Burma and India. If I understood him rightly, he thought that a trade agreement might secure those relations for a period of years, say, for 10 years, but he thought that they might be disturbed when the trade agreement came to an end. If experience showed that it clearly was in the interests of Burma and of India that the trade relations should continue on the same footing, why does he suppose that the Indian and Burmese Governments would alter the treaty?

Mr. Tyabji: From my point of view, the dependence of India on the Burmese trade is not so great as the dependence of Burmese trade on India. Therefore, the danger lies in the fact that in India, perhaps, conditions might emanate out of the separation which later may make it difficult for a trade convention on a free trade basis to be agreed upon.

Marquess of Zetland: In other words, you are afraid that under separation the Indian Federal Government might impose tariffs against the Burmese trade? Is that your real fear?

Mr. Tyabji: No. For instance, it is not a question of India imposing a tariff wall against Burma, but it might be a question of the development of India or Indian industries or Indian products. For instance, at the present time rice going from Burma is Indian rice, but when Burma is separated it does not remain an Indian product, and the desire might be cultivated to become more self-contained in that respect.

Marquess of Salisbury: In India?

Mr. Tyabji: In India.

Marquess of Zetland: But how do you suggest the Indian Government would set about making themselves more self-contained? You do not apparently fear

that the Indian Government would impose a tariff against Burma's rice; at the same time you think India might want to become self-contained in the matter of the production of rice.

Mr. Tyabji: In the production of rice and the production of timber, for instance.

Marquess of Zetland: Yes. Let us take rice as an example. How do you suggest that the Indian Government is going to achieve its supposed object?

Mr. Tyabji: By an increase of agriculture—cultivation.

Marquess of Zetland: You are only afraid that the Indian Government may undertake an advanced agricultural policy under which it would produce more rice? Is that not likely to happen in any case?

Mr. Tyabji: It may not. So long as Burma is a Province it may not; so long as it supplies cheap rice, it may not happen, but if it becomes a separate entity it may.

Lord Middleton: There is one question I would like to ask U Ba Pe. Supposing that legislation based on this Committee's recommendation had not a scheme for Federation—I do not, of course, suggest that it is a probability—would your views on Separation remain unchanged? Do you wish to separate from India in any case?

U Ba Pe: Of the two alternatives, yes.

Marquess of Salisbury: Dr. Ba Maw, might I just, merely to clear up one or two answers which you have been kind enough to give to the questions, ask you this: as I understand you prefer Federation to separation on the terms of the Burmese White Paper; but if you got separation on your own terms, which would you prefer—separation or Federation?

Dr. Ba Maw: If we got separation on our own terms, any Burman would accept it on those terms. After all, we are approaching it as a very practical proposition, as I submit any other part of the British Empire would approach it. So that, on the basis of that argument, if the terms that we require are guaranteed to us under separation, we would accept separation.

Marquess of Salisbury: I thought you would give that answer, only I wanted to make it quite clear. Now might I ask just one question of Mr. Harper? I am afraid I was unlucky enough, owing to causes which I could not control, not to

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

hear his speeches yesterday, but I gathered enough this morning to know how to put the question, I think—it is with reference to what Lord Reading asked him. As I understand it, you think a trade agreement between Burma and India in the case of separation, of the greatest importance?

Mr. Harper: Yes, of the greatest importance; rather, may I say, we consider the maintenance of the trade relations as of great importance.

Marquess of Salisbury: Yes. I ought to have said so. Do you think it is a *sine qua non* or that you could not agree to separation on any other terms?

Mr. Harper: There you are asking me a question which I am in rather a difficult position to answer on behalf of the European community, because, as I said yesterday, the European community have never been unanimous on this subject. Some of them have thought that this question of the trade relations is so important that as Federation is the only way of maintaining them, that is to say, the trade relations with India, it would be in the best interests of Burma to remain with India. The other view is that no constitution, no decision on this subject which really runs counter to the real wishes of the people will be a success; that the new constitution must be supported by the people of Burma. Therefore it would be no use, or it would not be wise to put on to them for the sake of their trade relations which they might not be able to assess, because if they were not allowed to go wrong, they would not have realised what it would have meant if they had gone wrong—so it would not therefore be wise to make a choice which is against their will and their wishes. In that event the position comes down to this, that we want to get the best of both worlds; we want to get what the Burmese people want.

Marquess of Salisbury: That is separation?

Mr. Harper: If it is separation; and we want to ensure that the consequences of separation will be, as far as the trade relation question is concerned, adjusted as we want them to be adjusted.

Marquess of Salisbury: I quite understand that that is your aspiration, but you think that precautions should be taken by this Committee so that in the final act the possibility of the alteration of the trade relations between Burma and India should be prevented?

Mr. Harper: Precisely.

Marquess of Salisbury: And to that purpose, I think you suggested in answer to Lord Reading, that there should be some clause inserted in the Constitution Act under which, pending an agreement between the two new Governments, the *status quo* should continue?

Mr. Harper: Yes.

Marquess of Salisbury: Have you thought of the consequences of such an arrangement? If the *status quo* continued it would not be possible for either Government to deal with their trade relations elsewhere freely until the period was over. May I explain my meaning? It is quite clear that if the Burmese Government or the Indian Government were free to make treaty relations elsewhere in respect of matters of trade which affected the two countries, then it would not be possible to continue the fiscal *status quo*.

