

INDIA: STATEMENT BY THE CABINET MISSION.

HL Deb 16 May 1946 vol 141 cc271-87271

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DOMINION AFFAIRS (VISCOUNT ADDISON)

My Lords, I would ask your Lordships' permission to make a statement on India. In view of the great importance of this statement made by the Cabinet Mission and his excellency the Viceroy it has been deemed necessary that it should be read to your Lordships in full. I am afraid it will take a little time, but I will ask your Lordships to bear with me as well as you usually do. The statement is as follows:

"1. On March 15 last just before the despatch of the Cabinet Mission to India, Mr. Attlee, the British Prime Minister, used these words:

"My colleagues are going to India with the intention of using their utmost endeavours to help her to attain her freedom as speedily and fully as possible. What form of Government is to replace the present regime is for India to decide; but our desire is to help her to set up forthwith the machinery for making that decision....

"I hope that the Indian people may elect to remain within the British Commonwealth. I am certain that she will find great advantages in doing so....

"But if she does so elect, it must be by her own free will. The British Commonwealth and Empire is not bound together by chains of external compulsion. It is a free association of free peoples. If, on the other hand, she elects for independence, in our view she has a right to do so. It will be for us to help to make the transition as smooth and easy as possible."

2. Charged in these historic words, we... the Cabinet Ministers and the Viceroy... have done our utmost to assist the two [272](#)main political parties to reach agreement upon the fundamental issue of the unity or division of India. After prolonged discussions in New Delhi we succeeded in bringing the Congress and the Muslim League together in conference at Simla. There was a full exchange of views and both parties were prepared to make considerable concessions in order to try to reach a settlement, but it ultimately proved impossible to close the remainder of the gap between the parties and so no agreement could be concluded. Since no agreement has been reached, we feel that it is our duty to put forward what we consider are the best arrangements possible to ensure a speedy setting up of the new constitution. This statement is made with the full approval of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.

3. We have accordingly decided that immediate arrangements should be made whereby India may decide the future constitution of India, and an interim

Government may be set up at once to carry on the administration of British India until such time as a new constitution can be brought into being. We have endeavoured to be just to the smaller as well as to the larger sections of the people; and to recommend a solution which will lead to a practicable way of governing the India of the future, and will give a sound basis for defence and a good opportunity for progress in the social, political and economic field.

4. It is not intended in this statement to review the voluminous evidence which has been submitted to the Mission; but it is right that we should state that it has shown an almost universal desire, outside the supporters of the Muslim League for the unity of India.

5. This consideration did not, however, deter us from examining closely and impartially the possibility of a partition of India; since we were greatly impressed by the very genuine and acute anxiety of the Muslims lest they should find themselves subjected to a perpetual Hindu majority rule. This feeling has become so strong and widespread amongst the Muslims that it cannot be allayed by mere paper safeguards. If there is to be internal peace in India it must be secured by measures which will assure to the Muslims a control in all matters vital to their culture, religion, and economic or other interests.

2736. We therefore examined in the first instance the question of a separate and fully independent sovereign state of Pakistan as claimed by the Muslim League. Such a Pakistan would comprise two areas; one in the North-West consisting of the provinces of the Punjab, Sind, North-West Frontier, and British Baluchistan; the other in the North-East consisting of the provinces of Bengal and Assam. The League were prepared to consider adjustment of boundaries at a later stage, but insisted that the principle of Pakistan should first be acknowledged. The argument for a separate state of Pakistan was based, first, upon the right of the Muslim majority to decide their method of government according to their wishes, and, secondly, upon the necessity to include substantial areas in which Muslims are in a minority, in order to make Pakistan administratively and economically workable.

The size of the non-Muslim minorities in a Pakistan comprising the whole of the six provinces enumerated above would be very considerable."

