

LIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

OFFICIAL REPORT
(UNREVISED)

Vol. 142. No. 118

Thursday, 18th July, 1946

CONTENTS

Motion—The Mission to India.
Questions—Marriages of Troops Abroad.
Lighting in Side Streets.
Written Answer—Watch Repairs.



LONDON
HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

Price Sixpence

Peers wishing to be supplied with these Daily Reports should give notice to that effect to the Printed Paper Office.

The Bound Volumes will also—in addition—be sent to those Peers who similarly intimate their desire to have them.

No proofs of the Daily Reports are sent. Any corrections which Peers desire to suggest in the Report of their speeches for the Bound Volume should be indicated in this Daily Report, and the copy of the Daily Report containing the corrections suggested must be received by the Editor of Debates, House of Lords, within fourteen days of the Debate.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Annual subscriptions: Lords, £2 15s.; Commons, £3 10s.

Short period subscriptions to cover a fixed number of consecutive daily issues:

40 issues (Lords or Commons), £1
100 " (" " " "), £2 10s.

All rates are inclusive of postage to the subscriber's address.

Orders should be placed with the Stationery Office at any of the addresses below.

LONDON

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

To be purchased directly from H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE at the following addresses:
York House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2; 13a Castle Street, Edinburgh 2;
39-41 King Street, Manchester 2; 1 St. Andrew's Crescent, Cardiff;
80 Chichester Street, Belfast;
or through any bookseller

HOUSE OF LORDS

Thursday, 18th July, 1946.

The House met at half past two of the clock, The LORD CHANCELLOR on the Woolsack.

Prayers.

RAILWAYS (VALUATION FOR RATING) BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order) on re-commitment of the Bill: Bill reported without amendment.

Then, Standing Order Number XXXIX having been suspended (in pursuance of the Resolution of 15th July), Bill read 3^a, and passed.

WEST MIDLANDS, JOINT ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order) on re-commitment of the Bill: Bill reported with Amendments.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH PROVISIONAL ORDER (WALLASEY) BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order) on re-commitment of the Bill: Bill reported without amendment.

THE MISSION TO INDIA.

VISCOUNT TEMPLEWOOD had given notice that he would ask His Majesty's Government whether they have any statement to make on Indian affairs; and move for Papers. The noble Viscount said: My Lords, I beg to ask the question standing in my name, and to move for Papers.

2.40 p.m.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA AND BURMA (LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE): My Lords, I welcome the opportunity provided for me by the noble Viscount to give some account of my stewardship in India and to explain to your Lordships something of what I, in conjunction with my colleagues of the Cabinet Mission and with the Viceroy,

tried to do in three and a half months of busy negotiations in India, and the measure of our accomplishment. As there is so much to tell I will say only one thing by way of introduction regarding the magnitude of the problem with which we had to deal. If you take all the population of the United States, if you take all the population both in Europe and in Asia of the Soviet Union, and if you take all the people in the British Isles and all the white people throughout the British Empire and add them all together, even then you do not reach a total as great as that of the Indians in India. Not only so, but that vast sub-continent has great multiplicities of race, religion, language and culture. No wonder is it, then, that the Indian statesmen are deeply conscious of their responsibility and take divergent views as to the precise constitutional future of their country.

As your Lordships are of course aware, the two great Parties in British India, the Congress Party and the Moslem League, who, between them, nearly swept the polls in the recent Provincial Elections, are acutely divided on this matter. While the Congress Party have always stood for one united India, the claim of the Moslem League has been for a division of India into Hindustan and Pakistan.

Therefore, while the first task of the Mission was to convince Indians of the sincerity of the British people in offering them independence, within or without the British Commonwealth according to their choice, the second task was to bridge the apparently unbridgeable chasm separating the rival views of the two great Indian Parties. I think I can claim, without fear of disagreement, that as to the first we were entirely successful. All leaders of Indian opinion now realize that the British people mean what they say, and will do their part to carry it into effect. As to the second, I believe that the facts as disclosed in these voluminous Command Papers—which are now in the hands of your Lordships, and which I hope to make more clear in the course of my remarks—speak for themselves.

We began by getting into direct personal contact, orally and by correspondence, with most of the representative men and women in India, not only of the great Indian Parties and of the States but also of other sections and minorities in British

[Lord Pethick-Lawrence.]
 India. Their views profoundly influence us in forming our opinion as to the best way in which to approach the problem. The main difficulty lay in the fact that not only were the major Parties divided as to the character of the future constitutional structure of India, but these divergences of view prevented them from agreeing on any constitution-making machinery. Congress wanted to have a single constitution-making body, while the Moslem League desired two separate constitution-making bodies, one for Hindustan and one for Pakistan.

After considerable discussion with them separately, we decided to invite Congress and the Moslem League to send four representatives each to meet us together in Simla and to consider a proposal to frame a constitution on a three-tier basis. This they agreed to do, while preserving complete freedom of action.

The Simla talks were marked by a welcome spirit of accommodation shown by both parties, and, though final agreement was not reached, the talks ended amicably and sufficient progress had been made to justify us in putting out a statement on May 16 (to be found in Command Paper 6821), which we felt was sufficiently near the views of both parties to be likely of acceptance. Probably, most of your Lordships have read the statement, either when it was originally issued or recently, in view of this debate. I will, therefore, only say that it does not purport to lay down a constitution for India—that is a matter entirely for Indians. What we did was to offer a framework of a constitution and to invite Indians to join in constitution-making machinery on this basis. The three-tier basis is, therefore, nothing more than our recommendation to the Indian people, but as it is on this basis that we were asking the parties to join in the formation of a Constituent Assembly, it was necessary in a later paragraph in our statement, namely Paragraph 19 (VII), to stipulate that the provisions of the earlier Paragraph 15 could not be varied without a majority of each of the two major communities.

In Paragraph 18, we gave our reason for adopting the population basis for elections to the Constituent Assembly, and this method has met with general approval. But, as we recognize that it did not give (and no scheme that might have

been devised, with any real justification could have given) real and effective influence in the Constituent Assembly itself to smaller minorities, we proposed the formation of a special advisory committee for minorities, which we believe will provide a substantial protection for them. Paragraph 14 of the statement dealt with the question of the Indian States. I should say, perhaps, that we had already had a series of very interesting talks with the States Rulers and their representatives, as well as a good deal of correspondence, and we were most impressed by the helpful and co-operative attitude which they adopted throughout. The Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, His Highness the Nawab of Bhopal, was very helpful and will, I am sure, contribute much to the solution of the problem of the Indian States. As I have said, our attitude to the States is expressed in Paragraph 14 of the statement of May 16, in which we record the willingness expressed by the States to co-operate and their helpful attitude as to the winding up of the Parliamentary Paramountcy relationship. This matter was further elaborated in a Memorandum handed by us to the Chancellor. That Memorandum is set out in Command Paper No. 6835. The views of those States for whom the Chancellor speaks are given in Command Paper No. 6862, Document 4. It will be seen that a negotiating committee has been set up to arrange for the participation of the States in the constitution-making body.

The May 16 Statement, as a whole, had an excellent reception, although of course there were points in it that were criticized on many sides. Neither of the major Parties could achieve their whole objective through it, although the statement presented a practical and flexible compromise which we hoped they might both accept. After we had issued that statement there naturally followed a period when all Parties in India were discussing among themselves our proposal, and were weighing up in minute detail the pros and cons, as they affected their own principles and the interests of their particular sections. There were also verbal and written interchanges between them and ourselves as to the Constituent Assembly—as will be seen from some of the earlier letters published in Command Paper No. 6861, and from the statement issued by the Mission on May 25 in Command Paper

No. 6835. Although I would be quite ready to go into greater detail I am anxious to keep to the major lines, because there is a great deal to tell and if I went into the bye-paths I might easily weary your Lordships.

On June 6 the All-India Moslem League Council passed a resolution which, while critical of the contents of our statement of May 16, particularly on the issue of Pakistan, and while reserving opinion on the point, definitely accepted the scheme, put forward by the Mission. This was a great step forward and I pay tribute to the courage and statesmanship of Mr. Jinnah, that in advance of any pronouncement by Congress he should have introduced and carried through his Council, acceptance of our proposals, although they differed substantially from the views held and vigorously expressed by his followers until then. At that time Congress did not come to any final decision. Perhaps I may anticipate events, and tell you that on June 25, in a resolution and in a letter to the Viceroy—which appears in Command Paper No. 6861—while expressing their view on interpretation, they announced their acceptance of the proposals set out in our statement of May 16. Thus, in the end we have secured the acceptance of both the major Parties in India to those proposals.

The nominations and elections to the constitution-making body have accordingly been proceeding during the present month, and from the news which reaches me it would seem that some of the best human material in India is likely to be returned to take part in the deliberations. If my expectations in this respect are fulfilled, a most valuable start will have been made in the erection of the constitutional structure for the future of India. Before I leave this matter of the Constituent Assembly I should perhaps say a few words regarding some recent reports from India as to the intentions of the Parties in joining the Constituent Assembly. We saw both Parties shortly before we left India, and they said to us quite categorically that it was their intention to go into the Assembly with the object of making it work. Of course, they are at perfect liberty to advance their own views of what should, or should not, be the basis of a future Constitution. That is the purpose of the Constituent Assembly, to hammer out agreement from diverse

opinions and plans. Likewise, they can put forward their views as to how the Constituent Assembly should conduct its business. But having agreed to the statement of May 16, and the Constituent Assembly elected in accordance with that statement they cannot, of course, go outside the terms of what has been agreed. To do so would not be fair to other Parties who come in, and it is on the basis of that agreed procedure that His Majesty's Government have said they will accept the decisions of the Constituent Assembly.

The States themselves need have no anxiety, since it is for them to agree freely to come in or not, as they choose. It is for that purpose that they have set up a negotiating committee, and I am sure that that committee will have the wisdom to work out an acceptable basis for their co-operation in the Constituent Assembly. After all, it is upon the free consents of the many diverse elements of the Indian people that the success of the new constitution will depend. And I am confident, from all that was said to me in India, that all Parties appreciate this fundamental fact. Union cannot be by force; it must be by agreement, and it will be the task of the Constituent Assembly to attain that agreement, which will be possible if the majorities and minorities alike are tolerant and are prepared to co-operate for the good of the future of all India.

I will now come to the negotiations for creating an Interim Government—what was, in the end, referred to in India as “the short term plan.” Those negotiations were already begun by the Viceroy at Simla, and he had discussions both with Mr. Jinnah and with Pandit Nehru on certain possible bases for representation of the Congress and the Moslem League in conjunction with minority representatives in this Interim Government. I need hardly point out to your Lordships that during this interim period it is most desirable if possible to get an interim Government which is in the nature of a coalition in which at any rate the two major Parties in India are both represented. No agreement was reached at Simla on this point or after our return to Delhi. But a number of relevant questions were dealt with. A very strong point with Congress—as will be evident from Document 3 in Command Paper 6861—related to the powers

[Lord Pethick-Lawrence.]
and status of the Interim Government and the treatment of it by the Viceroy. Letter 4 by the Viceroy contained his answer, which we were given to understand was regarded as substantially satisfactory. There was also some correspondence with Mr. Jinnah which will be found in the same Paper.

After some delay, due to the absence of some of the negotiators from New Delhi, the question of the composition of the Interim Government was taken up again. Congress took exception to parity between the two Parties and attempts were made to meet this by forming an Interim Government on the basis of six Congress representatives, five Caste Hindus and one representing the Scheduled Castes, five Moslems and two others. Mr. Jinnah might possibly have agreed, but Congress were not satisfied with this arrangement or suggestion. We thus reached a complete deadlock, and it seemed that the only possible way to break that deadlock was for the Viceroy, in consultation with the Mission, to choose a suitable Interim Government on the basis judged most likely to be acceptable to both Parties, in view of their expressed opinions, and make a statement publicly that he was going ahead on that basis. There resulted the statement of June 16, which is Document 21 in Command Paper 6861. The proposed Government was built up on the basis of six Congress representatives, including one for the Depressed Classes, five Moslem League representatives, one Sikh and two others—fourteen in all—the two others being a Parsi and an Indian Christian.

I should say that the Viceroy had had unofficial and tentative lists of names from both sides, and those were largely used in the selection of the fourteen names. On this occasion Mr. Jinnah took up the position that he would await the Congress decision before giving that of the Moslem League. Congress were very much troubled by the type of parity that still remained between the Moslems and the Caste Hindus and on a matter concerning the minority representation; but it might have been, despite all the difficulties, that Congress would have consented to this arrangement, had there not at that moment been an unfortunate and widely publicised disclosure of certain letters written by Mr. Jinnah. The most im-

portant of those was No. 22 in Command Paper 6861, which contained the following sentence:

"... the Moslem League would never accept the nomination of any Moslem by you...."

that was the Viceroy—

"other than a Moslem Leaguer."