Mr. Harper: The suggestion is, my Lord, that the *status quo* should be continued until the new Governments have arrived at a trade agreement. We contemplate that that trade agreement should not merely deal with the Indo-Burma trade, but there is room in that for reciprocal arrangements with regard to outside tariffs of both countries.

Marquess of Salisbury: That is a very complete and reasonable answer, but that means that until the agreement has been made the fiscal position would be stereotyped.

Mr. Harper: So far as the Indo-Burma trade is concerned.

Marquess of Salisbury: And not only trade between India and Burma, but all trade elsewhere which deals with the same commodities as the trade between India and Burma.

Mr. Harper: We have not asked for the fiscal policies relating to outside trade to remain in the *status quo*.

Marquess of Salisbury: But it would have to be so, would it not, because if the Burmese and Indian Governments make different fiscal arrangements with regard to the outside trade it will not be possible to maintain the *status quo* as between themselves.

Mr. Harper: We should hope they would consider this trade agreement between themselves as the first item to be adjusted.

Marquess of Salisbury: But we have got to consider how we arrange this clause in the Constitution Act. It

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

appears to me that, upon your footing, we should have to say, supposing we followed the policy you were good enough to suggest, that, as far as the commodities which are in trade between Burma and India are concerned, the fiscal position should be stereotyped, not merely as between Burma and India alone, but elsewhere, until the new trade agreement had been come to.

Mr. Harper: We do not regard that as being absolutely necessary. If the Committee thinks so, then we should still consider that our Indo-Burma trade is the more important question to be adjusted.

Marquess of Salisbury: I must not press you but I wonder whether you would think over the point as to whether that is not a necessary conclusion of the argument.

Mr. Harper: I certainly will do so.

Marquess of Zetland: I am not quite clear. Why could not there be a free trade arrangement between India and Burma apart from other trade arrangements?

Marquess of Salisbury: It was pointed out by Lord Peel the other day, because then the trade from elsewhere would naturally flow to the market which had the lower tariff, and therefore it would pass to Burma or India, as the case may be, and, once there, it would pass freely straight across the boundary, because there would be free trade between the two; so you could not have it.

Sir Samuel Hoare: My Lord Chairman, the problem is a very intricate one, and I have several comments which I would like to make upon the conclusion that Lord Salisbury has just drawn, but I would prefer to make them when we deal with the question as a specific question.

Marquess of Zetland: I apologise for having butted in.

Marquess of Salisbury: Not in the least. Only one further question. Apart from this trade agreement, you heard the speech which I think Mr. Tyabji made this morning; he said that there ought to be a labour agreement as well as a trade agreement between the two new Governments; is that your view?

Mr. Harper: Yes, it is, that point has been dealt with actually in the memorandum which the European community have issued.

Marquess of Salisbury: And you think that is also of very great importance?

Mr. Harper: Of very great importance.

Marquess of Salisbury: You do not put it quite so high as the other.

Mr. Harper: I am not so directly concerned, my Lord. I think it is of enormous importance; I think they are both necessary in Burma's interests as well as in India's interests.

Lord Rankeillour: I think I must ask a question or two about the convention and the *status quo*, because it is even now not quite clear. I understood you wanted it put in the Constitution Act that the *status quo* should be maintained for a certain number of years.

Mr. Harper: We have not suggested any number of years. We have suggested that the *status quo* should be preserved until the new Governments can make their trade agreement.

Lord Rankeillour: Until that comes about?

Mr. Harper: Until they have concluded their trade agreement.

Lord Rankeillour: And if it does not come about the *status quo* would still remain. That is an obvious difficulty.

Mr. Harper: It is, my Lord.

Lord Rankeillour: But you are assuming all the time that there are separate Governments of India and Burma.

Mr. Harper: It would of course force the two Governments to come to an agreement, would it not?

Lord Rankeillour: Exactly, and they would have, as regards the outside world, the right to impose what duties they pleased.

Mr. Harper: That would be possible.

Lord Rankeillour: They might be different, and probably would be different.

Mr. Harper: Yes.

Lord Rankeillour: Whatever goods were affected by the one and were landed in the one country would be able to go on to the other without any further duty or hindrance.

Mr. Harper: I think that is a matter which could be adjusted also, surely, in the Act?

Lord Rankeillour: If it was not so it would not be the *status quo* still.

Mr. Harper: Not entirely, no; not in that respect, certainly. But it was not intended that anybody should be able to import through the country of the lower tariff; that is not the idea.

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Lord Rankeillour: If you maintain the *status quo* that must happen. You would have to modify it, otherwise.

Mr. Harper: Yes, it will have to be modified to that extent.

Lord Rankeillour: And it might happen that the consumers of one country would be benefited at the expense of the consumers of the other country.

Mr. Harper: By the tariffs of their own country, yes.

Lord Rankeillour: Not necessarily by their own country. It might work to the disadvantage of the other partner, might it not? If Indian producers had a tariff which benefited that produce and that produce was not made in Burma, that is to say, the production of Indian producers, the Burmese consumer might suffer.