I will not read the tabular statement but it will be circulated in the OFFICIAL REPORT. The effect of it is that in the North Western area, that is the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province, Sind and British Baluchistan, the Muslim population stands to the non-Muslim in the proportion of 62.07 per cent. to 37.93 per cent. and in the North Eastern area, that is Bengal and Assam, the proportions are Muslim 51.69 per cent. and non-Muslim 48.31 per cent. The statement continues:

"The Muslim minorities in the remainder of British India number some 20 million dispersed amongst a total population of 188 million.

These figures show that the setting up of a separate sovereign state of Pakistan on the lines claimed by the Muslim League would not solve the communal minority problem; nor can we see any justification for including within a sovereign Pakistan those districts of the Punjab and of Bengal and Assam in which the population is predominantly non-Muslim. Every argument that can be used in favour of Pakistan can equally, in our view, be used in favour of the exclusion of the non-Muslim areas from 'Pakistan. This point would particularly affect the position of the Sikhs.

2747. We, therefore, considered whether a smaller sovereign Pakistan confined to the Muslim majority areas alone might be a possible basis of compromise. Such a Pakistan is regarded by the Muslim League as quite impracticable because it would entail the exclusion from Pakistan of (a) the whole of the Ambala and Jullundur divisions in the Punjab; (b) the whole of Assam except the district of Sylhet; and (c) a large part of Western Bengal, including Calcutta, in which city the percentage of the Muslim population is 23.6 per cent. We ourselves are also convinced that any solution which involves a radical partition of the Punjab and Bengal, as this would do, would be contrary to the wishes and interests of a very large 'proportion of the inhabitants of these provinces. Bengal and the Punjab each has its own common language and a long history and tradition. Moreover, any division of the Punjab would of necessity divide the Sikhs, leaving substantial bodies of Sikhs on both sides of the boundary. We have therefore been forced to the conclusion that neither a larger nor a smaller sovereign state of Pakistan would provide an acceptable solution for the communal problem.

8. Apart from the great force of the foregoing arguments there are weighty administrative, economic and military considerations. The whole of the transportation and postal and telegraph systems of India have been established on the basis of a United India. To disintegrate them would gravely injure both parts of India. The case for a united defence is even stronger. The Indian Armed Forces have been built up as a whole for the defence of India as a whole, and to break them in two would inflict a deadly blow on the long traditions and high degree of efficiency of the Indian Army and would entail the gravest dangers. The Indian Navy and Indian Air Force would become much less effective. The two sections of the suggested Pakistan contain the two most vulnerable frontiers in India and for a successful defence in depth the area of Pakistan would be insufficient.

9. A further consideration of importance is the greater difficulty which the Indian States would find in associating themselves with a divided British India.

10. Finally, there is the geographical fact that the two halves of the proposed Pakistan state are separated by some 275 seven hundred miles and the communications between them both in war and peace would be dependent on the good will of Hindustan.

11. We are therefore unable to advise the British Government that the power which at present resides in British hands should be handed over to two entirely separate sovereign states.

12. This decision does not, however, blind us to the very real Muslim apprehensions that their culture and political and social life might become submerged in a purely unitary India, in which the Hindus with their greatly superior numbers must be a dominating element. To meet this the Congress have put forward a scheme under which provinces would have full autonomy subject only to a minimum of central subjects, such as foreign affairs, defence and communications.

Under this scheme provinces, if they wished to take part in economic and administrative planning on a large scale, could cede to the centre optional subjects in addition to the compulsory ones mentioned above.

13. Such a scheme would, in our view, present considerable constitutional disadvantages and anomalies. It would be very difficult to work a central executive and legislature in which some ministers, who dealt with compulsory subjects, were responsible to the whole of India while other ministers, who dealt with optional subjects, would be responsible only to those provinces who had elected to act together in respect of such subjects. This difficulty would be accentuated in the central legislature, where it would be necessary to exclude certain members from speaking and voting when subjects with which their provinces were not concerned were under discussion. Apart from the difficulty of working such a scheme, we do not consider that it would be fair to deny to other provinces, which did not desire to take the optional subjects at the centre, the right to form themselves into a group for a similar purpose. This would indeed be more than the exercise of their autonomous powers in a particular way.