This at once became the major issue. Congress had already suggested that in order to get over the parity idea, they should be allowed to substitute a Moslem for one of their number, which had been proposed by the Viceroy; and they might have perhaps waived this suggestion had it not been that a public challenge was at this moment made to their right to do so.

I would remind your Lordships—no doubt you already know—that Congress have, of course, always insisted upon the national character of their organisation, and they have fully demonstrated this fact by nomination of personnel to those Provincial Governments where they are in the large majority. When I say "national character," I mean as opposed to merely a communal character. Although it was made perfectly clear to Mr. Jinnah on more than one occasion that neither the Viceroy nor the Mission could accept his claim to monopoly of Moslem appointments, we felt we could not at that stage accept this large alteration of the Viceroy's plan and force Mr. Jinnah to swallow it.

In order to explain the subsequent events I must now return to the Statement of June 16. In paragraph 8 of that Statement we have laid down the course which we should pursue in the event of both or either of the two major Parties being unable to accept a Coalition Government on the basis there proposed. If either refused the whole basis of the proposed coalition fell to the ground. But we desired to protect any who had agreed to co-operate in the plan of May 16—that was the long term plan—for the Constituent Assembly, and so we stated that in the event of failure to form a coalition on the lines set out in the June 16 Statement, "it is the intention of the Viceroy to proceed with the formation of an Interim Government which will be as representative as possible of those willing to accept the Statement of May 16." Up to June 16 this indicated the Moslem League only, as neither Congress nor the Sikhs had up to that time given any decision.

When Congress ultimately came to their final decision, to which I have already referred, to accept the Statement of May 16, while unfortunately rejecting the Interim Government, they quite clearly became equally eligible with the Moslem League for inclusion in the representative Government.

Immediately we received from the Congress President the letter numbered 31 in the Command Paper, we saw Mr. Jinnah and told him the position, giving him a copy of the letter and informing him that the scheme of June 16 had fallen to the ground, since Congress had turned it down. We confirmed this the same evening in the letter numbered 33. Up to that moment the Moslem League had arrived at no decision as to their attitude to the proposal of June 16. As I have already pointed out, they had adopted the line that they must await the Congress decision before themselves deciding. In view of the Congress decision it then became too late for any decision of the Moslem League to be effective. Mr. Jinnah went straight from this meeting with us to his Working Committee, who passed a resolution which is set out in Document 34 accepting the scheme of June 16. Presumably Mr. Jinnah told his Working Committee what had passed at the interview; though he does not make this clear in his letter of the 26th, numbered 35. Mr. Jinnah seemed to think that the acceptance by Congress of the statement of May 16 had put him into a false position; and that we should have proceeded forthwith to the formation of an Interim Government with the Moslem League alone. His arguments on this point are to be found in the statement he made to the Press (Document 39 of Command Paper 6861) and his letters to the Viceroy, numbered 41 and 43. These were answered shortly in the letters numbered 42 and 44.

It is easy to realize the disappointment of Mr. Jinnah that Congress had not accepted what apparently seemed to him the acceptable arrangement of June 16 for the Interim Government, while at the same time qualifying themselves for consultation upon the formation of some other Interim Government, by agreeing to operate the plan of May 16. But I cannot see that any other interpretation was open to us than the one we put upon it. The situation now is that the Viceroy, after a very short delay, will proceed to

act under Paragraph 6 of the Statement of June 16. I must make it quite clear that during this short delay a temporary official Government has been set up; this is purely a temporary expedient to tide over the time until a representative Government can be formed. The reason for the delay is entirely a practical one. No one desired an official Government had any other solution been possible. Only those who have carried through intensive negotiations during the summer months in New Delhi can realize how exhausted all the participants were. It was essential that there should be a short interval after three and a half months of intensive work, and this necessity was emphasized by the fact that all the Congress Working Committee had to leave the All-India Congress Meeting at Bombay on the 8th July, and that both the Indian Parties wished to participate in the elections to the Constituent Assembly. So it was that this purely temporary expedient was adopted.

The next stage will be for the Viceroy to resume negotiations at the earliest practicable moment with the two major Parties for the formation of an Interim Government. This will, as your Lordships may well imagine, be an exceedingly difficult task, but we hope the fact that the constitution-making machinery is now at last being launched will make both Parties realise the absolute necessity of a compromise on the question of the Interim Government. This Government is, of course, no part of any permanent structure in India; it is to be a purely provisional Government to carry on until such time as a new constitution comes into operation. It would therefore seem inappropriate for either Party to delay its formation by insisting upon principles, which may well be important enough from the long term point of view but which for a purely interim purpose will have no influence upon their future position. The members of the Mission would therefore appeal to all those on both sides with whom they developed such true and friendly relations during their stay in India to put aside, for this purpose, their keen communal and Party feelings and to come together for the good of all India in this difficult time when an efficient and representative Government is so vital to her future welfare.

So far I have of necessity concentrated upon the position of the two major

[Lord Pethick-Lawrence.]

Parties, but although these represent a large proportion of the total population of British India there are other important elements which are entitled to the fullest consideration. I have already explained what arrangement we have made for the participation of the Indian States. I now pass to the question of the Sikhs. It is a matter of great distress to us that the Sikhs should feel that they have not received the treatment that they deserve as an important section of the Indian people, and that they appear to be standing out of the constitution-making body. The difficulty arises, not from anyone's underestimate of the importance of the Sikh community, but from the inescapable geographical facts of the situation. The views of the Sikhs are set out in Documents 1 and 3 of Command Paper 6862. From these it will be seen that what they demand is some special treatment analogous to that given to the Moslems. The Sikhs, however, are a much smaller community—5,000,000 as against 90,000,000—and are not geographically situated so that any area as yet devised can be carved out in which they would find themselves in a majority.

It is, however, essential that the fullest consideration should be given to their claims, for they are a distinguished and important community whose culture and interests deserve protection. The most we could do directly was to nominate them in Paragraph 19 of the statement of May 16 as one of the more important communities, and this we did. But on the population basis which we had to adopt they lose their weightage, and consequently have only four out of a total of twenty-eight seats in the Punjab or out of thirty-five in the North Western section. We hope that this situation will to some extent be remedied by their full representation in the Advisory Committee on minorities set up under Paragraph 20 of the statement of May 16. Over and above that we have represented to the two major Parties, who were both most receptive in this matter, that some special means of giving the Sikhs a strong position in the affairs of the Punjab or in the North-Western Group should be devised.

I now come to the Depressed Classes. The difficulty that arises here is that there are two claimants to represent this large body of Indians, one identified with the

name of Dr. Ambedkar, who has fought so strenuously for the rights of the Depressed Classes, and the other which works in close association with Congress. We naturally considered with great care what could be done to obtain representation for both organizations in accordance with their popular support in the country, but owing to the operation of what is known as the Poona Pact they have been almost entirely excluded from the Provincial Assemblies, and it is therefore impossible to secure representation in the constitution-making body if, as we decided, it has to be based on election from the Provincial Assemblies. The Depressed Classes will, of course, have their full representation through the Congress affiliated organization. We interviewed the leaders of this organization and were convinced of their very genuine and strong desire to support the case of the Depressed Classes. Here again, however, we hope that the Advisory Committee on Minorities may provide an opportunity for the reasonable representation of both organizations, and we very much hope that the majority of the Constituent Assembly, in setting up that Advisory Committee, will be generous in their allocation of seats to all the minorities, and particularly to those who have little or no representation in the Constituent Assembly itself.

There are, as your Lordships are of course aware, other important minorities in India, of whom I need only mention to-day the Indian Christians and the Anglo-Indians, whose rights will, we hope, also be safeguarded by the Advisory Committee. I would remind your Lordships that in our statement of May 25, in Command Paper 6835, we have singled out "adequate provision for the protection of the minorities" as one of the two matters which are required in order that His Majesty's Government will recommend to Parliament such action "as may be necessary for the cession of sovereignty to the Indian people." We express the well-founded belief that this will be non-controversial.

That brings to the end the story I have to tell about our work in India, but before I sit down I may perhaps be permitted to pay a tribute to my Cabinet colleagues in the Mission, without whose resource, initiative and wise judgment I could have done nothing, and further to pay a tribute to the Viceroy, who is held

in such high esteem in India and who contrived, in spite of having to carry on his normal duties, to devote his great gifts to the furtherance of the work on which we were all engaged. I should also like to say a word with regard to the India statesmen with whom we came into contact. Although we were at times engaged in acute controversy with them on political issues, our personal relationships always remained on a friendly footing; and although sometimes we may have felt a little impatient at the delay, we had to bear in mind, and I think we must all bear it in mind, that whereas from our point of view the change in the constitutional position of India will be an act which may have important repercussions in the future but which will to some extent simplify our problem, for the Indians the setting up of the Constitution will be the beginning of a very difficult chapter. It is most natural that they should want to think, and think again, and think still again of the actual framework under which they may have to live for centuries to come.

I am quite sure that your Lordships, in discussing these matters with your accustomed judgment and restraint, will bear in mind the critical and delicate state of the negotiations that are about to be resumed in India, and I know I can count upon you, therefore, to refrain from any remarks that might make more difficult the task of the Viceroy in bringing those negotiations to a successful conclusion. The work upon which my colleagues and I have been engaged during some three to three and a half months in India has, as I am quite sure you realise, been no light one. It is fraught with consequences of the greatest importance, not only to India and to Britain but indeed to the whole world. If we have been able to reach even a partial solution of some of the problems presented to us and to help our Indian friends to find a way through their own difficulties to a great and prosperous future, then I am proud to have taken my part in this great work.

3.28 p.m.

VISCOUNT TEMPLEWOOD: My Lords, it is my pleasant duty, as the first unofficial speaker in this debate, to say a word of welcome to the Secretary of State and to congratulate him upon the courage, patience and endurance with which he has carried through his difficult mission. I am

told that not only did the noble Lord inspire widespread respect in India but that he also excited great personal affection. We who know him here are not surprised at that; nor am I surprised, having played many games of tennis with him in former years, at his great physical endurance. In any case we are delighted to have him back and we are grateful to him for the full exposition of the position in India which he has just given us.

Let us at once, without going into the details, give the Mission credit for one or two outstanding results. In the first place, they have shown once again (if indeed it was necessary that the fact should be shown again) that we are all of us, to whatever Party we may belong, anxious to help India on the way to full self-government. I should have thought it scarcely needed any further evidence to prove that fact, especially when we look back over the last thirty years on the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, the Simon Commission, the years in which I myself and other members of this House occupied ourselves at the various round table conferences, on the Joint Select Committee, in connexion with the Cripps Mission and so on. I suppose there never has been a case in the history of the world in which a great Power has so insistently and so sincerely attempted to devolve itself of Governmental responsibilities. No doubt the personality of the Secretary of State counted for very much, and I believe that a great deal of the suspicion that still remained in Indian minds as to our motives has now been removed.

Having made those two general observations, let me, as in duty bound, approach some of the issues in somewhat greater detail. I approach them in the most friendly spirit. Indeed I hope that my past record in Indian affairs is sufficient evidence of my desire to help on an Indian agreement and to make the change in the relations between India and Great Britain as friendly as it is possible to make it. I would draw your Lordships' attention to one or two points upon which it seems to me we need, if not to-day, at any rate in the future, some further enlightenment. As I see it, the Mission went to India with the sole objective of helping Indians to bridge the difficult passage in the present relations between India and this country. It was a single bridge which the Mission had to find—a

[Viscount Templewood.]
single bridge which at the one end contained a representative Indian Government and at the other end a Constituent Assembly. I purposely say a "single" bridge, and I believe myself that one end of it is not possible without the other end of it. I am justified in making that claim by what emerges in document after document in these various White Papers. I need not weary your Lordships with extracts from these documents, but you will find that from start to finish, the Moslems and the Hindus alike insist that if a Constituent Assembly is to work effectively it is essential to have an Interim Government representing the main trend of Indian opinion.