Mr. Harper: As he does now.

Lord Rankeillour: The only other thing is that you do not suggest that the convention shall be made permanent by an Imperial statute?

Mr. Harper: We have not suggested that, no.

Lord Rankeillour: But then, of course, if it were not, it is liable to be denounced by either party.

Mr. Harper: Our view on that was that it would be made by the new Governments and have a greater chance of being renewed at the end of its period.

Lord Rankeillour: But, of course, it would be liable to attack from either Legislature.

Mr. Harper: It would, yes.

Lord Rankeillour: You do not suggest that it is possible for the Constitution Act in advance to contain some provision which would stereotype that constitution so that it could only be repealed by a new Imperial Act?

Mr. Harper: It would be possible to do so. I have not asked that, but if it were possible to do so—

Lord Rankeillour: You would like it if it were possible?

Mr. Harper: Yes.

Major Cadogan: I must apologise to Dr. Ba Maw for again returning to his speech. He has answered so many questions already, but there is only one I want to ask him. I may be wrong, but his historical analysis of the birth and progress of the anti-separationist movement seemed to me to conflict with the experience of the Royal Statutory Commission. Dr. Ba Maw referred to the vote taken on the motion of U Ba Pe in

December, 1929, on the subject of separation, and incidentally I may say that Dr. Ba Maw is quite wrong in saying that that was the only ground upon which we made our recommendation. That is only by the way. But Dr. Ba Maw discounted the effect of that vote on the grounds that the non-co-operators, that is, those not working the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, were per man anti-separationists. Is that really so? When we were on the work of the Commission in Burma, we went a long way beyond merely the members of the Council to discover what the feeling was in Burma, and I can refer the Committee to page 184 where we say: "Some may ask whether the verdict of the Council is the verdict of the country as a whole. We ourselves have little doubt from what we heard and saw in Burma, that, so far as there is public opinion in the country it is strongly in favour of separation." I do put it to Dr. Ba Maw that it was not the case that all the non-co-operators then were anti-separationists. I suggest to him that the anti-separationist movement grew some time after the visit of the Royal Statutory Commission to Burma.

Dr. Ba Maw: May I submit that what I have stated is literally true, because I do admit that there is a small section of non-co-operators who are separationists. I do admit that, but the position of the anti-separationists later were conclusively proved by the fact that anti-separation was adopted by the non-co-operators and that they decided to lift the boycott in order to vote against separation. I am referring to the origin of the Jubilee Hall Meeting. The Jubilee Hall Meeting was convened by the three non-co-operating associations, U Chit Hliang's Association, U Soe Thein's Association, and U Su's Association. These three associations represent admittedly the non-co-operating section.

Major Cadogan: At that time, in 1929, were they then definitely anti-separationists? That is the point of my question.

Dr. Ba Maw: Yes.

Major Cadogan: They have not become anti-separationists since the visit of the Statutory Commission? That is what I am asking.

Dr. Ba Maw: The anti-separationist movement was one that formed part of their policy. U Chit Hliang will be able to give us the date because he worked

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

it in those days. I was not in politics in those days.

Major *Cadogan*: I understood your point was that when the Statutory Commission visited Burma, all the non-co-operators were separationists.

Dr. *Ba Maw*: With the exception of a very small section of non-co-operators.

Sir *Reginald Craddock*: All the questions I was going to ask I think have been covered by the replies already given.

Miss *Pickford*: I would like to ask U Kyaw Din whether he associates himself with the answers that have been given by Dr. Ba Maw?

U *Kyaw Din*: No, I do not.

Miss *Pickford*: May I ask you a little further. You do not agree with him in favouring federation with India on an equality with other Indian Provinces, without the right to secede?

U *Kyaw Din*: That is so.

Miss *Pickford*: If that was the alternative you would prefer separation on the lines of the Burmese White Paper?

U *Kyaw Din*: May I explain my position? Dr. Ba Maw has stated that he was one of those who started this Anti-separationist League. May I also add that I was one of them with him as my trusted colleague in starting this Anti-separationist League. When we started that League it never entered into our minds that we would ever federate with India. We were Anti-separationists on the basis that we would not separate from India on the basis of the Prime Minister's statement. At that time, I wish to make it plain, we had no other White Papers or any scheme of constitution, except the one that was made by the Right Honourable the Prime Minister, at the end of the Second Round Table Conference. The Indian White Paper was not out then. At that time we were satisfied (I was satisfied at least) that the constitution that would be given to India would be in advance of any constitution that would be given to Burma. On those bases I joined Dr. Ba Maw, or rather Dr. Ba Maw joined me—at least the two of us worked together—that we would go out for a constitution that would be equal at least to that of India. On those bases we worked and started this Anti-separationist movement. If I may recall the

speech I made, I made my position extremely clear as to what I mean by "Anti-separationist." This was in the Legislative Council—the speech on Anti-separation was first led by me; I led and Dr. Ba Maw and others followed me. These were my words: "Therefore Anti-separation does not necessarily mean federation. Anti-separation, as far as we are concerned, means this, that we are not satisfied with the constitution, but we are prepared to consider any constitution that would be satisfactory to the people of Burma." Then the White Paper for India comes. The White Paper for Burma comes. I compared the two. I was satisfied in my own mind that the constitution as promised to Burma, or as outlined for Burma, if I may put it that way, is equal to the constitution as outlined for India. To my mind there was no object in holding back when we would be under the same constitution. I have been accused of turning somersaults. I never turned somersaults in my life. On the other hand my other Anti-separationist friends who supported me in the Council turned somersaults. They said they would never agree to permanent federation. That was our war cry. That is how I got that big majority. That is my position.

