

## CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF INDIA

*Tuesday, the 13th September 1949*

The Constituent Assembly of India met in the Constitution Hall, New Delhi, at Nine of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Dr. Rajendra Prasad) in the Chair.

DRAFT CONSTITUTION—(Contd.)

**New Para XIV-A (Language)—(Contd.)**

**Mr. President :** There are two or three amendments more which I consider to be of fundamental character. There is one about Sanskrit language but I do not find Pandit Maitra here. The second is by Mr. Shankarrao Deo which says that all the reservations in favour of English should automatically cease at the end of fifteen years. That also I consider to be of fundamental character and there is another amendment of which notice was given by Dr. Subbarayan to have Roman character. So I propose to call these first and after that I go to general discussion.

**Shri R. V. Dhulekar** (United Provinces: General) : I have proposed amendment No. 240.

**Mr. President :** Come along, then.

**Prof. Shibban Lal Saksena** (United Provinces : General) : I have also an amendment.

**Mr. President :** All have, but I said “amendment of a fundamental character.”

**Shri R. V. Dhulekar :** Mr. President, Sir, nobody can be more happy than myself that Hindi has become the official language of the country. I may remind the House that on the very first day when I spoke I spoke in Hindi and there was an opposition that I should not speak in the language which I called the National language of the country. I tried to move an amendment that the Procedure Committee should make all rules in the Hindi language with a translation in the English language. I said that the Hindi version should be considered as the authentic version and if there was any discussion about the interpretation, then the Hindi version should be considered authentic. On that day in spite of the fact that the then President tried to rule me out of order, I claimed that as a Member of the Constituent Assembly and as a son of this country I had a right to speak in the language which I feel is the national language of the country. A momentum was created and today I find that Hindi in Devanagiri script has become the official language of the country.

**Some Honourable Members :** Not yet.

**Shri R. V. Dhulekar :** Some say “not yet”, but I say that it is a fact. However much you may try to postpone the day—in your opinion it may be an evil day—in my opinion it is a fortunate day, it has come. However you may oppose it, it is a decision that the country has taken. Some say that it is a concession to Hindi language I say “no”. It is a consummation of a historic process. It is the result of an historical process which has been going for a long number of years, many centuries. I may say that Swami Ramdas wrote in Hindi, Tulsi Das wrote in Hindi, then again the modern Saint, Swami Dayanand wrote in Hindi. He was a Gujarati but he wrote in Hindi. Why did he write in Hindi? Because Hindi was the national language of this country. Then again I may say that our Father of the Nation Mahatma

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Gandhi also, when he came into the Congress, immediately did away with English and he spoke in Hindi. He did not try to write in English. He wrote his own biography in Hindi and got it translated by Mahadeo Desai. I may submit to those people who are under a misapprehension that it is an imposition—I may say that it is not an imposition. Hindi has become the universal language of this country and has taken the field. There was a tug of war and there was a race among languages and the only language which had the national language characteristics in it, which had the power and the strength became today the national language of this country.

**Shri H. R. Guruv Reddy** (Mysore State) : Shall we not say official language ?

**Shri R. V. Dhulekar** : I say it is the official language and it is the national language. You may demur to it. You may belong to another nation but I belong to Indian nation, the Hindi Nation, the Hindu Nation, the Hindustani Nation. I do not know why you say it is not the National Language. Some of you want that Sanskrit be the national language—I may say Sanskrit is the international language—it is the language of the world. There are four thousand roots in Sanskrit language. Sanskrit is the root of all roots. Sanskrit is the language of the whole world. And you will see that some day when Hindi becomes the official and national language, Sanskrit will become the language of the world.

Now, today because we are nationally minded, therefore I say that Hindi is the national language. You say, Hindi is the official language, but I say it is the national language. You are mistaken when you say that it is the official language. There was a race among the languages and Hindi has run the race and you cannot now stop its career. The amendment I have, moved is that Parliament should decide how long this present Official language—English should last in this country. You are, afraid of the Congress, You are afraid of your future Parliament, and therefore in framing this resolution, you have put in commissions and committees. I may tell you all that these Seigfried line and Maginot line will be of no avail when the members come to the Central Assembly after two or three years. They will say that Hindi will be the language of the country. That I have decided.

**An Honourable Member** : But your decision is not binding upon us.

**Shri R. V. Dhulekar** : I have already sent in my amendment to the that all these commissions and committees should be brushed away, for however much you may wish to erect a barricade so strong that the surging tide of the Indian nation will not be able to defeat it, or to surmount it, I say that you will all fail and by putting in the clause about commissions and committees, you will be sowing the seeds of dissensions and....

**Mr. President** : I would ask the honourable Member not to go into that question, but to confine himself to the merits of his case. I do not think you are advancing your own case by speaking like this.

**Shri R. V. Dhulekar** : I say, Sir, that you are creating from the very first day, 'a cause of action,' for Parliament, to decide that these commissions and committees should go.

When we take into consideration the long history of the growth of this national language you will see that it is not on this ground alone that I am going to oppose that the official language of the country should not continue for fifteen years. I feel that the lease of another fifteen years will not be in the national interest. My friends ask me, "What will you do if English is not adopted as the official language ?" I will most calmly and with folded hands

request you to consider the position, and I will say that you do not know the heart of the country. English language is not the language of the brave people. It is not the language of scientists at all. There is no word of science that the English language can claim to be its own—neither can it claim its own numerals. You say, let this. English language remain as the official language in this country for another fifteen years. I shudder at the very idea of it at the very idea that our universities and our schools and our colleges and our scientists, that all of them should, even after the attainment of Swaraj, have to continue to work in the English language. What will other people say ? What will the host of Lord Mecauly say ? He will certainly laugh at us and say, “Old Johnnie Walker is still going strong” and he will say, “The Indians are so enamoured of the English language that they are going to keep it for another fifteen years.” And some here say, it will remain for twenty years. and some say, for fifty years and there are still others who say, they do not know for how long it should remain as our official language.

I would like to put a straight question to these friends of mine, and it is this. In 1920 or even in 1885 there are some who are older than myself here—what were you thinking should be the language of this land? What should be our language after the attainment of Swaraj ? I would say that those who felt that English should be our official language, they were caught napping. They were caught napping by Swaraj. But when I entered the Congress at the age of 18, I had a clear vision that Swaraj will come. I had a clear vision that we will govern ourselves in a particular way. I had a clear notion about my language. I had a clear notion about my country. And I had a clear notion about my civilisation and I had a clear notion about my culture. If I had no clear notion like that, why should I have served this country from morning till night, since my birth into this country—that is, when I came of age ? I had the notion that my country will have my own language, and my own culture. But today, I hear people asking another fifteen years for English in this country. Have we not had enough of it ? We have had it for the past two hundred years, we have had this slavery of a foreign language. This English language has produced no great men; Even in our slavery we produced great men. Some people may say that on account of the English language we got our freedom, I say, “No”. Only those people joined the freedom’s fight who forgot the English language, and who had extreme hatred for the English language and who knew that the English language was a poison and that it will kill our country. I would with all humility say to Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar, “I do not understand your language. And you do not understand my language. You did not know the language of the country for the last 40 years, and so you will not understand my language today”.

And so. Sir, I confess I do not understand your language today and I will not understand your language tomorrow also. You put in a plea for the English language. You, Sir, all along were thinking that Swaraj will not come and so my friends there, were all along, working in English language. While we small people gave up our roaring practices, the other people had their roaring practices with the English language. We also can have a roaring practice today if I go to the Federal Court. But we are wedded to poverty; we are wedded to the freedom of our country, to the freedom of our country from bondage and from the bondage of a foreign language. But here you say, postpone the change for fifteen years. Then I ask, when are you going to read the Vedas and the Upanishads ? When are you going, to read the Ramayan and the Mahabharata and when are you going to read your Lilavati and other mathematical works ? When are you going to read your Tantrams ? After fifteen years ? You may say so. because you people believe in the saying. “After me the deluge. Let us impose upon this country, this beloved country the English language as the official language.” My friends say we cannot learn the Hindi language and much less the numerals. Then I ask you , what is your official language

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in the eyes of the outside world ? I am not in the confidence of the Government of India, but I am informed that when in Russia our Ambassador submitted the credentials in the English language, that country refused to receive it. They said you must present the credentials in your own language : and when the credentials were presented in Hindi, then they were accepted. Here is Russia which knows how to honour a country's language and here are our friends who do not know how to honour their's. They feel that I am a stranger in my own country. They say that Dhulekar is talking a language which is not the language of the country. I say, and I claim that I am the only man in this House who can love the Hindi language, the mother's language. I am the only man who can express the Indian thought. (*Interruption*). My friends are largely cut off from the common man in the street. Look at the galleries and see how few people have come here to hear you. That is because they know you have given up the cause of the country, because you have brought out a proposition so wrong and so big that it cannot be understood. You should put your proposition in the fewest number of words. The longer it is the greater the weakness of the Constitution. Why have you tried to hang all sorts of things on its sides and to erect barricades and Maginot lines ? You have done this because in your heart of hearts, you believe that this is not the voice of the country. Let us not surround the Hindi language with Devanagari script, with all tantric figures and . . . . .

**An Honourable Member :** And *Mantras*!

**Shri R. V. Dhulekar :** And *Mantars* so that the future generations in India may not brush it aside. Let me point out in all humility that in spite of these Maginot lines, Hindi will be the language of this land and the Devanagari script and numerals will be the script and numerals for this country. My request is to leave it to Parliament to decide the question. May I ask my friends one question ? Are they afraid of democracy ? Are they afraid of Parliament? Are they afraid of their own sons and grandsons who will be the members of our future Parliaments ? Is that the reason why they do not want to leave this question to be decided by Parliament? It is only the people who are afraid of democracy who put in provisos after provisos for commissions and committees, because they have no faith in democracy. They do not believe that people who are elected on adult suffrage will be able to do the right thing.

Yesterday an appeal was made by my Friend Mr. Hifzur Rahman—I do not know whether he is in the House—yes, there he is—and I would like to give a word in reply. He is very much annoyed, very much perplexed to know why the people of India have forgotten Hindustani and why they have forgotten the Urdu script and the Persian script and all the paraphernalia which goes under the name of Hindusthani. And he made an appeal in the name of Mahatma Gandhi that we should make Hindusthani the official language of the country, writing it both in Persian and Devanagari scripts. I feel he has forgotten history, and I might remind him a little.

For the last thirty-eight years, during the period I have been in the Congress, the history of this appeasement policy or this friendly policy or the Hindusthani business has to be recollected a bit. I may ask in the name of Lokamanya Tilak, in the name of Surrendranath Banerjee, in the name of Mahatma Gandhi, why not have separate electorates also? I may say that except for a few thousands of Muslims, sons of this country, who are still with us except for them, the bulk of the Muslim population was not with us. They did not feel that this country was their. And therefore they wanted to separate. They wanted to have separate electorate. And the Congress knew as far back as 1916—and even before—that they could not fight against the foreign rulers by fighting a triangular fight and therefore .....

**An Honourable Member :** Are you speaking on your amendment? You are alone.

**Shri R. V. Dhulekar :** Yes, I am opposing Hindusthani. And I know you will never be with me.

As I was saying the Congress knew that it could not fight the triangular fight and so it was necessary to exclude the bulk of the Muslim population from the fight. There was a straight fight between the Indians and the English Government and this appeasement policy....

**Mr. President :** I would remind the honourable Member that it is not a Communal question at all. The question of language that we are discussing is not a communal question at all.

**Shri R. V. Dhulekar :** No, Sir. But I know Maulana Rahman and I have experience of U.P. and he has been lecturing there and here also, and I say whatever I heard yesterday it was all on a communal basis. I am going to give him a national interpretation of history. The bulk of the Muslims, barring our friends like Maulana Azad and Kidwai.....

**The Honourable Shri Jawaharlal Nehru (United Provinces: General) :** May I enquire whether all this is relevant?

**Mr. President :** No, I have reminded the Speaker more than once.

**The Honourable Shri Jawaharlal Nehru :** But still he is persisting.

**Mr. President :** I do not think you are really advancing your case.

**Shri. R. V. Dhulekar :** I will not pursue this matter further, Sir. So it was necessary that we should go on with that policy, so that we might fight the British. Now we find that policy was not successful to our woe. We have been through all these things in a friendly way and in a brotherly way; we have suffered and are suffering. Therefore it is with the greatest unhappiness that I have to say that in spite of our honest efforts to solve the problem of this country on a non-communal basis, the result has been that we are suffering still. Hence I wish that my Friend Maulana Hifzur Rahman may take it from me that it is only a reaction to our honest efforts, honest efforts which did not succeed, that the pendulum has gone over to the other side.....

**The Honourable Shri Jawaharlal Nehru :** Hear, hear!

**Shri R. V. Dhulekar :** I am very happy at the thought that I have spoken the mind of my honourable Friend the Prime Minister. Certainly if their efforts had succeeded, whatever they said, or whatever the Father of the Nation said had succeeded, no person could have been happier than myself. Do not conceive for a moment that I am a communal-minded man. When I oppose Hindustani I do so, not on account of my lack of love for those people, but because of my love and affection for them, the honest love that an honest man has for his brethren. Today if you speak for Hindustani, it will not be heard. You will be misrepresented, you will be misunderstood and therefore my honest advice to Maulana Hifzur Rahman is that he should wait for two or three years and he will find that he will have his Urdu language, he will have his Persian script; but today let him not try to oppose this, because our nation, the nation which has undergone so many sufferings is not in a mood to hear him. I have heard him, I appreciate him and I know how he feels. I am myself a Persian scholar and I have read Urdu and I have loved it. I can say that I have written more in Persian and Urdu than my Friend Maulana Hifzur Rahman. I had a clerk for twenty years who was a Muhammadan, all along when there was fight between Hindus and Muslims at Jhansi and other places. So many of my friends came to me and said "You have got a Muslim

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clerk, turn him out." I said "No, he is my brother, he is my own kith and kin and blood of my blood." I believe that all Muslims who are in India and all those who are in Pakistan are my own blood, they are my own brethren. It is because of my abiding faith in my country and in myself that I am in the Congress. The Congress does not belong to Hindus or Muslims, it belongs to all. It may be surprising and strange that a person who claims that Hindi should be the national language of this country should at the same time claim to be a friend of Urdu or Persian. I have the widest sympathies.....

**Mr. President :** It is better the honourable Member concludes. He has been rather not always relevant and the House is not in a mood to listen to him.

**Shri R. V. Dhulekar :** With these words I move my amendments and support the unqualified adoption of Hindi in Devanagari script and Hindi Numerals, for no other language can be the official language of India, not even for a minute.

**Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra** (West Bengal: General): Mr. President, at the very outset I must apologise to you and to the House for my absence from the House when it commenced its sitting and when you were pleased to call me to speak to my amendment. My only explanation for it is that I was engaged so long in a very important committee meeting of the Government of India elsewhere and therefore my absence was not due to any slackness on my part.

Sir, I must confess that I am the sponsor of an amendment which has caused considerable surprise to many an honourable Member of this House and to many people outside. It has been received, if I may say so, with mixed feelings in the country. One set of reports that I have so far received and the shoals of letters and congratulations seem to indicate that I have hit upon a right and honourable course. The other set seems to suggest that I am trying to take India several centuries back by proposing that Sanskrit should be the official and national language of India. Let me tell you 'at once that I am sincerely convinced that if on the attainment of freedom, this country is to have at all anything like an official language which is also to be the national language of the country, it is undoubtedly Sanskrit.

**Some Honourable Members :** No, no.

**Some Honourable Members :** Yes, Yes.

**Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra :** I have no desire to wound the susceptibilities of those who think that Hindi is the be-all and end-all of their existence. I have no quarrel with them.. But let them not make a fetish of it, for that may ultimately defeat their very purpose. If I did not from the very beginning, Mr. President, press on my friends for acceptance of my amendment, that is, my proposal for adoption of Sanskrit as the national and official language of India, it was because of my deep concern for the very serious efforts that were made by several responsible Honourable Members of the House to bring about a sort of an honourable rapprochement between the two important contending sections of opinion in the House. I held back and I refused to side one way or the other because I felt that I could not honestly support either. However, when things reached a stage when we were almost hopeful that an agreed formula for an official language of India was going to be acceptable to both, with sufficient give and take on either side. I felt that I must not bring in my proposal of Sanskrit to upset the apple cart. Unfortunately for us, and may I say for the whole country, the matter took an unhappy turn, as in my humble opinion, for a very small and comparatively unimportant matter the whole agreement had to break. It is regrettable.

Today in this Constituent Assembly we are going to take the most fateful decision, the decision about the official and national language of India. Sir, in the present temper of the House I am really apprehensive that whichever amendment is carried by a majority of the votes—whether Hindi in Devanagari script and with the international form of Indian numerals as proposed in the draft moved by my honourable Friend Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar on behalf of the Drafting Committee, or that moved by the other group, the austere whole-hogger Hindi group with everything Hindi—the defeated Section will be leaving this Assembly with a sense of despair, a sense of frustration born of acute bitterness that has been generated in the course of the debates on this question for weeks on end. I have therefore come forward, knowing full well that it is temerity on my part, to ask the House to accept, as the national language of India, Sanskrit and not any other language.’ Sir, my amendments in brief seek to replace Hindi by Sanskrit with all consequential changes in the draft moved by my honourable Friend Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar. Besides that.....

**Pandit Balkrishna Sharma** (United Provinces : General) : Numerals also in Sanskrit?

**Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra** : I am coming to that.

Besides that, I have got another substantial amendment, namely the addition of Sanskrit in the list of the languages of the Union. It is surprising that before my amendment was tabled, none even considered the desirability of recognising Sanskrit as one of the languages of India. That is the depth to which we have fallen. I make absolutely no apology for asking you seriously to accept Sanskrit. Who is there in this country who will deny that Sanskrit is the language of India? I am surprised that an argument was trotted out that it is not an Indian language, that it is an international language. , Yes, it is an international or rather a world language in the sense that its importance, its wealth, its position, its grandeur have made it transcend the frontiers of India and travel far beyond India, and it is because of the Sanskrit language and all the rich heritage of Indian culture that is enshrined in it that outside India we are held in deep esteem by all countries. Is there any soul in this House who can challenge this proposition ? Is India admired and respected all the world over for her geographical size or for the multitude of her population? Our land has been characterised by uncharitable foreigners as a country hopelessly heterogenous and bewilderingly polyglot. Yet, notwithstanding all that, they have earnestly sought for the message of the East which lies enshrined in the Sanskrit language.

**Shri H. V. Kamath** (C. P. & Berar: General) : On a point of information, Sir, may I know whether this language is called Sanskrit or Samskrit (संस्कृत)!

**Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra** : I am deeply grateful to my honourable friend Mr. Kamath for this *debut* in humour; as a piece of honour it is all right.

**Shri H. V. Kamath** : It is not humour; I did not intend it as such.

**Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra** : When I am talking in English I think it is natural that I should use the English pronunciation.

Sir, Sanskrit has the oldest and the most respectable pedigree of all the language in the world. I have got here a collection of opinions of some of the biggest orientalists that the world has ever produced; the consensus of opinion of men like Professor Maxmuller, Keith, Taylor, Sir William Hunter, Sir William Golebuk, Seleigman, Schopenhauer, Goether, not to speak of numerous other people like Macdonell and Dubois. All have accorded to Sanskrit the highest place, not to please us, because when these opinions were expressed

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we were a subject race under a foreign power on whose behalf adverse propaganda was conducted against us by personages like Miss Mayo whose '*Mother India*' was characterised by Mahatma Gandhi of hallowed memory as a "drain inspector's report". Notwithstanding all such adverse propaganda carried on against India by the interested agencies in foreign countries, the world came to know the real India, gradually through these great orientalists who had devoted their lives to the study of the Sanskrit language and literature and all that is contained in it. These great servants unhesitatingly declared that Sanskrit was "the oldest and the richest language of the world," "the one language of the world," "the mother of all languages of the world."

If today India has got an opportunity after thousand years to shape her own destiny, I ask in all seriousness if she is going to feel ashamed to recognise the Sanskrit language—the revered grandmother of languages of the world, still alive with full vigour, full vitality? Are we going to deny here her rightful place in Free India? That is a question which I solemnly ask. I know it will be said that it is a dead language. Yes. Dead to whom? Dead to you, because you have become dead to all sense of grandeur, you have become dead to all which is great and noble in your own culture and civilisation. You have been chasing the shadow and have never tried to grasp the substance which is contained in your great literature. If Sanskrit is dead, may I say that Sanskrit is ruling us from her grave? Nobody can get away from Sanskrit in India. Even in your proposal to make Hindi the State language of this country, you yourself provide in the very article that the language will have to draw its vocabulary freely from the Sanskrit language. You have given that indirect recognition to Sanskrit because you are otherwise helpless and powerless.

But I submit that it is not a dead language at all. Wherever I have travelled, if I have not been able to make myself understood in any other language, I have been able to make myself understood in Sanskrit. Two decades ago, when I was in Madras, in some of the big temples at Madura, Rameshwaram, Tirupati, I could not make myself understood in English or in any other language, but the moment I started talking in Sanskrit, I found that these people could well understand me and exchange their views. I came away with the impression that at least in Madras there was the glow of culture of Sanskrit. Notwithstanding their inordinate passion—which is only natura—for their regional languages—Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada—the Southerners did study Sanskrit on a fairly wide scale.

Our idea of Sanskrit has been very crude. We seem to think that Sanskrit is only composed of big, bombastic phrases, grandiloquent phraseology, several feet long, that it has only one style like that of Bana's *Kadambari*, or of *Horshacharita* or *Dashakumar Charitam*. But may I submit to you what was, with some amount of self-conceit, said by an eminent poet,

Sahitya Sukumarabastuni :—

*Drihira-nava-graha-granthila*  
*Tarka ba Moyu Sangbidhatari*  
*Samang Lilayata Bharati.*

You think that I cannot compose simple yet forceful pieces in plain Sanskrit? Whether it is a soft, delicate matter like poetical literature or whether it is learned discourses in abstruse subjects like philosophy and dialectic, when I am composing it I can handle the language for either purposes with equal ease. Sanskrit is such a language that it can be used either for very serious subjects as philosophy, science and also for light literature, it is an easy vehicle of expression for all shades of thought. I am sure that those who know Sanskrit, will endorse every single word of what the great poet uttered some centuries ago.



**An Honourable Member :** Will you please speak in Sanskrit, so that it may be understood by all of us ?

**Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra :** I am not here to parade my knowledge of Sanskrit. I am not going to commit the blunder of some of my friends, who, in their zeal,—despite the request of others to speak in English so that they might be understood by everybody, persisted in the language of their bobby. I am not going to do that. I want to make myself understood by every single honourable Member in this House. If I can speak Sanskrit, I do not claim any special credit for it. I ought to be able to speak in it; and if I cannot speak, I ought to be ashamed of my culture and education. Therefore, you do not try to put me up as piece of curio here. When I am pleading for Sanskrit, let there be no derisive merriment anywhere in the House. Let me ask every honourable Member of this House, irrespective of the province he comes from, “Does he disown his grandmother ?”

Sir, we are proud of the great provincial languages of this country—Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada and others. They constitute a variety of wealth of Indian culture and civilisation. This is not a province’s property. It is all our national property. But all these languages derive their origin from Sanskrit. That is the parent language and even in the case of the languages in the South, they have taken a large number of Sanskrit words to enrich their language. Therefore, I submit that if we could set our hearts on it, we could develop a simple, vigorous, chaste, sweet style of Sanskrit for the general purposes of our life.

I do not suggest that from here and now every one of us would be able to talk Sanskrit. My amendment is not like that. What I have proposed in my amendment is, that for a period of fifteen years English will continue to be used as the official language for the State Purposes for which it was being used before the commencement of the Constitution. At the end of fifteen years, Sanskrit will progressively replace English. That is all my amendment purposes.

Let me tell you that in every province, in every University we have got arrangements for teaching of the Sanskrit language. Men like me, who tried to introduce Hindi in anticipation of its being adopted as the State language of this country, experienced a tremendous amount of difficulty in getting Hindi teachers—at least in Bengal. You will be surprised to know that. That is a problem. If you want to coach up thousands and thousands of your young men in Hindi, you want teachers for that; you want literature for that, you ought to have elaborate printing machinery, books, texts, primers, teachers and all the rest of it. That would be a very great handicap; and, in spite of all that the Central Government and provincial governments might do, this problem cannot be easily solved. And mind you anybody from the Hindi speaking areas would pose as a great Hindi scholar. I have got them tested and found them no good. If on the other hand, you have Sanskrit as the official language, every University has got Sanskrit as a compulsory subject up to a certain standard and as an optional subject after that stage. There will be therefore absolutely no difficulty on the score of teaching or learning Sanskrit.

**Shri B. N. Munavalli (Bombay States) :** The same difficulty will be felt.

**Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra :** I know that in the case of Mr. Munavalli at his age—I hope he will not be offended when I say that he is aged—it may be difficult to learn a new language. But if Mr. Munavalli thinks that he can more easily master Hindi, than Sanskrit, I have no quarrel. Let him have it.

What I am pleading is that I have noticed a deep feeling of jealousy—pro-

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ing. I do not justify it, but I realize that feeling. Many people, have been led to think, “of all, languages. why should Hindi be set up as the national language? It is after all a provincial language”. Nobody can deny that it is a provincial language. You are lifting a provincial language to the status of a national language. You cannot deny that. There is a vast amount of truth in that. Who will deny that languages like Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, Gujarati, Malayalam, Marathi, Kannada have got very rich literature of which they can legitimately feel proud ?

Yet Non-Hindi speaking members are not claiming their own provincial languages for recognition as the official languages of India. Do you realise the spirit of sacrifice that lies behind it? I have never pleaded that Bengalee shall be the State language of this country. I have never suggested it, though I feel that I have a very rich language and literature made richer by our Poet Laureate Rabindranath Tagore and given an international reputation. I felt that in the larger interests of the Union, we must evolve a language, be it Hindi which by our joint co-operative effort might be built up for the use of the whole country.