If your Lordships will think of the problem for a moment you will see that the Moslems and Hindus are perfectly right in insisting upon this fact. Suppose the present Caretaker Government continues in office and the Constituent Assembly is formed. The Caretaker Government will almost inevitably become the butt of every kind of criticism. There will be many very difficult and perhaps dangerous administrative problems that it will have to face, for instance, the possibility of famine in certain of the Indian Provinces. It will have no public opinion behind it. It will be faced on the one hand by the Central Legislative Assembly and on the other hand by the Constituent Assembly, and the result will be crisis after crisis in which, in my view, it will be practically impossible for the Constituent Assembly to carry on its work.

That situation I hope is not going to arise, but at the same time it is a situation which may possibly arise. It is the duty of the Government to face these possibilities. The Secretary of State said quite rightly that he hoped the Caretaker Government would only continue in office for a very short time. I hope so too, but supposing that that does not happen, what is then going to be the case if, after the election to the Constituent Assembly, the same difficulties still continue as to parity and it is found impossible to form a representative Indian Government? Will the Caretaker Government then have to continue? If it does not continue shall we attempt to fall back upon a Government of Indian notables? I should have thought that at this period of the chapter

it would be very difficult to find the notables who would take office in these circumstances. Will the Viceroy be forced to select one of the communities—assuming that one of the communities is ready to cooperate—and to give the main responsibility for forming the Government to the representative of that community?

I mention that possibility for the purpose of drawing your Lordship's attention to the great danger of any such action. I hope that the possibility has been removed by the Viceroy's letter to Mr. Jinnah of June 16. I feel myself that if events developed upon those lines and one of the communities was given the responsibility of forming an Interim Government there would almost inevitably be an outbreak of communal trouble with the British Army still in India, and the obligation presumably upon the British Army to suppress the trouble. It has only been necessary to mention that possibility in order to give the noble Lord an opportunity of saying that nothing of that kind is contemplated. I felt it, however, my duty to raise the point today because it is a possibility fraught with some great dangers, not only to the peace of India but to the whole integrity of the British Empire.

Now I pass to the question of the Constituent Assembly. With reference to that I at once pay a tribute to the work of the Mission in achieving the result of getting both the great communities to accept a single Constituent Assembly. As one who has had a great deal of experience, in the past, of the divisions between the communities, I can say that that is an achievement of considerable importance. Having said that, and having listened with a good deal of satisfaction to what the noble Lord said about the Constituent Assembly, I must point out to him that in the documents which he has circulated there is still a great deal of ground for doubt and anxiety. Is the Constituent Assembly to be a sovereign body or not? Is it to be bound by the framework of the Statement of May 16? I was very glad to hear from the noble Lord today—he used very explicit words on the subject—that it was definitely to work within the framework of the Statement of May 16. The Statement laid down that there should be a single Constituent Assembly. A small

centre, with limited power, division into sections for the Provincial constitutions, and contemplated the possibility, at the end, of the grouping of Provinces. I was delighted to hear what the Secretary of State said on the subject today, and I hope that his words will have wide publicity, because it is quite clear from the documents contained in these White Papers that that is not the view taken by more than one of the Parties concerned in this negotiation.

The noble Lord alluded to the question of the Indian States. There again, I am convinced that if there is to be a united India in the future it is essential that what in the past was called "Indian India," that is the India of the States, should be properly represented in its Government and in its legislature. I, therefore, hope profoundly that if the Constituent Assembly is formed and works effectively, the Indian States will take their full part in the deliberations and their full part in any Constitution that may emerge. It does, however, seem to me—again from the reading of these documents—as though the present situation is very far from clear. I am not clear, for instance, about the exact scope of what is called the negotiating committee, or at what point it starts its negotiations. Do I understand rightly that the position is that the negotiating committee will represent the Indian States, and that after the Constituent Assembly has been formed from the representatives of British India the negotiating committee will then enter into discussions with them as to their representation in the Constituent Assembly? I should like, before the debate ends, to have that point a little further elucidated.

There is another committee in which the Indian States are expected to take part. It is called the Advisory Committee, and it is the Committee that is to deal with minorities, tribal areas and—a subject that seems a little bit alien from those two matters—the question of fundamental rights. There again, I know from past experience how very sensitive the Princes are to any suggestion that seems to interfere with their internal sovereignty, and I should like to know a little more about this Advisory Committee. Is its procedure to be entirely in the hands of the Constituent Assembly, and if so will it operate by majority? If it operates by majority, how can the result fail to be

that the Indian States will be in a very small minority? In any case, whatever may be the answer to that question, I should like, during the course of this debate, to have a little more information on the subject.

I now pass hurriedly on to the other two questions with which the noble Lord dealt—the question of the Sikhs and the question of the Scheduled Castes—those millions of Indians who at one time we called "Untouchables" at another time "Depressed Classes" and whom now, in the Government of India Act, we call "Scheduled Castes." As to the Sikhs, I will only say that I re-echo entirely the appeal made by the noble Lord that they should reconsider their decision and should take part in the Constituent Assembly. They are people of very strong character, and they are a very important part of the life of India. It would be most regrettable if they were not represented in the Constituent Assembly. As to the Depressed Classes, if I may still so call the Scheduled Castes, I have one or two further observations to make. Your Lordships will remember that in the past they have always been treated by every successive British Government as a distinct minority, worthy to be given weightage and worthy to be given separate electorates. The reason of these distinctions is that, in the nature of things, although they have food in their possession and although they now number among them many distinguished Indians, upon the whole their educational, social and economic standards are lower than the standards of the caste Hindus, and on that account it has always been regarded as essential that they should have their own distinctive representation. I remember very well the protracted discussions we had upon this subject in the Round Table Conferences and in the Joint Select Committee. In the Round Table Conferences this question was the main issue between Mr. Gandhi and Dr. Ambedkar. We had almost interminable discussions upon the subject. I am disclosing no secrets when I tell your Lordships that the whole way through those discussions the Government of the day, of which Mr. Ramsay MacDonald was Prime Minister, supported Dr. Ambedkar and the Depressed Classes against the claim of Mr. Gandhi that they should be regarded in the general electorate of the Hindu community.

[Viscount Templewood.]

Eventually, in the course of the long discussions which we had over the Government of India Act, it was clear that unless we gave some decision from this country, we should meet with the same kind of difficulties that have arisen in other directions during the recent negotiations. There would have been a deadlock in Indian constitutional progress. Accordingly, we took immense trouble at the India Office to make a communal decision. It was, perhaps, the most difficult issue of all the issues connected with those constitutional discussions. As a result of it we reaffirmed British policy with reference to the Depressed Classes. We gave them distinct representation. Speaking generally, we gave them about eighty seats in the Provincial Legislatures. Mr. Gandhi resented this decision so profoundly that he began a hunger strike. When the course of it seemed to be getting critical, Dr. Ambedkar and the leader of the Depressed Classes had further discussions with Mr. Gandhi, and, as a result, it was agreed that the Depressed Classes should have double the number of seats—again speaking generally—that we gave them in the communal award, but that those seats should be filled by two elections.

The first election was to be by the Depressed Classes themselves. So far as I remember, they were to elect four members for each seat. Having elected their four members, they submitted the names of the four to the general Hindu electorate who elected the final member. I do not go into the merits of this decision, nor do I suggest any criticism of either Mr. Gandhi or Dr. Ambedkar, but the actual result of this arrangement is that in the Provincial Assemblies, from which will be appointed the representatives to the Constituent Assembly, Dr. Ambedkar, who is still regarded as the leader of the great majority of the Depressed Classes, is left with practically no representation. It seems to me that that is a very serious situation. Without pressing the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India and Burma to give me a detailed answer to-day, I do urge him to think again, with a view to bringing Dr. Ambedkar into these constitutional discussions—for he is one of the ablest public men in India—and to making it a more representative body than at present exists so far as the Depressed Classes are concerned.

The Secretary of State to-day referred to the Advisory Committee. At present, we know nothing about the Advisory Committee except its name. Will the noble Lord, or our Indian friends be able to bring into the Advisory Committee, with effective power, sufficiently comprehensive representation of the great bodies of Indians such as the Depressed Classes? At present it looks to me as if it is very little more than an Advisory Committee without any powers. I hope that the noble Lord will use his influence to make this Committee an effective instrument, and to see that these minorities really are represented.

There is only one further question on which I wish to say a word. It is a question on which the Secretary of State did not touch. It has been inevitable that during the war years there has been practically no recruitment to the Services in India. The result is that to-day the Services are very short of personnel. They are greatly overworked and they are confronted with an accumulation of increasingly difficult problems. There is a danger of the Services running down and of the machine being destroyed. I cannot imagine a greater calamity, not only for our British reputation, but also for the Indians themselves. It is essential that if and when we hand over the Government of India to Indians we should hand it over with an efficient machine and as a running concern. I desire, therefore, to impress upon the Secretary of State for India and Burma the urgent need for at once filling up these big posts. If, as he hopes, the constitutional change comes quickly, and there is no longer need for the services of these recruits, they can be adequately compensated. Meanwhile do not let us allow this great machine which we have created—perhaps one of the greatest creations in British history—to run down. It is due to the Services themselves, it is due to British reputation, and it is due to the Indians, that we should keep the machine effectively running. I have raised this question not in any captious spirit. I am as anxious as any noble Lord that the Constituent Assembly should start, that the Interim Government should be fully representative of Indian opinion and that Indians themselves should fill in the gap in the bridge which exists at present.

I end my speech with a feeling of both hope and fear: with hope that the work of

the mission will succeed and that Indians will solve their differences; with fear, however, lest those differences still continue. I cannot help asking myself this question, after many years of association with these problems and after studying very closely the documents in these White Papers, whether in effect the unity of India is not a British creation, and whether when the British Raj comes to an end, it will be proved that it is not possible to maintain it. I have myself always been a convinced adherent to the idea of a united India. Indeed, I spent many years of my life in trying to build up a federation for a United India. Looking at the differences as I see them to-day, however, and at the past history of recent years, I wonder very much whether, when the British Raj goes, it will be possible to maintain this unity. It is for Indians to decide. It is for Indians to decide by agreeing together. If they disagree then, almost inevitably, they, as well as we, will be forced to ask the question whether a divided India, with all its drawbacks, with the admission of the fact that in almost every respect it is inferior to a united India, is not better than Indian chaos. I hope the fear I have just expressed will be proved to be groundless; then in the autumn when we resume this debate, it will be found that the Indians have themselves bridged the gulf that at present divides them, and that even when the British Raj comes to an end it will be possible to maintain a united India.

4.3 p.m.

VISCOUNT SAMUEL: My Lords, when some months ago the Cabinet Mission started to undertake its great task in India we, in this House, expressed our heartiest good wishes for their success. In welcoming them on their return we are happy to think that those good wishes have been in very large measure fulfilled. We would express our gratitude to the Secretary of State and his two colleagues for the patience, perseverance and resource which they have shown under such arduous conditions, in the hottest season of the Indian year and the most heated feelings of Indian politics. I am sure that I shall be expressing your Lordships' feelings when I say that from here we watched with interest and admiration the patient constructive efforts of the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, during the Mission and throughout all those difficult controversies.

Two principal matters have been dealt with—the Constituent Assembly and the Interim Government. On the first a great measure of success has been achieved. The machine, so difficult to construct, has been constructed, and the wheels even now are beginning to revolve. On the other, the Interim Government, it must be admitted that for the moment such success has not been attained. I was very glad to hear the emphatic statement of the Secretary of State that the position in that regard cannot be left as it now is for longer than a very short interval, and that necessity was emphasized by the noble Viscount, Lord Templewood, who has just spoken.

One of those in a position to form an opinion has informed me that he thought that the work of the Constituent Assembly might well take eighteen months to complete. If that is so, the period of bringing to birth a new India may, in one respect, be a very suitable one, for that is just, I believe, the period of gestation of the elephant. But it is not possible for so long a period as that for the government of India to remain in the hands of a merely caretaking Cabinet of officials. The great and urgent tasks which present themselves during the immediate future will demand the best statesmanship which India can produce.

With regard to the Constituent Assembly, the sentence in the speech of the Secretary of State which I heard with the greatest satisfaction, was that in which he expressed the belief that both Congress and the Moslem League were entering the Constituent Assembly with a resolve to succeed. If Parties are determined to succeed, soon or later, after perhaps many controversies and many difficulties, they will find a way, and it is vital to India that that success should be attained, otherwise India will indefinitely, to quote the well-known lines be left

“wandering between two worlds—one dead, the other powerless to be born.”