Miss *Pickford*: May I ask Dr. Ba Maw just one question. He said in reply to Lord Salisbury that he would prefer separation on Burmese terms. I take it that that is the ultimate ideal which he holds out.

Dr. *Ba Maw*: That is so.

Miss *Pickford*: Could he tell me in a few words what are his reasons for thinking that he will reach that ideal by means of federation?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: I am not thinking of what is going to happen in the future. I am at present restricting myself, as the British Government required us to do, to the two alternatives placed before us, and, facing these two alternatives as a practical man, I say that I prefer the federal alternative.

Sir *John Wardlaw-Milne*: My Lord Chairman, I am in a little difficulty because the question I want to ask has already been touched on, and it may have been answered, and, if it has, of course, I withdraw it. The point that

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

has interested me particularly is in connection with the remarks which were made yesterday regarding the election. U Chit Hlaing, for example, I think particularly said that the matter had been put to the Burmese people, and they had given their decision. I am paraphrasing his words, but I think that was in effect what he said. I want to ask this: Would these Delegates who support federation, and also those who are in favour of separation, answer me this question: Was the choice put before the electorate of Burma of separation, on the one hand, and permanent federation on the other?

U Kyaw Din: Never.

Sir John Wardlaw-Milne: May I finish the question to make it perfectly clear. Or was it, in fact, thus put before them, of separation on the one hand, and federation, possibly leading to better terms with some right of secession, whether stated or implied?

U Kyaw Din: That is so.

Sir John Wardlaw-Milne: I want to know which was put before the people of Burma?

U Kyaw Din: I can explain myself, my Lord Chairman, with your permission. When this propaganda was started it was started by Dr. Ba Maw and myself. I have spoken to as many meetings as Dr. Ba Maw did, sometimes in the same places, and sometimes in different places. I have always put forward that we would oppose permanent and unconditional federation at all costs. Dr. Ba Maw could not deny that.

Sir John Wardlaw-Milne: Does Dr. Ba Maw agree with it?

Dr. Ba Maw: May I explain, my Lord. I do not, because, realising the responsibility placed upon me in giving the answers to the Committee I do not wish to make statements that I cannot support. I am appealing to actual records and actual facts. I want these facts to speak for themselves, whatever claims U Kyaw Din may make. I suppose he has reasons for making claims before this Committee which he would never have made in Burma.

U Kyaw Din: You have made claims.

Dr. Ba Maw: Fact No. 1 is that when we started the League we called ourselves Anti-Separationists. Now this is an extremely important fact; we never called ourselves conditional Federalists; we never called ourselves by any other name. We called ourselves "Anti-Separationists," and the Jubilee Hall resolutions will bear me out on that point. That is Fact No. 1. Fact No. 2 is: At every meeting where we did pass resolutions the first resolution always related to an unconditional opposition of separation on the basis of the Prime Minister's proposed constitution.

U Kyaw Din: That is right.

Dr. Ba Maw: Then, after having made clear these points, we go to the other points, namely, we say that we want a constitution acceptable to Burma; secondly, that we are opposed to an unconditional and perpetual federation. I am sure the Committee will fully appreciate this political situation because naturally, particularly in our part of the world, we do start with certain fundamental propositions, and we go to propositions which are not primary but secondary, inasmuch as they merely proceed from the first propositions, but our first and foremost propositions are propositions embodied in our very name that we are anti-separationists. While I am answering this question may I proceed further, because I do feel that I owe a duty to explain these things. Up to now, of course, U Kyaw Din has also tried to stress the fourth resolution, and entirely ignored the first, second and third resolutions, and U Kyaw Din has given as his reason for doing so the appearance of the Indian White Paper and the Burma White Paper. I wish to submit one objective fact, that U Kyaw Din changed his colours months before the Indian White Paper and the Burma White Paper appeared.

U Kyaw Din: You are not correct.

Dr. Ba Maw: Here is a fact. U Kyaw Din stood for election at Henzada South as a Member of my party, and, within a fortnight of the election, he left the Party and made that speech after he had left the Party. A further fact (it is a painful fact, but I must mention it) is that we unfortunately have not the salutary convention, that protects the integrity of Parliament in Britain. In other words, when people change their position on fundamental questions, they do not consider it their moral obligation to appeal to their constituency, with the result that in spite of all those statements made by U Kyaw Din before this Committee he has not made them in his constituency.

U Kyaw Din: I protest.

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Dr. Ba Maw: With the result that the Anti-separationist League of his constituency unanimously passed a vote of non-confidence against him.

U Kyaw Din: That is not so.