14. Before putting forward our recommendations we turn to deal with the relationship of the Indian States to British India. It is quite clear that with the 276 attainment of independence by British India, whether inside or outside the British Commonwealth, the relationship which has hitherto existed between the rulers of the States and the British Crown will no longer be possible. Paramountcy can neither be retained by the British Crown nor transferred to the new government. This fact has been fully recognised by those whom we interviewed from the States. They have at the same time assured us that the States are ready and willing to co-operate in the new development of India. The precise form which their co-operation will take must

be a matter for negotiation during the building up of the new constitutional structure and it by no means follows that it will be identical for all the States. We have not therefore dealt with the States in the same detail as the provinces of British India in the paragraphs which follow.

15. We now indicate the nature of a solution which in our view would be just to the essential claims of all parties and would at the same time be most likely to bring about a stable and practicable form of constitution for All-India.

We recommend that the constitution should take the following basic form:—

1. (1) There should be a Union of India, embracing both British India and the States, which should deal with the following subjects: foreign affairs, defence, and communications; and should have the powers necessary to raise the finances required for the above subjects.
2. (2) The Union should have an executive and a legislature constituted from British Indian and States representatives. Any question raising a major communal issue in the legislature should require for its decision a majority of the representatives present and voting of each of the two major communities as well as a majority of all the members present and voting.
3. (3) All subjects other than the Union subjects and all residuary powers should vest in the provinces.
4. (4) The States will retain all subjects and powers other than those ceded to the Union.
5. (5) Provinces should be free to form groups with executives and legislatures, and each group could determine the 277 provincial subjects to be taken in common.
6. (6) The constitutions of the Union and of the groups should contain a provision whereby any province could by a majority vote of its legislative assembly call for a reconsideration of the terms of the constitution after an initial period of ten years and at ten-yearly intervals thereafter.

16. It is not our object to lay out the details of a constitution on the above programme but to set in motion machinery whereby a constitution can be settled by Indians for Indians.

It has been necessary, however, for us to make this recommendation as to the broad basis of the future constitution because it became clear to us in the course of our negotiations that not until that had been done was there any hope of getting the two major communities to join in the setting up of the constitution-making machinery.

17. We now indicate the constitution-making machinery which we propose should be brought into being forthwith in order to enable a new constitution to be worked out.

18. In forming any assembly to decide a new constitutional structure the first problem is to obtain as broad-based and accurate a representation of the whole population as is possible. The most satisfactory method obviously would be by election based on adult franchise but any attempt to introduce such a step now would lead to a wholly unacceptable delay in the formulation of the new constitution. The only practicable course is to utilise the recently elected Provincial Legislative Assemblies as electing bodies. There are, however, two factors in their composition which make this difficult. First the numerical strengths of Provincial Legislative Assemblies do not bear the same proportion to the total population in each province. Thus, Assam, with a population of 10 million, has a Legislative Assembly of 108 members, while Bengal with a population six times as large, has an Assembly of only 250. Secondly, owing to the weightage given to minorities by the Communal Award, the strengths of the several communities in each Provincial Legislative Assembly are not in proportion to their numbers in the province. Thus the number of seats reserved for 278 Moslems in the Bengal Legislative Assembly is only 48 per cent. of the total, although they form 55 per cent. of the provincial population. After a most careful consideration of the various methods by which these points might be corrected, we have come to the conclusion that the fairest and most practicable plan would be—

1. (a) to allot to each province a total number of seats proportional to its population, roughly in the ratio of one to a million, as the nearest substitute for representation by adult suffrage.
2. (b) to divide this provincial allocation of seats between the main communities in each province in proportion to their population.
3. (c) to provide that the representatives allocated to each community in a province shall be elected by members of that community in its Legislative Assembly.