As for our task here in this Parliament, it is not our duty to make suggestions as to the course that the Constituent Assembly ought to take. Having declared with the utmost emphasis, and on many occasions, that it is for Indians to frame their own Constitution, we ought not to seek to take an effective hand in determining it. All that the Mission has done has been to suggest the basis on which the principal Parties could meet to discuss

[Viscount Samuel.]
 the actual framing of that Constitution. They have agreed to that basis, but beyond that it is not for us, or for His Majesty's Government in this country, to attempt to pre-judge conclusions. Both noble Lords who have previously addressed your Lordships have mentioned, as I had been intending to do, two specific questions, the position of the Sikhs and the position of the Scheduled Castes. There are other minorities as well. Although we cannot lay down anything in the nature of a condition, I think all of us can join, as those two noble Lords have joined, in expressing the very earnest hope that the problems presented by those two minorities may be satisfactorily solved.

For the Sikhs in particular there is a feeling of warm friendship in this country, and I agree with what has already been said that, looking at it from the outside, the Sikhs seem to have made a great mistake in deciding to abstain from taking an effective part in the work of the Constituent Assembly. It is always a magnificent gesture to say you shake the dust of the room off your feet, but it is a futile one, and he who gesticulates outside the door is never a match for those who participate inside the room. So I, too, venture to express the hope that the Sikhs on further consideration will change their course in that regard. As I say, it is not for us in this House to discuss matters that should be left to Indians, but we are fortunate here in having one Indian member of your Lordships' House, and I feel certain that you will hear with great interest and pleasure the maiden speech to-day of Lord Sinha. The noble Viscount, Lord Templewood, expressed his anxiety as to certain elements in the present situation, and I myself must confess that I feel more anxiety at this moment than at any time during the forty years that I have been following often and closely Indian politics. Viscount Templewood referred to the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, but my memory goes back to the Campbell-Bannerman Government, of which I was a member, and to the Morley-Minto reforms, and during that period of forty years there have been many anxious and difficult times.

The principal matter now under discussion, namely how far the future India is to be a unity and how far it is to be divided, is one that must give us all the

greatest concern. When one régime is withdrawn and another is substituted it has frequently proved during the history of mankind very hard to maintain at one and the same time order and peace. History shows us many lessons in that regard. One need not go back to the centuries when the Roman legions were withdrawn, their withdrawal being followed by centuries of anarchy and turmoil, rightly described as the Dark Ages. In more modern years when the rule of Spain was ended in South America a number of succession States were created almost at once, and for many years they engaged among themselves in a whole series of internecine wars, some of them destructive and sanguinary to the last degree. When Turkey was forced to withdraw from Europe four States were created, Greece, Roumania, Bulgaria and Serbia and, as we all know, almost ever since they have been engaged at frequent intervals in conflicts and wars between themselves. Even after the Declaration of American Independence, when the British Colonies separated and set up their own Constitution, hardly had two generations passed before they were engaged in a civil war, one of the most calamitous in history. In our own time, still more recently, when the Manchu Dynasty was ended in China there followed many years of anarchy, war lords setting up in each Province and living by brigandage to the disaster of the ordinary people of China.

We have to remember—and I feel sure the Indian statesmen will remember—that, as has been said to-day, and is so often said, India is far from homogeneous. Her area is far from manageable. The Indian people include nearly one-fifth of the whole of the human race, and deep divisions prevail between religions and cultures and ways of life. Every traveller passing through India sees almost throughout the country the great forts and the memorials of wars which were waged constantly between the Hindu and Moslem peoples of India. That is why in these days, when there is so much pressure for separation, anyone who takes a keen and friendly interest in India is bound to feel a deep anxiety. It is difficult indeed to arrive at an understanding in the lobbies or across the floor of a representative assembly, but it is far more difficult to arrive at an understanding across the frontiers of highly-organized States.

Those movements to which I have briefly referred in South America, in the

Balkans, in regard to American independence and in China were all movements of liberation, and history will justify them; but they make it quite clear that liberation must be followed by extreme care, in order to ensure that liberty shall be accompanied by order and independence by peace. There are cases where that has been achieved. The separation of Norway and Sweden is an example, but there is another more conspicuous example familiar to all of us. When the United Nations gather together four of those nations—Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa—take their places there equally with all the rest. In the framing of their constitutions, in the transfer of power and since that transfer not a blow has been struck, not a life has been lost. Let us hope that will be the result in this case. Sir Henry Lawrence, one of the greatest servants Britain and India ever had, said one hundred years ago: "We cannot expect to hold India forever." And he went on to say, with regard to the time when the change should come:

"Let us so conduct ourselves that it may be so, not with convulsions, but with mutual and human affection, and that England may then have in India a noble ally enlightened and brought into the scale of nations under her guidance and fostering care."

It was in that spirit that the Cabinet Mission set about their task. May it be in that spirit that that object is attained.

LORD CHORLEY: My Lords, I would like to join in the congratulations and welcome which have been extended to the Secretary of State for India, and indeed to the whole Cabinet Mission, on the result of their work in India. Nobody who has had the pleasure of seeing the Secretary of State for India playing one of those games of tennis with the noble Viscount, Lord Templewood, would for a moment suspect him of being a hot-house plant, yet from a climate which can only be compared with that of a very hot greenhouse, in which he has been working very hard for a number of weeks, he has returned more full of vitality than ever. I am sure this arouses the admiration of your Lordships' House. As a member of the recent Parliamentary delegation to India, my impression is that perhaps the greatest success of the Cabinet Mission has been in persuading the people of India, and particularly the Indian political leaders, of the sincerity of the British Government and the British

people at the present time. Nobody who was with us at that time in India could have doubted that this suspicion was then still astonishingly deep and real, and our appreciation of the work of the Mission can only be measured in the light of the success which they have achieved in that sphere.

A very distinguished Englishman in India said to me one day that you have always to remember that hardly anybody in India believes a word of what you say when you say that England is sincerely desirous of seeing an independent India. That the Cabinet Mission should have succeeded very largely in removing this suspicion is an enormous tribute to the work which they have done. This suspicion is not altogether without grounds in history, and I find it difficult to believe that it has been completely removed. I think it will be necessary to take steps to see that this attitude is maintained, because on it the success of the negotiations in connexion with the transfer of power, which must obviously continue over a period of months if not of years, will very largely depend. That the transfer of power cannot be carried through in the twinkling of an eye, and indeed Mr. Ghandi himself explained to us that his slogan "Quit India" did not and could not possibly mean "Quit India in twenty-four hours." Months and even years might elapse before the complete transfer could be carried through.

I think this suspicion is not only founded on the Indian interpretation of the history of the two countries and the relationship between them, but also to a considerable degree on the feeling of Indians that so many of the English people who are out there treat them as if they were inferiors. That was emphasized in the report of the Simon Commission. It is very largely ill-founded at the present time, but every now and then there are silly actions by silly people which attract a great deal of attention in India. If we are to maintain the friendly relationship which has been built up by the Mission, I suggest that all our countrymen, not only in India but in this country too, should be very careful during the next few weeks and months in what they do and say. One of the difficulties has been—and this was emphasized to us repeatedly—that the social contacts

[Lord Chorley.]

between the English and the Indians in India have been rather fewer in recent years, strange though it may seem, than in the past generation, especially during the war period. I do not think that was due to any increase in estrangement between the two people; far from it. My own impression is that it was due to the great pressure of work under which British officials in India were working during the war period. I entirely agree with what was said by the noble Viscount, Lord Templewood, as to the astonishing difficulties under which they are now working and the tremendous job of work which they did during the war years.

When one thinks about it, it is one of the most astonishing things in the history of administration that a handful of no more than about one thousand members of the Indian Civil Service have carried on the enormous administrative machine which governs this sub-continent with its 400,000,000 people under the tremendous pressure of war. Of those thousand members of the administrative grades of the Indian Civil Service, some five hundred, I believe, are Englishmen, and the other five hundred are Indians. They have been working into the small hours of the morning day after day, week after week, and month after month. They have had no time for social contacts even among themselves, let alone with the leaders of Indian business, politics and culture. I think that very largely explains the feeling which undoubtedly exists among the people of India that there is a certain, I will not say estrangement, but lack of social contact between them. It is to be hoped that over the next few months something can be done to redress that, but I, personally, should very much doubt whether the solution put forward by the noble Viscount, Lord Templewood, was a very wise one, namely, that the gaps should be filled and that more English officials should be sent out to India. One of the arguments with which we were continually confronted in trying to persuade the Indians of the sincerity of our people in desiring independence for India was the fact that English officials, English judges and English soldiers were still going out to India.

LORD MIDDLETON: Did the noble Viscount say "English officials" when he suggested that the gaps could be filled?

I thought he did not mention English officials.

LORD CHORLEY: If I misunderstood him, I apologise to him. That, however, was what I gathered he meant, and certainly if that policy were proposed I think it would be an unwise one, because it would immediately revive among Indians the suspicion that we are not really sincere at all and that these people are being sent out from England in order to carry on the British Raj in India. I think if the Cabinet Mission had done nothing else but establish this admirable basis on which the negotiations could be conducted and on which all sorts of other relationships with India could be built up and maintained, they would still have achieved a tremendous success. We found that there was a really great desire on the part of all classes and all communities in India to remain on the best of terms with the people of this country and indeed with the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations as a whole. We felt that a great and permanent structure—a structure which would be of great value to this country, to India and to the world—could be built up on those foundations. I hope, therefore, that every effort will be made in the coming months to see that this atmosphere is maintained.

The political success of the Mission has been very considerable. In politics one never achieves 100 per cent. success, but they have been more successful than we who were out there believed could possibly be the case. We all expected however, that they would achieve a very large measure of success, because one could not spend a substantial period of time discussing these political difficulties with the leaders of India political opinion without realising that among them there were a number of remarkably able statesmen, men of great ability and great good will, who could be relied upon to find some sort of solution to this difficult problem, if a solution existed. Mr. Jinnah on the one side, Mr. Nehru and others on the other side are leaders of great political parties, and as leaders of such political parties they have from time to time committed themselves, on the platform and in public, to statements of opinion and objectives from which it is exceedingly difficult for them, as for any politicians, to withdraw. That

makes it difficult to carry through negotiations of the kind which have been carried through over the last month, and I think the measure of the success which has been achieved shows their great political ability and capacity for leadership.

I am continually met in England with the suggestion that our Parliamentary democracy is a method of government which can only be worked by English people, and that it is unsuited to the climate of India and to the personalities of its people. I do not believe that for a moment. The way in which the political leaders in India have carried out the government of the Provinces from 1937 onwards, has shown that they are perfectly capable of developing efficient and capable Parliamentary government on the similar though not necessarily identical lines, and in the same spirit in which it exists in this country. I have no doubt at all that there are men who are just as capable of carrying on the traditions of constitutional parliamentary government in that country as there are men capable of doing it in this country. They have shown that that is so, and they will demonstrate it again in the future. In those circumstances, obviously they were able to meet and negotiate with the members of the Cabinet Commission as people who understood the workings of Parliamentary democracy. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that they did in fact succeed in achieving a very considerable measure of success, and we hope that that may be crowned in the next few months by a complete success.

Obviously it is of the very greatest importance that some sort of interim government by Indians of India should be achieved as quickly as possible, and I am quite sure that everybody who was in the Parliamentary delegation will agree with that. The noble Viscount, Lord Templewood, has pointed out how exceedingly difficult it is going to be to achieve it and I am wondering whether it might not be possible to achieve it by entrusting the task to an independent Indian, a national figure, who is not committed to the policy either of the Congress Party or of the League. There are such men, and the suggestion has been made by Englishmen of very great experience of Indian affairs. It will of course be difficult from the point of view of the strict letter of the existing

Constitution to carry out such a project as that, but I think the lawyers could probably find some kind of way out of that difficulty. It is a possibility which might well be explored.

Reference has been made to the difficult problem of the Sikhs, and to that of the Scheduled Castes. Nothing need be added to that except to say that I join in the appeal which some of your Lordships have made to the Sikhs to come in to the Constituent Assembly. If there is one lesson which history teaches us about this kind of thing I think it is that those who have stayed out, or those who have walked out on occasions of this kind, have never derived any advantage from it. The advantage has always been to those who stayed in. The Sikhs are a people who have made, considering the smallness of their numbers, an astonishing contribution to the recent history of India in engineering and business and in many other ways. The future of India will be much less colourful and successful than it would otherwise be if the Sikhs are not brought into the great march of Indian history. I am not at all sure it is outside the bounds of human wisdom to give the Sikhs their own little area of India in which they can establish their own system of provincial Government on their own basis, but I am quite sure that their chance of securing that will be very much better inside the Constituent Assembly than if they remain outside, and I join your Lordships in appealing to them to come in.