Sir John Wardlaw-Milne: I am sure the Committee are interested in what has been said, but I wonder if Dr. Ba Maw will be kind enough to tell me the answer to my question? With great respect, what he has told me is extremely interesting as to his own view and the view of some of his colleagues here, but the question I want to ask him is one of fact, quite apart from any view he may himself hold, whether he is able to say as a mere onlooker that the question which was put to the electorate did give them the impression that the choice was between separation and permanent federation or not?

U Kyaw Din: I never gave that impression, my Lord. I always preached that separation, on the Premier's statement, is not good enough for us. But, on the other hand, I preached as strongly that permanent federation was detrimental and death to Burma's aspirations. In my constituency, and in the constituencies I spoke in, there was not one man, and there is not one man who will say "We will go in for permanent federation." I may inform this Committee, Sir, why was U Chit Hlaing's party separated from Dr. Ba Maw's party. U Chit Hlaing's party was for permanent federation; Dr. Ba Maw's party was not. That was the reason why there was this division at the beginning of the new Council.

Sir John Wardlaw-Milne: Then you would agree that that choice was not put before the people of Burma?

U Kyaw Din: Absolutely.

Sir John Wardlaw-Milne: U Ba Pe, would you agree with it?

U Ba Pe: Quite so.

Sir John Wardlaw-Milne: You agree it was not put before them?

U Ba Pe: Yes.

Sir John Wardlaw-Milne: I want to ask Mr. Harper a number of questions on details which I will reserve till we come to the question of trade relations, but there is one main question, and that is in connection with your proposal for a convention or agreement. You suggested, I think, to the Committee, that it was perhaps desirable, and I think we would all agree with that if it were possible that such an agreement or con-

vention should be made between the new Governments.

Mr. K. B. Harper: Yes.

Sir John Wardlaw-Milne: Firstly, are you prepared to run the risk of leaving it to the new Governments (that is really one part of the question) and, secondly, supposing the new Governments cannot agree, what then? Is your idea of a continuation of what I will call, for the sake of brevity, the present Free Trade position, that that should continue until in fact the two Governments can agree, so that if, by any chance, one Government could not agree with the other, or stood out, Free Trade would continue for ever. How are you to be safeguarded?

Mr. K. B. Harper: I tried to answer this question this morning. I agree it is a point of great difficulty.

Sir John Wardlaw-Milne: If it has been answered, do not trouble to repeat your answer.

Mr. K. B. Harper: First of all, we think that the Government will be forced into some kind of an agreement by having that rather indefinite provision, but in all these matters of trade agreements we have been advised that it is impossible to make any provision which will last for ever, and that a period of some kind, in some form, will have to be put.

Sir John Wardlaw-Milne: On the whole, you are prepared to leave it to the goodwill of the two Governments?

Mr. K. B. Harper: We are prepared to do so.

Sir John Wardlaw-Milne: As I understand, you have already answered this to some extent, at any rate, I will not pursue it, but I want to get this point clear. Are you pinning any faith to the continuation of the present system until in fact the two parties to an agreement come together?

Mr. K. B. Harper: Yes, we are, in the sense that we think that when the new Governments have really considered their opinion, they will want to continue the present relations.

Sir John Wardlaw-Milne: And if they do not agree, you are safeguarded that the present conditions must continue until they do agree. Is that it?

Mr. K. B. Harper: That is as our proposal is worded, but I would not like to say whether that was our intention.

Lord Eustace Percy: I do not want to go further into the past politics of Burma at all, but I should like to get

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

clear what Dr. Ba Maw's views really are. I thought I understood him, until his reply to Miss Pickford, in which he said he was not concerned with the future, but only with the present choice placed before the people of Burma by the Prime Minister. Surely, if one of those alternatives is permanent federation, you cannot say that you are or are not in favour of permanent federation without thinking about the future. Is Dr. Ba Maw in favour of a permanent federation with India on the terms of the Indian White Paper?

Dr. Ba Maw: I thought I made myself completely clear on this point. I am against both the terms of the separation as contained in the Burma White Paper as well as the terms of Federation as contained in the India White Paper. That is my complete attitude towards the constitutional part of the question, but if I am faced with these two alternatives on the principle of the lesser evil, I and U Chit Hlaing prefer the Federal alternative.

Lord Eustace Percy: And you prefer committing yourselves at this moment to permanent federation?

Dr. Ba Maw: If I have no choice. As I explained, the December resolution still contains our complete demand. If we cannot get the terms of the December resolution we are forced by circumstances to accept the next best thing: that is the federal alternative.

Lord Eustace Percy: But, Dr. Ba Maw, you say, "the federal alternative" in general terms.

Dr. Ba Maw: Exactly.

Lord Eustace Percy: But you choose that, knowing that it means permanent federation.

Dr. Ba Maw: With all its consequences.

Lord Eustace Percy: May I explain, in order that I may not appear to be laying a trap for you, what is in my mind? It has been obvious, I think, from all our discussions on the India White Paper that whatever may be the views of various sections of Indian opinion as to developments in the future, no section of Indian opinion anticipates that the Provinces, as against the Centre, will have wider powers or a wider autonomy in the future than they would have at the beginning of the Federation. Therefore, Burma in entering Federation on a permanent basis, would be permanently committed to a restriction

to the Provincial powers as laid down in the White Paper. I am not now bringing into the question anything about the Governor's Special Responsibilities or the degree of responsible government. I am only talking of the powers of the Province as compared with the powers of the Centre. Therefore, you would be permanently committing yourselves to the Burma Legislature, having no more power than is provided for a Province in the India White Paper permanently. Are you prepared to accept that as what you call the next best alternative.