We think that for these purposes it is sufficient to recognize only three main communities in India, General, Moslem and Sikh, the "General" community including all persons who are not Moslems or Sikhs. As smaller minorities would, upon a population basis, have little or no representation, since they would lose the weightage which assures them seats in Provincial Legislatures, we have made the arrangements set out in paragraph 20 below to give them a full representation upon all matters of special interest to minorities.

19 (1) We therefore propose that there shall be elected by each Provincial Legislative Assembly the following numbers of representatives, each part of the Legislative Assembly (General, Moslem or Sikh) electing its own representatives by the method of proportional representation with single transferable vote."

Again I will not attempt to read the tabular statement but it will be circulated in the OFFICIAL REPORT. The statement goes on:

"For the process of electing their representatives the Provinces are grouped into three sections.

Section A comprises Madras, Bombay, the United Provinces, Bihar, the Central Provinces and Orissa. These will have a total representation of 187 members, composed of 167 General and 20 Muslim.

[279](#)Section B comprises the Punjab, the North West Frontier Province and Sind, with a total representation of 35, composed of 9 General, 22 Muslim and 4 Sikh.

Section C, consisting of Bengal and Assam, has a total representation of 70, composed of 34 General representatives and 36 Muslims.

To these will be added, in Section A, one representative each of the Chief Commissioners Provinces of Delhi, AjmerMerwara and Coorg, and, in Section B, a representative of British Baluchistan. The combined total, therefore, for British India will be 296.

"(II) It is the intention that the States would be given in the final Constituent Assembly appropriate representation which would not, on the basis of the calculation of population adopted for British India, exceed 93; but the method of selection will have to be determined by consultation. The States would in the preliminary stage be represented by a negotiating committee.

(III) Representatives thus chosen shall meet at New Delhi as soon as possible.

(IV) A preliminary meeting will be held at which the general order of business will be decided, a chairman and other officers elected and an Advisory Committee (see paragraph 20 below) on rights of citizens, minorities and tribal and excluded areas set up. Thereafter the provincial representatives will divide up into three sections shown under A, B and C in the Table of Representation in subparagraph (1) of this paragraph.

(V) These sections shall proceed to settle provincial constitutions for the provinces included in each section and shall also decide whether any group constitution shall be set up for those provinces and if so with what provincial subjects the group should deal. Provinces should have power to opt out of groups in accordance with the provisions of sub-clause (VIII) below.

(VI) The representatives of the sections and the Indian States shall reassemble for the purpose of settling the Union constitution.

(VII) In the Union Constituent Assembly resolution varying the provisions of paragraph 15 above or raising any major communal issue shall require a majority of the representatives present [280](#)and voting of each of the two major communities. The Chairman of the Assembly shall decide which, if any,

resolutions raise major communal issues and shall, if so requested by a majority of the representatives of either of the major communities, consult the Federal Court before giving his decision.

(VIII) As soon as the new constitutional arrangements have come into operation it shall be open to any province to elect to come out of any group in which it has been placed. Such a decision shall be taken by the legislature of the province after the first general election under the new constitution.

20. The Advisory Committee on the rights of citizens, minorities and tribal and excluded areas will contain due representation of the interests affected and their function will be to report to the Union Constituent Assembly upon the list of fundamental rights, clauses for protecting minorities, and a scheme for the administration of tribal and excluded areas, and to advise whether these rights should be incorporated in the provincial, the group or the Union constitutions.

21. His Excellency, the Viceroy will forthwith request the provincial legislatures to proceed with the election of their representatives and the States to set up a negotiating committee.

It is hoped that the process of constitution-making can proceed as rapidly as the complexities of the task permit so that the interim period may be as short as possible.

22. It will be necessary to negotiate a treaty between the Union Constituent Assembly and the United Kingdom to provide for certain matters arising out of the transfer of power.