There is one final point I would like to make. The question of Dominion status has not been mentioned this afternoon. I think that one of the great factors in the political success of the Cabinet Mission was the fact that it was made clear before they started on their journey to India that the question of remaining within or without the British Commonwealth of Nations was entirely a matter for the Indians themselves. We found great suspicion in India that in any kind of solution an attempt would be made to force them into the British Empire. Now that they are free to go or to come I think that, while they may not wish to become a Dominion like Australia, Canada, New Zealand or South Africa, there is a very strong feeling in India for some kind of particularly close connexion with this country and with the British Commonwealth of

[Lord Chorley.] Nations, which if it does not actually amount to a desire to become a Dominion may nevertheless lead them to ask for something very close to Dominion status.

I am quite sure that all your Lordships will agree that the close connexion between these two great countries has benefited both and the closer that connexion can be drawn the better it will be for both of our countries and for the world. We have benefited enormously not only in material sources and wealth which we have drawn from India, but from the cultural and spiritual values which are so outstanding a part of the great Indian civilization. It used to be said that India was the brightest jewel in the Crown of the British Empire. That was at a time when these matters were measured in terms of material resources and wealth. Now we look not at the British Empire but at the British Commonwealth of Nations, and we look at its cultural and spiritual values. We hope and pray that there is a place for the great nation of India, because India from the dawn of history has had a kind of unity. Although no doubt there are many sects and many cultures there, nevertheless it has an overriding unity, and we hope that that unity of India may play its part in the future as one among the great partners of the British Nations.

4.36 p.m.

LORD SINHA: My Lords, it is with feelings of pride and trepidation that I rise to-day to address your Lordships in this debate. May I, at the outset, crave the indulgence which this House has always given, I have noticed, to all newcomers. I am sure it will be extended to me in full measure. May I start by welcoming the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India on his return to this country after a very successful mission. I should like to add a few words of praise with regard to the gallant and noble Viceroy, Field-Marshal Viscount Wavell, for the great part he has been playing in alleviating the trouble and calming the feelings which have been roused in India. The world is passing through a very troublesome time. Subversive forces have been very much at work at a time when the jet propelled plane has annihilated time and space and national barriers. Finally the atom bomb came, bringing to the fore a great many issues.

May I humbly congratulate His Majesty's Government on the bold and courageous action they have taken in deciding that India has won her right to independence and freedom because of the great part that she has played in the last two wars during the past quarter of a century? Her sons have shown in the field that they are the equal of any. India has spared no efforts in raising large sums of money for the prosecution of the war. Munitions have been made there and all kinds of supplies have been sent to the Far East, an area which I believe has been solely supplied from India. With all these deeds I feel that India has earned her right to freedom and independence, and I congratulate His Majesty's Government on acting on that great principle of doing what is right. It is a principle which our friend, the right honourable Sir Alexander Cadogan recently, in a broadcast from the United States of America, enunciated as being the only sure foundation for the working of the United Nations Organization and its various committees. The times are very difficult, and I feel personally that this is not a very happy moment for a discussion on the work that has been done by the Cabinet Mission in India. I take my hat off to the work which the noble Lord, Lord Pethick-Lawrence, and the other members of the Cabinet Mission carried out with such calmness and untiring effort in the great heat of Delhi—the temperature I believe reached 140 degrees—when tempers were apt to be very much frayed.

I think your Lordships will agree that the Mission brought the main issue to a very successful conclusion. I refer to what is spoken of as the long term settlement—that is the Constituent Assembly which is in process of being elected just now. I feel sure that the leaders of our country, including our friends the noble Princes of India, will see that in the constitution-making body, when it does function, justice will be done particularly by the major Parties to the variety of minorities in India. Reference has been made to our gallant friends the Sikhs. I am sure they will think matters over again and will agree to work in the Constituent Assembly. Certainly, I most earnestly hope that they will. As I say, I am convinced that the leaders of the various Parties, including the two major Parties, will see that justice is done to all

the minorities in India. I cannot but feel, however, that the speech made by the noble Viscount, Lord Templewood, may do some harm in India because of the repercussions which may follow this diving into the past. I thought we had agreed to wipe the slate clean and to start afresh. That was the reason, I understood, why the Prime Minister made the statement he did many months ago, which was followed by the despatch of the "Goodwill Delegation" as it was called, and then later by the Cabinet Mission.

The Cabinet Mission, as I can assure your Lordships from my personal knowledge, having been in India within the last few months, has done marvellous work in soothing the wounded feelings of Indians in cases where racial feeling had been exacerbated and there has been a steadily mounting bitterness. I was horrified to find that bitterness. There had never been anything like it before. Indians have been associated with the British for several centuries, and they have always had the deepest regard for them in their heart of hearts and for the justice for which the name of Britain stands. When there has been trouble leading to law suits, all parties, as I well know, have preferred to go to an Englishman and have trusted him to hold the scales of justice evenly. That being so, I feel that at the present juncture controversial matters should not be referred to in either House or in the Press, and that letters should not be written to the papers commenting upon the situation in India at the present time. I can assure your Lordships that that situation is very critical, very difficult and very delicate just now. I know full well that the people of India have, at last, come to feel that Great Britain does mean to carry out her pledged word. Quite frankly, they were beginning to doubt it, but recent events have convinced them that Great Britain does mean to do the right thing by them.

I believe that a good deal of what is going on out there just now is more or less in the nature of bargaining. Counters are being used to bargain with, and this bargaining on the part of a Party is not necessarily to be taken as an indication that they will go the whole hog later on. I feel that when the Constituent Assembly does meet and set to work, it will see the necessity of desiring treaty rights ensuring

the closest friendship and alliance with Great Britain. We recognize—the people of India in their heart of hearts know it full well—that we cannot do without Great Britain and that Great Britain cannot do without us. We recognize that we can always work together to make each other greater. I would rather not say more at present beyond thanking His Majesty's Government for the noble work which they have done and expressing the hope that this Constituent Assembly—though it may take some time—will eventually come happily into being. I thank your Lordships for the courteous hearing which you have given me.

4.46 p.m.

THE EARL OF SCARBOROUGH: My Lords, it falls to my fortunate lot to follow the noble Lord, Lord Sinha, after he has delivered his first speech in your Lordships' House, and to offer him very warm congratulations, in which I am sure all your Lordships join, on the contribution which he has made to this debate. Some of your Lordships will have known his distinguished father whose record was unique. He was a member of the Viceroy's Council and an Under Secretary of State—the only Indian, I think, to be an Under Secretary of State in the Government of the United Kingdom. He was also the first Indian, I believe, to be appointed Governor of an Indian Province. We welcome the advent of the noble Lord to this House and we look forward to further contribution from him.

I would join with noble Lords who have spoken earlier in the welcome which they have extended to the noble Lord, the Secretary of State, on his return from his mission. I am sure that all your Lordships are glad to see that neither the heat of the plains nor the height of the hills, nor even the strain of what must have been prolonged and difficult negotiations, have cast any shadow upon him. We are greatly indebted to the noble Lord for the statement which he has made this afternoon. That statement and the White Papers which have been published have given us at least an outline of the course of the negotiations which have taken place in India during the last few months, and of the position which obtains at this moment. We all recognize that that position is not a final one; the negotiations are not concluded. Many matters still remain to be settled, and no final

[The Earl of Scarborough.]
 verdict is invited or required at this stage. But the interval occasioned by the return of the members of the Cabinet Mission and by the process which is going on now of the election by the Provincial Assemblies of representatives to the Constituent Assembly, provides us with an opportunity to make some review of the position now reached, a review which must necessarily be tempered by recognition of the fact that the issue of these matters is still in doubt and that they continue to be of much complexity and delicacy. In the few remarks that I shall venture to address to your Lordships I shall endeavour to bear that in mind.

It would be difficult for me to find any coherent path through the many problems which present themselves in these documents without first being certain of an objective—without being sure, at least in my own mind, of the aim which I would wish to see directing British policy in this fateful period of British-Indian relations. Without an objective to guide one at the present moment one would drift rudderless through all the cross currents of these matters. Therefore, before I make one or two specific points, I would like very briefly to state the objective which it seems to me should be our guide at the present moment. If I felt that the completion of complete political freedom for India were ill-conceived at this time my attitude to the negotiations would be simple. The exertions of the Cabinet Mission would need to be opposed, root and branch, as also would the exertions and the pronouncements of previous Governments for some years past. Or, if one felt that any settlement could be grasped, no matter with whom and no matter what its significance to India's future, then again one's attitude would be easy to define. One could await with indifference the first opportunity to abandon all our responsibilities in India. Along neither of those roads would I wish to see British policy directed. We still have a part to play to assist India to attain her full position as a nation; without convulsions, without confusion, and with sufficient strength to enable her to take her place among the great nations.

That is the objective which, for a hundred years, many Englishmen who have served India have had before them. To many, it was a distant vision. In

our time it has come very close. Perhaps the hardest and the greatest part of the British task in India lies before us now. We must hold to that objective, and hold to all of it. Our achievement in India will not attain its fulfilment unless we do. Our friends in India, and they are many, expect of us that we should hold to all that objective. But, my Lords, that objective requires that a constitutional settlement should be acceptable to the main elements in India and should have foundations sufficiently firm to carry India into her future with confidence. Rightly or wrongly, it seems to me that it is by those tests that we should form our judgment on the matters which are now before us. And it is with them in mind that I turn for a few moments to the position as it is to-day.

The first comment I would like to make is this. It is clear from these documents that the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy have done their utmost to promote an agreed settlement—that is to say, a settlement acceptable to the main elements in India. That stands out on every page. It stands out most strikingly from those two occasions when Indian Parties were unable to reach agreement amongst themselves and the British side intervened with further initiative in order to bring the Parties together. Whatever may be the final result of these efforts, it has been made clear once again, and on this occasion more clear even than before, that the main obstacle to a settlement in India lies not in British unwillingness to transfer power but in the different views, and the strongly held views of the two main Indian Parties as to which should be the recipients of power. I think we, in this House, would do well to recognize that the Mission and the Viceroy have done their utmost to promote agreement. I hope and would expect that that is also recognized in India and throughout the world.

Our principal concern must be with the final outcome of this great endeavour, to see whether an agreed settlement can be obtained, and not so much with the details, which in any case must be fashioned by the Constituent Assembly. There is one matter which has already been mentioned to which I would draw your Lordships' attention again, because it is a matter on which Parliament, as the Cabinet Mission have said, will ultimately have to be satisfied. I refer to the

protection of the minorities. My noble friend Viscount Templewood has already mentioned this matter. At this stage, it is important that we in Parliament should comprehend the provisions for minorities which are contemplated. As I understand the position, there will be an Advisory Committee which will recommend, amongst other things, what provisions for the protection of the minorities should be included in the constitutions. That Advisory Committee is to contain—I quote the words—“Due representation of the interests affected.” I would like to inquire—and I hope in his reply the noble Lord will be able to assist me in this matter—what is meant by “due representation”? Like other noble Lords, I am particularly concerned about the representation of the Scheduled Castes. How will their representatives on this Advisory Committee be chosen? The matter seems to me to be one of some importance. It is obviously necessary, if the Scheduled Castes are to feel satisfied that their case is to be well presented, that they should be represented on this Committee by those in whom they have confidence. Are the Scheduled Castes to be represented on this Committee by the holders of the Scheduled Castes' seats in the Provincial Assembly, or are they to be chosen directly by the Scheduled Castes themselves?

There is a difficulty in this matter. I hope the noble Lord will correct me if my information is not right, but I am informed that in Bombay—and I believe it is much the same in other provinces—at the time of the primary elections for the Scheduled Castes' seats to the Provincial Assembly some months ago, when only Scheduled Caste electors voted, the great majority of the votes went in favour of Dr. Ambedkar's Party which used to be known as the Independent Labour Party. When the candidates chosen for these primary elections went into the next stage before the general constituencies, none of those who had received the majority of Scheduled Caste votes was elected, but only those who were supported by the Congress Party. If that is the case, I should hope that a similar procedure is not going to be pursued in regard to the representation of the Scheduled Castes on this Advisory Committee; and I would greatly hope, indeed I would expect, that the Congress Party would recognise how important it is that that great and im-

portant minority of the Scheduled Castes should have the satisfaction of feeling that their case to the Constituent Assembly will be presented by those who have their greatest confidence. The other minority which so far has not been mentioned in this discussion are the backward tribes in the partially-excluded areas. I wonder if the noble Lord could tell us who is going to represent them? I can well understand that it will not be an easy matter to find men from them who can represent their interests on this committee. There is one other point which I feel obliged to make. The Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy have done their utmost to promote an agreed settlement. But, as we recognise, an agreed settlement will not depend upon their exertions and their goodwill; it will depend upon the Parties in India. I trust that I have made it clear, from what I said a few moments ago, that I sincerely hope they will succeed in obtaining agreement. I would not yet be pessimistic about the prospects. I am sure that there are many in India, on all sides, who are working for an agreement, and I hope that their efforts will prevail. But they may not prevail. If, unfortunately, that should be the case, and if the present efforts should break down, then a number of very difficult questions will arise. I hope that they are receiving the attention of His Majesty's Government. I certainly would not press for any declaration about them now, but if that unfortunate position should arise, I trust that neither the Government here nor the Government in India will be at a loss.