But, having gone a considerable way, we stood still at a certain stage. I personally feel that it was regrettable and unfortunate. Some of my friends have criticised, me saying: ‘Having swallowed a camel why do you strain at a gnat?’ They ask, why, having agreed to Hindi script, I am objecting to the Hindi numerals ? Now, do you seriously suggest that Indian freedom will not be worth having, will not be worth its name, if it is not cent per cent. Hindi in everything? Does anyone put this forward as a serious proposition? If so, why should they not have the sense of humour to realise that this very argument can be used by people on the other side in favour of adoption of their own languages ? Sir on this question there was a close tie. The Honourable Govind Ballabh Pant on one occasion made a magnificent speech. He said : ‘We are not going to impose this language on the non-Hindi people’. That was a statement worthy of the Premier of the biggest province in India. But unfortunately that province and not mine has now become the problem province in this matter. This language trouble started there. The controversy about Urdu and Hindi and Hindi language with Nagari numerals started there till it reached, a stage when both sides sat down to settle their differences. When we could not achieve a measure of success in our endeavours notwithstanding the appeals made by speaker after speaker for an agreement, the Premier of the U.P. declared : “No, no. We are not going to impose Hindi on you. We must have an agreed formula.” Now, if this is not imposition, Hindi language in Devanagari Script with Hindi numerals—what else is imposition, tell, me ? If you say that there will be absolutely no imposition of Hindi but voluntary acceptance by all, and at the same time insist on cent per cent acceptance of Hindi demands. is it not a demand for our voluntary surrender? Be frank about your proposition. But, this is not the way in which an issue like that of language can be solved. Language means the very life-blood of a nation. It cannot be, lightly trifled with. I do not believe in producing a language under a made-to-order procedure or by the fixing of a date-line and all that. It is a, living organism which grows and thrives.

Now if you want to have a language for the whole of India. What language has the largest claim? Certainly from the point of view of democracy from the point of view of the largest number of people speaking or understanding it, probably Hindi, which is spoken by about 14 crores of people. has the strongest claim. Hindi has, however, a bewildering variety of dialects. People from U.P. have told ‘me that if Hindi is accented as the State language the population of the western United Provinces would have to learn it afresh, because they

do not know that language. Yet when the claim is made on the basis of statistics of 1931 that Hindi is the one language spoken by the largest number of people, according to the Common notions of democracy it may be all right But in settling language questions, mere theory of democracy must not prevail. If a language is spoken by a very large section in the land, it does not necessarily mean that it is the language of the majority.

In this connection I will give you an illustration which will show the extent to which passions can be roused on the question of language. I shall refer you to what happened last year in Eastern Pakistan. After the partition of Bengal, the Founder of Pakistan issued a fiat that for the whole of Pakistan, Urdu should be the State language. Do you know what was the reaction in East Bengal to this fiat ? The Bengalee Muslims of East Pakistan got very much agitated over this imposition of Urdu on them, and asked. "Are you going to destroy our Bengalee language ? We whole heartedly supported you in your effort to create the Islamic State of Pakistan. Dare you now touch our language?" Demonstrations started all over Eastern Pakistan and there were the usual counter measures such as tear-gas attacks, lathi charges etc. Pakistan authorities raised the scare that it was the Hindu fifth column that was responsible for that agitation. But at once the Muslim intelligentsia and their educational and cultural associations came forward and said that it was all bunkum. They said " you are trying to throttle the language of Rabindranath Tagore. We are not going to tolerate it." People were lathi-charged, imprisoned for rising in revolt on the question of language. At a gathering of students and professors in Dacca, the moment Mr. Jinnah advised people to take to Urdu in Arabic script as the language, of the newly created Islamic state, there were cries of 'No, no'. As he proceeded, these cries rose louder and louder which could not be silenced. These things were not reported in the Press. After seven days' futile efforts, Mr. Jinnah had to retrace his steps to Karachi. Thereafter a communique was issued to the effect that Bengalee would continue to be the State language of Eastern Pakistan. The Bengalee speaking Muslims of Pakistan made it a condition precedent to their acceptance of Urdu in Arabic script, that Mr. Jinnah would make Bengalee also a State language in Central Pakistan. They said that they would go to Karachi to see that in every place there, side by side with Urdu there was also Bengalee used before they accepted Urdu also for Eastern Pakistan. So when there was this counter blast by the Muslims of Eastern Pakistan, the authorities came to their senses. Next the authorities said that they would have Bengali in the Roman script. This was not tried. Recently they have proposed to make an experiment with Bengali in Arabic script in certain selected places. But such efforts are bound to fail.

I submit that language is such a vital thing that if by mere votes or fiats you decide it, it will sink deep into the hearts of those who do not voluntarily accept it. They will go with sore and lacerated feelings, which will ultimately break all asunder. Sir, I am not a pessimist—but I feel that in the absence of an agreement our passions are bound to be aroused on any decision on this issue of language. I heard the cold calculated speech of my honourable Friend, Shri Gopalaswamy Ayyangar. In it there was an undertone of depression but there was also a note of firmness that he was prepared to go thus far and no farther. When he was making his speech, I interposed an observation—

"Sir, is it your idea that we will have to take the whole draft as it is or we can take out parts?"

He said, "No, no; it must be taken as an integrated whole". His idea is and I think it is the right idea—that this whole chapter of linguistic provisions must stand or fall together; that does not mean that small minor changes cannot be made here and there: but it will be absolutely unacceptable to us if simply

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the first part for instance, viz., “Hindi in Devanagari script” is carried and the rest thrown out. The acceptance of Hindi is conditional on the rest of the provisions being accepted. (*Hear, hear*)

I am making my position absolutely clear. Now, Sir, it is my firm conviction that if we want to avoid the provincial jealousies and acrimonious feelings which are bound to follow the enforcement of a provincial language or the raising of it to the status of a national language—we must adopt Sanskrit which is the mother of all languages, a language, which can be learnt in my humble opinion in fifteen years by intensified effort, for which the necessary facilities and the arrangements, are already in existence in the country. Perhaps it would seem impossible to enforce it now—within 15 years, within the present generation it may not be possible; though those of you who know it might develop its use. But the coming generation can learn it and use it for all purposes.

Meanwhile I do not want to bring in inefficiency in the administration of the country. Therefore I want that for these fifteen years English should continue as the official language of the country. I know that when I was making a similar speech in another place, I was severely criticised. A friend of mine from the Hindi-speaking area, told me, “Look here, Maitra, you are passionately pleading for English for the next fifteen years. What is your idea ? Are you waiting for the time when the British would come back ?” I told him that we had our grouse against the Britishers, against the British domination of our country but not against the English language and culture as such. When the Britishers first came to this country, in the last century, English was not understood. People knew not a syllable of it. A story goes that A Bengali babu serving in an English mercantile firm in those days went to his boss and said, “Sir, today is the “Rath Yatra” (car festival). “Leave, Sir, Leave”. “What rath ?”, the boss asked. With his knowledge of English the Babu could not explain what “rath” was. He said, “Church” “Church” “wooden Church Sir” “Jagannath sitting”, “rope and pull,” Sir. The poor European was dumbfounded. This was the earliest stage of English knowledge but soon after, people like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Keshab Chander Sen, Bankim Chandra, Ramesh Dutt and others mastered the English language. Then, within a few years magnificent poetry and prose were produced in the English language by poets like Kumari, Toru Dutt, Michael Madhu Sudan Datta and others whose poetry compares favourably with the finest lyrical poetry in the English literature. So in the beginning there may be difficulty but if you apply your mind, you will learn Sanskrit in no time. Meanwhile for international commerce, higher and scientific education, Judiciary etc. English has to be used in India.

Sir, I am a lover of the English language and literature in as much as it is the one priceless thing that we have acquired in all our humiliation, miseries and sufferings during the English rule. My honourable Friend, Shri Gopalaswamy Ayyangar, was referring to it as the instrument with which we got our freedom. I found derisive laughter was going round at this observation of his. But is it seriously proposed that the English language should be completely banished from this land and not allowed to play any part in our future lives ? If today, Mr. Krishnamachari or Maulana Abul Kalam Azad or Pandit Balkrishna Sharma and myself have to talk together, not in the English language but in our own tongues, it will be a veritable babel. It is out of such babel that the English language has drawn us together. And if any attempt is made now to banish the English language from this country. India will lapse into barbarism. We must have an international language and English is a language which is spoken by sixty crores of people. English is not now the property of the English people alone. It is their property and mine. There is a brilliant chapter

in the book written by one of the Viceroy's, called "Babu's English". The Britishers know the profundity of the knowledge of English that Indians possess; they know the clarity and precision with which the Indian people speak the language. This has been our reputation. In my experience extending over a decade and a half in high British circles, I have seen how the European members of the Legislative Assembly of old days had often wondered at our mastery of the English language. They often remarked, "We wonder how you people in the Legislative Assembly immediately after you listen to 'the speech of the Home Member or the Railway Member, stand up and criticise. We cannot do it. We must have enormous time to Prepare for it.'" So, we had beat them in their own field. English language has opened to us the vast store house of knowledge and wisdom of the world accumulated throughout the ages. We cannot afford to close its doors now. While English win be there, you will also develop Hindi, or for the matter of that every provincial language. Give every regional language of India free scope to develop according to its own genius, to be enriched by accretion of accession from other languages. If you want to do that, you must have Sanskrit as the national language.

What is being done in Israel? Now that the Jews got their freedom, they have installed Hebrew as the official language of their State. They wanted to show respect to their language, their culture, their civilisation, and their heritage. What I am asking, Mr. President, through my amendment is that we should revive our ancient glories through the study of Sanskrit. We should give our message to the West. The West is steeped in materialistic civilisation. The Message of the Gita, the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Tantras, the Charaka and Susrutha etc., will have to be disseminated to the West. It is thus and thus alone that we may be able to command the respect of the world;—not by our political debates, nor by our scientific discoveries which, compared with their achievements, are nothing. The West looks to you to give them guidance in this war-torn world where morals are shattered and religious and spiritual life have gone to shambles.

It is in these circumstances, it is in these conditions that the world looks to you for a message. What kind of message are you going to send to foreign countries through your Embassies ? They do not know who your national poets are, your language, your literature, or the subjects in which your forefathers excelled.

I was surprised to see that in the matter of the numerals, very few people knew what magnificent contributions India had made to the world not only in regard to the numerals, but in algebra, in mathematical notation, the decimal system, trigonometry and all the rest of it. All these were India's contributions to the world. It was given to our illustrious friend from Madras—I am referring to the Chairman of the University Commission—and our present Ambassador to Moscow, whom the late revered father of our Industries and Supply Minister, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, picked up from the South and gave him the fullest facilities at the Calcutta University—to bring out the treasures of Indian Philosophy for the benefit of the outside world. If you do not know that language, the language which you have inherited from your forefathers, that language in which our culture is enshrined, I do not see, what contribution you are going to make to the world.

I want to know whether my appeal evokes any response in the hearts of my friends from the north or the south. You should have the highest respect for Sanskrit, the language of your forefathers. Is it not the proper thing for you to do in deference to them, when you have got today the chance of shaping the future generations ? Let us bury our hatchets and cheerfully accept Sanskrit as the National and official language of free India. I honestly believe that if we accept Sanskrit, all these troubles, all these jealousies, all this bitterness

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will vanish with all the psychological complex that has been created. There may be, of course, a feeling of difficulty; but, certainly, there will not be the least feeling of domination or suppression of this or that. It is in that belief that I earnestly appeal to you in the name of that great culture and civilisation of which we are all proud, in the name of the great Rishis who gave that language to us, to support this amendment; for once, let the world know that we also know to respect the rich heritage of our spiritual culture.

**Mr. President :** I have been thinking of calling upon some one who has given notice of an amendment which is of a fundamental character. When he has finished, then, we can take up the other things. Mr. Anthony has given notice of an amendment to substitute the Roman script for any other script. I think that is more or less of a fundamental character.

**Mr. Frank Anthony (C.P. & Berar: General):** Mr. President, Sir, I have given notice of two amendments. These amendments appear in the eighth list and are numbers 338 and 347. The first amendment reads :

“That in amendment No. 65 of Fourth List, in clause (1) of the proposed new article 301-A, for the words ‘Devanagari script’ the words ‘the Roman script’ be substituted.”

My second amendment is :

“That in amendment No. 65 of Fourth List, after the existing proviso to the proposed new article 301-C, the following proviso be added :—

“Provided that no change shall be made in the medium of instruction of any State University or in the language officially recognized in the law courts of a province or state without the previous sanction of Parliament.”

Sir, in giving notice of these two amendments. I have sought to make my approach a highly objective one. The conclusions which I have reached are my own conclusions, but they are based, I believe, on a sense of realism and I believe also in the Principle of the greatest good to the largest number of people in this country.

Sir, in speaking on this subject, which, unfortunately, has become so highly controversial, may I at the outset, claim that I have no axe to grind ? I have been fortunate in that I come from Jubbulpore a Hindi speaking area. I have also been fortunate in that from an early age. I have learnt Hindi in the Devanagari script. More than that, I have had to earn my living essentially through the medium of Hindi. The cross-examination of witnesses in criminal cases is generally done in the Central Provinces through the medium of Hindi. Arguments in scores of murder cases before assessors who are not conversant with English have usually to be done through the medium of Hindi.

May I say also, at the very outset, that I accept this premise entirely, that if India is to achieve real unity, a real sense of Indian nationality, then every one of us must accept this premise that we must have a national language, English is my mother tongue. Because I am an Indian, because English is my mother tongue. I maintain that English is an Indian language. The honourable Member who has preceded me has just mentioned that English is not the prerogative or the monopoly of the Englishman. It has become the mother tongue, and assimilated to or has become part of the people in different parts of the world. Although English is my mother tongue and though I claim English as an Indian language, I realise that English cannot, for many reasons, be the national language of this country.

At the same time, I am bound to say with regret that I cannot understand the almost malicious and vindictive attitude towards English. As my honourable Friend Pandit Maitra has pointed out, understandably rightly, in the political field there may have been a sense of bitterness, a sense of resentment

against the Britisher. But do not let us get confused and muddled-headed in our thinking, do not let our resentment against the British be imported into our attitude towards the English language. As he has said, the English language is one of the few good things that the British incidentally, perhaps unthinkingly, gave to this Country, and so opened up a treasure house of literature, thought and culture which a knowledge of the English language has given to the Indian people. I cannot understand this attitude of bitterness against English, wanting to efface it, and thereby to do a deliberate disservice to our people. After all, a knowledge of English which our people have acquired over a period of 200 years is one of the greatest assets which India possesses in the international field. I say this without qualification that India's claim, India's acceptance of leadership in the international field is due largely, if not entirely, to the capacity of our representatives abroad to hold their own, more than hold their own in speaking English in international forums.

Sir, at one time, there was no doubt in my mind as to what should be the national language. Before this unfortunate controversy was precipitated, I took it as axiomatic that Hindi would be the national language in this country. At that time, I say, I had no particular predilection as regards the script. I have been fortunate in that I know the Devanagari script. It is one of the simplest scripts in the world. At that time, before this unfortunate controversy was started, I would have, without qualification, accepted Hindi in the Devanagari script as the national language. But, today, I have moved away from that. I say without offence that those friends of ours who have been ardent, if not fanatical, protagonists of Hindi have done the cause of Hindi greater disservice than any one else. By their intransigence, by their intolerance,—they may not recongnise it as such, but the other non-Hindi speaking people have interpreted their actions and speeches and their attitude as fanatical intolerance,—they have created, whether they like it or not, an attitude or resentment, an attitude of resistance to what should have naturally been accepted as the national language of this country. Sir, I feel that because of the unfortunate heat and intolerance which has been imported into a subject of such a vital importance, it has become necessary to define the content and extent of Hindi. I come from a Hindi speaking province. Before this controversy started, we accepted Hindi as understood, not by a person who claims to be a person endowed with literary polish, but as understood by the man in the street, by a literate Hindi speaking Person, we understood Hindi to have a certain content. What do we find today? In this spirit of intransigence, in a spirit of fanatical zealotry, there is a process of a purge which has become current and unless we define it, my own feeling is that in this present fanatical movement a new kind of Hindi which is unintelligible to the Hindi speaking Hindu in the street a new kind of Hindi which is unfamiliar to the people, a highly sanskritised Hindi will be imposed. There seems to be some kind of a vendetta against languages which have a non-Sanskrit or a non-Hindi origin. There seems to be almost a sense of hatred against using the commonest language. Today the word 'Subera' is not used as it may have some Urdu origin but our friends use 'Prath Kal'. I talk to my servant about 'Prath Kal' he does not understand what I am saying. A student told me that an axiom which is taught to him regularly is,

हिन्दी के विरुद्ध भाषण देने से साम्प्रदायिक भावना उत्पन्न होती है।

This is the type of Hindi that we are seeking to impose on our people. Even if you take the Constitution in Hindi how many of your Hindi-speaking Hindus can understand it. I attempt to read our so-called Hindi translation but I do not understand one word in four sentences. I take tip my various dictionaries and these unfamiliar words do not even appear in the dictionaries. How do you expect me to acquire this new form of Hindi overnight ? Therefore I feel that it is necessary that we should define it.

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After all if we allow these precipitate, intolerant motives to inspire our national language at this stage, it will mean that terrible, unnecessary and avoidable hardship will be done to Hindi Speaking Hindus. When I go home to Jubbulpore students come and complain to me—Hindi speaking Hindu boys :

“As a result of the Precipitate policy adopted by the Nagpur University, our careers are being ruined. We were first class up to Matriculation standard. Certainly we speak Hindi in our homes but we have not achieved the necessary standard to take a first class degree. Overnight the Nagpur University have introduced Hindi.”

If it is operating so harshly against the Hindi speaking Hindus, what is the position of linguistic minorities in C.P. ? Overnight you are rendering them illiterate. Yet you pay lip service to the ideals of secular democracy, you talk of equality of opportunities on the one side and on the other hand you implement precipitate policies which are the negation of the principle of equality of opportunity.

Sir, I am sorry to have to speak with such fervour on this particular subject but I do feel very strongly about it. As I have said, I have no axe to grind but my friends—I do not question their motives—I believe they are sincere and fervent but let me appeal to them—their sincerity is being misconstrued by those who do not see eye to eye with them. They feel that at the bottom of this intransigence and intolerance is an ill-conceived communal motives—whether they are directed with that purpose or not—to make all the ideals of a Secular State still-born. I cannot understand it. What are you afraid of ? Some of you have not forgotten the slave mentality of the past 200 years. As my Friend Pandit Maitra has said language is a living, dynamic thing. You cannot put it in a straight-jacket. You cannot artificially prescribe the process by which language will grow, and will be inspired. What are we seeking to do ? You seem to be motivated by a fear that the Hindus are so emasculated that they will repudiate their own culture, they will repudiate their own language; and to prevent the Hindus from repudiating their culture in evolving their own language you must therefore put in a rigid formula. I cannot understand it. Who are you afraid of ? Who is going to take away your Hindi in its inevitable and natural growth to its full stature as the National language. Sir, I cannot help feeling that this attitude is analogous to an attitude where some Britishers wake up some morning; for some reason their memories are carried back to the bitternesses of the Roman invasion and they start a movement that all words of Latin origin should be expurgated from English! There is nothing different from a movement, to expurgate words of Latin origin from English—between that movement and the movement to purge Hindi of every word however assimilated it may have become to Hindi which has either in urdu or a persian origin.

I am not holding any brief for my Muslim friends, I never held any brief for them or for the politics of the Muslim League, but I do say that a language grows by natural processes and my friends there cannot cut across or retard by one iota the natural processes. Hindi will assimilate words whether you like it or not, in spite of you—perhaps because of you—from all kinds of languages! And I regret that for some reason—it is not a logical reason, at any rate to my mind not a rational reason—you have excluded English from the list of languages from which Hindi can draw. What possible rational reason except that you were inspired again by a sense of hatred against the Britisher ? After all today if you talk to any well informed Hindu, he will use numerous English words which have become almost part and parcel of the Hindi language. And yet for no good reason at all except a fanatical and unreasonable reason, if I may call it, you have sought arbitrarily to remove English from its place in the fourteen languages on which Hindi can draw.



I have given this amendment of Hindi in the Roman Script because I feel that looking at it objectively, if we look at it also in the larger interests of the country, we should accept it. I know that in the present temper of the country, in the present mood of the House, as a concession to sentiment and reaction and retrogressive forces, we will not adopt it. But what is there—I say it without offence—sacred in a script. Some people go about saying that this script is sacred and indulge in all kinds of hyperbole and extravaganza. If the Devanagari script is sacred to the Hindi-speaking Hindus, how can you introduce uniformity throughout India and ask other people whose mother-tongues are represented by provincial languages, to give up their script, and take to the Devanagari script.

I feel that if we do not lack courage and do not lack vision, then we will accept Hindi in the Roman Script as the national language. After all there are many reasons why it should be considered and considered favourably. Two million jawans, in the process of three or four years, during the war were made literate in Hindi through the medium of the Roman script. If we adopted the Roman script, we would strike a mighty and a decisive blow in the cause of Indian unity and national integration. I believe if we accepted the Roman script in Hindi then there would be no difficulty at all in any of the provincial language also accepting the Roman script. Immediately you would strike a blow in the cause of inter-provincial social, cultural and linguistic intercourse.

But as I say, it requires courage and vision. It requires the need to resist sentiment and reactionary forces. I do not know whether this will be done, I feel—here my friend Shankarrao Deo will not agree with me—up to a point I endorse what he said but I feel we are making undue concessions to regionalism. I know how strongly the people in the different provinces feel about their respective mother-tongue. It is inevitable. It is natural that Tamil, Telugu, Bengali and Gujarati will grow rich and to their full stature, but I can't help feeling—it is a little natural—that we mouth the slogans of Indian nationality and our sense of Indian nationality upto a point where it suits us. But when we come to a point where it does not suit us, then we argue in favour of a policy which I feel, if allowed to grow, will inevitably balkanize this country.

Only a person who is deliberately dishonest will argue that a boy who has had his primary, secondary and University education through the medium of Bengali will ever pay the slightest regard to Hindi. If we are really interested in a national language, let us all suffer an abatement of our respective vested interests. Let Madrasis, Bengalis and Gujaratis all in the cause of national integration and Hindi deliberately suffer an abatement. That is why I have moved this particular amendment. I say that the change in the medium of instruction of the Universities should not be made except with the previous sanction of Parliament and that the change in the official language or languages of the law courts should not be made except with the previous sanction of Parliament. I have moved this amendment advisedly.

I now come to the law courts. You have merely provided for the High Courts. What about the other courts? What is to happen if tomorrow a particular provincial or state language is enforced, as it is bound to be in certain provinces, overnight? What is going to happen to the Madras sessions judges for instance in the C.P.? Are you going to ask these men to write up profound judgments enunciating nuances of legal interpretation in Hindi? It, is fantastic. They will have to be interpreted and translated into English so that the High Courts will be able to sit in judgment on those translated judgments. In the process of interpretation those judgments will lose a good deal of their strength and cohesion. If my second amendment is accepted, it will ensure that we will change over in every province by a process of evolution and natural

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transition. It will ensure that the national language will take its rightful and proper place in every sphere not only at the Centre but in the provinces as well.

**Shri Deshbandhu Gupta (Delhi)** : May I know whether it is not a fact that now-a-days in the United Provinces and Bihar, judgments are given by the lower courts in Urdu and they are translated for the purposes of the High Court in English.

**Mr. Frank Anthony** : I am not aware of that.

**Shri Deshbandhu Gupta** : Now, of course, Hindi is the language, but up till now in the United Provinces, Bihar and Punjab, judgments of the lower courts were given in Urdu.

**Mr. Frank Anthony** : I know of Bihar; in many cases that I have argued in that province, particularly before Sessions courts English is used.

**Shri Deshbandhu Gupta** : I mean documents are translated for the purpose of the Sessions courts.

**Mr. Frank Anthony** : As I say for a number of years certain ancillary work in all courts has been done through the medium of the local or provincial language. The accused is always examined in his mother tongue. Certain documents are always kept in Hindi. I am talking about the more fundamental work that even the lower courts are required to perform for instance, the writing of a judgment by a sessions court. I feel that if a change has to be made it should not be made at this stage. The change can be made later on when we can be sure that our judges have the capacity and knowledge to be able to write in Hindi with the same finesse, with the same analytical precision and with the same strength of a language as they do at present in English.

Sir, I feel that I have made out what I regard as a not unreasonable case both for the consideration of Hindi in the Roman script being adopted as the national language and also that no change should be made in the medium of instruction of any University or in the language or languages of any courts in any province without the previous sanction of Parliament. Sir, I move.

**Mr. President** : I am finding great difficulty in selecting the speakers. We have got many amendments—I have counted that the movers of amendments number sixty or more. If I counted the names attached to particular amendments, probably the number will go to more than hundred. Now, in these circumstances it becomes very difficult for me to select speakers. So far I have adopted the procedure of selecting speakers whose amendments are more or less of a fundamental character. But this process will soon come to an end and then I shall be at sea as to what to do. Every Member who has given notice of an amendment thinks that his amendment must be supported and he must get a chance. Others who have taken the trouble of not giving any amendments think that they should also get a chance. As between these two classes the whole House is exhausted. I want the guidance of the House in a matter like this.

**Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru (United Provinces: General)** : It only means that the discussion should go on a little longer than you intended at first.

**Shri Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar (Madras : General)** : I suggest, Sir, your electing representative speakers from each of the provinces. we have got two sets of people, the Hindi speaking and the non-Hindi speaking Provinces. The point of view of the one does not tally with the point of view of the other. We might at some stage come to an agreement and I hope it will be satisfactory to all. The proper way would, therefore be to select one or two people

from Madras; similarly from C.P., etc. Because after all there is great deal of unanimity in regard to the point of approach.

**Mr. President :** Fortunately the division is not on provincial lines.

**Shri Sarangdhar Das** (Orissa States) : Sir, may I make the suggestion that the provinces which are non-Hindi speaking should be given more opportunity to speak. If only the Hindi-speaking people are given an opportunity to advertise their case.....