Dr. Ba Maw: Yes.

Lord Eustace Percy: My Lord Chairman, I had wished to ask Mr. Cowasji some questions on his financial statement, which I confess I did not follow, but I think perhaps it would be best to postpone that until we have the figures before us in writing.

Chairman: I quite agree.

Major C. R. Attlee: Just to follow up that last question, Dr. Ba Maw, would you say briefly why you think that is the lesser of two evils?

Dr. Ba Maw: Because, first of all, it is the mandate of the country. The feeling of the country is—

Major C. R. Attlee: I have got that part. I was really asking for your personal point of view as a practical politician, looking at the thing—not what the verdict of the country was; but in what respects you thought it was better.

Dr. Ba Maw: Because, to give a short answer to that, we feel that it is safer to be in the Indian Federation than to separate on the proposed terms.

Major C. R. Attlee: Safer for whom?

Dr. Ba Maw: Safer economically, politically, and in various other respects.

Major C. R. Attlee: Safer economically: Do you think Burma cannot run itself financially; is that right?

Dr. Ba Maw: I am absolutely certain.

Major C. R. Attlee: You think there will be more money to spend in Burma if you belong to the Federation.

Dr. Ba Maw: I think that we will get more benefit out of the moneys actually spent.

Major C. R. Attlee: Do you anticipate that the finances of Burma are likely to improve, or is this a reason for permanent Federation, because you think that Burma is so constituted that it never can stand alone?

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Dr. Ba Maw: Because at present, to my mind—I may be taking a very dark view of things—as things are, Burma is an entirely agricultural country. We are entirely dependent, as far as the masses go, upon rice, and in the present world conditions I think that it will take us very very many more lean years before we can recover from the present depression, and during that time and in the years to follow, if we are in the Federation, Indian credit and Indian trade would save the situation.

Major C. R. Attlee: Do you mean with the credit of the Government of India behind you?

Dr. Ba Maw: Exactly.

Major C. R. Attlee: Is not it a fact that at present Burma pays a considerable contribution to the Government of India which suggests on any financial adjustment she would pay less?

Dr. Ba Maw: That is a question that has received various answers. My point of view is that the money we are actually paying is not to India but to the Central subjects in India. The Central subjects will always be there and under the proposed Constitution in the Burma White Paper those Central subjects will be directly under the control of the Governor and the financial adviser. Therefore, whether those Central subjects are in India proper or whether they are in Burma, we must contribute these revenues towards the control of the Central subjects, and so long as those Central subjects are not in Burmese hands we would not have much say in the management of those Central subjects, and so long as that is a fact, which will be a fact under the proposed Burma White Paper Constitution, Burmans do not have much of a choice between the two. Whether the Central subjects are managed in India or in Burma it would not be under popular control. Therefore the moneys that we pay will, whether it be federation or whether it be separation, under the proposed Constitution, not be controlled by our popular Legislature.

Major C. R. Attlee: I take your answer. I could not quite agree, perhaps, on the financial settlement. Your second point was that it would be politically better for Burma to be in the Indian Federation. What did you mean by that?

Dr. Ba Maw: Politically, looking to the future, it is my personal conviction

that it will be the day for federations; that the position of the bigger and the stronger countries would be very appreciably better than the position of the smaller and isolated countries; and my statement is based upon that personal conviction, that we will receive better protection and we will feel greater benefit all round in a federation, unless, of course, decidedly greater benefits than what we can derive from a federation are guaranteed to us in our Constitution. I am approaching the subject purely as a practical man. If I have to choose between two things, I say, as a practical man, that a proposition that ensures greater benefits to my country is the proposition that I must accept.

Major C. R. Attlee: Of course, you have ruled out independence altogether on financial grounds, so we can leave that aside, because you have said that Burma cannot stand alone financially. So with you it is merely a question whether you would like to join up with this Federation or that Federation. Is not that so?

Dr. Ba Maw: In our present circumstances.

Major C. R. Attlee: How do you mean?

Dr. Ba Maw: So long as we do not have effective control of all the subjects, particularly finance, I consider that it will be more advantageous for Burma to be in the Indian Federation.

Major C. R. Attlee: Do you suggest that your financial resources would be increased if you were entirely independent, and therefore you could manage, if you were entirely independent, while you could not manage as long as there was any other control than your own?

Dr. Ba Maw: My personal conviction is that if we have effective control of the subjects we could very easily balance our Budget, and as long as we can balance our Budget and ensure two full meals a day to our agriculturists, to our masses, I shall be very happy.

Major Attlee: That seems to me rather to conflict with your last point, that as a purely agricultural country you never could expect to stand by yourselves.

Dr. Ba Maw: I am talking of the present circumstances, where our finances are not under popular control; facts are facts; with the result that before we can talk about our money, half of it or more is expended upon subjects over which we have absolutely no control.

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Major *Attlee*: Which subjects are those?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: The Services, the administration of which is our most expensive item in the Budget.