There is one point in this connexion in respect of which the noble Lord may find it useful to state in advance the position of the Government. If the present efforts break down there is very likely to be strong pressure on His Majesty's Government to effect a transfer of power to one Party only. I hope that that will be resisted. To transfer power to one Party in India would deepen the divisions there. It would destroy for a very long time any chances of future agreement and might very well lead to convulsions which would weaken India at this critical stage of her history. I hope, therefore, that the Government will hold firmly to the objective of a settlement acceptable to the main Parties, and that they will not be persuaded to depart from it. It is possible

[The Earl of Scarborough.]
that the hands of those in India working for agreement might be strengthened if that was made clear at this stage. The Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy have made great efforts to obtain an agreed settlement. That I think we all freely acknowledge. If they succeed, as I hope they will, it will be perhaps the greatest achievement of any European race in the East. But there are many difficulties still ahead of them, and I trust that they will hold firmly and closely to the objective of an agreed settlement, which they have pursued so far with such patience and sincerity.

5.5 p.m.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY:
My Lords, I hesitate to address your Lordships after the speech which we have just heard, because no one could have listened to my noble friend Earl Scarborough without realizing that he spoke from the closest personal knowledge of the subject which he was discussing. He has himself returned from a great position in India, and he spoke with that moderation and that statemanship which one would expect from him. I rose to say only one or two words. Although I do not suppose it is doubted in England at all, let it be understood in India that all Parties in this country will be carefully attentive to the pledged word of this country. There can be no doubt whatever about that. I venture to say so, because in a former stage of these long controversies I personally, and some of my friends, did not take the same view as my noble friend Lord Templewood, who started this discussion this afternoon. But all that is in the past. We shall not go back to the past. We are now engaged in granting Dominion status to India, if she can agree.

I was very pleased indeed to hear the emphasis with which Lord Scarborough urged the necessity for agreement. No settlement will be of the slightest use unless there is agreement among the main elements in India itself. We might sit up all night; we might have discussion after discussion; we might pass Bill after Bill, but nothing will do as a final arrangement unless there is agreement in India. We shall, of course, do what we promised, and we shall keep our engagement to all the elements in India—to the

minorities, to the Moslems, to the Scheduled Castes. This country will keep its word to all of them. I particularly noticed a phrase in the speech of the Secretary of State. He said that our consent would depend upon the settlement put forward in India being within the framework which the Mission, as representing the Government, has laid down. That is quite correct of course, and that implies, as I conceive it, that all these promises we have made to the minorities will be fulfilled. We shall grant Dominion status.

Let me say one word (and that is the only reason why I venture to trouble your Lordships this evening) upon Dominion status. To listen to some utterances one would almost imagine that the commentators considered that Dominion status and independence were the same thing. I noticed a phrase even in the speech of the Secretary of State for India this afternoon in which he seemed to think that they were quite equivalent alternatives. But that is not so. Undoubtedly any Dominion which possesses Dominion status has absolute freedom and can become independent; but that is not the same thing as independence. Dominion status is a status of freedom within the limits of the British Empire or, if you like, the British Commonwealth of Nations. No doubt by their own wish the Dominions may pass outside, though in my judgment in doing so they would make a most profound mistake. I noticed a phrase in one of the utterances of the Prime Minister which would lead exactly in the same direction. He said that speaking for himself he would regret if Dominion status ended in independence. I think he might have expressed himself a little more strongly. I think it would have been far better to have used the word "profoundly."

Why should they give up the great traditions of our Empire, its great qualities, its spirit of tolerance, its public spirit and co-operation, all things which have come down to us and which are possessed by our Dominions either by inheritance or by adoption. We would earnestly hope that our Indian fellow subjects will have the same conviction. We want to treat them as brethren—not as strangers—engaged in some great work; and do not let us by the language we use let the world think that we do not

care whether India is independent or not. That I am sure is not the view of your Lordships, and it was only in order to check if I could some of these too lax phrases which pass in the Press and even in Parliament on this subject that I ventured to address your Lordships. For the rest, I would like once more to thank, as I do most cordially, the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy for the great efforts they have put forward. I earnestly hope that all their exertions will lead to agreement, and that we shall live to see the solution of the India problem.

5.13 p.m.

LORD LINDSAY OF BIRKER: My Lords, at this hour of the debate I only wish to detain your Lordships for a few moments, but the speech of the noble Marquess who has just sat down has made me feel that I must say what I had in mind to say. I remember when Mr. Gandhi was in this country some fourteen years ago, and I had the honour of coming to know him (he stayed at my house for some time), I asked him what he meant exactly by asking for Indian independence, and how he connected it in his mind with Dominion status, saying that he knew our view was that the Dominions had complete independence in the British Commonwealth. He replied: "I should not call India independent unless it was perfectly clear that she could say she was not going to come into the British Commonwealth." He went on to say: "If it was perfectly clear that she could say 'No' I would advise her to say 'Yes,' but it would have to be perfectly clear that she could refuse." One of the things which has contributed more than anything else to the way in which the Mission has really dissipated the distrust which has been the curse of this whole question is the fact that they went out on the assumption that it was going to be perfectly clear that if India did not want Dominion status she need not take it.

I venture to suggest that that attitude is a perfectly reasonable one, which we under similar circumstances would adopt, and that it really, though not constitutionally, represents the greatness of the British Commonwealth. The great Dominions do not wish to go out of the Commonwealth, but if we told them that they could not, would not they say they

were going to do it "just to show us"? I think you cannot be independent unless you can say "Yes" or "No." I do not think that anybody can have rights unless to some extent they are rights to do wrong, to make choices of which other people do not approve or to make foolish choices. I think we ought to recognize quite clearly what we are doing. I think we are now saying to India: "If you make up your mind to be an independent nation, if you do not wish to belong to the British Commonwealth, we regret it; we think you are mistaken, and we hope you will come to a better mind, but that is your business." I think that is the essential position of a Dominion. And is it not better that we should recognize this from the beginning?

We have not said to India: "You had better come and see what it feels like to be a Dominion, and if after some time you find it is all right you can stay, but if you do not find it all right you can go." That, it seems to me, would be paramount to delaying the answer which India wants, and I venture to say again that the success of the Mission in dispelling distrust has been largely due to that change (it is a change) in the attitude of the British Government. If we are doing this, may I further say that really what the Mission and we are trying to do is to put the various communities of India in a position to work out their own salvation. Had we just quit India in the bag-and-baggage, rapid manner which is sometimes suggested we should have left India with quite insoluble problems, and we have no right to do that. But surely as we listened to the account given by the Secretary of State for India as to what the Mission have been doing we must realize that what they have been doing in so masterly a way is trying to get the great communities of India together. I think all we can do is to look on, to applaud the wisdom shown and to feel confident that in anything further that happens the Viceroy will go on displaying the same wisdom. But I think we ought to be very careful not to say that there must be complete agreement, and that the various communities must say, "Yes."

Part of the great difficulty of our negotiations in the last decade has been that we seemed to give one community

[Lord Lindsay of Birker.]
 a right of veto. It has been very difficult to avoid, but it seemed that by saying "You must have agreement" we have said "If you like to say 'no' then you can stop the whole thing." I think, therefore, with respect, that it would be a great pity to ask specific questions about what exactly is to happen to the Depressed Classes and what exactly is to happen to the Sikhs. I do not see that we can do more than trust to the wisdom which has been displayed—and surely displayed abundantly—both by the Mission and by the great Parties in India, who have got this length and who, I trust, may get further.

May I, with respect, say something about the last remarks made by the noble Viscount, Lord Templewood, when he said what a pity it would be if we allowed the machine to run down. I do not see how you can help that. My informants in India tell me that nothing did more to revive the distrust of our intentions than the quite matter-of-fact and ordinary proposals made in this country for the continuance of recruitment for the Indian Civil Service. It was said, "Here you are proposing to give independence to India, yet you are proceeding as if the thing was going to break down and as if the old régime was going to go on." However regrettable it is—and I think it is very regrettable—that a long delay may mean that you cannot go on recruiting for the Indian Civil Service in the ordinary way because you must not present the future Indian Government with a *fait accompli*, I do urge you to recognize that you cannot help that. If you say, "No, this must be done in the meantime; we are going on as if the thing was going to fail," it will be quite wrong.

I am sure that the success of this Mission has produced in India for the first time a feeling that the thing is going to happen. In quite an extraordinary way the Mission have put that across to the communities of India. Before, I think, the Indians, knowing all the great difficulties, knowing all the ways in which it could go wrong, and feeling that the British Government took a little advantage of the difficulties, felt "it is not going to happen." I think the Mission created a real conviction for the first time that there was no doubt that this thing was going to happen, and I am sure

it is more important to preserve that spirit than anything else.

5.24 p.m.

VISCOUNT SIMON: My Lords, I think it will be generally agreed that this debate has been a useful one in which there has been no unnecessary controversy and nothing to make the situation more difficult in the immediate future. In the few remarks I would like to make I shall certainly keep those matters well in front of my mind. As was said by my noble friend, the Earl of Scarborough, in what I thought was a very wise speech, what we are really doing to-day is reviewing the position which has been reached, seeking neither to rake up the past nor to issue rash challenges as to how things will work out in the future. I suppose it is the intention of the authorities in this House, as we know it is in another place, that later in the year—it is suggested perhaps in November—we should have a further debate, in which we shall be much better informed as to how things are really working out or are likely to work out.

All I want to do is to remind your Lordships of the situation as it now is, because we must take note of it as a part of one of the most eventful and important factors in the whole history of the world. We shall never be able to judge wisely how this thing develops unless we look quite clearly at the situation to which we have now attained. On that subject I would first like to say that I join most heartily and thoroughly in the view that the Cabinet Mission has achieved a great success in the extent to which it has succeeded in removing suspicion. I know something about that, and I not only admire but envy them. I think it is the literal fact that the Mission in its very strenuous work has, to all appearance, and I think in reality, done more than has ever been done before to convince opinion in India of that which the noble Marquess said was quite evident to those who understood us, namely, that we really do mean what we have said, and that we are honestly trying to carry out our promises. It is the first necessity of this country in its relation to India that this belief that we mean, if we possibly can, to contribute to what has been promised to India should continue to be everywhere accepted and understood. I would like to express to

the noble Lord opposite my sincere gratitude that he and his colleagues have had that degree of success. What is the situation which has actually been reached? A good deal has been said in very general terms, but as long as we keep within the bounds I have mentioned there is no harm in being rather more precise. On February 19 in this House the noble Lord, Lord Pethick-Lawrence, was good enough to make a statement as to what the Mission of Ministers to India would endeavour to do. He said that they were going out to help to take steps for preparatory discussions with the elected representatives of British India and with the Indian States in order to secure the widest measure of agreement as to the method of framing a constitution and the setting-out of a constitution-making body. I think we all recognise that he and his colleagues made the most genuine and strenuous efforts to get agreement, and I think they will be among those who have tried to do these things in India and who will remember to their dying day what a difficult job it is.

I think the noble Lord, Lord Lindsay, in one or two of his passages, on which I will not comment, spoke rather too readily and as though India was some unity and as though, if only we did not exact too many answers to too many questions, we might, by general good nature, achieve the desired object. I do not agree with him at all, I may say, in his view that at this stage the British Government would be justified in letting the whole machine of Government in India run down. That seems to me to be not serving India, but in fact retreating from your trust before you have been able to hand it over.