23. While the constitution-making proceeds the administration of India has to be carried on. We attach the greatest importance therefore to the setting up at once of an interim Government having the support of the major political parties. It is essential during the interim period that there should be the maximum of co-operation in carrying through the difficult tasks that face the Government of India. Besides the heavy tasks of day-to-day administration, there is the grave danger of famine to be countered, there are decisions to be taken in many matters of post-war development which will have a far-reaching effect on India's future and [281](#) there are important international conferences in which India has to be represented. For all these purposes a government having popular support is necessary. The Viceroy has already started discussions to this end and hopes soon to form an interim government in which all the portfolios, including that of War Member, will be held by Indian leaders having the full confidence of the people. The British Government, recognising the significance of the changes, will give the fullest measure of cooperation to the Government so formed in the accomplishment of its tasks of administration and in bringing about as rapid and smooth a transition as possible.

24. To the leaders and people of India, who now have the opportunity of complete independence, we would finally say this. We and our Government and countrymen hoped that it would be possible for the Indian people themselves to agree upon the method of framing the new Constitution under which they will live. Despite the labours which we have shared with the Indian parties and the exercise of much patience and goodwill by all, this has not been possible. We, therefore, now lay before you proposals which, after listening to, all sides and after much earnest thought, we trust will enable you to attain your independence in the shortest time and with the least danger of internal disturbance and conflict. These proposals may not, of course, completely satisfy all parties, but you will recognise with us that, at this supreme moment in Indian history, statesmanship demands mutual accommodation and we ask you to consider the alternative to the acceptance of these proposals. After all the efforts which we and the Indian parties have made together for agreement, we must state that, in our view, there is small hope of a peaceful settlement by the agreement of the Indian parties alone. The alternative would, therefore, be a grave danger of violence, chaos and even civil war. The gravity and duration of such a disturbance cannot be foreseen, but it is certain that it would be a terrible disaster for many millions of men, women and children. This is a possibility which must be regarded with equal abhorrence by the Indian people, our own countrymen and the world as a whole. We therefore lay these proposals before you in the profound hope that they will be [282](#)perated by you in the spirit of accommodation and goodwill in which they are offered. We appeal to all who have the future good of India at heart to extend their vision beyond their own community or interest to the interests of the whole 400 million of Indian people.

We hope that the new independent India may choose to be a member of the British Commonwealth. We hope, in any event, that you will remain in close and friendly association with our people. But these are matters for your own free choice. Whatever that choice may be, we look forward with you to your ever-increasing prosperity among the greatest nations of the world and to a future even more glorious than your past."

§[The tabular statements referred to by Viscount Addison are as follows:

TABLE OF
POPULATIONS.

	Muslim.	Non-Muslim.
North-Western Area—		
Punjab	16,217,242	12,201,577
North-West Frontier Province	2,788,797	249,270
Sind	3,208,325	1,326,683
British Baluchistan	438,930	62,701
	22,653,294	13,840,231
	62.07	37.93

	per cent.	per cent.
North-Eastern Area—		
Bengal	33,005,434	27,301,091
Assam	3,442,479	6,762,254
	36,447,913	34,063,345
	50.69	48.31
	per cent.	per cent.

All population figures in this statement are from the most recent census taken in 1941.

TABLE OF
REPRESENTATION.

SECTION A.

Province—	General.	Muslim.	Total.
Madras	45	4	49
Bombay	19	2	21
United Provinces	47	8	55
Bihar	31	5	36
Central Provinces	16	1	17
Orissa	9	0	9
Total	167	20	187

SECTION B

Province—	General.	Muslim.	Sikhs.	Total.
Punjab	8	16	4	28
North-West Frontier Province	0	3	0	3
Sind	1	3	0	4
Total	9	22	4	35

283

SECTION C.

Province—	General.	Muslim.	Total.
Bengal	27	33	60
Assam	7	3	10
Total	34	36	70
Total for British India	292		
Maximum for Indian States	93		
Total	385		

NOTE.—In order to represent the Chief Commissioners' Provinces there will be added to Section A the member representing Delhi in the Central Legislative Assembly, the member representing Ajmer-Merwara in the Central Legislative Assembly and a representative to be elected by the Coorg Legislative Council.