Major *Attlee*: I suppose you will still come under the Central Government as far as the Indian Civil Service is concerned?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: Quite so.

Major *Attlee*: Would you prefer that to be Burmanised or Indianised?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: Naturally I prefer it to be Burmanised.

Major *Attlee*: Which do you think it will be under the Federation?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: What is actually taking place in our country now is that the Government has interpreted the term "Indianisation" applied to Burma as "Burmanisation."

Major *Attlee*: Supposing it was interpreted the other way would you have any objection to your Services being Indianised?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: Most certainly so, and I am perfectly certain any Indian Province would have the greatest objection to members of other Provinces coming into their Services. I stand on exactly the same level with the rest of the Indian Provinces. Bengal would have the strongest objections to recruitment to its Services being made in Madras.

Major *Attlee*: It was only asking about All-India Services.

Dr. *Ba Maw*: At present under the present system we are recruiting in Burma to a certain section of the All-India Services.

Major *Attlee*: One point you made was economic, the other was political. What was the third point?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: These are the two points.

Major *Attlee*: Thank you.

Lord *Hardinge of Penshurst*: Mr. Tyabji this morning referred to Indian immigration and you mentioned the necessity for a labour convention. Is there at present any system of control of Indian immigration into Burma?

Mr. *Tyabji*: No, there is no control at present.

Lord *Hardinge of Penshurst*: Why is Indian immigration into Burma necessary at all? Are there not sufficient labourers from the backward classes that would make immigration unnecessary and would even contribute to the civilisation of these backward classes?

Mr. *Tyabji*: My Lord, the position in Burma is this: It is a very large country,

very sparsely populated. It has, I think, about 68 persons to a square mile, and it is a country which is still undeveloped and has a very small population of about one crore and 45 lakhs. The cultivation in Burma has increased enormously, and, therefore, all the fresh population is taken up in agricultural pursuits. Therefore, the industrial labour that is required in Burma is supplied mainly by the Indian immigrant labour. Also the work of the Indian labour, the industrial work in Burma, is very much seasonal, that is to say, the rice mills, and the rice mills particularly, which employ quite a large amount of labour, work only for certain months in the year, and after the labour has done its work in the rice mills it goes over to the fields and does a certain amount of agricultural labour. Then again it comes back, a certain amount of it, and does work which is called casual work on the wharves and in the city for transport work, so it rotates during the year. At the present time, and for many years to come, it does not seem possible that there would be any amount of Burmese labour which would be available for industrial work. It is also considered that the agricultural expansion of the country would take up almost all the increase in the population. Therefore, the Indian labour is considered to be a necessity in Burma.

Lord *Hardinge of Penshurst*: Then the backward classes do not work at all?

Mr. *Tyabji*: There are no backward classes in Burma.

Lord *Hardinge of Penshurst*: I meant the tribal classes.

Mr. *Tyabji*: The tribal classes are all agriculturists.

Lord *Hardinge of Penshurst*: They do work in the fields?

Mr. *Tyabji*: They do work in the fields.

Lord *Hutchison of Montrose*: I would like to ask Dr. Ba Maw a question. I understand when the Statutory Commission under Sir John Simon visited Burma in 1929, the opinion then expressed, as expressed on page 184 of the Second Volume of that Report, was the almost unanimous opinion in Burma then in regard to their favour for separation.

Dr. *Ba Maw*: The opinion expressed?

Lord *Hutchison of Montrose*: At that time in 1929.

Dr. *Ba Maw*: In 1929 the witnesses who appeared before the Statutory Commission did make statements to that effect.

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Lord *Hutchison of Montrose*: I understand also that in the Council the question there was carried almost unanimously?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: Quite so, my Lord. In those days, the present anti-separationists were non-co-operating with dyarchy.

Lord *Hutchison of Montrose*: Might I ask you what has caused this reversion of opinion that has now come along, in your view and in your friends' view, that Federation will be better for Burma than separation?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: First of all, may I submit that there has been no reversion; that the non-co-operating section has consistently held to the view that separation on any terms less than Dominion status would be unacceptable for Burma. Rightly or wrongly they have consistently adhered to that point of view and consistently with that and with their policy of non-co-operation, they refused to have anything to do with the dyarchical councils and also with the Statutory Commission when it visited Burma. It was only when His Majesty's Government, through the Prime Minister, gave us a definite pledge that the decision will be according to their decision at a General Election that U Chit Hlaing and I persuaded the non-co-operating element to vote and to enter the Council merely for the purpose of registering a protest against separation, as offered by the Prime Minister.

Lord *Hutchison of Montrose*: Then may I take it that the result of the recent elections has altered your opinion in Burma?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: I should put it this way, my Lord: The result of the election has brought out the real opinion of Burma on the issue.

Lord *Hutchison of Montrose*: I only want to bring out the point that of course we here, in the British Parliament, are somewhat in a fog as to the reasons for the change of view as expressed in this Report and as expressed by yourself yesterday and to-day.

U Chit Hlaing: There was no change at all.

Earl *Peel*: I would just like to ask two questions only. The first is from Dr. Ba Maw. He has told us, I think, that the separationists are only in favour of separation on the basis of Dominion status. That is so, is it not?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: And for that I am quoting two authorities. One is taken from

and made in the Burmese Legislative Council by the accredited leader of the separationists, U Ba Pe in August, 1930, and the other is the first part of the December Resolution.