As far as getting a constitution-making body together was concerned, the Mission made immense efforts and as I understand them were not very far from success. I accept that and I do not comment on it at all. Although it was not the actual intention when they started that they should intervene and make a proposal on their own account, I think that was a very natural development when, after meeting the main Parties, the Princes and other communities they thought it was possible to build a bridge. There again it seems they have served both India and this country well. As regards the other object which the noble Lord told us when he spoke in February last was the motive for

going to India, that of course has not been achieved. That was the bringing into being of an Executive Council having the support of the main Indian Parties. They have come back, to our regret, without having achieved that. In fact I think it must in common candour be admitted that what has actually resulted is almost the exact opposite of what they went out in that respect to secure, because they have come back with a Government of officials which is the very last thing in the world, I am quite sure, that the noble lord and his companions desired when they started.

I should like to ask one or two questions on each of those two aspects of the matter. The first is with respect to this Interim Government, this Caretaker Government, which is in fact a Government of officials. The Viceroy, under an Act of Parliament which we passed not very long ago, was relieved of the necessity of having some members of his Council who should be persons—not necessarily British, it might be Indians—who had had ten years' service in the Government of India. That was part of the existing Constitution as framed by Parliament under the guidance of the noble Viscount, Lord Templewood, in 1935. It was possible, therefore, to create a Government which did not contain a single person who had any experience of the administration of India, and the Viceroy, in fact, as I understand, removed those who were occupying seats in the Council and left the chairs unoccupied, hoping no doubt to get Indians of prominence and representative character to constitute this Council. Unhappily that has not happened, and we have got there perforce a Government of officials, which I suppose is of all forms of Government the Government which large numbers of Indian politicians are most likely to denounce and to hold responsible if anything goes wrong.

What I want to know—and I think the noble Viscount, Lord Templewood, also tendered the question—is how long the Government contemplate that this Government of officials is going on? It does seem to me to be an unhappy situation and one I am sure which the noble Viscount opposite and all of us would like to see got rid of as soon as possible. I think the noble Viscount, Lord Samuel, said that it might mean for eighteen

[Viscount Simon.]
 months. A great deal can happen in that time, but for my part I thought it rather an extraordinary, sanguine estimate that the Constituent Assembly, duly created and working no doubt with great intensity, would produce an agreed, or anything like an agreed Constitution—I think it is now called a three-decker Constitution—in eighteen months, and that we in this country should pass the necessary Act of Parliament in order to change the Constitution of India. It has to be remembered that the existing Constitution is a statutory creation involving an enormous number of Sections in an Act of Parliament. It is not like our Constitution which can modify itself in all sorts of directions according to the movement of public opinion or as wisdom dictates. It is a closely articulated structure in which the part that is to be played by the various members of the Constitution of India is all laid down by Statute. I think it would be a very happy outcome if the Constituent Assembly was really to produce this completed work, and we put the authority of Parliament behind it, in any such period as eighteen months.

It is very important for India and for us to know when speaking of a Caretaker Government—I think that phrase is used—how long it will last, knowing as we do that the Caretaker Government is to consist of the Viceroy at the head and nothing but officials sitting with him. Is it really contemplated that that is a system which can work happily for very long? I should have thought it would have attracted criticism, and maybe even denunciation if things went at all wrong. This may be a very anxious passage in the history of India because there has been nothing like it of course since Curzon's time, or even before that. The constant effort of this country right through this difficult time has been to get in the Viceroy's Council not officials, but Indians who were thought to be prominent and influential persons. This, of course, for the moment (though only for a moment no doubt) is going quite in the other direction and creating as a Government of India an Executive Body which will have from day to day to administer those duties, whether there is a famine or riot or any other difficulty. It is a body of a very unusual kind and one which I cannot help thinking a great deal of Indian opinion would regard as a body which is composed

on a very reactionary principle. Therefore, with the greatest friendliness, I put that question.

If it is the case that this Interim Government of officials is going on until the Constituent Assembly has framed the new Constitution and all has gone happily and we have made the laws of the land, I think it is as well that we should know, because I am sure that this is an anxiety to many besides myself. I would venture to add, merely as a piece of exposition, that it is really rather a pity that in this recent correspondence there seems to have been some confusion as to the extent to which, under the existing constitutional law of India, you could have a Central Government which has the qualities, attributes and aspects of a Dominion Cabinet. There was evidently some misunderstanding about it which the Viceroy very rapidly corrected in the correspondence. I hope I may be forgiven for pointing out the need for a complete change in the nature of the Constitution—and a change which involves a change by Statute—before anything of that kind can be attained.

I will take the most obvious and simple illustration. In a Dominion Cabinet, the Governor-General does not sit as a member at all. He is not a member of the Executive in the sense that he decides what the day to day policy should be, just as in this country the Sovereign has never sat in or with the Cabinet since the days of Queen Anne. And in no Dominion constitution could you conceive such a thing as that the Governor-General should be part of the executive government in that sense. More important, of course—this is one of the central considerations—you cannot really get anything corresponding to a Dominion Cabinet until you have a Cabinet composed of members of, or a Cabinet itself responsible to, the popular legislature, liable to be turned out if the popular legislature is against it, liable to be changed if a General Election alters matters.

Therefore, it is important, I think, to realise that although we sincerely entertain these aspirations, in order to move to a position of Cabinet Government in India—even if it is not more than moving to a position—very important changes have to be devised which, no doubt, this Constituent Assembly will consider and

we in Parliament here will have to pass an Act which will make these changes have legislative effect. I think it is quite impossible that any form of executive central government in India should have any character other than the character provided for in the Act of 1935. That, no doubt, is a reason why the noble Viscount, Lord Addison, on an earlier occasion—I remember it quite well—assured the House that what was intended was a change of personnel. You cannot have constitutional changes in a statutory constitution until you have passed a new statute authorising these changes. That is not said with any desire at all to put any obstacles in anybody's way. It is simply put for purposes of clearness, for it is really no good claiming more than what has been achieved. And what has been achieved is really very great. First and foremost, suspicions have been removed; secondly, the promises have been obtained of the two main Parties to join in this proposed Constituent Assembly.

Next I would like to ask for an assurance regarding something which I have understood but not actually heard. I could not be here at the beginning of the debate owing to duty elsewhere. Do I understand rightly, from my noble friend opposite, that the Constituent Assembly, in the work which it is undertaking, cannot go outside the framework of the terms which are involved in the Government's broad outline and to which they agree? I hope that it is so. I think the noble Lord said something about it when he first spoke, but I am not quite clear upon it. I think that it would be a considerable relief to some Indians in India if that were made clear, because I believe that there has arisen a degree of uncertainty on the point. I do not know if I have made myself plain, but I hope I have done so. The Cabinet Mission provided a scheme according to which a Constituent Assembly should meet, and they are entitled to say that they have obtained the agreement of the two main Parties to their scheme. When the Constituent Assembly meets, is it regarded by the Government as being quite open to them to frame a constitution which squares with the Government's framework, or have they a wider ambit than that, so that they can propose something of a different kind? I am not

very clear about that, and I think it is rather important to know.

Lastly I would like to ask—I am confining myself strictly to asking questions to elicit information—what, as the noble Lord conceives it, is going to be the power of this Advisory Committee? I see the importance, of course, of having an Advisory Committee to deal with matters of minorities, but supposing the Advisory Committee proceeds to give advice as to how minorities should be provided for; and supposing the Constituent Assembly, while, no doubt, being grateful for the advice, disregards it and takes quite another line. It is not clear to me at present—and I have read the Papers with a great deal of care and a great deal of sympathy—how the Advisory Committee is really going to be a security for the minorities.

I confess that it is my inner conviction that there is, in fact, in the last resort, a kind of contradiction between a completely sovereign and independent government and a provision imposed from outside for the protection of minorities. If you stipulate the protection of minorities to that extent, is the body that is getting these powers really and fully independent? I have always felt, in connexion with the Indian problem, a great difficulty about that. The Act of 1935, at any rate, was full of what we call safeguards; and I should like to know how the Secretary of State thinks that the two things are, in outline, to be worked together. There is a reference to it in the White Paper; I had not at first noticed it, but it is there. I see that on page 5 of the White Paper No. 6861 there is a reference to the two provisos. It reads:

“ . . . two provisos which are mentioned in the statement and which are not, we believe, controversial, namely, adequate provision for the protection of minorities and willingness to conclude a treaty to cover matters arising out of the transfer of power.”

I do not think I am being indiscreet—if I am I hope I may be disregarded—but I should like to know what is this adequate provision for the protection of minorities which the noble Lord and the Government have in mind? I have not attempted to refer to the past and I do not wish to attempt to prognosticate about the future. I do share the view which has been expressed by my noble friend Viscount Samuel, and I really feel more anxiety now about the outcome of this Indian problem than I ever did. But it

[Viscount Simon.]

has been known to me for so many years as one of the greatest difficulties with which the human mind can try to deal that I feel nothing but genuine gratitude for the efforts the Cabinet Mission have made and for the extent to which they have made any progress. We shall soon know what real progress has been made in November, or whenever it is, when we see how this works out. I hope that the observations which I have made and the questions which I have addressed to him do not embarrass the noble Lord and do not in the least prejudice the happy progress (as I sincerely hope may turn out to be the case) of the scheme which has been set on foot.

6.0 p.m.

LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE: With the permission of your Lordships, I will say just a very few words with regard to the remarks that have been made and the questions that have been put to me in the course of this debate. When I was in India we were constantly being asked for clarification and with the best will in the world we attempted clarification. What we discovered was that for every clarification we gave to either side, we were asked for additional clarification; until the whole thing became a snowball. Perhaps noble Lords opposite who have asked for clarification will forgive me on this occasion if I do not go very far to meet their requests. I have learned from experience how very dangerous clarification may be. And as nearly everything I say is likely to be telegraphed out to India it would probably result in a great many more requests for clarification.

I will, however, deal with the point raised both by the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, and by the noble Viscount, Lord Simon. They asked how long this temporary Caretaker Government will last, and if it was our intention to carry it on all through the sittings of the Constituent Assembly. If they will look at Command Paper No. 6831, page 26, they will find these words:

"Since the Congress and the Muslim League have now both accepted the statement of May 16, it is the intention to form a Coalition Government, including both those Parties, as soon as possible. In view, however, of the long negotiations which have already taken place, and since we all have other work to do, we feel that it will be better to have a short interval before proceeding with further negotiations for the formation of an Interim Government."

That is the position. In my opening speech I made it perfectly clear that the only reason a temporary Caretaker Government had been put forward was to start there and then on negotiations for an Interim Government. Negotiations for such a Government could not have taken less than a week or two. Apart from that, members of Congress were going to Bombay to take part in large meetings of their own. Both the Moslem League and the Congress had said they wanted to take part in the elections for the Constituent Assembly, and it would have been futile to expect an Interim Government, a Coalition Government formed from members of these two Parties, to be set up in less than three or four weeks. The chances are that if we had tried to set up such a Government we should have failed. As a purely temporary expedient, to meet a temporary situation, the Viceroy formed a Caretaker Government of officials. Obviously, I cannot say exactly how long that Caretaker Government will last. We had experience in this country of a Caretaker Government not so long ago, and my recollection is that it lasted four or five weeks. That may or may not be an indication of how long the Caretaker Government in India is likely to last. But I can assure noble Lords opposite that there is not the slightest intention to hold up the attempt to make a real Interim Government, and that every effort will be made to establish it on a Coalition basis. We recognize, at least as fully as noble Lords opposite—and from my own experience I would perhaps say more fully—the vital importance of getting a Coalition Government formed, if it is at all possible, at the very earliest moment.

In reference to the remarks of the noble Viscount, Lord Simon, about the powers of the Interim Government, I would only add this. He said that we cannot change the constitutional structure during the interim period. He will find that in the course of this correspondence, that was one of the points which we put to the representatives of Congress. A very sensible letter which we received from the President of Congress showed that they recognized the force of the arguments which Field Marshall Wavell and I put to them on the matter. But the noble Viscount knows perfectly well that it is often the practice of the British tradition to make considerable changes in method

before making changes in constitution. That is why the Viceroy wrote to Congress the letter which we understood went a very long way towards meeting the wishes of Congress in the matter. That letter was shown to Mr. Jinnah and apparently also satisfied him.

With regard to the Constituent Assembly, I think it would be quite impossible for me to give direct, specific, definite answers as to the precise position of that body, and I do not propose to try to do so. I made a carefully worded statement in the course of my opening address, and I cannot go any further than that. The object of setting up the Constituent Assembly is to give Indians the power to make their own Constitution. The only reason we intervened at all was that it was necessary to get both major Parties into the body so that there should be certain understanding between them as to the basis of a new Government.