**Mr. President :** If the Honourable Member had been present in the House since the discussion on this question started and if he had counted the names of speakers, he would have found that Hindi-speaking people are fewer than others so far.

**Shri Ram Sahai** (Madhya Bharat) : \*[I beg to request Sir, that the States representatives be given opportunity to express their views with regard to the question of Hindi.]

**Mr. President :** \*[Is there any difference between, the Hindi used in States and that used in other places ?]

**Shri Ram Sahai :** \* [Of course there is no difference in that respect. But the difference exists in respect of their interests, requirements, and problems.]

**Mr. President :** I have grasped it and shall give as much time to each speaker as is possible with due regard to each province and all other aspects of the question. But I do not think it will be possible for me to give every one a chance to express his views. I have no idea as to how long this discussion will continue.

**Honourable Members :** Till tomorrow.

**Mr. President :** I have no idea as to how long the House would like to continue discussions on this subject.

\*[We had at first drawn up a time table for this, but the position has changed now. I am trying to give every speaker fifteen to twenty minutes. I may vary this time in some cases. I am, however, very particular that every speaker should confine himself to the subject and does not become irrelevant in his observations. When I find any Member talking something irrelevant I try to stop him and I do stop him. Even then, in view of the shortage of time. I do not find that course very helpful. I would, therefore, like that every Member should bear this consideration in mind.]

**Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra :** Could you not continue the discussion till tomorrow morning because it is a very vital matter ?

**Mr. President :** It will depend on the House. We shall consider it at the end of the day.

**Shri Deshbandhu Gupta :** The discussion can go on as long as an agreed formula is not arrived at.

**Shri Mahavir Tyagi** (United Provinces : General) : After what you have decided about the procedure in selecting the Speakers, may I know if the Members of the House have to go on seeking to catch your eye or will you yourself name them ?

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\*[            ] Translation of Hindustani speech.

**Mr. President :** Let them try to catch my eye and in that process I shall make my selection.

**An honourable Member :** I suggest you fix a time-limit of ten or five minutes.

**Mr. President :** I think we shall have to limit the speeches.

**Pandit Govind Malaviya** (United Provinces: General) : From what you have said, namely, that you will not allow any speaker to bring in irrelevant matters, I think there should be no question of any time-limit. If you find after two minutes that a speaker is irrelevant he should be asked to come back to the point or to close.

Secondly, this is so important a matter and everybody in the House is so keenly interested in it that I think we cannot possibly lay down whether we should spend one day or half a day or two days or even more over it. It should all depend on your discretion to let the debate go on so long as there is some fresh argument or point of view to be placed before the House in this matter. It is so vital a subject that I think, in your discretion, you should allow the debate to go on.

**Mr. President :** Yes, you may leave it to my discretion.

**Shri V. I. Muniswami Pillay** (Madras: General): The language question was put for two days and most of the Members have come from various provinces under the impression that we are going to have only a two days' debate, I therefore think it is highly necessary that this debate should close this evening and voting should take place thereafter.

**Mr. President :** I cannot accept that argument as sufficient for closing the discussion. Members are expected to be in their places throughout the session.

**Qazi Syed Karimuddin** (C. P. & Berar: Muslim) : \*[Mr. President. There are two amendments in my name. First is this :

"That in amendment No. 65 of fourth List, for the proposed New Part XIV-A, the following be substituted :—

'301. A—The Parliament by law provide the National language of the Union within six months after the election of the Parliament on the basis of adult Franchise'."

My second amendment is this that in case this is not acceptable then Hindustani should be made the national language.

Sir, I cannot say whether in the present atmosphere my amendment would be accepted or not, but as poet Ghalib has said "*Tamashae ahle karam dekhte hain*", I am not concerned whether you accept it or not. What we are to see is this : do the conditions prevailing in 1947 still prevail or have they changed ? If there has been some change, then why has it come about? Today we are told that Muslim Members present here have been elected on communal basis. With regard to this I would say that the general elections prior to 1947 were held on commercial basis. Muslim Members, as well as Congress Members, all were elected on communal basis, and it is because of that we see passions so deeply aroused here today.

Mr. Dhulekar has just said that Urdu is the mother-tongue of Muslims. At present our passions are so greatly excited, that if two years hence a demand

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\*[ ] Translation of Hindustani speech.

for the recognition of Urdu or Persian is made, we may accept that, but at present there is absolutely no-chance for its acceptance. Sir, that is the reason why I have put in this amendment. If in the present atmosphere they are unable to concede that demand, then how could it be expected that when-Hindi becomes the national language, they would concede it? Therefore, I would request that till a fresh general election is held and all members of the now House, both Hindus and Muslims have been returned on the basis of joint electorate this question may be postponed. The decision taken by that Parliament would be just and proper. Instead of taking a decision on-that question today, it would be better if it is left undecided till then. It may be 'that to some provinces, or to some people the decision taken today may not be agreeable and that is why this is not the proper time.

Sir, the House has adopted this attitude because Pakistan after 1947 has declared Urdu as its national language and it may be its reaction that Hindi in Devanagri is being made the national language of India.

Shri Seth Govind Das had read out names of certain Members who had affixed their signatures in support of his proposal, but who have now changed their minds. I would like to ask him whether all those supporting Hindi in Devanagri script are not Congress Members ? They have suffered and sacrificed. Now, if they support Hindi in Devanagri script, are they riot acting against the Congress creed ? Because they have accepted that creed, so they have changed their minds now. Congress had agreed that the national language of India would be Hindustani written both in Devanagri and Urdu scripts. If Mahatma Gandhi was alive today he, would have seen that on this issue Congress stood firm like a rock and Hindustani in both the scripts is adopted.

My Friend Mr. Dhulekar has said that it was by way of appeasement that Gandhiji had agreed to Hindustani in both the scripts. May I ask him, does it mean that whatever Congress does, it does only by way of appeasement ? Has the secular State also been established by way of appeasement ? I maintain that India belongs to the people of all sections who reside here, and they are entitled to live here. Now, to persuade you to change your minds it is being said that Gandhiji had accepted Hindustani written both in Urdu and Devanagri scripts, as the national language of India, and the Congress had accepted that proposition by way of appeasement only. I would like to remind Seth Govind Das of his budget speech of 1945 in which he had said that he was sorry that he could not speak in Hindustani. Has he forgotten that only in three years time ? In 1945, Hindustani was his language but today it is Hindi in Devanagri script. May I ask him what is his reason for that change over? In 1947 the Indian National Congress had agreed to make Hindustani, written both in Devanagri and Urdu script as the national language of India, but today we are told that only Hindi in Devanagri script could be the national language. The reason for this change is, as I have already told you, that after partition in 1947 Pakistan declared Urdu to be its national language and so its reaction in India has been that Hindi in Devanagri script is being adopted. In this connection what I want to say is that along with Devanagri script you should agree to keep Urdu script also.

Take the case of forty million Muslims of U.P. Bihar, and Berar. At present they are getting education through their mother tongue i.e., Urdu. Now, if you make Hindi as the State language, would it ever be possible for them to enter the Government service ? You have provided a time-limit-say 5 years or 10 years-to the other languages for this change-over, but why not to Urdu ? I am not opposed to Hindi, but when Hindustani is our language then why so much aversion to Urdu ?

You have already agreed that English shall stay here for the next 10 or 15 years; then why you are denying the Muslims their rights by banning Urdu

[Qazi Syed Karimuddin]

script ? You have got a majority so you are, trying to ban it completely—to finish it. Why is this happening ? It is because, as I say, our passions are excited, our sentiments have gained the upper hand and finally it is the reaction.] Pandit Govind Malaviya: \*[Who says that?]

**Qazi Syed Karimuddin :** \*[This is evident from the resolution.]

**Pandit Govind Malaviya :** \*[Where?]

**Qazi Syed Karimuddin :** \*[Clause (1) says that the script, shall be 'Devanagri. In U.P. there are thousands of Muslim government employees who are conversant with Urdu only; so, if you make Devanagri as the national language then it would not be possible for them to remain in service. Unless you give them ten years time to learn, they would not be able to learn Hindi. That is my request to you. I would like to tell the House that this thing was acceptable to you till 1947 and was also to Mahatmaji's liking, rather regarding which he used to say that he would fight for it : then why are his followers giving it up today and why is Urdu script being banned ? For this change-over there can be no other reason than what has been stated by Mr. Dhulekar.

Seth Govind Das has said that one reason for not accepting Urdu is that it contains names of Rustom and Sohrab. For that my reply to him is that when Hindustani, written in both Devanagri and Urdu scripts, is made our national language, then would there be no mention of the names of our Indian leaders in it ? If we retain English language for the next fifteen years, would it not contain stories of Lord Clive's and Warren Hastings' atrocities ? Therefore, if you discard Urdu simply because it contains stories of Sohrab and Rustom who were Parsis, than to me, it is not a sufficient reason for doing that.

He has also said that there is no country which has not got one culture and one language, and he has cited Russia as an example. I think that Sethji has not read the history of Russia. There are sixteen languages in Russia. Those, who have cited Russia's example, have contradicted him. In Russia, all government gazettes etc., are published in all the sixteen languages. I would regard it as an act of great high handedness, if today by sheer force of majority you pass a law making Hindi written in Devanagri script, as the national language and discarding the use of Urdu script. To cite the example of Russia in this connection is utterly misleading.

Another thing which has been pointed out by the honourable Member from Jubbalpore is that to make the present form of Hindi, both spoken and written, intelligible an interpreter would be needed. If Sir Sapru were living today, he would have repeated what he had once remarked that if Hindi-wallahs continued to trudge on this path the day is not far off when without the aid of an interpreter Hindi would not be understandable. Hence I say that only that language, in which both Hindus and Muslims easily express themselves and exchange their ideas and which has evolved through common intercourse, *i.e.* Hindustani, should be made the national language. I hope that before coming to a decision on this issue you will keep those high principles taught by Mahatmaji, before you. His photo is in front of you. He is, as it were, looking at you to see how far you are acting up to them. You should not be carried away by mere sentiments.]

**Shri Lakshminarayan Sahu (Orissa: General) :** \*[Mr. President, I belong to Utkal (Orissa), yet I fully agree to the adoption of Hindi as the national language. The resolution before us has been drafted after much thought. I,

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\*[ ] Translation of Hindustani speech.

therefore, support it generally. While supporting it I would say a few words about the amendment tabled by me.

We should first think over the cause of the dispute. It is whether there should be a national language or not. It is the view of some people that they cannot recognise any language as the national language, though they may agree to accept one language as the official language. This, however, gives me much pain. When we regard India as a nation and are trying to make it one, that is no reason why we should call it official language. We must call it national language. If one language is accepted as the national language, that would not imply that changes will be made in the languages of the various regions. I have, therefore tabled an amendment, that after five or ten years when a Commission or Committee is set up for promoting Hindi, it should also seek to promote the interest of every provincial language. When every province and every provincial language is developed, our national language will also be developed.

Some people say that Hindi and Hindustani are different, while others say that they are not. I have to pay attention to this question of difference between the two for one reason. It is this. All of us possess a brain—a brain whose capacity to remember words, is limited and not unlimited. So every man cannot learn all the words that any dictionary may contain. Naturally we have to select some words and reject others. This happens in the case of all the languages. You should just see that Sanskrit is the mother of all the provincial languages, and it contains so many words that, we can derive from it every word that we may need. But we do not always use that. I take the instance of a particular word ‘Pavan’ which is used in Orissa. This word is also in vogue in Sanskrit. It means ‘air’ but it does not get much currency, and in Bengali language no one understands this word. So I say that when we accept Hindi as national language, we should have to reject a few words.

And while accepting Hindi, we will also accept its literature. It is not possible to reject the literature while accepting the language. We should therefore accept the literature of Hindi, after we have adopted it as our official language. It cannot be possible to evolve a Hindi which only contains simple words and is easily understood by all the people of the country. This can never be the case. When we speak English, we take care to speak it rightly and not merely to speak it in any way we may care to. Hence it is not a correct idea that we can evolve our national language in any way we like. Of course, it would be right to enrich Hindi by taking words from other languages, if the vocabulary of the former is not already complete. I therefore clearly support the appointment of the commission and the Committee.

One gentleman has moved an amendment that the Bengali language should be the national language. In that way, I can also claim the same status for Oria, which is far more ancient than Bengali. The latter was not born when Oria, had taken shape as a language. Similarly, my friends from the South would claim that their language is very ancient. This is not a right approach. There is no question of ancient or medieval. When we wish to adopt Hindi written in Devanagiri as the national language, which is the right thing, to do, we should also keep in mind that the other provincial languages should also be allowed to develop in their own field, and their progress should not be handicapped.

Here I would like to add that some people are so much enamoured of English that they think they would lose their very existence if English is not used as the official language. It is like a drunkard saying that he would die if there is prohibition and he is not allowed to drink. If a few people die as a result of the replacement of English, what is the harm ? We have to move

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forwarded in the interests of the whole nation and the country, and if a few people are inconvenienced they should put up with it.

A new dispute regarding the numerals has also cropped up and the issue is whether the numerals should be of international form or of Devanagari form. The crores of our South Indian friends are insisting that they would not yield on this point, even though they may concede other points. What should then be done ? They have become obstinate, for the world does not go by logic; sentiment also prevails. We should therefore accept the foreign numerals.

Then there is the question of accepting Sanskrit as the national language. If all the South Indian friends and others accept Sanskrit, I would have no objection and would accept it. Of course, there is the apprehension that Sanskrit is a difficult language, and it will take a long time to learn it, but this is a different matter. The Hindi speaking areas are in a majority, hence Hindi should be adopted as the national language. But the effect of this should not be the extinction of the various provincial languages and their literatures. Every provincial language should be protected and the Commission or the Committee formed in this connection should take care of it.

In the end I would only say that those who advocate the use of Roman script do not understand the very principles regarding the genesis of the script. The Sound of the language, which is used to express it, is formed into the script : When written in Roman script, Hindi is difficult to understand and cannot be pronounced correctly. Hence, I say, the Roman script is totally unacceptable : it is ugly and has no scientific basis. Hindi written in Devanagari script is most scientific and should be accepted.]

**The Honourable Shri N. V. Gadgil** (Bombay: General): Mr. President, I do not want to make a long speech. From what I heard yesterday and this morning in this House and from what I see in the List consisting of 350 amendments, including one, to my discredit I should say, from me, I am impelled to make an appeal to the House to rise to the occasion and end this controversy.

Sir, the amendments range from the acceptance of Sanskrit as the national language to the retention of English for at least one century more. In this context, I do feel that the sense of responsibility with which we have so far carried on the deliberations on far more important topics should be appealed to.

As I analyse the proposition moved by my esteemed Friend Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar, I think that that is the best in the circumstances. It does not mean that that is the right one under the circumstances. But let us not aspire to solve all the problems simultaneously. Let us leave some of them to the next generation to solve ten or fifteen years hence. What I find is that certain broad principles or broad facts clearly emerge from this proposition. No. 1 is that there is a fair measure of agreement on the fact that Hindi should be the official language of the Union. I think a declaration of that kind is an achievement. I find also the important fact that the script should be Devanagari. I think to have one script for the official language throughout the Union territory is also an achievement.

I further find, Sir, that there is a spirit of give-and-take in this proposition in as much as an interim period of fifteen years is contemplated during which those whose mother-tongue is not Hindi will have an opportunity to pick up Hindi and get themselves familiarised with it.

After all, the only difference that I find from the various amendments and the speeches relates to the numerals. It will be a sad tragedy if we were to



hang the unity and solidarity of this Country on the cross of numerals. I therefore appeal to my Hindi friends with whom I agree in theory—but being a practical man-somebody has credited me with being a politician—I appeal to them to leave something to the next generation; Let the future solve this question of numerals. I do not think it is such an insurmountable thing that it cannot be solved, given the necessary goodwill, but in the present context where I find a good deal of emotion and passion and play of personalities also, whatever efforts we may make now, instead of bringing the parties together, they win result in something contrary. I therefore appeal in particular to my esteemed Friend, Shri Purushottam Das Tandon that like a big brother he must make a gesture. Hindi today admittedly is a provincial language.

**Mr. President :** I request the Speaker to make no personal reference. It places the gentleman referred to in an awkward position.

**The Honourable Shri N. V. Gadgil :** I accept your ruling and the reference may be deleted from the proceedings. After all, Hindi is a provincial language. There are languages in which literature is far more rich, and yet we have accepted Hindi as the national language. That itself is a great achievement for the Hindi people, and if you want to persuade others, the best way is not with the strength of your voting numbers but by persuasion, by tactfully handling the situation; if in the course of the next ten or fifteen years the Hindi people were to approach the non-Hindi people through the various means of propaganda, I have not the slightest doubt that those people who have taken to English in the course of the last century and a half, will not fail to take to Hindi.

After all, there is not a single Indian who, if he is asked whether he would have English or any of the Indian languages, will vote for English, instead of any one of the Indian languages including his own mother-tongue. So, let the Hindi people go about their task with hope and faith just as they have done in the past and win over the rest by propaganda, not in an aggressive manner but in a persuasive manner. The proposition that has been moved itself provides the procedure whereby what they desire can be achieved, in a much better way than exists today.

In the course of the last three years we have not taken any important decision by going into the lobby. Let us not depart from that record. Let the world know that on all important questions, those which constitute the foundations of the Constitution, the decisions here were taken unanimously. If the decision today is taken unanimously, it will not leave any feeling of bitterness; but, as I said, if the Hindi people who constitute a majority in the country and also perhaps in this House, make that gesture, I think the judgment of history will be to their credit. I do not want to take up the time of the House further, but I do hope that what I have suggested will be acceptable to the House.

**Shri T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar** (Madras: General) : Mr. President, Sir, this is a very difficult question for us from the South to solve. It probably means life and death for the South. unless it is going to be handled in the way in which it ought to be done. Well, Sir, for us coming from the South to go back and face our people with any decision you are going to make here, you will see what it will mean. I have been told by friends of the North that if they were to yield on the question of numerals, they will be twitted by their voters and that they will find their life difficult when they go for elections. What will it be like when we, giving up our own languages, adopt the language of the North, go back to our provinces and face our electorates ? They do not seem to care for our position. Sir I have great admiration for the Hindi people for their great patriotism and the perseverance and the persistence with which

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they are enforcing their decisions, but at the same time they will have to realise that we too may have some patriotism like that, we may have some patriotism and love for our language, for our literature and things like that.

After all, where do we stand ? We have got languages which are better cultivated and which have greater literature than Hindi in our areas. If we are going to accept Hindi, it is not on account of the excellence of the language, it is not on account of its being the richest language or on account of its being, as it has been claimed for Sanskrit, the mother of other languages and things like that. It is not that at all. It is merely on account of the existence of a large number of people speaking Hindi, not even a majority of the population of the country, but only among the languages which are spoken in India, Hindi claims probably the largest number of people. It is only on that basis that they are claiming that Hindi should be accepted as the official language of the whole country. Well, Sir, being practical, we do not claim that our languages which are better cultivated, which have got better literature, which are ancient, which have been there for millenniums, should be adopted.

**Mr. President :** May I make a request to the Members that we should not compare the literatures of different languages. I do not know whether any Member here knows the literature of the different languages that are prevalent in the country and when any Member says that his own language and literature is richer than that of this language or that language, he propounds a proposition which cannot be accepted, and the thing is not carried any further by that kind of argument. Let us confine ourselves to propositions which are ordinarily an generally acceptable and not enter into controversies which can be avoided.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga** (Madras : General): How is it possible to make out your case unless you compare one with the other.

**Mr. President :** You may make up your mind but do not say so.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga :** I do not think it is reasonable.

**Shri T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar :** Anyhow, I was saying that the claim of Hindi is not based on its literature, its antiquity or anything like that. Well, Sir, such being the position, I want the Hindi speaking brethren sitting here to consider whether they are justified in making the claim for everything they want and putting us, coming from the South, in the false position which we will occupy if we are going to accept all their claims. That is the things which I want them to consider and consider deeply.

Sir, on account of the realities of the situation, as I said, we have accepted Hindi in Nagari script as the official language. I however said that you cannot use the word national language, because Hindi is no more national to us than, English or any other language. We have got our own languages which are national languages and for which we have got the same love as the Hindi speaking people have got for their language. We have agreed to Accept Hindi and the Nagari character as the official language. and script because, as I said, that language claims a larger number of people speaking it than any other language in India. If, for that reason alone, you are going to say that you ought to change over tomorrow, if you are to claim that it ought to be adopted As the official language today or tomorrow. I think it would not be accepted by the people. It would lead not only to frustration and disappointment, but something worse.

I may say that the South is feeling frustrated. If there is the feeling of having obtained liberty, freedom and all that, there is very little of it felt in

the South. Sir, coming here to the capital in the northern-most part of the country, and feeling ourselves as strangers in this land, we do not feel that we are a nation to whom the whole thing belongs, and that the whole country is ours. Unless steps are taken to make the people in the South feel that they have something to do with the country, and that there is some sort of unity in the country, I do not think the South is going to be satisfied at all. There will be a bitter feeling left behind. To what it may lead, it is not easy to say at present.

I have been saying that one of the most important questions is the question of the capital of India. The question is a very important one. People laugh at it sometimes; they do not know the seriousness of the matter. When a man has to come two thousand miles and do his things here, he naturally feels that he is not in his own land. He feels as if it is a strange country to which he has come. In the social life of Delhi, how many Madrasis have got a share, I ask the question. I have been here for the last two or three years; I know very few people in Delhi or U.P. That is the state of affairs. Unless things are made easier for the South, unless the capital is taken to a place, which will common ground for all people, which would not be claimed by the U.P. or the Punjab as their territory, the Southerners will feel that they are going to a strange land. It has been said the other day that the Madrasis are holding positions. Does it show that there is any nationalism here? Why should not Madrasis hold position if the Punjabis and people from the U.P. are not able to fill up those positions? After all, if you claim that you have made progress within the last two years, is it not those people who are now at the helm of affairs that have contributed to that? Sir, such things are not going to lead to unity.

This question of language is much more important than even the question of capital, the question of offices and things like that. If you are going to impose anything and leave a feeling that you are going to impose it on other people, whether it is a real imposition or not, whether as a matter of fact, as somebody said, it is the natural course to which we have come and we could not avoid it, even if it is so, if there is this feeling that there is this imposition, of the North over the South, it will lead to very bitter results. I do not want to say anything by way of telling my friends in the North that things will go wrong, But at the same time, I think it is necessary for them to realise that, after all when we want to five together and form a united nation, there should be mutual adjustment and no question of forcing things on people who may or may not want it.

After all, what is it that we have asked for? We asked for time for preparation. That is the first thing that we wanted. It was agreed to by the leaders on the other side. They said that they will allow fifteen years for preparation. What does the draft say? The draft goes back upon it. In the clause it says, for fifteen years English will continue. In the second clause, it says there will be appointed a Commission or a Committee after five years and the Committee will recommend for what purposes Hindi can be introduced and the President may issue orders accordingly. What does it mean? At least with reference to these matters with reference to which order will be issued, the term of fifteen years has been cut down to five. Then you say, after ten years, you are going to appoint another Commission and that Commission is to report and on that report, orders will be passed. What does this mean? You are only saying that you are allowing fifteen years; but at the end of five years, and at the end of ten years, you are going to introduce Hindi with the natural result that we who are not able to take our part in the administration, in the Government, in the legislature and elsewhere will not be in a position to take our share because we are not prepared by that time. It

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is only giving a hope in the first portion of the section and taking away that hope and giving us mere stones in the latter portion of the draft.

I do not know who is responsible for the draft. I have no doubt that Mr. Gopalaswami Ayyangar has come out to propose it. But, I for instance cannot at all accept it unless the fifteen years period is made real and not merely chimerical by the introduction of these Committees and Commissions and changes which are expected after the fifth year and the tenth year. That is the main thing with which we in the South will be concerned.

The South is the only part of the country probably which does not feel that it is going to come into line with the other provinces soon, especially my part of the country where Tamil is the language spoken. We have been priding ourselves that we have had nothing to do with Sanskrit. We do not claim that Tamil is derived from Sanskrit, or is based on Sanskrit in any way. We have been trying to keep our vocabulary as pure as possible without the admixture of Sanskrit. Now, we have, to go back upon all that. We have to take words from Sanskrit; we have to change our whole course of action. What it means to the people who have been brought up in their own language, who have been priding themselves that their language has been independent of Sanskrit, and that is the only language which can stand against Sanskrit, you have to consider. In that position, we are to prepare ourselves first with reluctance to give up our old position and take to a study of Hindi or Sanskrit. You will have first to educate the people, I mean make them reconcile themselves to the new order of things. Then, they will have to take to the study of Hindi, to enable them to take their place here among those whose mother tongue is Hindi.

Not only that, you are permanently handicapping us. Those whose mother tongue is Hindi they learn only Hindi. But, we in the South, we have got to study not only Hindi but also our own mother tongue; we cannot give up our mother tongue. There is also the regional language; we have to study that. Permanently, for ever, you are handicapping us by this arrangement. You in the North will have to realise what sacrifice we are making.

After all, what do we ask for in return ? We say, do not complicate matters by having not only the script, but also the numerals. The numerals are being used for purposes of accounts, for purposes of statistics and other things. You want to take away not only the language and the script, but also the numerals. You say that our accounts will have to be kept hereafter in the Hindi numerals if you are going to produce them before the Income-tax authorities. Sir, we have been habituated to these numerals for ever so long a time. After all, the question of numerals is not a question which concerns the South alone. It is a matter of convenience and it is a matter on which people both in India and outside are concerned; statistics have to go outside. Things have to be put in the accounts and sciences in a particular numeral. If you are going to say you have to adopt Hindi numeral, what are you going to do for other purpose? If you are to study anything from outside whether science, banking or anything else, everything will appear in other books only in the international numerals.