To Section B will be added a representative of British Baluchistan.]

4.31 p.m.

VISCOUNT SIMON

My Lords, the statement that has just been read to us is, as we all realize, of such importance and of such complication that we shall wish to give it the most careful consideration, and no doubt will wish to see it in print before we attempt any extensive comment upon it. For myself, I only want to ask one question, but perhaps before I put the question I may be allowed to say this. The document shows with what industry and devotion the three Cabinet Ministers in India have pursued their very difficult task. I think we shall be at one in feeling that that recognition is due to them immediately. The publication of the document I think will have another effect. It will bring home to vast numbers of people in this country, who have perhaps been confident that they knew the solution of the Indian problem, how frightfully complicated that problem is, and how, with the best will in the world, it is not only one of the greatest but one of the most difficult tasks to find a satisfactory solution.

The only question I would venture to address now to the noble Viscount, the Leader of the House, is this: Twice in the document, once at the beginning, and once at the end, rather more at length, there is a reference to the setting up at once of an interim government. I do not think it will embarrass him if I ask him this question to make quite clear what is involved in that phrase. Of course, if by setting up an interim government is meant that new men will be chosen to sit in the Viceroy's Council, that is not a constitutional change; that is merely a change [284](#)in personnel, which happens from time to time in this country, too. It is, as I gather, intended to make a rather more widespread change instead of making a more limited change of personnel. I certainly should not myself call that any change in the constitutional government now provided for and in India, and it is largely a matter of discretion as to who the individuals chosen may be. But, of course, if by setting up an interim government in India was meant anything more than that, quite different questions would arise.

Your Lordships are aware that, under the [Government of India Act, 1935](#), as indeed in a different form in earlier Statutes dealing with the Constitution of India, the Viceroy of India has what are called reserved powers and special responsibilities. I would like to be assured that when this document, put forward with the authority of the Government, speaks of creating or setting up an interim government in India in the meantime, it does not mean that there is to be attempted some modification either explicit or implicit in those constitutional provisions, because of course there is cast upon the Viceroy, under the existing Constitution, in particular the duty of protecting minorities, the duty if occasion calls for it of certifying legislation which the legislative bodies in India do not pass, and also, in the realm of administration, of overriding or taking upon himself to decide grave matters which he thinks are

not being satisfactorily dealt with without the exercise of his special powers. I do not attempt to define the range or seek to enlarge it. I am only pointing out that this phrase about the importance of setting up an interim government in India at once might be understood—I hope it might only be misunderstood—as involving constitutional changes.

I would ask if my noble friend opposite can tell me if my reading is right, that what it really means is that, in place of individuals who have so recently been the members of the Viceroy's Council, other individuals will take their place—not appointed by the Viceroy, not appointed by any political Party, but appointed by His Majesty on the recommendation of the Secretary of State. As long as it is clear that that is what is involved, certainly for my own part [285](#)I should not seek to question the discretion which decides that it may be well to have a change of personnel. That I do not think is an embarrassing question. It is literally a question of seeking elucidation, and, while many questions occur to me, and I have no doubt to others who are interested in this matter, and who have had occasion to consider it, I think, for my own part, it is much wiser to examine the document at leisure and study the relation of all its parts rather than attempt to conduct a sort of impromptu cross-examination across the table. The matter is much too serious for that and the document itself is manifestly the result of the most intense labour and consideration by Ministers on the spot.

The next thing which I suppose we ought to do is to see what is the result of making this public announcement in India. Is it going to be received favourably by the great communities or not? About that I would only venture to say what I think every honest man ought to say: that my profound hope is that these proposals thus put forward will meet with the favourable reception which is desired. When we have learned more about the way they are received, and when we have had the opportunity of studying the document more closely, I imagine that my noble friend the Leader of the opposition, with the assent of the Leader of the House, will want to get arrangements made that we may have some further discussion or at least some further questions put on this all-important subject.

4.42 p.m.