Reference has also been made to the States Negotiating Committee. Here again I cannot go beyond what I said at the beginning. The States are free to come into the Constituent Assembly, or to stay out. They can discuss the basis on which they will come into the Constituent Assembly, in the Assembly which they themselves have already set up. What precisely they do when they negotiate it is not for us to decide. It is for them to decide, and they have complete freedom in the matter.

When we come to the Advisory Committee on minorities and other matters I would ask noble Lords who think that we can lay down its basis to remember that the days when we could dictate these things are gone. We have suggested this Advisory Committee. It has been accepted in principle; and, so far as I can judge, there is no attempt to by-pass or to minimize or to render nugatory the work of this Committee. As far as I know, we had no representations made to us that the major Parties did not want the Advisory Committee. I believe that the very good and very sound men and women in India who have been either elected or nominated in the Constituent Assembly mean to do their work in an honourable way and the only thing we can possibly do is to trust that they carry it out in that spirit.

With regard to the question of the representation of the Scheduled Castes, I

explained to some extent, in my opening speech, where our difficulty lay. I will go into greater detail if it is desired. I think the noble Viscount, Lord Templewood, said he could not go into the merits of the Poona pact. Neither can I. I take the Poona pact as it is. I cannot go back and deal with the question as to whether it ought to have been agreed, or how it was brought about. I have to take the facts. There may have been some constituency in this country in the old days that was a rotten borough, or something of that sort. Whether it was, or was not, did not affect the question. When the representative came to the House of Commons, he was as much entitled to be in the House of Commons as any member coming from any other constituency. There can be no argument that when people have been elected, they have been elected. That was so also under the Poona pact.

As to the actual figures about which the noble Earl, Lord Scarborough, asked, I may say that I have any number of figures. I can prove all kinds of things by the figures, and somebody else can look at those figures and prove all sorts of other things. What he said about Bombay has a certain substance. He said he imagined that what had happened in Bombay had happened also in the other Provinces. That is not the case. In any event, the position simply is this: that of the two organizations which represent the Scheduled Castes—and there were other bodies as well—the number of successful candidates from the Ambedkar organization as a result of the Poona Pact was very few indeed. If I remember rightly, it amounted to only two in all the Provinces, or something of that order. Either we were going to base the Constituent Assembly on the Provincial Assemblies or we were not. It was not possible for us, in view of the fact of the case, to give to the Federation of the Scheduled Castes—that is the Ambedkar organization—except by some impossible weightage (which would have been quite unthinkable) direct representation in the Constituent Assembly.

That does not mean that the interests of the Depressed Classes, even in the Constituent Assembly itself, are going to be entirely neglected. Because as I said in my speech, we interviewed a Congress sponsored organization whose name I forget. We were very keen on securing the

[Lord Pethick-Lawrence.]
rights of the Depressed Classes. I do not at all take it for granted that their interests will not be pressed forward in the Constituent Assembly. But there is no provision that the Advisory Committee shall consist solely of members who are themselves members of the Constituent Assembly; the Advisory Committee contains people other than those in that body. I think the noble Earl, Lord Scarborough, mentioned the tribes. There will probably have to be different sub-committees of the Advisory Committee. The matter of dealing with the tribes is naturally an entirely different one from settling the affairs of the Depressed Classes.

I am going to put my confidence, faith and hope in the Indian people doing the right thing. That seems to me to be the only basis on which we can go. The day when we could determine exactly how such a body should conduct its labours has gone. We cannot do that. The day when we could suggest exactly how a special Advisory Committee should be established for dealing with all these minorities, or when we here or the Mission out there could determine exactly how it was going to be done, is passed. We have to put our trust in the good sense and good faith of the Indian people. If they were—and I refuse to believe they are—going to be utterly unworthy of that trust, then and then only would arise the question of what we should try to do to help them to put matters right. But for the moment I am not going to contemplate any such failure on their part. That, I am afraid, is all I can say, because I cannot determine the nature of this Advisory Committee. I cannot determine its personnel. I cannot determine how it will work, and I certainly cannot determine its findings or to what extent they will ultimately be adopted in the constitution-making body itself.

I think I have dealt with all the questions except the one the noble Viscount, Lord Templewood, put to me at the end with regard to maintaining the personnel of the Services in India. Through no fault of anyone (I am not blaming anybody), I certainly inherited an exceedingly difficult position, because, owing to the war, both British and Indian recruitment to the Services was certainly not proceeding at the normal rate. I found substantial difficulty. Difficulties still

remain, but I will take note of what the noble Viscount says and bear it in mind. I realise that it is an exceedingly important point, and I have no intention of allowing the question to be merely disregarded. It is one that obviously must be settled. I quite agree that the sooner we can get an Interim Government that has the backing of the Indian Parties behind it, the sooner we can make a move in deciding what ought to be done.

I think to some extent I have answered all the questions that have been put to me. In conclusion I thank noble Lords for the kind words they have said with regard to myself and my colleagues who accompanied me on the Mission. The essential thing, we agree, is that there should be positive fruits from our labours. We believe we have helped to set up a constitution-making body. Undoubtedly both major parties have contributed personnel of the highest order to serve on that body. That, in itself, I think is an earnest of their intention to make the thing work. I have every hope that it will work. I think that when the noble Viscount, Lord Simon, said we had totally and completely failed he was putting it a little too high.

VISCOUNT SIMON: I am sorry if I made it seem that way. I was not seeking to criticise. I wanted only to point out that the objects had been stated before you started, and I did not think the second object had been achieved; but I did not wish to criticise.

LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE: I think I made that clear in the course of my speech. It sticks out. I want only to make it clear that I do not think the Mission was a complete failure. It did not attain full success, but we went very near to it. There was one day when it appeared we had attained success, and then the cup of success was dashed from our lips just as we were going to drink. We have made an investigation of where the Parties stand, and I have every hope that, starting from where we left off and where we did not succeed, the Viceroy will be able to reach success in this matter. It is so very much in the interests of all Parties in India that they should get a properly constituted Government, because there are questions which are going to arise from day to day in this transition stage which clearly need the approval of the leading statesmen of

India of both Parties, in order that a successful interim solution shall be arrived at, leading up to the ultimate position, which is the ideal in front of us, of a new constitution being made for India, and being accepted by this country, and the Indians having at last what they desire. When they have got what they desire I am sure from the personal good will that has been expressed to me by individual people in India that we shall have a loyal friend in the people and in the statesmen of that great race.

VISCOUNT TEMPLEWOOD: My Lords, In asking the leave of the House to withdraw my motion I would make but two observations. The first observation is that I do not demur from the Secretary of State for India at all in what he says about not giving specific answers to-day. We raised our points not for the purpose of embarrassing him or embarrassing the Viceroy, but to make it quite clear that we are following with the greatest interest the course of events. Our final judgment we must postpone to the future. The second observation is in connection with what he has just said about minorities. I agree with the noble Lord that when eventually we leave India the Indians themselves must undertake the responsibility for the good treatment of minorities. The noble Lord will, however, forgive me for saying that I do think he went a little too far in dissociating himself from this question. He gave the impression—perhaps it was not the impression he wished to give—that as soon as the Constituent Assembly started operating our responsibility ceased and the question of minorities was simply an Indian affair. Without entering into any controversial discussion to-day, I would only say that until there is a change in the position we are by statute responsible for the protection of minorities. On that account I very much hope that as long as the noble Lord holds the seals of the Indian office, and as long as the present Government is responsible for the protection of minorities, the noble Lord will do his utmost, without compromising the course of negotiations, to use his influence upon the lines we have suggested to-day—the lines, indeed, which he has just himself suggested—namely, of putting more substance into the Advisory Committee and bringing into the Committee, if necessary, representatives of minorities who have not been returned by the

Provincial Assemblies. I would only say in conclusion that it is on an issue of that kind that I personally, and I think a good many of my friends with me, will judge the ultimate result of the negotiations. I beg leave to withdraw my Motion.

Motion for Papers, by leave, withdrawn.

6.14 p.m.

MARRIAGES OF TROOPS ABROAD.

LORD CALVERLEY had given Notice that he would ask His Majesty's Government, when it proposes to allow the marriages of British soldiers stationed in Austria, with Austrian nationals, if such proposed marriages have been approved by the Army chaplains and commanding officers. The noble Lord said: My Lords, I wish to ask the Under-Secretary of State for War the question which is on the Order Paper, and very briefly I will amplify it. We have a problem in Austria of British soldiers who have been there for a considerable time, and some of them, being young and meeting attractive Austrian girls, have done what has been done from time immemorial—they have fallen in love. That is about what it amounts to. When I was in Austria in May and the beginning of June owing to the fact that I had some connection with His Majesty's Forces in Army Welfare, I was asked by soldiers individually for advice, and also some of them told me that they were deferring their release because they wished to contract marriages with Austrian young ladies. I had the advantage of speaking to Commanding Officers, and I also had the advantage of speaking to one Officer Commanding one of the provinces in Austria. He told me that, so far as he knew, there were some 2,000 applications from British soldiers to contract marriages with Austrian girls. He told me that these 2,000 cases had been examined not only by his own officers but also by the padres, and they could not find any moral objections to these young fellows getting married to the Austrian young ladies. That is how the matter stands to-day.

There is a complication in many cases, because many of the young soldiers are Protestants and Austria is largely a Catholic country, but that is an objection which is not insuperable. Here we have responsible British officers examining

[Lord Calverley.]

cases of proposed marriages coming to the conclusion that the alliances, so far as they know, would be satisfactory (I know that marriages are made in heaven and also that marriage in any case is a lottery) and that the marriages should take place. When I was there, as I say, only a few weeks ago, I spoke to one young chap—he was an ardent young Catholic as it happened—who had deferred his release because he was deeply in love with an Austrian young lady. He was very frank about it. Nobody could throw a stone as to either his morals or anybody else's in connexion with this courtship. I told the young fellow that I should make my own inquiries into this question, and I would try to pierce the heart of the Under-Secretary of State for War with that little arrow which comes from Eros (which we hope to see soon in Piccadilly Circus) so that he would feel that certain amount of romanticism which I cannot get away from even in my mature years. I told this young fellow I would even wager that he would be able to put up his own bans of marriage in August. I told him I hoped his marriage would be very happy, and that he would live happily ever after, as most married people do.

I am trespassing upon your Lordships' time, but this is a very human problem. These soldiers of ours, many of whom I visited privately, are doing a fine job of work in representing this nation in Austria.

They were as good as any Ambassador at £5,000, £10,000 a year or whatever an Ambassador gets. I want the Under-Secretary of State to announce that His Majesty's Government is prepared, if not itself to give the bride away, at any rate to give its consent to these marriages which have been vetted, examined, and approved locally. I hope he will now give his benediction to the proposal.

6.21 p.m.

LORD FARINGDON: My Lords, I rise to add one or two remarks, because this is a matter on which I have been in correspondence with the War Office ever since my own return from Austria rather more than four months ago. There I found that the troops had two principle complaints, and I made it my business to find out as much about them as I could. One complaint referred to the difference

in leave conditions between members of the C.M.F. and members of the B.A.O.R., and I am glad to say that has been satisfactorily settled. The other complaint concerned this question of marriages with local girls. To all my letters since my return from Austria I have received the reply that the matter is under—I think the technical term is “active consideration.” When I was in Austria I had the very strong feeling that this was an immediate problem. It does not concern only the young men. I think if a rule had been made that young men, such as, for instance, young men newly-called-up and not yet of age, should not marry, at any rate without some delay, it would be defensible. But these were not young men that I saw; these were men who had been through the campaigns in Africa and Italy and who were fully of an age to know their own minds.

There is, I know, some doubt among legal personalities as to the legality of this particular ban. I am told, in fact, that although the ban is legal, so would be any marriage contracted by any member of our Forces in Austria or Germany. That is clearly a curious position, but I suggest there is a rather more serious question involved. This ban upon matrimony seems to me to be a definite infringement of the civil liberty of the subject, and I suggest that any such infringement is a matter on which Parliament should be extremely jealous. I know it is said that this ban has been imposed for reasons of security. That is an argument which is perfectly valid in the case of orders against fraternisation, but the moment you revoke the anti-fraternisation order the security basis for the ban disappears. After all, we never heard that the famous blonde spy made the bonds of matrimony any part of her business. The female of the species is no more dangerous within the marriage bonds than outside them; indeed, I suggest she is probably very much less dangerous.

The argument from the security point of view is, I suggest, entirely fallacious. I am perfectly prepared to believe that there may be danger in the association of the men in the Forces with women in enemy territories, but to ban marriage on the ground of security is quite clearly a completely fallacious theory and I hope it is not one which His Majesty's Government will put forward in their reply to-day. On