After all what is the objection to international numerals ? It is only on the ground that we ought to have 100 per cent. Hindi, because you have agreed to adopt the Hindi language in the Hindi script, you better adopt the Hindi numerals also. You do not care what results from that. After all the whole world is adopting international numerals. Why should you fight shy because you want to dominate the whole of India ?

It is much more the spirit that actuates the people that is so difficult to meet. It is not even the things that are said—we have given up our language in favour of Hindi—but the way in which the Hindi speaking people treat us and the way in which they want to demand things that is more galling than anything which actually is done or is going to be done. That is the way in which it is said—‘of course you ought to accept’. That is the thing that exasperates us. I appeal to the North Indian people not to take up that attitude, to have a feeling that we are all living together in a common country, we have to create a nation—there is no such thing now—and that unless there is give and take, unless they are also prepared to adjust themselves and not demand everybody to adjust according to their dictates. It is only then that India can proceed and can be successful and form a united nation.

Otherwise I shudder to think what may be the future for us. There ought to be accommodation. I need not say that history has taught us that if there is trouble the outlying places will always try to take advantage of the trouble. We have the example of Burma and other countries. Supposing tomorrow there is some difficulty here, what will be the position? Unless you weld the nation and you make everybody feel that they have got a share in the country and it is their country, unless you do that, if you go on keeping the spirit of domination of one part over the other, I am sure the result is not going to be for the progress or for the safety of the country. Sir, with these words I appeal again to the Hindi speaking people to give up their attitude of domination and of dictation and to adjust themselves.

**Shri Satis Chandra Samanta** (West Bengal : General) : Mr. President, Sir, I have moved amendments Nos. 223 and 278. In 223, I have proposed that Bengali should be taken as the official or national language of India. As regards language, children-learn language even in the laps of their mother and the language they talk is called the mother-tongue. Everybody loves his mother-tongue. Now we are in need of an official language, a national language for the administration of our country. So, there should be no controversy about the mother-tongues and languages used in different regions and so I have no grudge against any of the languages but I respectfully submit to put the case of Bengali before this august House for their favourable Consideration.

Bengali is a rich language; it has a long history; it has an ancient and a brilliant literature; it has its philology and the like. So it will not be out of place to put the case of Bengali for the acceptance of House. I know most of my friends are bent upon taking up a language which will be more intelligible to the people of India. I would say that only intelligibility to the largest number should not be the criterion, other things also should be taken into consideration. We are taking a language to be our official language or a national language and we should expect which it that we should try to make it one of the international languages. So if we have that point in mind *viz.*, that we should make out national language an international language,—then we must see which of the languages of India has some place at least in the international world. I would submit that Bengali is taught in foreign Universities such as Oxford, Warsaw where Ravindrology is taught in Harvard in the U.S.A. It has also been recognised in language institution in Paris, Munich, Moscow and in Rome. So, I submit that Bengali has some international connections. The vocabulary of Bengali should now be taken into consideration.

There is the question of scientific terminology, Shri P. C. Ray, Jagadanda Roy, of Santi Niketan the late Principal G. C. Bose of Banga Basi College Ramendra Sundar Trivedi and others tried their best and coined scientific terminologies in Bengali. There is a monthly magazine known as *Gyan Vigyan*

[Shri Satis Chandra Samanta]

devoted to the development of such scientific and technical terms. The Bengali language has all these things.

Over and above these, I would beg of you to consider the case of our revered poet Guru Dev, Shri Rabindranath Tagore. It was he who established the Viswabharathi and in that institution, he has made arrangements for the teaching of Bengali and all the other languages of India and even for some languages of other countries. Rabindranath's name is well-known to one and all not only in India, but all the world over. There is not a single man or woman here in this House who does not know this name. Rabindranath's lyrics and songs are learnt and sung by all. They have been translated into the various languages of the world and they have been treasured by all of them. In Calcutta University almost all the Indian languages are taught even in Post-Graduate classes.

Another thing I would draw your attention to, is this. We are now a free nation and in our freedom's struggle, we were all inspired by that great song *Bande Mataram*; for this Mantram thousands have made sacrifice. For *Bande Mataram* thousands have sacrificed their property and all. This song inspired one and all in India and this Mantra was given to us by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee in his *Ananda Math*". So I would invite your hearts and mind to this fact, when you are going to select your national and official language. Sir, I have no quarrel with any one, language I would beg of you to see that Bengali contains Arabic, Turkish and Persian words right from 1200 A. D. Later on it has drawn on from Portuguese, French, English languages. Though originally Bengali was Prakrit, and therefore it contains a lot of Sanskrit words, it has grown by drawing from all these other language also. I would beg of you to consider this also when you are selecting the official and national language.

Time-honoured customs, culture, literature—all these are there in Bengali.

I would also add that Bengali has advanced in another direction also. It has got Bengali typewriting machine. The Bengali tino-type machine has been made by Shri Suresh Chandra Mazumdar of *Ananda Bazar* an honourable Friend of mine of this august House. There has been Bengali shorthand from 1915. So official work can easily be carried on in this language. It will be quite suitable for such work in India.

Sir, a lot of controversy has been going on and I do not want to enter into any of them. I put forward before you the case of Bengali and I may say that for my part I am ready to accept the language which will be accepted by the overwhelming majority of this House. But it should not be less than three-fourth of the House, because if it is less, then there will be controversy and the people will not accept that language heartily. It is true that those people who will have to learn the national language will be put to some difficulty. We Indians have suffered so much and sacrificed so much for attaining freedom for our country. Can you not suffer a bit for the national language of our land. We should, and everybody should, be prepared to make that little sacrifice. The responsibility lies on us. We should select that language which will be acceptable to all and for which they will be prepared to make a little sacrifice. Sanskrit has been mentioned. Hindi has been mentioned. I am not going to say anything against them, because every language should be respected. I would request friends here not to get into controversies but to put their cases safely and justly so that the language selected may be acceptable to all of us. With these words, Sir, I commend my proposition for acceptance of the House.

**Shri Algu Rai Shastri** (United Provinces : General) : \*[Mr. President, with your permission, Sir, I beg to move a small amendment to the amendment

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\*[ ] Translation of Hindustani speech.

moved by Shri Gopalaswami Ayyanger and request the House kindly to accept the same. My amendment runs thus—

“That in amendment No. 65 above for the proposed new Part XIV-A, the following be substituted :

‘New Part XIV-A 301(1) The official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagari script.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in clause (1) of this article, it shall be open to the government of the Union to use English for the purpose for which it has been in use all these years. during a transition period extending over fifteen years at the most.

(3) It shall be the duty of the Government of the Union to encourage the progressive use of Hindi in Devanagari script in Government affairs in such a manner that after the end of the said transition period of 15 years Hindi may replace English completely’.”

You will find that the amendment moved by Shri Gopalaswami Ayyanger is so lengthy that it constitutes a volume in itself. We are going to frame a Constitution and a Constitution should embody only fundamental principles. Article 99, as originally drafted by the Drafting Committee, briefly stated that the language of the Parliament shall be Hindi or English. The question was dealt therein in a very few words. But the amendment moved by Shri Gopalaswami Ayyanger contains many extraneous matters. When I read in the original article drafted by the Drafting Committee for the first time these few words contained in it, that the language used in Parliament shall be Hindi or English, it made me think that the whole question of language had been put in clear and definite terms.

English of course had become indispensable to us only for the reason that our country had been under the yoke of British imperialism for the last two centuries and the alien ruler imposed his language on us during that period. This imposed language dominated every aspect of the life of our country and became supreme of course in central administration. Even today it appears to be occupying a very prominent position. Till recently English held a dominating position in our country.

When we started the movement for our freedom, we had an ideal before us. What was that ideal? What was the objective for which we launched the struggle for freedom? We wanted complete freedom from the British domination, we wanted swaraj (self government). We had visualised a picture of ‘Swaraj’. This word ‘Swaraj’ is a Sanskrit word and it has become current in Hindi also in its original, sense. It has a very comprehensive meaning. It means ‘self’ that is one’s individuality, personality are all included in this word. Politically it implies that we are one nation and one country.

We have a common and ancient history. We have a common language having a rich literature of its own. This Vedic Sanskrit—the ancient form of our language—was for long in dominant use in our country. But a language never remains stationary. Our language also underwent some changes. But this was what happened in the case of all other languages. Thus the ancient form of the English language which is being so much extolled here every day was not the same as that is today. I have just read a book from which I find that in olden days the word ‘King’ was spelt as ‘Kynge’ and was pronounced in a different way. The ancient style of English was also very much different from the modern style. There were only a limited number of words in English. Some specimens of that English can be found in what Karl Marx wrote about the Industrial Revolution in Britain. An historian has depicted the deplorable condition of the villages in England when the lands of the peasants were acquired in order to promote the trade of wool in foreign countries and farms for rearing sheep were established on them. an event on which the famous book

[Shri Algu Rai Shastri]

“*Deserted Village*” was written. Some extracts from the history have been, taken by Karl Marx in order to give a picture of their conditions and these extracts are to found in his famous book “*Das Kapital*”. The language in which the condition of their English village is depicted provides us with a beautiful specimen of English used in those days.

The language current in those days bears no relation to the modern English. There is a wide difference between the style of ancient English and that adopted Ruskin, Dickens, Shakespeare, and Milton. It is thus plain that language never remains static. It is changing and developing. Similarly the language which we are going to make the national language of the land has descended from the very Vedic Sanskrit which was at one time a living language and was for centuries occupying a place of honour in our country.

We had been aspiring to recapture our fundamental and real self. The rose plant of our national life had so long remained buried deep under the ice of subjugation. Its leaves had withered, its flowers were dry and dead. Only one of its stems—I mean language—had some life left in it. But even in the darkest hour we knew that spring would return, we were sure that the ice of Subjugation will melt and our rosy life would bloom again, and we knew that the plant of our life would send forth beautiful rose flowers of its own. Our country had remained for centuries under foreign rule. Our rich and fertile plans were invaded by foreigners many a time; ultimately we lost our freedom and became slaves of the foreigners. We have always been making an effort to throw off the yoke of foreign rule. The national movement for freedom was but an aspect of this perennial effort of our people.

The movement for liberating ourselves which our people have carried on had a long history. The last phase of our armed efforts for liberation was the battle that we were forced to fight against the British Imperialist in 1857. The movement of 1857, known as the mutiny, was but an expression of that striving of our people for freedom. While the Objectives Resolution was being discussed in this House I had said that that movement of 1857 had been fertilised by the blood of such martyrs as the Rani of Jhansi and Bahadur Shah, the Begums of the Nawab of Oudh and Tippu Sultan, Tantia Tope and Nana Farnavis.

Ultimately the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi had made it possible for us to witness that dawn of freedom in which we had assembled to pay our homage to the great departed and sing the songs of our freedom. Now that we have attained *swaraj* it should be possible for our ‘*swa*’ (self) to manifest itself. It is a matter of deep regret that there are some people here today who say that we have no language of our own and that in fact we have nothing in common and that we have to create and develop all these things anew. But I would like to tell them that we do possess a language that is common to us, that is understood by a large number of people of this country. At least that is my experience.

In 1942 while returning from Bombay I had to rush straight to the Frontier Province. Khan brothers are not here amongst us and I may add that their absence is a source of agony to our hearts. But I had on that occasion the pleasure of meeting the Khan brothers in a camp on the bank of river Sarab. What do you think was the language in which I carried on my conversations and talks with the common volunteers in that camp? It was not Pushto. It was in no circumstances English. Will it surprise you what I tell you that it was simple Hindi—the Hindi in which I am at present addressing the House—that I talked with the volunteers and I found that they understood my Hindi quite well. Previously in 1928, I had accompanied Lal Lajpat Rai



to Madras; I may inform you that there also I had talked to the people in Hindi, for the very simple reason that I am not accustomed to speak in English. Is it necessary for me to say that all those with whom I had occasion to talk understood my Hindi well and it may surprise some of my friends to learn that people there also talked in Hindi with me ?

During the Congress session of Cocanada, the annual session of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan was also held there under the Presidentship of the late Shri Jamanalal Bajaj. I had there the occasion to hear a recitation of Hindi poem by some local girls. Perhaps a better recitation than that cannot be given even by the people of northern India.

What I mean to convey is that Hindi is understood in every province and we are pledged to make it our national language. It was Mahatmaji who gave birth and inspiration to this idea. We wanted that we should be free and that the English should go away from our land. We had hoped that with the departure of the English people their language would also disappear from this land and that we would be able to use our language in place of English. We had not learnt English voluntarily. It was introduced here under the scheme prepared by Lord Macaulay. The alien rulers wanted cheap clerks and to this end English was taught us. Those who learnt this language at the initial stage of its introduction came in close contact with the administration and the government and this, as was natural created a love in them for English.

We had thought that with the arrival of freedom, our dress, our language, will regain their lost position and that freedom in its wake would bring new ideas, sentiments and inspiration to us. The dawn of independence has actually brought all this with it :

भाषा, भेष और भोजन, हैं जिसको अपना प्यारा।  
उस पर कभी नहीं चलने को है, औरों का चारा।

One who loves his language, dress and diet will never fall into the subjection of others. There was a natural longing in the people's mind to bring the national language to its own in free India.

The question may be asked as to what is our national language. There is no doubt that Sanskrit is the mother of all the languages spoken in India. All of them are derived from Sanskrit; for their vocabulary they have drawn upon Sanskrit which is an inexhaustible source of words. But Sanskrit, the mother of the current Indian languages, cannot be enthroned today on the pedestal of the national language. Its eldest and the seniormost daughter alone can today be the national language. There are many other people, Sir, in this country, but God has bestowed upon you the ability to adorn this high office and we earnestly wish you to be the first President of the Indian Republic. Who does not aspire for this office? But everybody has not the merit to occupy this august office. If we want that the President of the first Constituent Assembly of India should be the first President of the Indian Republic, does that mean that we are making any exaggerated claims or that we are giving vent to avarice ?]\*

**Mr. President :** \*[The Honourable member is talking beside the point.]\*

**Shri Algu Rai Shastri :** \*[Discussion as to what should be our national language, implies our acceptance, of the fact that English cannot be our national language. Now the question arises as to which one of the languages current in the country can be made the national language of our State. Hindi alone has acquired an inter-provincial status. A majority of the people of the country speak Hindi.

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\* [.....] Translation of Hindustani speech.

[Shri Algu Rai Shastri]

Some non-Hindi speaking friends have claimed that their literature is richer than ours. I may concede that claim, but can they honestly say that the number of the people speaking their language is greater than that of those who speak Hindi. If the answer be in the negative, I would like to ask them, which course would be more proper whether to replace English by a language and a script that is spoken and written by a majority of the people or by some other language? Hindi has rivalry with English alone. It has no rivalry with Bengali, Telugu, Tamil, Canarese or Pushto or any other language. The English Government has gone, the English Governor-General and Governors have gone. Now an Indian Governor-General and Governors have been appointed. In this context it is but fit that an Indian language should also take the place of English here.

Having due consideration for all the relevant factors relating to a language, I mean simplicity and intelligibility, etc., etc. Hindi alone can be the national language of our State. The supporters of Hindi have no quarrel or hostility with any one. They support Hindi only because Hindi alone can claim to be the most popular and widely spoken language in India. I fail to see why any one should feel in his heart that the Hindi speaking people want to impose Hindi on non-Hindi people? There is no question of imposition. It is the House or the Drafting Committee that have suggested that Hindi shall be the Official language of the State and the Parliament. If this is taken to be imposition, it is not from us rather it is from the House or the Drafting Committee.

Other Indian languages have not acquired an all-India position, they are confined to their own regions. May be that some of them are spoken by a few people outside their regions also, but no other language has acquired an all India importance, Hindi is spoken in U.P., Bihar, C.P., Madhya Bharat, Rajputana and Peshawar. It is understood in almost every province. A language that is so widely spoken must be made the national-language of the Indian Union.

The credit for making Hindi the official language of the Union does not go to us the Hindi speaking people, but in fact it goes to others, who though they cannot speak Hindi fluently, have no command and control over Hindi and have not had any long practice in its use yet admit that Hindi is simple and intelligible.

It may not be out of place if I mention a few of the merits of Hindi script. One of my Friends here has suggested that we should adopt Roman script. He is a learned man, who can doubt the learning of my honourable Friend, Shri Anthony? But we should consider every aspect of this script. There are two kinds of script one the shorthand script and the other ordinary or longhand script. It is necessary in the longhand script that a word be written exactly in the way it is pronounced so that there may not be any mistake about its correct pronunciation. That is the most characteristic feature of the ordinary or longhand script. But in a shorthand script different devices are adopted to represent the greatest number of words with the minimum number of signs.

We begin the primary education of our children with our script (अ, आ) etc. If we 'ए' say but use it to represent the sound of 'अ' or 'आ' it would be an unscientific method and we will be imparting a wrong training to our children, if we adopt this method. A B C D etc. are the alphabets of the Roman script. We use A & B to represent the sound of 'अ' or 'आ' or 'ब'. Similarly the letter C is used to represent the sound of 'स'. This is not at all scientific. Rather it is an atrocious script. This is a very serious defeat in the Roman script.

The Pitman's shorthand system has also adopted, as the reporters are well aware, a script based on Phonetic System of Hindi script. Pitman adopted the phonetic arrangement of the letters for formulating his system. The shorthand reporters have found that arrangement to be very easy and have adopted it.

Therefore, the controversy regarding the script should end. So far as script is concerned, Roman or any other script can bear no comparison to the Hindi script. The Hindi script stands far superior to any other script. As I have already said the letters of a script should have a definite and intelligible phonetic basis.

From this point of view the Urdu script also is found to have the same defect that is found in Roman script. There the pronunciation of letter and the sound they represent are quite different. The letter 'Alif' is used to represent the sound of 'अ', 'आ', or 'ए'; we pronounce 'Lam' but this letter represents the sound of 'ल'. If we have to write 'Lokat' we will use the letters 'Lam', 'Wav', 'Kaf', 'Alif' and 'Tey'. The pronunciation of letters, in Urdu have no relation to the sound for which they are used. In a longhand script this should not be the case : of course in a shorthand script we may do so.

On the other hand the script and the alphabets of Hindi are not only simple but can also be learnt with very great ease. The pronunciation of its vowels is simple and scientific. The fact is that they can be pronounced with natural ease and they are also pronounced very clearly. Thus the vowel 'अ' occurs as the first vowel 'अ' of the Hindi alphabet and possesses a simple sound unlike the vowels of the other scripts. It stands for one single sound and not for any other. The other vowels also have the same scientific character, and are all scientifically arranged. Moreover the Hindi alphabets are divided into certain groups according to the order of their pronunciation.

We have thus the classification that the vowel 'अ' and the 'क' consonant group and 'ह' are pronounced from the throat, while the vowel 'इ', the 'अ' consonant group and 'य', 'श' are palatal in pronunciation. In this manner the other consonants and vowels are also arranged according to the part of the vocal organs through which they are pronounced. Again the different letters and the groups have also been assigned to different deities—some to 'Indra' and some to 'Varuna' and so on.

It is plain, therefore, that no student can have any difficulty in mastering this language which is entirely scientific in character. I believe that any student can very well pick up—any, even master—its alphabets within a few weeks. I believe that the scholarly and distinguished lawyer members of the Drafting Committee also had an appreciation of this fact, for they also have in their draft provided for Hindi in Devanagari script as the official language of the Union. I add that even if only Hindi is referred to in the Draft, it would imply the use of Devanagari script as well. Just as we also imply the use of the Roman script when we refer to the English language.

Under that Draft English shall continue to be our official language for the next fifteen years. None of us can deny that the use of that language is essential for carrying on our work and that we cannot totally remove it earlier. All of us, therefore, agree that we shall keep English for our administrative and official purposes for the next fifteen years. But it is my belief that within this period of fifteen years, all the Government officials would be in a position to have a very good and sound knowledge of Hindi. I do not doubt in the least that they can do so with the greatest possible ease and convenience. The period of 15 years is not a small one. Hindi also is not a difficult language to learn. In any case it is not such as cannot be picked up by our Government officials within this period.

[Shri Algu Rai Shastri]

I am reinforced in my belief by the consideration that the members of the I.C.S. used to pick up several Indian languages within the period of two years of their training. It cannot, therefore, be doubted that these very people would be able to learn Hindi very well within this period of fifteen-years. I know that they are men of ability. I also know that they have all the facilities and opportunities for learning Hindi. I know that they are officials of an Independent Government and are men of learning and light. It is, therefore, my conviction that these people can have a very sound knowledge of Hindi within this period.

English is not a language which is the language of the people of any part of our country. Besides it is not the official language of any of these regions. So far this language had been that of the ruling class of the alien Government. It was, in other words, a language of their offices and people working in those offices for the benefit of the alien rulers. But this foreign language was mastered by our administrators and civilians through great labours. I put it, therefore, to you that if they could master a foreign language—the language which did not have its origin in this country, a language which had been brought to this country by foreigners and which had been imposed on this country by those foreigners as the official language for their own advantage and benefit—could be mastered by those of us who wanted to go in for administrative services, I put it to you, can it be said that these very people would not be able to put forth sufficient efforts to master Hindi which is a language of their own country? When you could go through such hard toil and labour for mastering English, I believe, you will have to put forth much less labour to learn Hindi which is much simpler than English and can, therefore, be learnt with much greater ease than that foreign language.

Even our children would not find any difficulty in learning this language. In this connection I cannot forget that many of the existing administrators would be retiring sooner or later. Those who would be filling their places can very easily learn the Hindi Language within the period of fifteen years which has been provided for in the Draft.

I would like in this connection to state that if we have to make Hindi our national language and to develop it for all our purposes; it is essential that every man of learning in this country should acquire a thorough knowledge of Hindi. This does not imply that Hindi would be, in any way, taking the place of the regional languages. If would not do so. Its evolution however is essential. English is a language that had been evolving from the very beginning. It has also been for centuries the national language of another country and that country has imposed it on other countries as well for its own benefit; but our children who have had to learn it under compulsion, have become denationalised. Their ideas and sentiments have been more or less anglicised and they have begun to approach the problems of life from an alien point of view. It is plain, therefore, that English cannot be our national language. Besides we have not to remain tied down to the Dominion of Britain for all time to come.

It is, therefore our duty to consider that after the advent of freedom, it is essential for our dignity and self-respect that we should have a national language. We know fully well the good and the evil that English education. It is an order that the people of this country may proudly claim Hindi as their national language and Devanagari as their national script that it is necessary that Hindi also should evolve. We should not be governed by narrow or selfish considerations and if we approach the problem of national language with that broad vision, we would succeed. But if we do not do so, instead of making any progress our country will go down in disaster.

In this connection I would like to refer to the example of Estonia and Lithuania which had made a demand for their independence after the last Great War. Their main reason for demand of their freedom was that under the alien rulers attempts had been made completely to suppress their language and that they had to carry on an intensive struggle and undergo any amount of sufferings for protecting and maintaining the existence of their own language. These petty States are not bigger than the district of Gorakhpur in our province. These people had protected and defended their language against the attempts of the Germans to suppress them. If they could do so, it is our duty also to do the same.

I would like to make it clear that all of us here want the development and promotion of the regional languages, for all of them are very dear to Hindi. Several of these regional languages are very sweet and very well developed. Naturally I cannot and do not lay any claim to the superiority of Hindi as compared to any of the regional languages. But from the inter-provincial point of view, I can say that Hindi has a better claim for adoption as the national language, because it is not a language of any one province alone. It is the language of many provinces. I concede that there have been great poets in other languages as well and I would not like to institute any comparison between them and the poets of Hindi, such as Kabir and Tulsi. It is not necessary for me to go into this kind of comparison. I do concede that the Tamil Veda of Shri Tiruvalluvar of the Deccan is as great a composition—probably greater—than that of Kabir. I do not dispute, therefore, that great literature exists in other languages as well.

But I submit in all humility that the number of people speaking Telugu or Tamil is very much less than that of the people speaking and understanding Hindi. So far as I am concerned, the question whether a regional language has a great literature or not, is quite irrelevant to the decision of the question of the official language of India. We have to choose one language for this purpose and if we were to follow the principles of democracy and the rule of majority decision, we will have to accept Hindi, far from all points of views—it is an undisputed fact that the number of people speaking Hindi is greater than the number of people speaking other languages. Besides it is a very simple as well as a developed language.

I cannot resist the temptation of citing a few passages from the works of the great Hindi poet, Surdas, in order to give you an idea of the high level of development reached by Hindi.

*“Piyabinu nagini kaladi raat,  
Kabahunk yamini hoti Jitnahiya,  
Dansi ulati hai jaat,  
Mantra na footat yantra nahi lagat,  
Ayu sirani jaat,  
Soor Shyam bin bikul birahini,  
Muri muri lahiri khaat.”*

*“Alas, my darling is away,  
The snake like night curls and curls,  
The fangs of lightning pierce my heart,  
Incantations or amulets—nothing avails,  
While my life is ebbing away,  
The separation of Shyam says Sur,  
‘Keeps the lady love in paroxysms of pain.’ ”*

[Shri Algu Rai Shastri]

I would like any one here to give me a parallel passage from the literature of any other language. I may add that the Hindi literature is full of numerous gems one better than the other. Thus I may cite a passage from Tulsidas which is as follows :—

*“Arun parag jalaj ari neeke  
Shashi hi bhoosh ahi lobh ami ke.”  
“The tender and delicate Lotus  
Its basom red with passion  
Rises in a waving,  
Serpentine motion  
To kiss the moon or sucking nectar.”*

The reference is to Ram applying Vermillion with his hand to the moon like face of Sita, his betrothed.]\*

**Mr. President :** \*[I would like the Member to remember that this is a Constituent Assembly and not a poets' gathering.]\*

**Shri Algu Rai Shastri :** \*[Sir, I was just giving an illustration in order to refute the suggestion that the Hindi language is undeveloped and does not have any literature worth the name. This assertion has been made here and I felt it necessary that something should be cited to refute it and to show that Hindi has a great and extensive literature.