VISCOUNT SAMUEL

My Lords, uppermost in your Lordships' minds will, I feel sure, be a sense of the obligation we owe to the three Ministers who have been charged with this very arduous duty, and especially perhaps to the member of our own House who, by virtue of his office as Secretary of State, had the primacy of responsibility. Lord PethickLawrence, undeterred by the burden of years, by an oppressive climate and by the arduous and at times apparently hopeless task that had been entrusted to him, pursued it, so we learn, with unflagging

enthusiasm, vigour and resourcefulness. When the Indian Parties, after coming close together, again fell apart, it would have been easy for the Ministers to have issued a statement affirming certain [286](#) platitudinous principles and expressing kindly regrets, and then to have abandoned their task. That would have been done if it had been true, as has been freely stated by Indian politicians for years and echoed sometimes in the United States, that Britain's purpose was not to promote Indian self-government and independence but rather secretly and subtly to foment Indian divisions in order to re-establish and maintain our own rule.

The Ministers did not take that course because that accusation has been wholly untrue. On the contrary, they have presented now a complete and definite scheme. Because it is complete it is necessarily complex, and for that reason, as has just been said by the noble and learned Viscount who has preceded me, your Lordships are unlikely to wish today to enter into any closer consideration of this document. That would be a sufficient reason, but there is another. It is common to all Parties that this matter is for the Indians themselves to decide, and therefore, as the noble Viscount has just said, it would be right to give time for Indian opinion to express itself before we in this Parliament begin to examine the matter and to express an opinion of our own.

For my own part, having had an opportunity, through the courtesy of the Leader of the House, of seeing beforehand a copy of this document, I would only give as a first impression the opinion that it is admirably framed for the purpose in view. That is all I had intended to say, reserving to a later occasion any further observations, but what the noble Viscount, Lord Simon, has just said with regard to the interim government prompts me to say that, for my own part, I do not share his apprehension. This establishment of an interim government as a first step towards the later developments has been advocated by myself for the last two Years I rejoice that it is now to be carried out as a first step in what must necessarily be a long process. I do not think it likely that any constitutional difficulties will arise, and if the Government does really consist of the trusted representatives of all the Parties, it is very improbable that there will be the friction between the Viceroy's Council on the one hand and the Legislative Assembly on the other which has hitherto prevailed, and therefore questions of certifying important [287](#) measures like the Budget which the Legislative Assembly may refuse to pass are unlikely to occur.

That is all I would wish to observe on this occasion. Three wise men have gone from the West this time. The West, no doubt, has always had much to learn from the East in matters of religion and philosophy; but the East has much to learn from the West in questions of statesmanship, and not least perhaps from this country which, for centuries, in spite of many errors, has shown great resources of statesmanship. Those resources have now been placed at India's service without stint and without reservation of any kind, and we may hope

that now, after decades of controversy, they may have helped to show the way to a happy settlement.

4.48 p.m.

VISCOUNT ADDISON

My Lords, I thank the noble Lords who have just spoken for what they have said and for the manner of saying it. I am sure my colleagues out in India will greatly appreciate the tributes which have been paid to them and to their sincerity and devotion which, as the noble Viscount, Lord Samuel, has just told us, was without reserve. I think, too, that the advice that has been given to us that we should wait to ascertain, after the publication of this Paper, more of its effect upon Indian opinion, is very wise counsel, and I am glad that your Lordships have received it favourably. I note what the noble Viscount said as to the possibility of discussion at some future date, and, taking account of the observations I previously made, we shall no doubt be able to consider it between the Parties in the usual way. I think the answer to the noble Viscount's question is a fairly clear one. It is a change of personnel, which we hope will be effected agreeably and satisfactorily and will inspire confidence, as the noble Viscount below the Gangway has just said. The powers, duties and obligations will remain as before.

VISCOUNT SIMON

It would need another Act of Parliament.

VISCOUNT ADDISON

No, it will not need another Act.

VISCOUNT SIMON

No, I say that nothing further could be done without an Act of Parliament.