Earl *Peel*: I am not questioning your statement; I only wanted to found a question on it. In that case, if you do not have that you prefer to join the Indian Federation?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: Quite so, if we do not get the terms stated in the December Resolution.

Earl *Peel*: If you do not get your full terms?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: Yes.

Earl *Peel*: After all, compromise we all hate, do we not? In that case, as I say, you are prepared to enter the Indian Federation, but, of course, if you do that, do you not sacrifice any chance you might ever have of obtaining Dominion Status for Burma, either today or years ahead? You give up that ambition altogether?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: I am prepared to admit that to a certain extent, but at the same time what is much more vital to us is the immediate future rather than the remote future.

Earl *Peel*: You do not bother about posterity at all?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: I do, my Lord, but our first duty is to safeguard the immediate future.

Earl *Peel*: But when you are looking to the immediate future you are cutting yourselves off from something in, I will not say the remote future, but in the middle future. Is that not so?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: With due respect, I am not in a position, neither am I prepared, to discuss things that will occur in the next generation, whatever they may be.

Earl *Peel*: You want to stand on what you said, do you?

Dr. *Ba Maw*: Quite so.

Earl *Peel*: There is only one more question I want to ask. I am not quite sure to whom I should address it. I think it was Mr. Tyabji who said that there would be some risk in separation because the great bulk, or anyhow a very large percentage, of the rice export on which Burma depended so much went to India?

Mr. *Tyabji*: Yes, that is so, my Lord.

Earl *Peel*: I think it was you who said that the whole export of Burma to India, though large from the point of view of Burma, only represented 5 per cent. of the total production of India?

7^o Decembris, 1933.]GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION
OF THE SEPARATION OR FEDERATION OF BURMA.

[Continued.]

Mr. Tyabji: Yes.

Earl Peel: Therefore I think your fears were that India, by increasing its production, might very seriously injure Burma by not requiring the rice from Burma, and that Burma would not be able to get another market for its rice?

Mr. Tyabji: That was my point.

Earl Peel: But is it not the fact (you have been speaking about the seasonal immigration of Indians into Burma for certain purposes) that it is very much to the interests of India that, as it were, her surplus labour should migrate for certain periods to Burma in order to get employment?

Mr. Tyabji: That is so, my Lord.

Earl Peel: If that is so, Burma has got a very strong hand, has it not, in any negotiation with India? She can say to India, "Well, you must take our rice because otherwise we might wish to cut off the supply of this labour to Burma." Therefore you would be negotiating on fairly equal terms with India, would you not?

Mr. Tyabji: May I say this, my Lord, that although the Indian labour coming to Burma is about 3 lakhs per annum, still the number is not such a large one that if it did not find an outlet in Burma it would be impossible for those people to live. The improvement in agriculture and the improvement in industries in India itself would probably be providing a certain amount of work for the labour which at present goes out of India. It has, at the same time, outlets in different parts or other parts of the world, such as Ceylon, Singapore, Shanghai, Mauritius and Kenya, and therefore the outlet is not restricted only to Burma as the outlet of rice is restricted to India.

Earl Peel: I suppose it is likely also that although, as we know, Burma depends so much on its rice at present, equally with India it will probably de-

velop its industries as well, and the demand for labour from India will probably increase. Of course, a certain amount will be taken up, no doubt, by the Burmese themselves, but it is likely to increase, is it not, and therefore the surplus labour is not likely to be absorbed by emigration to other places?

Mr. Tyabji: Looking at the present, and, say, for five or ten years ahead, it does not seem that there will be such a very large demand for an increase of labour in Burma.

Earl Peel: Therefore you think on the whole that the interests in the two countries, as it were, would not be so evenly balanced, as I suggested?

Mr. Tyabji: Yes, my Lord.

Chairman: My Lords and Gentlemen, I understand that the Secretary of State desires to put no further questions. Does any member of the Committee desire to put any other questions?

I should propose now that the Committee and Delegates should proceed to examine in detail the proposals of the Burma White Paper in accordance with the detailed programme which has been circulated. Subject to the approval of the Committee, I do not propose to cause to be taken a verbatim report of this next phase of our inquiry.

May I at this stage say to the Burma Delegation—and I should like these words to go upon the Note—that during our work together it is, of course, understood that a Delegate who happens to be an anti-Separationist must not be held to prejudice in the slightest degree his case upon the main issue of Separation versus Federation by reason of the fact that such Delegate is prepared to make his contribution towards an examination of the scheme of Constitutional Reform in Burma as set out in the Burma White Paper.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned to to-morrow at half-past Ten o'clock.

B1

RECORD OF DISCUSSIONS
BETWEEN THE JOINT COM-
MITTEE ON INDIAN CON-
STITUTIONAL REFORM AND
THE DELEGATES FROM BURMA

[SESSION 1933-34]

Die Mercurii, 6° Decembris, 1933

Die Jovis, 7° Decembris, 1933

CONTENTS

	PAGE
<i>General Discussion of the question of the Separation or Federation of Burma ...</i>	1