But I would like to submit, Sir, that we are not demanding the adoption of Hindi as the national language on account of its literature. but because it is a language of the people and specially it is a language which, in comparison to other languages is spoken by a larger number of people and that it is a language whose area and sphere are very wide. It is for an these reasons that we fire adopting it as the official language and the fact is that it is not we who are adopting it. It is history that is compelling us to adopt it. Every one of us has to accept it as the official language, simply because every one of us desires to replace the foreign language by a language of our own country. The adoption of Hindi is unavoidable in order to remove English from its present position of official language of the Union.

When we have no other option but to adopt Hindi in this manner, I would submit that there should be no dispute about its script, for it has already its script—a script in which the ‘Rigveda’ was written—a script in which ‘Hanuman Chalisa’ is written—the script in which all the books from the Rigveda down to the Hanuman Chalisa of Tulsidas have, been written, is called the Devanagari script. I doubt whether we can, even if we search the whole world, discover a script as beautiful, as scientific as the Devanagari is. The script of our national language is Devanagari and the numerals are an integral part of that script. The meaning of many. Hindi couplets would be lost if the numerals were changed. Thus Tulsidas has said :

*Jaise ghatatna ank nav (९)  
Nav (९) ke likhat pahad.”*

This numeral (9) is of the Devanagari script. Again Tulsidas says:

*“Jag te Rahoo chati has (36)  
Ram Charon che teen ( 63 )  
Tulsi dekhoo vichari keya  
Hai yeh matou pravin.”*

*“Tulsidas says that a person should have an attitude of detachment forwards the world just as the numerals 3 and 6 appear to be in the figure 36. while he should have an attachment to the feet of Ram just as the figure 6 and 3 have in the figure 63, for to do so in the best wisdom according to Tulsi.”*

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\* [.....] Translation of Hindustani speech.

Naturally these passages would lose all meaning if the form of numerals is changed.

I, therefore, submit, Sir, that the numerals are even today in use in Devanagari just as they were to be found in the Sanskrit Rigveda and Yajurveda. I, therefore, fail to understand the basis of this discussion about numerals here. It is insinuated against us that we are quarreling over a very minor matter and that our insistence upon the Devanagari form of Hindi numerals is, as a matter of fact, extremely unreasonable and unjustifiable. But I would like to submit very humbly that the matter which may appear to you to be very minor, may ultimately have very dangerous implications. A person may be able to take two seers of milk, but no one would like to take a small head of a fly with it, for, he can never digest that. In the same manner, I would submit, Sir that we are unable to accept violence being done to the form of the numerals, and what is more important we see no reason why and for whom we should do violence to them.

It is being argued by some people that the change sought to be made is very minor, because a number of the numerals, more particularly (1), are similar in form. But, in this connection, Sir, I would like you to visualise the situation that is likely to arise in our province, if we agree to the adoption of international form of numerals. We have constituted in our province 'Village Panchayats' and 'Village, Assemblies'. For each group of 5 Village Assemblies or Councils we have established a 'Panchayat Court'. All these are now working there. Our province has a population of 60 millions and is, therefore, in no way smaller than England—rather it is bigger than the latter. In that province, we have established these, Panchayats for the villages and these bodies have been authorised to, levy taxes. They will have to maintain accounts and keep records and registers. Just think of how they would be maintaining their accounts. I am sure, they cannot but use the Hindi method of accounting—that is to say—they, would write Rs. 1-4-3 in the following manner :

1

In it the vertical line stands for the quarter of a rupee. Now the form of 1 in English is, as a matter of fact, used for indicating  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a rupee in the Hindi method of accounting. But the same symbol if drawn outside the bracket like symbol, its value is taken to be one pice.

We have thus been developing our numerals in this country. Is it your intention now to throw away all these improvements that we have made through our history for no reason or rhyme ? It has been argued here, Sir, that the use of Devanagari numerals would cause any amount of dislocation in industry and chaos in our army. But I fail to understand, the kind of difficulties that would arise in the industrial sphere. We can easily avoid any difficulty by specifying the design of the machinery that we seek to import from foreign countries. This is what happens usually in trade and commerce. Even the ordinary traders send their designs and the 'Saries' and other articles manufactured according to these designs are imported from foreign countries.

Moreover, Sir, will we always continue to import all our machinery from foreign countries ? I believe that sooner or later, we will be casting them here and in that case it would be quite easy for us to use our own numerals. I may add that our numerals are a matter of great fortune to us. We are people

[Shri Algu Rai Shastri]

of a great culture. Our history is glorious and grand. It does not befit us to humiliate ourselves and go down on all fours before the foreigners. I am confident, we can manufacture all the articles we need and I am confident that our country has the potential capacity to do so.

I may now say a few words, Sir, to those who feel that they would have considerable difficulties in learning Hindi. I would like to assure them that they would find Hindi to be a very easy language to learn, once they make an attempt to learn it. I admit that in view of the extensive use of English for all the official purposes and in all the branches of administration, it would not be possible for us to replace it at once by Hindi and if an attempt was made to do so, there would be considerable administrative dislocation.

I can, no doubt, speak Hindi with much greater ease and facility than many of my other friends. We have, therefore, to give some time to such friends to acquaint themselves very well with the Hindi language, so that they may be able to express themselves in idiomatic Hindi and may be able to think in it as well as to weep and sing in it. I recognise that only that language can be natural to any person in which he can sing out his joys and weep out his sorrows. I concede that time is needed by such friends to have felicity in the use of Hindi. A specified period has to be provided for them and I submit, Sir, that the period of fifteen years is more than adequate. It is my belief that we can replace English by Hindi, within this period, provided we make a sincere attempt to do so. Of course, if we do not seek to do so, the position would be otherwise. But if we really make an effort, there should be no difficulty in replacing English by Hindi within this period.

I have therefore, in the second part of my amendment proposed that during this period of transition, every attempt should be made to put Hindi in place of English wherever it can be done. I visualise this process to be similar to that of erecting a new house in place of an old one. It is plain that the first has to be removed and the second has to be erected, and we have provided a period of fifteen years for effecting this change and it is my belief that this, work can be completed with very great ease during that period.

But who shall be responsible for effecting this change ? Obviously the Government, and I have, therefore, put in the second part of my amendment that it shall be the duty of the Government to take steps to effect this change. But in the draft that has been put before us, such details as the formation of a Committee or the appointment of a Commission have been included in regard to this matter. As we read this article, Sir, we find that the Drafting Committee has added a new clause, there was previously only one clause. In this manner the Committee want to go into minor details and they do not want to leave any possible matter for the decision of the Parliament or the Government to come.

We, have, Sir, provided for *adult franchise* in our Constitution and representatives elected on that basis shall be composing the future Parliament and I believe they shall be making their own arrangement for the entire country in their own manner. But it is really funny that we would not like to leave even such matters for their decision as the salaries to be paid to our Civilians the number of people to be employed, the facilities to be granted to them and such other matters. Probably it is feared that persons of no education may be elected to the Parliament and such persons may cause any amount of dislocation and chaos. We, in our anxiety, have included provisions with regard to the judiciary, to the type of the houses that are to be occupied by them, the salaries that are to be paid to them and the work that is to be done by them.

The same tendency appear to me behind this draft regarding language. There would be a Commission. there would be a Committee. All Acts, bye-laws,



regulations in all provinces shall be in English. All these matters are found in this draft,—notwithstanding the fact that Hindi is already in use in many provinces and is in use without any difficulty and with all the possible success with which a language can be used for official purposes. But you are bent upon putting in such provisions in spite of all these facts.

I admit that it is almost an impudence on my part to seek to improve the amendment which Shri Gopaldaswami Ayyangar, who is a great thinker, a scholar, an expert, and an aged and experienced person, has moved. But I submit, Sir, would not the purpose be served if we leave to the future Government to make such arrangements as may enable Hindi to take the place of English within the period of fifteen years and to become the official language of this country ? The Government is today in the hands of the representatives of the people and I submit, it is time that the language of the people should also be the language of the State and that language of the people is Hindi, simply because it is understood in almost all provinces.

Some friends have mixed up Hindustani, Urdu and such other matters with the question of Hindi. I do not understand how a couplet of Nazir who was a great poet of Agra should be considered something outside the Hindi literature. . I may cite it here.

*“Abra tha chaya huva aur fasal thi barsat ki,  
Thi zamin pahne huve vardi hari banat ki.”  
“It was the season of rains and the sky was cloudy.  
All around the earth was covered with green verdure.”*

I would submit, Sir, that this is a Hindi verse composed by him and that it is one of the Hindi styles or dialects. Again—

*“Rab ka shukar ada kar bhai  
Jisne hamari gaye banai.”*

“Oh brother render thanks to God who has created the cow for us” is a couplet which all of us read in a book written by some Moulvi Sahib of Meerut. Are we to consider it as something not belonging to the Hindi literature? I do not think so. It is but natural that to a Moulvi or a Moulana such words would very naturally occur. But we have assimilated all these words in our language and I am sure, these words would remain there. All these constituted a style of Hindi and are not beyond the purview of the Hindi language.

No doubt, some people claim Urdu to be a language. But Urdu is not a regional language, nor is it a language used or spoken in any region, or by any particular community. All of us use Urdu words. I was educated under a Moulvi. He used to teach us :

*“Fakat tafavat hai nam hi ka,  
Darasal sab aik hi hai yaro,  
Ja ab safi ke mouj mai hai,  
Usi ka jalva hubab men hai,  
Kabili kurb nahi be-adabon ki sohabat,  
Door rahe unse dil jinko tera pas nahi.”*

“The only difference or dispute is in respect to names. In substance the reality is one. The same God whose light is visible in the clear waters of the Ocean, is to be perceived in the bubbles. One. should not, even, for a moment, remain in the company of the disrespectful and it is desirable that our heart should be away from those who do not have the love of God in their hearts.”

I submit, Sir, that these great thoughts cannot be exiled from our language.

**Mr. President :** \*[I believe you have already given sufficient citations.]\*

**Shri Algu Rai Shastri :** \*[So, Sir, all these words are of the Hindi language and we cannot exclude them from it. My submission is that the words of other languages which have become current in Hindi must be considered to be part and parcel of the Hindi language. I would go further and assert that that language alone should be termed Hindi which has this tendency of including all such words.

Before I conclude, Sir, I would like to say a few words about the content of the Hindi language. There is a great dispute about the real character of Hindi. But I would submit in this connection that Hindi is Hindi and no other definition of this language can be given. Just as I may describe myself by saying what I am, similarly Hindi is described by saying that Hindi is Hindi. Really I fail to understand what other definition can be given. Bhojpuri, Maithili, Khadi Boli and Brij Bhasha are two forms of Hindi. Thus the following passage of Brij Bhasha is part of Hindi literature:

*"Ankhiya Hari darshan ki piyasi"  
 'My eyes wishfully long for the sight of God.'  
 Similarly the following passage in Maithili  
 "Sar binu sarsij, sarsij binu sar  
 Ki sarsij binu soore".*

"The Lotus with the Lake and the Lake without the Lotus have no significance."  
 Similarly,

*"Rab ka shukra ada kar bhai  
 Jisne hamari Gaye banai"*

of Meerut is also Hindi. I do not think any one can prevent Moulana Hifzur Rahman from speaking the type of Hindi he pleases, for, there can be no dispute about its true nature since it can be taken down in Devanagari Script and it can be understood by quite a good number of people in this country.

The dispute regarding numerals I submit, Sir, is without any substance. The fact is that the numerals are but an integral part of the Devanagari script and cannot be distinguished from it and we should, therefore, accept Devanagari numerals. Such matters as the appointment of a Commission formation of a Committee for replacing English by Hindi within the period of fifteen years, should be left to the future Government for being decided in the manner it pleases.

With these words, I submit my amendment to you. I concede, Sir, that within this period of fifteen years, English should continue to be used. It is my conviction, that in our Constitution there should be an article declaring Hindi in the Devanagari script as our official language and that it should make provision that within the transitional period of fifteen years, English should continue to be in use but that after the expiry of that period, Hindi should completely replace English and within this period of fifteen years, it should be the duty of the Government to find out ways and means through which English can be completely replaced by Hindi.

I may add, Sir, that I have no ill-will towards English. I believe there would be English in our Universities even after the expiry of that period and that our students would be acquiring the knowledge of different languages. But I believe, Sir, that the signatures on our treaties etc. shall be in Hindi. Our national language shall be Hindi and our script shall be Devanagari which we

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\*[ .....] Translation of Hindustani speech.

have got from the Rigveda and whose words have been borrowed from that great ocean of learning. It has been fertilized by waters from that source—the source which has given life and light to the world—the source whose literature, philosophy and codes are invaluable treasures of the entire world.

With these words, Sir, I conclude my observations and I thank you, Sir, for having been kind enough to give me so much time for expressing my views.]

**The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee** (West Bengal: General) Mr. President, Sir, we are considering a matter which is of vital importance, not to the people belonging to one or other of the provinces of India, but to the entire millions of India's population. In fact, Sir, the decision that we are about to take, even if we ignore for the time being the points of difference, vital though they may appear to some, the decision that we are about to take is something which has never been attempted in the history of India for the last thousands of years. Let us therefore at the very outset realise that we have been able to achieve something which our ancestors did not achieve.

Some Members have spoken not doubt out of the warmth of their feeling and have tried to emphasise upon the points of difference. I shall say a few words on the points of difference a little later. But I would like the House to rise to the height of the occasion and flatter itself that it is making a real contribution to the national unity of our Motherland of which we and those who come after us may be legitimately proud.

India has been a country of many languages. If we dig into the past, we will find that it has not been possible for anybody to force the acceptance of one language by all people in this country. Some of my Friends spoke eloquently that a day might come when India shall have one language and one language only. Frankly speaking, I do not share that view and when I say so, I am not ignoring the essential need for creating that national unity of India which must be the foundation stone in our future reconstruction. That unity must be achieved by allowing those elements in the national life of our country, which are today vital, to function and function in dignity, in harmony and in self-respect. Today it stands to the glory of India that we have so many languages from the north to the south, from the west to the east, each one of which in its own way, has made contributions which have made what Indian life and civilisation are today.

If it is claimed by anyone that by passing an article in the Constitution of India, one language is going to be accepted by all, by a process of coercion, I say, Sir, that that will not be possible to achieve. (*Hear, hear*) Unity in diversity is India's key-note and must be achieved by a process of understanding and consent, and for that a proper atmosphere has to be created. If I belonged to a province where Hindi is the spoken language, I would have felt proud today of the agreement to which practically all the members of this House have voluntarily submitted themselves by accepting Hindi in Devanagari script as the official language of free India. That is a solid achievement which, I hope, those friends of mine who come from the Hindi-speaking provinces should appreciate.

I am not talking about the relative claims of other languages. Left to myself, I would certainly have preferred Sanskrit. People laugh at Sanskrit today perhaps because they think it is not practicable to use it for so many purposes which a modern State has to fill. I do not want to take your time by dwelling on the claim of Sanskrit. I am not fully competent to do so, but most certainly that is a language which still is the storehouse. Shall I say the unlimited and illimitable storehouse, from which all knowledge and wisdom are drawn, not so much perhaps by the present generation of the Indian people but by others who have preceded us and by all true lovers of learning

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and scholarship throughout the civilised world. That is Our language, the mother-language of India. We do wish, not for paying lip sympathy or homage to its genius, but in our own national interests so that we may re-discover ourselves and know the wealth and treasure that we accumulated in the past and are capable of achieving in future,—we do wish that Sanskrit will reoccupy an honoured place in the national educational system of India.

I am not similarly advocating the claims of other languages. You will not call it provincial if I say that I am proud of my own language. It is a language which has not remained as a mere language of the people of Bengal alone. It was the language enriched by many noble writers for centuries past—the language of Vande Mataram. It was our national poet Rabindra Nath Tagore who raised the status and dignity of India when he had his great thoughts and contributions in Bengali recognised it the bar of world opinion. (Hear, hear). That is your language. It is the language of India, (*Hear; hear*). I am sure that the languages of my friends from the South and the West, of which they are so proud, have also great records and must be protected and safeguarded in ample measure. All must feel that nothing has been done in the Constitution which may result in the destruction or liquidation or weakening of any one of these languages.

Why do we accept Hindi ? Not that it is necessarily the best of Indian languages. It is for the main reason that that is the one language which is understood by the largest single majority in this country today. If 14 crores of people out of 32 Crores today understand a particular language, and it is also capable of progressive development, we say, let us accept that language for the purposes of the whole of India, but do it in such a way that in the interim period it may not result in the deterioration of our official conduct of business or administration and at no time retard true advancement of India and her other great languages. We accept that proposition, and the scheme which Mr. Gopalaswami Ayyangar has placed before you includes certain principles which we consider, taken as a whole, meet this view-point and will be not in the interests of the people coming from the south of India, but in the interests of the people of India as a whole. (*Hear; hear*).

You Have got sonic time, fifteen years, within which English will have to be replaced. How is it to be replaced? It will have to be replaced progressively. We will have to decide realistically whether for certain special purposes English should still be continued to be used in India. As sonic of my friends have already stated, we might have rid India of British rule—we had reasons for doing so—but that is no reason why you should get rid of the English language. We know fully well the good and the evil that English education has done to us. But let us judge the future use of English dispassionately and from the point of view of our country's needs. After all, it is on account of that language that the have been able to achieve many things; apart from the role that English has played in unifying India politically, and thus in our attaining political freedom, it opened to us we civilisation of large parts of the world. It opened to us knowledge, specially in the realm of science and technology which it would have been difficult to achieve otherwise. Today we are proud of what our scientists and our technical experts have done.

I say, Sir, we would be suffering from a sense of inferiority complex if we examine the role that the English language should play in this country from any narrow standpoint. There is no question of the English language being used today for political purposes or for dominating any system of national education. It will be for us, the representatives of the people of free India, to decide as to how progressively we will use Hindi and other Indian languages, how progressively we will get rid of the English languages if we feel that for

all time to come for certain purposes, we will allow English language to be used or taught we need not be ashamed of ourselves. There are certain matters which we have the courage to speak out, not in individual or sectional interest but where we feel that such a step is to be taken in the interests of the country as a whole.

Sir, with regard to regional languages, I am now happy that the amendment proposes to include in the body of the Constitution itself a list of the principal regional languages of India. I hope we will include Sanskrit also. I shall speak here with frankness. Why is it that many people belonging to non-Hindi speaking provinces have become a bit nervous about Hindi ? If the protagonists of Hindi will pardon me for saying so, had they not been perhaps so aggressive in their demands and enforcement of Hindi, they would have got whatever they wanted, perhaps more than 'what they expected, by spontaneous and willing co-operation of the entire population of India. But, unfortunately, a fear has been expressed, and in some areas that fear has been translated into action, where people speaking other languages, not inferior to Hindi by any means, have not been allowed the same facilities which even the much-detested foreign regime did not dare to deprive them of.

I would beg of those who represent the Hindi speaking provinces in this Constituent Assembly to remember that while we accept Hindi, they in their turn, take upon themselves a tremendous responsibility. I was glad to find that some weeks ago at a meeting of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, a resolution was passed that in these Hindi speaking provinces, there will be compulsory arrangements for the study of one or more of the other Indian languages. (An honourable Member : A pious resolution!). Let that not remain a pious resolution. It will depend upon leaders like Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, Babu Purushottam Das Tandon, Babu Shri Krishna Sinha, and Pandit Ravi Shankar Shukla to see to it that within the next few months, arrangements are made, if necessary by statute, for the due recognition in their areas of other important regional languages, specially if there are people speaking those languages residing in those areas. I shall watch with interest and see how these facilities are given and the resolution unanimously passed under the leadership of Babu Purushottam Das Tandon is carried into effect in provinces like Bihar and the U.P.

Sir, a lot of talk is going on about what is meant by Hindi. There cannot be any artificial political forces or forces created by statutory provisions dictating as to how a language is to be shaped. A language will be shaped in natural course of events, in spite of current controversies, in spite of individuals, however big or however eminent for the time being they may be. It is the people's will that creates changes; they come naturally and often imperceptibly. It is not a resolution of the Constituent Assembly which will decide the supremacy of a language. If you want that Hindi is to really occupy an All-India position and not merely replace English for certain official purposes, you make Hindi worthy of that position and allow it to absorb by natural process words and idioms not only from Sanskrit but also from other sister languages of India. Do not obstruct the growth of Hindi. I can speak Hindi in my own Bengali way. Mahatma Gandhi spoke Hindi in his own way. Sardar Patel speaks Hindi in his own Gujarati way. If my friends from the U.P. or Bihar come and say that theirs is the standard Hindi which they have laid down and any one who cannot speak this language will be tabooed, it will be a bad thing not only for Hindi, but it will be a bad thing for the country. I am glad, therefore, that provision has been incorporated in the draft article suggesting as to how this language should develop in this country.

I do hope an Academy of Languages will be established by the Government of India and perhaps similar academies will be established in other regional areas

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in India where a systematic study of Hindi and other Indian languages will take place, where comparative literatures will be studied and publications in Devanagari script of selected books in all Indian languages will be organised; where the more important task of finding out terms and terminology specially for commercial, industrial, scientific and technical purposes will be dispassionately undertaken. Let us not be narrow-minded in this respect. I played my humble part in giving to my mother-tongue its due place in my University, a work which was started by my revered father nearly sixty years ago and it was left to me to bring that work into fruition fifteen years ago. Calcutta gave ungrudging recognition to all languages in India. We selected our terms and terminology from the point of view of our future advance and not narrow sentiments. If today it is said that all technical terms and terminology are to be used in Hindi, you may do so in the provinces where Hindi is being spoken. What will happen to Bengal, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madras? Will they also use their own technical terms in their State languages? If that is so, what will become about the inter-change of opinion and inter-change of educational facilities between one State and another? What will happen to those who go to foreign countries for their future education? These are questions I would ask you to ponder over. Let us not be carried away by mere sentiment. I am certainly proud of certain sentiments. I am anxious that there should be a language which gradually will become not only the spoken language of the entire population of India, but a language in which the official business of the Government of India will be carried, and will be capable of being used by all. We have agreed it will be Hindi. At the same time, it has to be adjusted and re-adjusted at every step in such a way that our national interests may not suffer and not injure the interests of the State languages also. If you proceed in that fashion I have not the slightest doubt that we will not have to wait for fifteen years; more readily, it will be possible for people of all the provinces to agree to and implement our decision.

Lastly, I shall say a few words about the numerals. Much has been made about the numerals. We are having a minor war on numerals. But, this suggestion which has been made is not in the parochial interest of the people who come from South India. That is a point which must be understood by every section of this House. The continuance, until otherwise decided, of the international numerals, which really have come back to the land of their birth in a somewhat modified form, is vitally necessary in our own interests, at least for many years to come. Later on, if, on the recommendation of the Commission, the President feels that a change is to be made, that change may be made. You have got your statistics; you have got your scientific work to be done. You have your commercial undertakings, banks, accounts, audit. You have so many other things in respect of which the use of international numerals is necessary.

Some of my friends ask me, if you are taking the entire Hindi language, and when some of the numerals more or less similar, why not accept a few more? It is not a question of learning three or four numerals. I believe every one will know the Hindi numerals, which may be also used right from the beginning. Hindi numerals will also be learnt by all. But the question is regarding their use for purposes for which you consider they cannot be properly used.

Some of my Hindi-speaking friends have asked, why compel us to use the international numerals? We are not banning the use of Hindi numerals in Bihar, Central Provinces or the U.P. where Hindi will be the State language. Obviously Hindi numerals will have a large part to play. Where is the harm

if you learn the international numerals also and use them for all-India official purposes? Rather, it will be to your benefit, specially for your higher educational curriculum. I would ask Babu Purshottam Das Tandon, and appeal to him that in this matter he must rise, equal to the occasion. It is not a matter which need be carried by a majority of votes. Even if some of them, I feel against the all-India use and recognition of the international numerals in addition to Hindi numerals, even if he feels that this is not fair and just, or is not to his liking, for the very fact that Hindi which is the language of his own province is being accepted by the entire people of India, he should have the statesmanship to get up and say that in spite of his personal feelings, he accepts the compromise and approves the resolution.

We have passed many important resolutions in this House during the past years. We have faced many crises together. It will be making a childish affair if on a matter connected with numerals, the Constituent Assembly of free India commanded by one political party divides. We shall be making a laughing stock of ourselves and the whole of India and we would be strengthening the hands of our enemies. Let us emphasise not on the differences but on the substantial achievement of our common aim. Let us tell the whole world that we have done so without rancour and with unanimity. Let us not look at the matter from a political angle.

It pains to find that in some areas, acceptance of international numerals may become a first class political issue. It depends on the leaders of those provinces to take courage in both hands, get up here and say that they have accepted this compromise for the good of India and that they are going to stand together. If the leaders say so, I have not the slightest doubt that the people also will accept it. We have not banned the circulation of Hindi or Devanagari numerals in any province where the State legislature so decides or even for all India purposes. All that we have recommended is the acceptance of a formula which we feel will be fair and just to all. I hope that before the debate concludes it will be possible for the representatives of the different view-points to meet together and come forward before the House with the declaration that the proposition of Mr. N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar is going to be unanimously accepted.

**Mr. President :** The House stands adjourned till 4 O'clock.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Four of the Clock in the afternoon.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Four P.M., Mr. President (the Honourable Dr. Rajendra Prasad), in the Chair.

**Mr. President :** We shall now continue the discussion. Mr. Chacko.

**Shri P. C. Chacko** (United State of Travancore & Cochin) : Sir, my position is that English should continue to be used for a period to be fixed and the question of a national language should be left to the future Parliament. A national language has to evolve itself and is not to be created artificially. The national language for a great country like India should have certain minimum requirements. It should be capable of expressing all the needs of modern civilisation. To be capable of meeting all modern demands, it should have a lore of scientific literature. Language as the vehicle of thought determines to a large extent our mental makeup. The capacity for thought, and for thought development, to a great degree is limited by the thinker's language of expression. Each language has a vocabulary, a method of construction and a scheme of thought process distinctly all its own.

A person who knows only a primitive language cannot, of course, think in the same lines as one who speaks a well-developed language. The national language of a great country like India should also be great. Some of our languages in India are really rich in literature. But, Sir, I do not think that any of our languages contain a good scientific literature. It would be almost impossible to teach Chemistry, Physics and such other sciences in any of our languages in India. A language cannot be artificially moulded for ready use. It has to develop itself and that takes time. The adoption of a language from the languages which we are having in India will most probably retard our national progress. It may prevent our higher studies. It may prevent scientific researches which we need. Therefore, I believe we will have to wait till the time when a language in India develops itself and matures to that stage when we can make it our official language and our national language.

To replace an international language like English, very expressive, rich ill vocabulary, easy and simple in construction, and one which is recommended to be the international auxiliary language, is almost impossible. Probably Shakespeare decided the national language of England once for all, and for Italy probably Dante decided it. Like that, some literary genius will in future, according to me, decide the national language for India.

A national language can be decided upon only by mutual agreement. It cannot be done by taking votes; that is what I believe. No language can be imposed upon an unwilling people. No nation has ever succeeded in imposing the language of the majority upon the minority. In the day of Czarist Russia, speaking Lithuanian language was absolutely forbidden and the penalty for breaking this law was very severe, sometimes amounting to death. Nevertheless, when after two centuries, Lithuania declared itself independent, it was found that about 93 per cent. of the people still spoke the Lithuanian language. Likewise, in Spain, the Catalan language was prohibited in 1923, but after a strenuous struggle which ensued in 1932, the State had to recognise that language.

On the other hand, we know what happened in Britain. Even now there are about six spoken languages in the British Isles. English evolved itself as a national language and the people willingly recognised it. The result was that Welsh in Wales and Gaelic in Scotland slowly were abandoned by the people. Likewise we will also have, to wait for some time till a language emerges from among the languages which exist in India. We will have to wait till it matures and reaches that position when we can make it *our lingua franca*.

Before deciding upon the official language, to me it appears that we have to decide one or two very important questions. Firstly Sir, the question is



whether we should have one language or more languages as our official language. In Switzerland, for example, there are four languages spoken by the people. In schools the medium of instruction is that language which is spoken by the people in the locality where the school is located. In higher classes a second national language is compulsory and later on a third language. All the four languages are recognised as official languages.

In pre-war Czechoslovakia, though there were about twelve languages, besides some dialects spoken by the people, two languages were recognised as official. In public offices the language of the region in which the office was situated was used. In many other countries also more than one language is recognised as official language.

Therefore it is a question to be decided whether we should have one single language as the official language of India or we should have more than one—for example Bengalee, Tamil, Hindi and even English. If we decide on one national language, we will again have to decide whether we should allow the Union Government to use any other language than the official language. In the U.S.S.R., for example, in European Russia itself there are about 76 languages spoken besides innumerable dialects and only one language is the official language of the U.S.S.R. But in offices the language of the region is also officially used. Where many languages are spoken and there are many other dialects also the question is to decide whether we should permit the Union to use only the official language or other languages also in public offices situated in particular regions.

I wish to point out that in Eire even now the English language is used for all official purposes. During the days of the Irish struggle for independence they were almost resisting the use of English. In 1893 a Gailic League was formed which played a most predominant part in the Irish struggle for freedom. In their schools now Irish is taught as a compulsory language. Though the Irish people want Irish to be their only official language yet they find it very difficult to replace English by Irish.

We are all almost agreed that English should continue for a period of fifteen years. So this is not an urgent question, though it is a very important question. It is a sound principle in democracy to know the wishes of the people and to respect the wishes of the people when there is doubt among the representatives themselves as regards the decision which may be taken by them. Though it is an important question, since it is not an urgent question I would request that we take time to go back to the people to get a mandate from the people and for that we should leave the question to be decided by the future Parliament.

Why should we worry ourselves with the problem when we are faced with several very urgent problems which affect the life of the millions of people of the country? When people who valiantly fought for the freedom of the country are dying for want of food and shelter, when trade and commerce is becoming duller day by day, when unemployment is rampant, especially in the South, when in the North we are having the Kashmir problem and in the South the menace of the Communist hooliganism—even today I got a telegram from my country that the son of a Congress worker who devoted twenty years in the service of the country was stabbed by a communist on Sunday last—and when the future of the very nation itself is hanging on the solution we might find for the food problem I ask why should this august Body waste its time over this question, the solution of which we intend to implement only after fifteen years, according to the agreement almost reached by every one in the House.

After having seen a sort of fanaticism in action in the matter of a comparatively smaller question of the numerals and after having heard a section of the people of this House speak as if all that mattered in life was the Devanagari system of numerals, I feel that it would be better for us to leave the decision on

[Shri P. C. Chacko]

this question to soberer men. We can hope that our posterity will be more tolerant and wiser and hence they may be able to find an agreed solution for this problem. Our intolerance has already divided India. Let it not divide it again. Instead of imposing a language on posterity I believe it will be better for us if we leave this problem to be decided by posterity themselves.

**Shri B. Das** (Orissa: General) : Sir, this question of Hindi as the *lingua franca* has caused us a lot of misgivings. I will 'not be true to myself', my conscience and my God if I do not express my feelings. I will not be true to my great leader, Mahatma Gandhi, who is in Heaven, if I do not express truly and correctly the apprehensions that I have come to entertain during the last three weeks, and which have been aggravated more and more by the dominating attitude of my friends from U.P. and C.P.

As we want a *lingua franca* I do accept Hindi as the official language, but that does not mean that we have no apprehensions, we have no suspicions or that we have no fears. My Friend Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerji this morning indicated some of the fears and suspicions that non-Hindi speaking provinces including those in the South do harbour. This morning when Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra was speaking I was almost persuaded to accept Sanskrit as the official language of the State, so that everybody will start with an even keel in that mother of all languages. There will then be no rivalry between the sons and daughters of the leaders of U.P. and C.P. that are present here and them sons and daughters of leaders of Orissa or Madras. They will all learn Sanskrit.

The fears and suspicions that we harbour today were harboured by us till a couple of years ago, when the officialdom was manned by the Britishers and the civil service examinations were conducted in London. Naturally, the Englishmen preponderated in service. Now that the civil services and other examinations are being held in Delhi, naturally hereafter the Hindi-speaking provinces (I am not talking of the immediate future but of fifteen years hence) the people of the Hindi-speaking provinces such as U.P. and C.P. will preponderate in the civil and other services of our country.

What shall be the standard or ideal of education and examination in Hindi language? I do not know much of Hindi. I know a little of what is called Hindustani which the ordinary people use, that inferior Hindustani in which official folks talk to the servants and ordinary workmen. That much Hindustani I know. According to my investigation Hindi is the only language in the world which requires its verbs to have different inflections according to the gender.

**An Honourable Member** : What about German?

**Shri B. Das** : I am sorry I tried to learn German but with the advent of first war I gave it up. However, in my old age, I am not prepared to start speaking Hindi—all the time labouring under the dread that I might make a mistake, in the proper gender of the verbs I used and the nervousness that I may not be laughed at by Hindi-speaking ladies and gentlemen over mistakes, I have made.

But that is not the problem. Our children will have to learn a language so like the German where they will have to see that they do not make mistakes in their sentences by using wrong verbs. That is a misgiving, yet I am willing to overlook it. But I am not willing to reconcile myself to the position that for the next fifteen, twenty or thirty years the sons of the Hindi-speaking people, whether they belong to U.P. or to the C.P., will preponderate in the all-India services.

I have watched during the last twenty-one years the spread of Rashtrabhasha Hindi throughout the country. I do say, that very little has been done to

train up Hindi speakers : excepting for the efforts of my Friends Mr. Satyanarayana and Shrimati Durgabai there, very little has been done, so that those who are today capable of a smattering of Hindi reading in Orissa or Madras, can they hope to compete with the Hindi-speaking people or can they compose music or songs like my Friend Pandit Balkrishna Sharma or write beautiful stories like my Friend Shrimati Kamala Chaudhri ? That may not count for my generation but it will count in later generations and affect them.

We know we must have a *lingua franca*. We accept Hindi. Why is it that the leaders of U.P. and C.P. are so intolerant ? I found leader after leader coming from those benches and talking in Hindi knowing that they are not appealing to the Members of U.P. or C.P. or even in Bihar. They are raising their voices to speak to the people of South India and even to the people of Orissa like me or to the Members from Bengal who talk just a smattering of Hindi. Everybody knows that the Bengali is a little bit conservative : he seldom learns an Indian language gracefully although he masters the English language. Sir, I do hope that when the next speakers rise from the benches of U.P., C.P. or Bihar let them address in English those Members of South India and those like me who cannot understand Hindi so very well. If they are so fond of their mother tongue, let them reserve it for other occasions. Let their arguments show that they have spirit of tolerance, that they want to concede and that they are not in that aggressive mood of, "You must have Hindi as *lingua franca*, we care a rap what happens to you, your sons or grandsons".

We are not going to allow that sort of attitude in speakers from U.P. or C.P. That way you will not make us co-operate in future or even now. Sir, that is what is agitating me and if I speak out my mind I do so in obedience to the dictates of my conscience.

**Shri H. J. Khandekar** (C.P. & Berar : General) : I would like to tell the honourable Member that C.P. is not a purely Hindi-speaking Province; it speaks Marathi as well as Hindi.

**Shri B. Das:** All right, Sir. I accept my Friend's correction. It is the Jubbulpore district which I have in mind which gave birth to the President of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, my Friend Seth Govind Das.

Sir, I have said already that we are human beings and the problems of loaves and fishes affect us as much as the problems of higher national ideology. Let the leaders of U.P. that will speak hereafter tell us how they are solving that problem so that they do not get an overriding weightage on the other Provinces like Orissa, Assam, Bengal, or the Southern Provinces and States like Madras, part of Bombay, Mysore and Travancore. That is a problem they will have to solve.

They will have to tell us how they are going to teach Hindi to the thirty odd crores of people of this sovereign India. Nobody has told us that, Simply passing the Resolution and making Hindi the *lingua franca* does not solve the problem. Even during the last 21 years how many teachers had U.P. sent out to the other Provinces ? Not more than 100. Do they expect that every village school teacher of U.P. will go to Orissa, Bengal, Assam and Madras and sufficiently teach Hindi so that our sons and daughters could equally compete, will the sons and daughters of U.P. and North C.P. ? If my friends of U.P. had tolerance they would not have caused us these heartburns for the last three or four weeks.

The question of numerals has loomed so much in the horizon that they do not appreciate the concession when the United India, in a spirit of co-operation agreed to accept Hindi as the *lingua franca* of India. Why do they not yield? The world is not stationary. What we may incorporate in the Constitution to day may be a dead issue five or ten years hence. We, Hindus, know how the world is changing; we know how our conception of God has been changing from

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time immemorial. From the days of Rigveda down through the Vistas of Upanishads, Puranas and the Bhagvatam to the present concept, we are changing all the time. Why are my friends from U.P. so insistent that only the Devanagari numerals be used and not also the Indian numerals of international character as many of us want ? I have supported the proposition to have these international numerals along with the numerals; our fears might prove to be wrong; ten or twenty years hence it might be proved that it was a wrong thing to have introduced international numerals, but at present the fear does exist and hence both the numerals the House should accept.

We do not want to fight over this small issue of numerals. Why should not my friends of U.P. and North C.P. agree that both the numerals will be allowed for another fifteen years ?—then most of us will not be here, at least I won't be in this world fifteen years hence. Then those who succeed, with the resurgence of the spirit of independence and after working the independent Constitution for fifteen years, let them meet together and solve the problem whether the international numerals should continue along with the Devanagari numerals.

With the advancement of science as Dr. Mookerjee rightly pointed out this morning, and with more and more international co-operation, more and more contact with outside world, more and more of the spirit of one world, we should have recourse to international numerals at least in the scientific and technical fields. What is right or wrong it is not for me to judge; it is for me to see that we evolve a common formula whereby all of us unanimously pass these articles which shall be incorporated in our Constitution. Let there be no bickerings. Let not South resent the discussions of the North. Let not North be overbearing to the South when they want the numerals of ancient times to be brought back in modern administration. If some of us who revere the memory of him who brought us this independence and was incarcerated and out of that memory we try to co-operate and not hurt the feelings of each other, it is expected of the leaders of U.P. who have pressed this question of language and numerals to show a spirit of tolerance which is expected of them.

**Dr. P. Subbarayan** (Madras : General) : Mr. President, Sir, this is the first time I venture to address this august Assembly and I feel rather overcome by that sensation. My amendment is a very simple one and all the other amendments actually follow in its wake.

My amendment is that the language of the Union should be Hindustani in Roman script. I feel that we ought to get akin to the world. The world is getting narrower today and we ought not to think in narrow terms of our own provinces but more with the idea of a "One World". If you do really believe in One World and peace, as Mahatma Gandhi preached to the world, then I am sure most of you, if you search your hearts, will be inclined to vote for the proposition I have propounded today.

**Shri R. K. Sidhva** (C.P. and Berar: General): Mahatma Gandhi did not say Hindustani in Roman script.

**Dr. P. Subbarayan** : Hindustani in Roman script, what I advocate, as two scripts are a difficulty and may be an acceptable solution.

There is also another thing which I would like to touch upon. Why all this awkwardness about English? All this hatred against English? With the coming of freedom I thought we had abandoned hatred altogether, and we had become friendly with the English people. I would like to quote the American example. Today, if you take the American population, about 20 per cent. only belong to the British Isles. The very nature of the men who represent them in sporting contests of which alone I am well aware, come of races which cannot be described as Anglo-Saxon by any stretch of imagination. In the last

Davis Cup against Australia the two representatives who did battle for America and won were Schroeder and Gonzales. Can you think of more strange names than Schroeder and Gonzales—the one a German and the other a Portuguese?

Therefore, all these people who come of different nationalities residing in the United States have agreed to adopt the English language is their own. I would far rather that we were bold enough to say that English which has been with us for nearly a century and a half, and we who have imbibed as much of the heritage of the English language as anyone else, adopted as our common language.

But unfortunately we are not placed in such circumstances because there is still, in spite of all that has been said, the spirit of hatred, the spirit that feels that we should not touch the language of the conquerer though he, has ceased to be the conquerer and willingly left our country without the firing of a shot merely because he felt the time had come when he ought to accept the decision of a whole nation. But still I am willing to give in to national sentiment.

I would, however, like honourable Members to take their minds back to Mahatma Gandhi. I have been told that we should not utter the name of Mahatma Gandhi in this controversy about language. Why not, I ask. Because day in and day out honourable Members mention the sacred name and only run quite counter to what he taught us. When that is the case, Mr. President, why should I not appeal to Gandhiji's name for Hindustani being adopted as the language of the nation?

**Shri R. K. Sidhwa :** Quite right. He should be quoted correctly. Not for Hindustani in Roman script.

**Dr. P. Subbarayan :** Mr. Sidhwa, if you will have a little patience and hear me develop my argument you will know what I am driving at—I was not quoting him for the Roman script; I was quoting him for the name Hindustani. Well, Sir, to proceed with my argument, English being out of the way, then the next best thing we can adopt is Hindustani in the Roman script, because it keeps us akin to the world.

What is all this nonsense about numerals, I say. Do you want to be archaic and go back to things which have been forgotten for a long time, which you have revived today because you think it is Your own? May I tell you, Sir, that these numerals are older than the numerals you so fondly hug to today.

**Pandit Balkrishna Sharma :** Question

**Dr. P. Subbarayan :** There is no question of questioning that. It is a fact.

**Pandit Balkrishna Sharma :** It is not a fact.

**Dr. P. Subbarayan :** You may say what you like. I have my own opinion about it.

**Pandit Balkrishna Sharma :** Your opinion is not what matters.

**Dr. P. Subbarayan :** It is not my opinion. It is a fact and not an opinion. Yours is an opinion with which you want to change the fact. Well, Sir, to go back to this question of numerals, it has been said in the Encyclopaedia Britannica—it is merely to prove facts I am reading it, Mr. Sharma, for your edification.

**Pandit Balkrishna Sharma :** Say for your enlightenment.

**Dr. P. Subbarayan :** I am enlightened enough.

“Several different claims, each having a certain amount of justification, have been made with respect to the origin of our present numerals, commonly spoken of as Arabic, but preferably as Hindu-Arabic. These include the assertion that the origin is to be found among the Arabs, the Persians, the Egyptians and the Hindus. Intercourse between traders served to carry such symbols from country to country, so that our numerals may be a conglomeration from different sources. The country, however, which first used, so far as we know, the largest number of our numeral forms is India . . . .”

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“One, four and six are found in the Asoka inscriptions of the third century B.C., long before your numerals were thought of. Two, four, six, seven and nine appear in the Nana Ghat inscriptions a century later.

**Pandit Balkrishna Sharma :** Is Nana Ghat situated in Europe ?

**Dr. P. Subbarayan :** That is why I say they are our numerals, which you do not unfortunately accept. I am only proving that these numerals originated in India and nowhere else. Two, three four, five, six, seven and nine in the Nasik caves of the first and second century of our era.

**Pandit Balkrishna Sharma :** Have you seen these numerals on caves in the Nasik? Can you enlighten the House whether these numerals are exactly like the ones now in use?

**Dr. P. Subbarayan :** I am not going to enter into an argument with the honourable Member. He will have his turn to make his observations, For the moment he may kindly bear with me in patience. Two, three, four, five, six and nine there are in the Nasik caves of the first and second century of our era. They bear considerable resemblance to our numerals. If the Honourable Member had waited in patience he would have understood my point. Those numerals have considerable resemblance to our own, our two and three being well recognised derivation, from two and three.

None of these early Indian inscriptions gave any evidence of place value or of a zero. That would make our place value possible. Hindu literature gives some evidence that the zero might have been known before our era. But we have no actual inscriptions containing such symbols before the ninth century. The first definite external reference to the Hindu numerals is contained in a note of Severus Sebokht, a bishop who lived in Mesopotamia about 650. Since he speaks of nine signs the zero seems to have been known to him.

**Mr. President :** Are you going to decide this question on the basis of his verdict ?

**Dr. P. Subbarayan :** Not on the basis of that but on the basis of their being Indian in origin. I am only proving that these are our own numerals and that we need not fight shy of them.

**Mr. President :** We need not go into those details any more. The question is to be decided on broader grounds.

**Dr. P. Subbarayan :** Sir, all that I want to say is that we need not fight shy of these numerals. They are our own and we are only taking back to ourselves what was our own and what are commonly known all over the world. In this way we can be more akin to the world also, because today more than 60 per cent. of the people of the world use these numerals. There is no harm in this. As this is so, I do not know why we should introduce archaic connotations and give up something well-known to us and which we have been using all these years.

I have already referred to the Roman script. (*Interruption.*) Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari is a constitutional expert. I do not pretend to be an expert. But what I say is this : When the script is well-known all over the world, and as the world is getting narrower and narrower, it will keep us akin. to the world and we shall be able to get our own scientists talk to the scientists of the world through the medium of our own language if we adopt the Roman script. It will be easily read by the rest of the world and therefore it will get us akin to the wide world. I hope Shri T. T. Krishnamachari is now satisfied.

Well, coming now to the rest of my amendments, I want that the Commission to be appointed under the Resolution as proposed by Shri N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar should not come after five years. Five years is too short a period

for that. It should come on after ten years are over and until those ten years we should keep the English language as the medium. My friends from the United Provinces laugh at this. If they had the experience I had to go through during the Hindi controversy, they will understand why I am pleading for this gesture on their part. We from the South, wanting a national language, wanting to be in tune with all of you from the North of India, agreed to swallow almost 95 per cent of what you wanted. And yet, you want the other 5 per cent also, because you believe in the Tamil proverb : 'The hare you have got has only three legs'.

I am also reminded of the other Tamil proverb which says, if a man comes and asks for a little place on the verandah and if you grant it, he will next ask for entry into the house itself. That is the position of most of you gentlemen, today.

I feel, Sir, that it is very important that you should understand the South Indian position. If I tell you what exactly happened for three months when I holding was charge of the portfolio of education in Madras and Hindi was introduced as a compulsory subject in the first three forms of the High Schools, you will understand my anxiety that I should go back from here with something done, something accomplished. For three whole months, every morning when I got out of my house I heard nothing but cries of "Let Hindi die, and let Tamil live. Let Subbarayan die and Rajagopalachari die". That was the cry that went up for three months and what is more, we were constrained to use even the Criminal Law Amendment Act which we railed against previously.

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari** (Madras: General): Hear, hear.

**Dr. P. Subbarayan** : Mr. Krishnamachari says : 'Hear, hear'. I remember his criticism on the floor of the House. If he had been in power at that time he would have used worse instruments.

Sir, I will give another information for the edification of my colleagues from the United Provinces. The Congress Bulletin is published both in English and in Hindi. If you compare the number of subscribers for these two editions you will be surprised. Only about 1/40th of those who subscribe for the English edition, subscribe for the Hindi edition. This shows that in spite of Gandhiji's attempts and in spite of everything that has been done, we have not been able to make even those who seem to be jealous of Hindi language buy the Hindi edition of the Congress Bulletin. My honourable friend the Secretary of the Congress (Shri Kala Venkata Rao) wants me to give the number. For reasons best known to him I do not want to give the numbers.

There is another amendment which I would like the House to accept and that is that English should be the fourteenth language in the Schedule. I think my Friend Mr. Anthony has explained the reasons for this, and correctly so. They may be an infinitesimal part of our population, but the Anglo-Indian community is as much Indian as any one of us is. If we regard them as our kith and kin, their language ought to find a place in the Schedule as any of the other languages. Therefore I feel that 14th should be the English language.

Our Friend Shri Lakshmi Kanta Maitra wants also his amendment to be accepted. I am in favour of putting Sanskrit as the fifteenth language, because Sanskrit is our ancient language and we want also to have it mentioned in our Constitution. This is the one place where we could include, it.

Considering everything, I feel that it would be correct if we adopt Hindustani written in the Roman script as the national language of the country.

**Shri Kuladhar Chaliha** (Assam : General) : Mr. President, Sir, after the speech of Dr. Subbarayan which was one of the most rational speeches ever

[Shri Kuladhar Chaliha]

made here in this House, if I come forward to support Sanskrit, I shall be taken as archaic or as an archaeological curiosity. I personally feel that we should have Sanskrit as our national language. Sanskrit and India are co-extensive. However much you can try, you cannot get away from Sanskrit. Our institutions are interwoven with it and values of our lives have been created out of its philosophy. All that is good and all that is valuable and all that we fight for and all that we hold precious have come from Sanskrit literature. The great personalities of Sri Krishna, the Buddha and the Father of the Nation—why do we follow them? But for the heritage that we have in Sanskrit, we would not be following them. It is in Sanskrit that we have got the most beautiful literature, the most profound philosophy and the most intricate of sciences. Can we ever conceive of anything more beautiful than Kalidasa's *Shakuntala* or his *Megadhuta*? Can we have any better things in the world or can you imagine any better culture in the world? As regards philosophy, we have the rational philosophy of Sankhya, the philosophy that Swami Vivekananda took to Chicago, where he had it recognised that ours was one of the finest of religions. This was due to his deep knowledge of Sanskrit. Because of his volcanic energy, he was able to galvanise the world with his ideas.

I cannot be as sentimental or as expressive as my Friend, Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra. I have not got the extensive knowledge of Sanskrit as he has, otherwise I would have given you all that we have in Sanskrit by way of science music, architecture, economics, political science and even surgery which will be surprising. It is there for us to draw upon. Sanskrit is such a vast storehouse that all the provincial languages, when they could not find the proper word for anything, have always gone to Sanskrit to draw upon. Even good Hindi is nothing but Sanskrit. Sir, from birth to death, we perform ceremonies in Sanskrit mantras. Our whole life is so interwoven with Sanskrit that you cannot get away from Sanskrit. May be today only a few people understand Sanskrit, but what about English? Only one per cent or two per cent of the people speak English.

As regards the proposition put forward by the Honourable Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar, I accept it because it is a compromise solution, and because it is good for India, not because Hindi is a better language. As a matter of fact, when I heard people like the Maulana Saheb speaking in Hindustani, I was struck by the dignity, flexibility, refinement of style, sweet intonations of that language, and I thought that Hindustani would be a better substitute for Hindi. You do not ask me why; I do not know, I do not know how to read and write it, but the dignity of the language of Hindustani is such that, when I heard it, I thought it was very attractive. I heard speakers after speakers speaking in Hindi as well as in Hindustani, but I was struck only by the dignity, beauty of expression and the flexibility of the Hindustani language, and I thought it was very attractive.

Now coming again to Sanskrit, it is the mother of all our provincial languages. We will become better Indians by adopting Sanskrit, because Sanskrit and India are co-extensive. Even if we adopt Hindi or Hindustani, we shall not be able to get away from Sanskrit, which has given us our philosophy and all the beautiful things of the world.

Then as regards the numerals, the heavens would not tumble down if we adopt the international numerals. If we have used it for 150 years, and more, we can use it even now, and nothing will be lost. I cannot follow the argument that the international numerals should not be used, for after all it is our own numerals. If we do not adopt the international numerals, we will not be able to adopt ourselves to the changing circumstances of the world. We should try



to be a little more modern and a little more progressive in our outlook. With these words, I conclude.

**Rev. Jerome D'Souza** (Madras : General): Mr. President, I venture to take a few minutes of this House, although I must confess that the points that I wish to bring before you have already been touched upon by various distinguished speakers. If, nevertheless, I crave the indulgence of the House for a few minutes, it is because with so many others in this House I feel the immense gravity and the vital importance of the topic on which we are engaged.

Sir, time and again during the last two years and more that we have gathered in this House, when questions of a controversial nature have engaged our attention and when sometimes passions were roused, some of us who have watched the political scene of our country with a certain detachment, not having been in the rough and tumble of it like stalwart fighters, asked ourselves whether the time would come when before the end of the discussion, our traditional spirit of adjustment and conciliation would assert itself and enable us to come to an agreed solution. And again and again to the deep satisfaction of those who have watched it, to the satisfaction of the friends of this country, possibly also to the deep chagrin of those who do not love us—I would not call them our enemies that spirit of compromise and understanding has asserted itself and we have come to some consensus of opinion.

Only at this point, to the grief of those of us who have wished to see this question also treated in the same spirit of compromise and understanding, I say only on this question, feelings have been embittered or excited to a degree which has not happened before. Now, I am not saying that as a matter of criticism—I may even say that it was inevitable—because apart from perhaps religious convictions and in some cases even more than religious convictions, there is nothing inhuman activity which touches the springs of man's action and man's life more than language and all that language implies.

After all, when we come to think of it, there is nothing that proclaims our superiority to the rest of creation than this divine power of language and speech. Because, after all, a world, when the world is really good and sincere, is the flowing out of the very soul of man, is the very counter-part of his innermost being. Therefore, there is nothing that flows out of human life and the human heart more beautiful than beautiful words, nothing more detestable than harsh, hateful, insincere words. When words come out from the depth of the soul and express the innermost sincerity of that soul, the man who speaks in that manner gains a power over his fellow men, with which nothing else on earth can compare.

How, may I ask you, did our incomparable Mahatma Gandhi hold us as it were in the Palm of his hand, if it were not by the supreme force of sincere, crystalline, vibrating speech which was his own and which was incommunicable? And whenever we find that a language which we claim as our own, a language which we think is the truest expression of our being is in some way denied to us, our passions are stirred as nothing else stirs them. That explains the passion of those who want a particular form of Hindi: that explains, my friends, the passion of those who, like me, wish to see that all the currents of Indian culture, including those of Muslim India, those of Christian India, those of the different parts of India should find a place within the hospitable limits of that language, which will be the official and which will ultimately become the national language of India.

Sir, what physical and geographical climate is to man's physical being language, its spirit, its genius, its vocabulary, are to the spirit of man, as intellectual climate in which the soul and culture of a people live. If that intellectual

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climate is not acceptable to any section, if the meaning, resonance, associations of ideas, historical and cultural implications of a very wide vocabulary do not give satisfaction to all the different elements of this varied and extraordinary nation of ours, in which so many different cultures have to find an expression, there will be great unhappiness. I say, if we do not find some kind of contentment in the cultural climate, of our land as expressed by the spirit, the genius, the music and the rhythm, and variety of vocabulary, of the national language, then, we shall not feel at home, we shall feel we are strangers, as it were under a decree of banishment imposed upon us, not physically, but in the intellectual and cultural sense. That is the meaning of the stand we have taken; that is the reason why we with all the strength of our soul, plead for this larger-hearted treatment of the vocabulary of this language.

I rejoice that our friends have accepted this. On this most fundamental issue, those who have championed the cause of Hindi have assured us that they accept the explanation which has now been made a part of the proposals of Mr. Gopaldaswami Ayyangar, that Hindi shall include the form of speech known as Hindustani as well as other congate styles and forms. This gives us the assurance that in course of time, with the evolution of this language all the different elements that make up this nation will find in it a congenial intellectual and cultural atmosphere. On this point, therefore, let me in all sincerity express a profound satisfaction that we have come to an agreement about the language in general, about the content and spirit of it, and finally about the script that has to be used for it.

Having come thus far, shall a minor thing, a small thing, now dash away that cup of unity that has been offered to our lips? Shall our friends say that here again was one of great might-have-beens of our history? In the brief course of recent history in the evolution of events during the past 10 to 15 years, there came a stage when the majority of our people said that division of the country was inevitable. Still, it is possible to say judging after the passage of time, and with the detachment of a historian, that perhaps at such and such a point, if we had acted in a different way, or if the other party or such and such a person has acted slightly differently, the course of events in our history might have been entirely different.

It is difficult when we are so near to the events, when we are, as it were lost in them, to cultivate that distance and detachment and to pass judgment and to discern all that a particular action or gesture, or decision implies. As apparently insignificant action may have very great explosive possibilities, may contain germs that will develop in a manner which we cannot foresee at all. I feel Sir, that some of us here, whether we belong to one section of the House or another, are saying things performing actions, and aligning ourselves in the course of these discussions in a manner the full significance, the ultimate implications of which, we ourselves are not aware, and which time alone can show.

While therefore rejoicing that there has been basic agreement on this question, let me say in a spirit of prayerfulness and earnest desire that as regards the points that remain unsettled, God Himself may guide our steps and decisions, and ultimately move us to a solution which will ensure the preservation of that unity which we have got at such a price, for which such tremendous sacrifices have been made. I hope and pray therefore that on the minor points on which we are still divided, the unity of this country may not be shattered upon this rock of linguistic consciousness. I will not use the word fanaticism it is feeling, and passion nurtured by ignorance rather than fanaticism, ignorance of all the implications of the decision which we are called upon to make.

Nevertheless, I venture to plead for the acceptance in its broad outline of the proposal submitted by Mr. Gopalaswami Ayyangar, not because I think that in every detail it is acceptable but because it embodies the widest common measure of agreement. I agree with Dr. Subbarayan that reopening the matter within five years though it is asked for and has been conceded, is not a satisfactory arrangement; in five years we shall not be in a position to satisfy the commission which is envisaged that the time has come for a radical and important change. I hope means may be found to evolve a satisfactory formula on this point also, which will be universally acceptable.

The logic of events will convince all that the time is not enough for the mastery of this language by many sections of our people in a manner in which the official language, should be mastered, mastered so that it may become not merely the official language, but ultimately the national language. I may assure those that may think that we are rather lukewarm in giving our support to this, that we wish to see Hindi not only as the official language, but we wish to see it evolving, developing, gaining the hearts of all our people to such an extent that from an official language, it may become a truly national language, nay as Mr. Dhulekar said this morning, with all the sincerity which we recognise in him, that it may become an international language. We do want it. But if it is to be an international language, its international spirit, and outlook must be maintained. If we close our doors against words, ideas, ways and currents of thought, manners of expression and historical association which are implied in this, then, it will not have the international spirit; the spirit which will naturally and inevitably spread out beyond our country and enable it to become one of the preferred languages of strangers and foreigners.

Cultured people have preferences in the matter of foreign languages. The French people, proud of their language, have a fine statement : I do not know whether national self-love has inspired them to say so, but it expresses their pride in their language. All men have two languages, they say, their own and then the sweet French tongue:

*“Tout homme a deux langues, la sienne et puis le français”*

Perhaps, a day may come when the whole civilised world may say, “All men have two languages, their own and then sweet language of India.” But, if it is to be that, the capacity to spread and conquer the hearts of men should be there; a truly international spirit as manifested in the way that It has developed in many parts of our country, gathering spoils as we may say of many an age and culture, many a race and many an epoch in our history, should be stamped upon it.

It is for this spirit of universality that I would plead with my friends who have till now stood out on the question of numerals to accept the compromise, putting aside for the moment the merits of the question. Personally I believe that on rights and merits, international numerals have an indisputable superiority. I say as a teacher, as a student of science and literature, as a student proud of our contribution of the concept of zero and its associated numerals to the world culture, that on the merits of the case, it is better to have the international numerals. But even if it were not so, this question of numerals has now come to be a kind of symbol for many of us : Symbol on the one hand of the spirit of adjustment among the differing elements within our country, and on the other, symbol of the spirit of universalism and so we want this point to be conceded. However I should not call it a “concession,” rather let me say an agreement on that point, as an affirmation of the spirit of universality from those who have not so far shown themselves willing to make it.

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This language of India has to be learnt not only by the 350 millions of our brothers and sisters. Remember that it has to be learnt by the army of foreigners who come to our country, to study our culture, to take part in our commerce, to take part in foreign diplomatic representation. It is not merely Indians who have to learn a language, for which they have a natural affinity; it is foreigners also who have to learn this language which will be entirely foreign to them. When we ask for fifteen years it is also because the commercial interests of India are mixed up with this question. Foreign countries which need the knowledge of the Indian language require a fairly wide period for its study. Moreover this universal outlook is required not only in the interests of India but for the good of the world at large.

We wish to carry to the world the message of India's spirit, the message of her firm belief in the primacy of spiritual values, the message of love and Ahimsa which Mahatma Gandhi preached. We wish to communicate to others the literary and artistic treasures which we have inherited from our past, and unless we keep our windows and doors open, unless we make matters easy for those friends to share our cultural heritage, unless we leave-as it were-bridges by which they will easily recognise that it is not an entirely strange land from which we are going out and into which they will be stepping it will not be easy for us to carry out our mission.

I say the acceptance of these international numerals will be a symbol of the spirit of India which wants not merely a narrow nationalism but according to the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi, and Rabindranath Tagore and of our own great Prime Minister wants the spirit of universal brotherhood. I say that for the sake of this we should not permit anything which would stand in the way of universal understanding and mastery of our language.

So, on all these grounds I should like to make a fervent and earnest appeal that these divisions which have caused so much distress of heart to the lovers of this country may be closed now, that the power and cohesion and the unity which led a mighty political party to win independence might not at this last stage of the deliberations of our great Assembly break down and be dissipated to the satisfaction of those who do not love us and to the deep distress of those who love us. I, therefore, most earnestly and humbly make this supreme appeal through you, Sir, that we may close our ranks; that on this question of language there be the grace of general and universal acceptance; and that as we rise from this discussion, we may rise not as separated into camps, but as brothers, and children of one Mother—Our Motherland, India. (Loud Cheers.)

**Shri B.M. Gupte** (Bombay: General): Mr. President, I have tabled amendment No. 281. It is a humble attempt at a compromise. The honourable Father D'Souza has just put in a very strong plea for a compromise but he has not put forward any specific formula. My amendment is an effort in that direction. I of course know the fate of those who venture to try their hand at compromise making. Very often they displease both parties rather than please both parties. But in the interest of unity and harmony I have taken that risk.

In my opinion the amendment 65—the Munshi-Ayyangar formula—is itself a very admirable compromise between the two schools of thought. It holds the scales evenly. The name of the language is accepted as Hindi but the protagonists of Hindustani are comforted with a directive clause. In that clause

itself those who are the Champions of Sanskritised Hindi are appeased because it is said down that Sanskrit shall be the primary source of vocabulary, but at the same time the advocates of the other school are also placated by providing that the words from other languages shall not be boycotted. So it is an admirable compromise, it is a very balanced provision and but for one exception, I would have been tempted to describe it as a very fine feat of tight-rope walking. Only in one exception that is in the case of numerals there is unbalance and my amendment seeks to correct that unbalance. It is very unfortunate when there is so much unanimity on all other points only in this small matter there should be such a very serious difference of opinion but unfortunately it is there.

If we compare both these drafts we find that there is substantial agreement even on this point. Under both, the numerals will remain in official use for fifteen years. Under both, the language commission and the Parliamentary Committee will have full power to decide the question of numerals in the five yearly reviews of the situation. So this is common to both the drafts. The only difference is that in the Munshi-Ayyangar draft the international form of numerals alone is mentioned as the official form of numerals and there our Hindi friends feel aggrieved. They think that though their language is honoured, their numerals are torn from that language and all of a sudden in one thrust the foreign numerals are foisted upon them and we must sympathise with their sentiment.

Whether those numerals are really of Indian origin or not—some people contest it—I do not want to go into that controversy—it has to be admitted that they have today an appearance of being foreign, at least to Hindi language. I therefore submit that in this matter we should try to respect the sentiments of our Hindi friends. It is no use trying to thrust these numerals all of a sudden:—let them be gradually and peacefully assimilated in the Hindi language. I have therefore proposed in my amendment that both these numerals should be mentioned in the first clause. That is a concession I should like to make to that school of thought. I therefore would plead with my Southern friends that even if according to you the Hindi numerals are to be in official use for such a long period as 15 years, then why not mention them in the clause? Why are you so chary about it?

But at the same time our Mr. Ayyangar has insisted and rightly insisted that our ultimate aim should be that international form of numerals shall be the permanent form of numeral. There I agree with that school of thought and I have therefore provided that after fifteen years subject of course to the right of the Language Commission and the Parliamentary Committee to decide the question in any way they like, the international form of numerals shall be the only form of numerals.

Now I plead with my Hindi friends that they should yield on this point and there are very good reasons for it. It had been admitted by them that the question of language had been solved 95 per cent to their satisfaction and I do not see why in the interest of unity and harmony they should not yield that 5 per cent with good grace. Of course there is the other well-known argument about the utility and the progressiveness of using international forms as far as possible especially when they belong to us in their origin, but I will not emphasise that. I will emphasise this that if you have 95 per cent of your demand, why create this strife, why this disharmony and bitterness only for 5 per cent?

I therefore beg of my Hindi friends that they should gratefully yield this five per cent. It is a small matter and we have solved much greater problems by agreement and good-will and amity. If we take a decision on this by a vote of majority, then it will leave a trail of bitterness and rancour behind it.

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By our action now we may jeopardise the normal working of our new Constitution, even before it is passed. The party that is defeated may start an agitation for the amendment of the Constitution and the reaction of the other side also may be equally violent. Thus the members of controversy, will remain alive for long time. So, I appeal to the honourable House. Let us take care that the verdict of history, the verdict of posterity on our labours on this matter, may not be that they set out to find a language to unite them but ultimately ended in allowing the numerous to divide them. Therefore I appeal to all for a compromise. I am not keen about my own formula. But I am keen on a compromise. I only want that there should be no division in this House on this matter, where there is so much substantial agreement.

With these words I leave this point and proceed to certain observations with regard to another topic, a topic of more enduring interest and more enduring importance, and that is about the characteristic of the future development of the language. There are on the Order Paper certain amendments which advocate Sanskritised Hindi as the official language. And even apart from those amendments, there is a strong tendency in certain influential quarters that Hindi should be over-Sanskritised, and perhaps owing to that tendency there has been some difficulty about the adoption of this language as the official language. Of course, those advocates will take advantage of the provision, in the directive clause that Sanskrit would be the predominant source of vocabulary. I have no quarrel with that provision. But I feel that no one should take undue advantage of that. It is a compromise and it should be worked in the spirit of a compromise. I am not against Sanskrit; most of us cannot be, it is in our blood. It is the fountain head of our mother tongues and the storehouse of our culture. Not only that I am not against Sanskrit, but I am an admirer of Sanskrit literature. The most ennobling philosophy the subtlest thought and some of the most enchanting poetry of the world, are enshrined in the Sanskrit language.

But with all its grandeur, and with all my admiration for that grandeur, I have to admit that Sanskrit cannot be the language of the masses; and equally certainly over-Sanskritised Hindi also cannot be the language of the masses. In these days of democracy and adult suffrage, it is the masses that must be uppermost in our minds when we decide such questions. It is the language of the masses that we must be able to speak. Otherwise, as far as we Congressmen are concerned, and most of us here are Congressmen, we shall be kicking the ladder by which we rose. We are here because of the support of the masses to the great Organisation to which we have the honour to belong,—the Indian National Congress, and it is the support of the masses that gave it the power to govern the whole country. I submit therefore, let us not create an artificial barrier between us and the common man by artificially Sanskritising Hindi. Thus easy intelligibility to the common man should be the characteristics of the future development of our language. I appeal to my Hindi friends, do not dwarf your ambition. Do not be satisfied with making Hindi only the official language, but try to make it the national language embracing the entire nation. I admit that Sanskrit must predominate in the literary forms of Hindi. I also admit that Sanskrit must predominate in the scientific terms. Sanskrit also has a place in the language of the common man. But let us not force the pace; let us not force the content. Let things grow spontaneously, and I am sure a day will soon dawn when Hindi will not only be the official language, but a national language easily spoken and easily understood throughout this great country.

With these words, Sir, I commend my amendment to the acceptance of the House.

**Mr. President :** The Honourable Shri Jawaharlal Nehru.

**The Honourable Shri Jawaharlal Nehru :** Mr. President, there has been a great deal of debate here and elsewhere, and much argument over this question. Personally I do not regret the time spent on it, or even the feeling raised by it. Some times I may not agree with that feeling; but after all, the question before us is a very vital question, and it is right that vital people should feel vitally about it.

We have had learned speeches, and speeches that were perhaps merely enthusiastic. Now, I do not know in which category to place myself. (*Laughter*). Neither the first nor the second suits me or is appropriate for me. So perhaps, you will put me in some third category. But I am interested vastly in this question from a variety of points of view; and I have listened to the arguments here and elsewhere, and sometimes I regret to say, I have got rather excited myself over it. And these scores and hundreds of amendments have also been perused by me. And yet I have felt that the matter is not one for verbal amendments here and there, but goes down somewhere deeper.

I rise to support the amendment that my Friend and Colleague Mr. Gopalaswami Ayyangar has placed before the House, (*Cheers*). I support that amendment, not because I think it is perfect in every way; perhaps if I had my way, I would like to change it here and there. But I know that this is the result of continuous effort and endeavour, and thought and consultation, and as a result of all that consultation and thought, some integrated thing took shape. Now it is a difficult matter to alter or vary something that is an integrated whole, which displays a certain strain of thought. You may change it here and there but I do not think that will do justice either to the original amendment or the person who wants to change it. It would be far better if some other integrated solution was found if the first one was not liked or approved of. Therefore, although I would have liked, perhaps if I had a chance, to lay greater emphasis on some aspects of that amendment, nevertheless after all that has happened I think that amendment displays not only the largest measure of agreement but also, I think, a thought-out approach to this difficult problem.

Now I am not going to talk about any of the various amendments that are before you or even analyse the amendments that I am supporting. Rather I wish to draw your attention to certain other aspects, certain basic things which perhaps are presented by this conflict on the issue either in the House or in the country. After all it is not a conflict of words, though words may represent that conflict here. It is a conflict of different approaches, of looking perhaps in somewhat different directions,

We stand—it is a platitude to say it—on the threshold of a new age, for each age is always dying and giving birth to another. But in the present context of events, all over the world and more so perhaps in India than elsewhere, we are participating both in a death and in a birth and when these two events are put together then great problems present themselves and those who have to solve them have to think of the basic issues and not be swept away by superficial considerations. Whether all the honourable Members of this House, have thought much of these basic issues or not I do not know. Surely many of them must have done so. But there are those basic issues. What is our objective? What are we going to do? Where do we want to go to?

Language is a most intimate thing. It is perhaps the most important thing which society has evolved, out of which other things have taken growth. Now language is a very big thing. It makes us aware of ourselves. First, when language is developed it makes us aware of our neighbour, it makes us aware of our society, it makes us aware of other societies also. It is a unifying factor and it is also a factor promoting disunity. It is an integrating factor and it is a disintegrating factor as between two languages, as between two countries. So

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it has both those aspects and when therefore you think in terms of a common language here you have to think of both those facts.

All of us here, I have no doubt, wish to promote the integrity of India. There are no two opinions about it. Yet in the analysis of this very question of language and in the approaches to it one set of people may think that this is going to be a unifying factor, another may think that if approached wrongly it may be a disintegrating factor and a disruptive one. So I want this House to consider this question and therefore it has become essential for us to view it in this larger context and not merely be swept away by our looking for this or that.

A very wise man, the Father of our Nation, thought of this question, as he thought of so many important questions affecting our national future. He paid a great deal of attention to it and throughout his career he went on repeating his advice in regard to it. Now that showed that, as with other things, he always chose the fundamentals of our national existence. Almost every thing he touched, you will remember, was a basic thing, was fundamental thing. He did not waste time, thought or energy over the superficial aspects of our existence. Therefore he took up this subject in his own inimitable way, thinking of it always not as a literary man, though he was a very great literary figure, possibly unknown to himself, but always thinking in terms of the future of the Indian people and the Indian nation, how to build it up brick by brick, so that we can get rid of the evils that pursued us. Whether those evils were foreign domination or poverty, or inequality or discrimination amongst ourselves, or untouchability or the like, he put this question on that same high level and looked upon it from the point of view of a step which might either help us to build a powerful and enlightened India or be a disintegrating or weakening factor.

Now the first thing he taught us was this : that while English is a great language—and I think it is perfectly right to say that English has done us a lot of good and we have learnt much from it and progressed much—nevertheless no nation can become great on the basis of a foreign language. Why ? Because a foreign language can never be the language of the people, for you will have two strata or more—those who live in thought and action of a foreign tongue and those who live in another world. So he taught us that we must do our work more and more in our own language.

Partly he succeeded in that, only partly, possibly because of the inherent difficulties of the situation. For it is a fact that in spite of all his teaching and in spite of the efforts of many of the honourable Members present here who are keen and anxious to push up our own languages the fact is that we continue to do a great deal of our political and other work in the English language. Nevertheless, this is true that we cannot go far or take our people by the million in a foreign language. Therefore, however great the English language may be—and it is great—we have to think in doing our national work, our public and our private work as far as possible, in our own various languages and more particularly in the language that you may choose for all India use.

Secondly, he laid stress on the fact that that language should be more or less a language of the people, not a language of a learned coterie—not that is not valuable or to be respected, we must have learning, we must have poets, great writers and all that; nevertheless, in the modern context, even more than in the past, no language can be great which is divorced from the language of the people. Ultimately a language grows in greatness and strength if there is a proper marriage between those who are learned and the masses of the people. In India—though I am unlearned in those languages—we have two



examples : one of Rabindranath Tagore who brought about that marriage in the Bengali language and thereby made that language even greater than it was and more powerful, the other the example of Gandhiji himself in the Gujarati language. There are, no doubt, others, but these are outstanding figures.

Now, in any language that we seek to adopt as an all-India language, or for the matter of that in any language whether it is all-India or not, we have to keep in mind that we dare not live in an ivory tower of purists and precisionists. Though purists and precisionists in the matter of language have their place and should be there, it is a dangerous thing to allow a language to become the pet child of purists and such like people because then it is cut off from the common people. So you have to have both : certainly a certain precision, a certain profundity and a certain all-embraciveness in language and at the same time contacts with the people, drawing its sustenance from the common people.

The last thing in this matter to which the Father of the Nation drew our attention was this, that this language should represent the composite culture of India. In so far as it was the Hindi language it should represent that composite culture which grew up in Northern India where the Hindi language specially held away; it should also represent that composite culture which it drew from other parts of India. Therefore he used the word 'Hindustani', not in any technical sense, but in that broad sense representing that composite language which is both the language of the people and the language of various groups and others in Northern India, and to the last he drew the attention of the people and the nation to that. I am a small man and it is rather presumptuous of me to say that I agree with him or do not agree with him, but for the last thirty years or so, in my own humble way, I stood by that creed in regard to language and it would be hard for me if this House asked me to reject that thing by which I have stood nearly all my political life.

Not only that, but I do think that in the interests of India, in the interests of the development of a powerful Indian nation, not an exclusive nation, not a nation trying to isolate itself from the rest of the world but nevertheless aware of itself, conscious of itself, living its own life in conformity and in cooperation with the rest of the world, that approach of Mahatmaji was the right approach. I should have liked to see somewhat greater emphasis on that in this Resolution, but because of all that has happened, when ultimately this Resolution took shape I accepted it as at any rate in a certain part of it attention is drawn to this fact that I have mentioned. As I have said, I wish it had been more pointedly drawn, nevertheless it is drawn, so I accepted the Resolution. If unfortunately that attention had not been drawn there, then it would have been very difficult for me to accept this Resolution.

Now, we stand on the threshold of many things and this Resolution itself is the beginning of what might be termed a linguistic revolution in India, a very big revolution of far-reaching effects, and we have to be careful that we give it the right direction, the right shape, the right would lest it go wrongly and betray us in wrong directions. Men shape a language, but then that language itself shapes those men and society. It is a question of action and interaction and it may well be said that if a language is a feeble language or an unprecise language, if a language is just an ornate language, you will find those characteristics reflected in the people who use that language. If the language is feeble those people will be rather feeble; if it is just ornate and nothing else they will tend to ornateness. So it is important what direction you give to it. If a language is exclusive those people become exclusive in thought and mind and action.

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That is what I meant when I said at the beginning that perhaps behind all this argument and debate there are these different approaches. Which way do you look ? As you stand on the threshold of this new age, do you twist your neck and back and look backwards all the time, or do you look forward? It is an important question for each one of us to answer because there is, inevitably perhaps, a tendency in this country-today to look back far too much. There is no question of our cutting ourselves away from our past. That would be an absurdity and a disaster because all that we are we have been fashioned by that past. We have our roots in that past. If we pull ourselves out of that past, we are rootless. We cannot go far merely by imitating others, but there is such a thing as having your roots in the soil but growing up to the sky above and not always looking down to the soil where your roots are. There is such a thing as marching forward and not turning back all the time. In any event, whether you want it or not, world forces and currents will push you forward but if you are looking back you will stumble and fall repeatedly.

Therefore, that is the fundamental thing in approaching this Problem: which way are you looking, backward or forward ? People talk about culture, about Sanskriti etc., and rightly, because a nation must have a sound basis of culture to rest itself, and as I have said that culture must inevitably have its roots in the genius of the people and in their past. No amount of copying and imitation, however good the other culture may be, will make you truly cultured because you will always be a copy of somebody else. That is admitted. Have your roots in that powerful and tremendous culture that took shape thousands and thousands of years ago and took shape so powerfully that in spite of every attack upon it inside and outside, even in spite of our own failings and decay and degradation, yet it has subsisted and given us some strength ? Obviously that must continue. Nevertheless, when you are on the threshold of a new age, to talk always of the past and the past, is not a good preparation for entering that portal. Language is one of these issues, there are many others.

There are many types of culture. There is the culture of a nation and of a people which is important for it, there is also the culture of an age, the *yoga dharma*, and if you do not align yourself with that culture of the age you are out of step with it. It does not matter how great your culture is if you do not keep step with the culture of the age. That has been the teaching of all the wise men of our country as well as of other countries. There is a national culture. There is an international culture. There is a culture which may be said to be—if you like—absolute, unchanging, with certain unchanging ideals about it which must be adhered to. There is a certain changing culture which has no great significance except at the moment or at that particular period or generation or age but it changes and if you stick on to it even though the ages change, then you are backward and you fall out of step with changing humanity. There is the culture of time and the culture of various nations.

Now, whatever might have been the case in the past, in the present—today there can be no doubt whatever that there is a powerful international culture dominating the world. Call it, if you like, a culture emanating from the machine age, from industry and all the developments of science that have taken place. Is there any Honourable Member present here who thinks that if we do not accept that culture,—adapt it if you like, but accept it fundamentally—that we can make much progress merely by repeating old creeds ? If I may venture to say, it is because at a previous period of our history we cut ourselves off from the culture of the rest of the world—and in this culture I include everything including the art of war—we became backward and we were overborne by others

who were not better than us but who were more in Step with the Culture of the time. They came and swept us away and dominated us repeatedly. The British came and dominated over us. Why ? Because in spite of our ancient *Sanskriti* and culture they represented a higher culture of the day—not in those fundamental and basic things which may be considered eternal, if you like—but in other things, the culture of the age, they were superior to us. They came and swept us away and dominated over us for all this long period.

They have gone. Are we going to think of going back in mind, thought and action to that type of culture which once brought us to slavery ? Of course, every honourable Member will say 'No'. Yet I say this line of thought is intimately related to what I say. It leads you to that. If you look backward, if you talk in the terms in which some honourable Members have talked today and yesterday, I say it inevitably leads to that conclusion, and I for one not only hesitate to reach that conclusion but I want to oppose it, because I think it is bad for India. You have—and I have—supreme faith in the Indian people and in the Indian nation. I am convinced that India, in spite of our present difficulties, is going to make progress and go ahead at a fast pace, but if we shackle the feet of India with outworn forms and customs, then who is to blame if India cannot go fast, if India stumbles and falls? That is the fundamental question before us.

Again, look at this language problem from another point of view. Till very recently—in fact, I would say a generation ago—French was the recognised diplomatic and cultural language of Europe and large parts of the earth's surface. There were other great languages—there was English, there was German, there was Italian, there was Spanish—in Europe alone, apart from the Asian languages. Yet French was the language in Europe, certainly of culture and diplomacy. Today it has not got that proud place. But even today, French is most important in diplomacy and public affairs. Nobody objected to French. No Englishman, or Russian, or German or Pole objected to French. So all those other languages were growing and today it might be said that English is perhaps replacing French from that proud place of diplomatic eminence.

Before French, in Europe the language of diplomacy was Latin just as in India the language of culture, and diplomacy for a vast period of time was Sanskrit, not the language of the common people but the language of the learned and the cultured and the language of diplomacy etc. And not only in, India, but the effect of that, if you go back to a thousand years, you find in almost all the South-East Asia, not to the same extent as in India, but still Sanskrit was the language of the learned even in South-East Asia and to some extent even in parts of Central Asia. The House probably knows that the most ancient Sanskrit plays that exist have been found not in India but in Turfan on the edge of the Gobi desert.

After Sanskrit Persian became the language of culture and diplomacy in India and over large Parts of Asia,—in India due to the fact of changing rule but apart from that, Persian was the diplomatic language of culture over vast parts of Asia. It was called—and it is still called—the “French of the East” because of that. These changes took Place while other languages were developing, because of the fact that French in Europe and Persian in Asia were peculiarly suited for this purpose. Therefore they were adopted by other countries and nation too. India may have adopted it partly because of a certain dominating influence of the new rulers, but in other countries which were not so dominated they adopted Persian when it was not their language because it was considered as suitable for that purpose. Their languages grew.

We took to English obviously because it was the conqueror's language, not so much because at that time it was such an important language, although

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it was very important even then,—we took to it simply because we were dominated by the British here, and it opened the doors and windows of foreign thought, foreign science etc., and we learnt much by it. And let us be grateful to the English language for what it has taught us. But at the same time, it created a great gulf between us who knew English and those who did not know English and that was fatal for the progress of a nation. That is a thing which certainly we cannot possibly tolerate today. Hence this problem.

However good, however important, English may be, we cannot tolerate that there should be an English knowing elite and a large mass of our people not knowing English. Therefore, we must have our own language. But English—whether you call it official or whatever you please, it does not matter whether you mention it in the legislation or not—but English must continue to be a most important language in India which large numbers of people learn and perhaps learn compulsorily. Why ? Well, English today is far more important in the world than it was when the British came here. It is undoubtedly today the nearest approach to an international language. It is not the international language certainly but it is the biggest and the most widespread language in the world today, and if we want to have contacts with the world as we must, then how are we to have those contacts unless we know foreign languages ? I hope many of us will learn other foreign languages, e.g., the Russian language which is a magnificent language, very rich; the Spanish language which may not be quite so important today but is going to be very important tomorrow in the context of a growing South America; the French language which of course always has been and is still important; the German etc. We will learn all of them no doubt, I hope. But the fact remains that both from the point of view of convenience and from the point of view of utility, English is obviously the most important language for us and many of us know it. It is absurd for us to try to forget what we know or not take advantage of what we have learnt. But it will have to be inevitably a secondary language meant for a relatively restricted number of people.

All these factors have been borne in mind in this amendment that Shri N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar has placed before the House. I do not know what the future will be for this language. But I am quite sure that if we proceed wisely with this Hindi language, if we proceed wisely in two ways, by making it an inclusive language and not an exclusive one, and include in it all the language elements in India which have gone to build it up with a streak of Urdu or a mixture of Hindustani—not by statute, remember, but by allowing it to grow normally as it should grow and if, secondly, it is not, if I may say so, forced down upon an unwilling people, I have no doubt it will grow and become a very great language. How far it will push out the use of the 'English language I do not know; but even if it pushes our English completely from our normal work, nevertheless English will remain important for us in our world contacts and in the international sphere.

So, to come back to the basic approach to this problem : Is your approach going to be a democratic approach or what might be termed an authoritarian approach ? I venture to put this question to the enthusiasts for Hindi, because in some of the speeches I have listened here and elsewhere there is very much a tone of authoritarianism, very much a tone of the Hindi-speaking area being the centre of things in India, the centre of gravity, and others being just the fringes of India. That is not only an incorrect approach, but it is a dangerous approach. If you consider the question with wisdom, this approach will do more injury to the development of the Hindi language than the other approach. You just cannot force any language down the people or group who resist that.

You cannot do it successfully. You know that it is conceivably possible that a foreign conqueror with the strength of the sword might try to do so, but history shows that even he has failed. Certainly in the democratic context of India it is an impossibility. You have to win through the goodwill of those people, those groups in India in the various provinces whose mother tongue is not Hindi. You have to win the goodwill of those groups who speak, let us say, some, variation of Hindi, Urdu or Hindustani. If you try, whether you win or not, if you do something which appears to the others as an authoritarian attempt to dominate and to force down something then you will fail in your endeavour.

Now may I say a word or two about this business of Hindustani and Urdu and Hindi. We have accepted in this amendment the word 'Hindi', I have no objection to the word 'Hindi'. I like it. I was a little afraid that it might signify some constricted and restricted meaning to the others. I was afraid about this. I thought the word 'Hindi', which I like, might appeal to others also. I know, many honourable Members here know, and persons coming from the United Provinces know, that they can with a fair measure of facility speak in what might be called Urdu and can speak with equal facility and flow in what might be called fairly pure Hindi. They can do both. It is rather interesting and it is right that we should know both, with the result that they have got a rich and fine vocabulary. I do not know whether your experience has been the same or not. We find that in a particular subject or type of subjects we speak better in Hindi than in Urdu and in another type of subjects Urdu suits us better; it suits the genius of that subject a little better. My point is that I want both these instruments which strengthen Hindi that is going to be developed as our official and national language of the country. Let us keep in touch with the people. That is a good practice. If you do that, then you will keep all the other avenues open. Then the language develops. Without any sense of pressure from anybody, without any sense of coercion, it takes shape in the, minds of millions of people. They gradually mould it and give it shape.

Take the question of numerals. I shall be very frank with you. I have never before looked into this question. But when it did come up before me and when I did give thought to it, I was immediately convinced that the right approach was to keep these numerals, Indian in origin but which have taken a certain form which are used internationally. I was quite convinced of that. But mind you, nobody is banning the use of Hindi numerals. They can be used whenever anybody wants them, but in official use where all kinds of statistics on banking and auditing and census and other columns of figures come in, it is not only an undoubted advantage that these international numerals should be used, but there are also other advantages. These numerals remove at least one major barrier between you and the other countries. That is a very important thing in these days when numerals count for so much in the development of science and the application of science. As I said, you can use Hindi numerals. Anyone who learns can read the Hindi numerals and write them whenever he likes. But officially if you try to think in terms of limiting the use of these international numerals for official purposes, as I have mentioned, you will land yourself in difficulty.

Now what is your objection to this ? Do you want India to progress rapidly in the sciences and art of the modern day ? I can say with conviction that if we do not use these international numerals for these purposes we would fall back. We would put a tremendous burden on the children's minds and the grown-up's minds and, our work will increase tremendously in our offices and elsewhere, and that work will be cut off from the rest of the world. So, from every practical point of view, and it is desirable even from the sentimental point of view—

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we are not adopting anything foreign; we are adopting something of our own which is slightly varied—and from the point of view of printing, it helps. Perhaps many honourable Members here have something to do with newspapers and printing. I ask you, is it not a fact that it is far easier from the point of view of composing and printing to use these numerals than the Hindi numerals ?

I submit that the fact that we have got rather stuck over the numerals issue has certain importance, again from that basic fundamental point of view of which way we are looking. For my part, I know the Hindi numerals, I can read and write them quite easily and so there is no difficulty so far as I am concerned. But from the way this controversy has developed, this argument has developed, here and elsewhere, more and more I have been made to think that behind this controversy is this different approach. This is the approach of looking back on science, on everything that science and the modern world signify. It is backward looking. It is an approach which, I think, is fatal to India. It is an approach which will prevent us from becoming a great nation for which we have worked and dreamt.

We stand on the threshold of a new age. Therefore it is important that we should have this picture of India clearly in our minds. What sort of India do we want ? Do we want a modern India—with its roots steeped in the past certainly in so far as it inspires us—do we want a modern India with modern science and all the rest of it, or do we want to live in some ancient age, in some other age which has no relation to the present? You have to choose between the two. It is a question of approach. You have to choose whether you look forward or backward.

**The Honourable Pandit Ravi Shankar Shukla** (C.P. & Berar: General) : We have heard just now and before we dispersed at 1 o'clock speeches of very eminent honourable Member of this House. It is sometimes embarrassing to oppose such array of distinguished countrymen of ours, but there are occasions in the history of nations when there is no alternative left to us but to have our say. I am not opposing for oppositions sake. I stand here before you to give my view on this historic occasion.

There are two approaches to this question. One approach is of those who wish the English language to continue in this country as long as and as far as possible, and the other approach is of those who wish to bring an Indian language in place of English as early as possible. With these two viewpoints, we look at the resolution which has been moved by the Honourable Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar. All the amendments that I have given are given from the last viewpoint. Had I found that the articles which comprise Chapter XIV-A are all of a nature which do not injure our cause, I would never have come here to speak. It is all right that we have raised to a very high pedestal the Hindi language and the Devanagari script. As far as numerals are concerned, I will speak later.

Having said that, I come to the operative part of this Chapter where the method and the manner in which it is proposed to bring about the desired end are set out. Hindi language is to be the national language, the official language of this country, and the Devanagari script is to be the script of this language. Having admitted all that, is it not right for us to find out ways and means by which we can bring this about? If we look at the various parts of this Chapter, it would appear to us that this is not the aim at all. What is aimed at is, judging the various hurdles that have been put in in this Chapter, to prevent Hindi from coming in as early as possible. If these hurdles are not crossed, if these hurdles are not pulled down and our approach to Hindi made easy, difficulties

in our way are very great. When you come to that part of the Chapter which refers to the Commission and the Committee there is a provision which says more or less that for five years in the Centre as well as in the provinces, you have to go on with English as your official language, and there are also other barriers which have been created hereafter in other parts of this Chapter. You find that in provinces it would be difficult for us to bring about the use of Hindi as early as possible.

Many honourable Members of this House have said that it is a proposition which must be looked at from their point of view. We in the provinces find it difficult. How shall we substitute Hindi for English? That is the proposition before us. Whatever may be done in the Centre, it is a task which we have to face in the provinces. Difficulties in our way are very great. When we took the reins of Government in our hands, we tried to establish departments which will bring about the use of Hindi as early as possible. In my province, I have established a Department called the Loke Bhasha Prasar Vibhag (लोक भाषा प्रसार विभाग). That is to say, we have appointed people who will translate books. There is a collection of vocabulary of twenty-four thousand words, technical words, which are needed for all scientific purposes. We have got scientific books translated into Hindi and Marathi, the two languages that are recognised in my province up to the Intermediate standard and materials have been collected whereby we can translate scientific books on Physics, Chemistry and all those subjects which are so difficult and technical into Hindi and Marathi up to the B.A. standard. Everything is there, but it would not be possible to bring them to use because of the article that has been proposed here.

The other point which I may say in that in my province there are two Universities. One of them has resolved that the medium of instruction in the colleges will be Marathi and Hindi from this year or from the next year. The other has decided that it shall bring into use Hindi as the medium of instruction from 1952. In our province we have altogether stopped English as the medium of instruction and from 1946 onwards, our high-schools are teaching through the medium of Hindi and Marathi. Both are recognised languages in our province. If there are schools and high schools where the medium of instruction is Bengali or Urdu or any other language, they are given grants by us. Therefore, in my province after three years, when the graduates come out from my Universities, unless they are conversant with the English language, they will not be utilised by the nation, and the province will be thrown into a very awkward position.

I consider that it is up to us to make, provision in this Constitution so that we may be able to progress further as far as possible. My point is that the province must be left to itself to develop and come into line with the article which provides that Hindi shall be the national language or the official language with Devanagari as the script.

**Shri B. P. Jhunjhunwala** (Bihar: General) : Can you say that the provinces are not at liberty? Provinces are at full liberty to pass any law. (*Interruption*).

**The Honourable Pandit Ravi Shankar Shukla** : If you read carefully the provisions, you, will find that it is not so. In the original amendment number 65, it is stated, "Subject to the provisions of articles 301-D and 301-E, a State may by law adopt any of the languages . . . ." If you refer to articles 301-D and 301-E, you will find the limitations placed upon you. Article 301-D says : "The language for the time being authorised for use in the Union for official purposes shall be the official language for communication between one State and another State and between a State and the Union." Then, further, you will find : "Provided that if two or more States agree that the Hindi language

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should be the official language for communication between such States, that language may be used for such communication." So far as that part is concerned, it is an improvement upon the original draft, but so far as the official language is concerned, in a State, it is governed by article 301-D. For that purpose, the official language shall be the language of communication between one State and another and between the State and the Union. For all purposes, you have to use the English language. Provision has been made that where both the States agree to use the Hindi language, then only it can be used. But, as far as the other States are concerned, and communication between one State and another State, and between the State and the Union is concerned, it is only the English language that can be used. Therefore, I say that our liberty in the use of the language is being curtailed. To that extent, I object to this provision.

The most dangerous provision which I consider in this draft is the use of the English language in courts and the High Courts particularly in the provinces. So long as the language in the courts does not change....

**An Honourable Member :** High Courts.

**The Honourable Pandit Ravi Shankar Shukla :** Yes, High Courts there is little hope for us so far as the subordinate courts are concerned, we are having Hindi and Marathi as our court languages; these are recognised languages of the court. But, what happens, what is happening today is that so far as the courts are concerned, no doubt it is open to us to present our complaints and written statements in Hindi or Marathi, Judges have been recording all the evidence in English and judgments are delivered in English. Therefore, for all practical purposes, the language which is being used is English and so long as we do not get people who will replace these persons, it is very difficult for us to adopt Hindi as our language in our province.

Therefore, I am looking at all the provisions from this point of view. We should be able to introduce Hindi in all departments and at all stages as early as possible. With that point of view, I say the restrictions placed upon us should be removed. So far as the Centre is concerned, there is already provision made and there is no restriction placed in its way. In one article they have put down so far as the States are concerned, that they are bound to have all their Acts, Bills, rules, bye-laws and everything in the language of the Union. That is to say, so long as English is there, we must have all these things in the English language. I submit that the provinces should be left free in this respect. Parliament may decide so far as the Union is concerned. But, if the State legislature decides to have these things in the language of the State, they should be at liberty to do so, I have provided in my amendment that these Bills and other things which are to be passed by the legislature should be passed in the language of the State, but at the same time, an authentic and authoritative translation of the text should accompany them.

I would like to bring to the notice of the House a parallel case. There is one parallel only in the history of the world in this respect. It is found in Ireland. In 1921 after the treaty which the Irish entered into with the British Government the first thing they put in the Constitution was that Irish shall be the national language and they also said English shall be their second official language. The reasons for this I will point out. In Ireland the British Government prohibited the use and the learning of Irish language so long as they were rulers of that land and the result was that from the primary stage onwards upto the colleges, English was the language which was being taught and in a century from the beginning of the 19th century to the end of the 19th century, the Irish language was almost gone from the country and every Irishman was speaking English. In 1910 when the census was taken, out of the 3 to 4 millions



population of that little Island only 21,000 knew Irish. In 1921 after the treaty the first provision they made in their Constitution was that Irish shall be the national language of that land and that was made by those Irishmen who did not know the Irish language then. Only 21,000 knew Irish and the rest were more English than the English themselves. These were the people who decided at once that the national language of Ireland should be the Irish language.

**An Honourable Member :** With what result?

**The Honourable Pandit Ravi Shankar Shukla :** For mere expediency, because it was not possible for them to throw away English downright, they had to keep English as second language, but bills that were to be introduced were to be introduced in the language of the land, *i.e.*, Irish and there was to be a translation of it or you may call it a counterpart in English. If a conflict arose between the two, the Irish text was to be considered authentic and authoritative. So in my amendment I have provided for allowing us to make our laws in the language of the State, whether it is Hindi or Marathi and there should be an authentic English text along with the original which we pass into law and in case of conflict where English is required English text may be considered as authentic, but for all other purposes Hindi or the State language text should be considered as authentic. I therefore consider that we should be left free. The provinces should not be hampered in using their language for this purpose. If we want to have Hindi, let us have it. Do not curtail our liberty.

With respect to numerals there has been high feeling running throughout this House for some time we have heard from no less a person than Panditji that so far as these international numerals are concerned they are required for very many purposes—some of them he mentioned. Some of the Members including myself thought that that was necessary also. So we have given an amendment to that effect that for certain purposes the English numeral shall continue to be used, *i.e.*, for purposes of accounting, banking and other business matters and official purposes for which they may be required. If that is admitted by the mover of this chapter 14-A, then our difficulties ought to be solved. They should not be confused with the language question at all. We all understand it is not difficult to understand. Let Hindi numeral be used as integral parts of the Hindi language and for purposes for which English numerals are required, let them be used independently. There is no trouble about them and I have framed my amendment with that view. I say that they may be used for purposes as the President may by order direct. Therefore if you take away the English numerals from Hindi, then there would be no confusion and I think everybody here will come to an agreement on that point. The question will be avoided; but what is running into the minds of all is that English numerals are being brought in as an integral part of the State language—Hindi. This is not the intention of this House. We may use the English numerals for purposes for which they are required—we have no quarrel and such provinces where English numerals are used in their language we have no quarrel with them—they can continue to use them: but even if it is insisted by them that English numerals should be used in the official language of the Union, *i.e.*, in Hindi, I have made a provision that if there are official communications and correspondence for which English numerals are required, then those communications sent to those provinces should be with the English numerals but for the rest of India where they are not wanted, they should not be thrust upon them. So far as Hindi Provinces are concerned there the Hindi forms of numerals shall go along with all communications but so far as those parts of the country are concerned where English numerals are used in the language, let, the Hindi that goes to them have English numerals. I have no quarrel because it does not concern us.

**An Honourable Member :** If one province does not want Hindi, will you give it freedom ?

**The Honourable Pandit Ravi Shankar Shukla :** It is for the all-India Union to say whether you want it or not. If you say that Hindi is to be the language of the Union with Devanagari script and if the Centre decides or if the Parliament decides that Hindi shall be the language communicated to you, you will have that language communicated by the Centre. So far as we in the provinces are concerned, there is nothing between us and you. You can settle your accounts with the Centre. We say, have the English numerals if you like or Hindi if you like and those of us who want both can have both, but so far as the Hindi language provinces are concerned let them not be compelled to have English numerals where Hindi is being used as provincial language or as a State language, so long as these provinces do not decide to have English numerals as an integral part of their language.

Therefore, I have in my amendment put in two clauses saying that so far as English numerals are concerned, they can be used in this way. The question of numerals will be settled if this amendment is accepted by the mover of the amendment. The solution is there and there is no conflict between the North and the South. I want to bring to the notice of the House that this question of language should not be looked upon from the position of the North or the South. Hindi language, so long as it is not adopted by the Centre or by the Union, is a provincial language. Any language you can adopt as your national or official language, it may be Hindi or if you like, Hindustani or Bengali or Marathi—and all these languages have been proposed, but once you adopt it as a national language, do not call it a provincial language. I appeal to you that once you raise that language to the pedestal of a Union language, then it is your language as well as my language and it is no longer a provincial language. It ceases to be a provincial language, and it will be your duty as well as mine to enrich it as best as we can.

A number of honourable Members have said that there are different words used for the same meaning. They say that Pandit Sundar Lal uses this word and my friend of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan—Seth Govind Das, uses another word for the same thing and so on. There is no end to words. If you were to turn to the pages of a dictionary, of any language, you will find numerous words conveying the same meaning, and people are at liberty to make use of any word they like. In Sanskrit too, you have got *Amar Kosh* which gives synonyms for so many words. Similarly for the same meaning there may be a Sanskrit word, a Hindi word or a Persian word or a Bengali word. But all these can be part and parcel of the same language and when they are put in the dictionary or Kosh, they can be used by you and by all of us.

Therefore, my request is that you should not think that we are imposing this language upon any one. It is open to the House to choose any language and once you have chosen that language, do not regard it that it is an imposition upon you by us. It is a language which you have accepted as your own and it becomes your own language as it is my language. After this, no question and no controversy can be raised. As has been pointed out and I am also certain about it, this House will accept Hindi as the language of the Union with Devanagari script. International numerals may be used for all purposes for which the Union requires, independently of the Hindi language. But if it is found necessary at all to satisfy some provinces, let the English numerals be used for their purposes by the Union. But for the rest of India where Hindi is the language used and where they do not require these numerals, let Hindi continue unalloyed, quite independent of English numerals altogether.

We have got the time limit, fifteen years, I can say to my friends from the South that so far as they are concerned, it would be in their best

interests to learn Hindi as early as possible, because if they do not learn Hindi quickly enough, they might be left behind. I say, so far as my South Indian friends are concerned—I am speaking frankly—they are very intelligent people. They are very industrious people as well, and I have found that in my province there are Departments in which Madrasi friends are working, and they are working as well, and sometimes even more efficiently than those whose mother tongue is Hindi. That is the position. I am speaking from my own experience as an administrator of long standing, and I think I can speak with responsibility. In my province there are so many of them. Here is a friend who belonged to my provincial service once and he can speak Hindi and also Sanskrit as well as anybody can do. And I say that I have got Madrasi civilian officers, I have got Madrasi provincial officers and I may tell you that there is one Department in my province in which work is carried on in Hindi in all places, whether it is a Marathi district or a Hindi district, and in that Department there are Marathi speaking people, there are Telugu-speaking people, there are Punjabis and Bengalees and all sorts of people, and all of them from the rank and file to the officers are there for the last 25 years and that is the Department of Police. It has been run as efficiently as we want by these officers and men, belonging to different regions using Hindi as the language of that Department. I do not see why our friends here should be afraid of learning Hindi.

**An Honourable Member :** No fear at all.

**The Honourable Pandit Ravi Shankar Shukla :** The hesitation is because of the fear that hurdles may be created for them. So I say, the earlier you learn Hindi the better it is for you, the better it is for us and for the country, because then there would be no difficulty in your way and you will be with us as you have been so long. Do not think for ever that it is our intention in any way to out any barriers by bringing Hindi as early as possible.

I have here a pamphlet which a friend of mine who is a Member of this House has given me and it says that that great social reformer of Bengal Keshab Chandra Sen wrote in 1874—and it appeared in a Bengali pice-weekly called “Sulabh Samachar”. It asks that when without one vernacular language unity is not possible for India, what is the solution? The only solution is to use one single language throughout India. Many of the languages now in use in India have Hindi in them, and Hindi is prevalent almost everywhere. If Hindi is made the common language throughout India, the question may be solved easily. I may say, the text is in Bengali and I have given the English translation. This was written in 1874 and was a sort of a prophecy, because we are today discussing the same thing.

To talk of Hindustani or Sanskrit or any other language is out of the question. So far as Hindi is concerned. I can say only one word that the framers of this chapter realised that Hindustani was only a form and style of the Hindi language. Indeed, in the Schedule that they have given, they have not included Hindustani as a language. They have put it down in the directive clause as a form and style known as Hindustani and we have no quarrel with it. We shall adopt it and use it by all means possible. As has been asserted a language is made not by passing a constitution. It is the people devoted to it who form it. We do not form it here, but it is people outside the House who will form it, whatever the Constitution we may pass.

I therefore submit that on these four grounds my amendments may be accepted. First, on the question of language and secondly, my amendments are aimed at the solution of the numerals. Let the provinces evolve their own destiny and not be hampered by ‘ifs’ and ‘buts’, subject to this or that. Leave out the ‘ifs’ and ‘buts’ and other provisos and give us freedom to develop. We shall show you that our South Indian friends in my province will learn Hindi

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as easily as anybody within five years. I have got the material and friends, even Madrasi friends are working in that department which I have opened in my province. I therefore say that the High Court language should also be the State language and even if it is English elsewhere we should be allowed in our legislature to pass our Bills as we like in the State language. These are the four points on which I have given amendments and I hope they will be accepted by the House.

As regards numerals so far as accounting is concerned I have as a last resort, as a matter of compromise accepted that English numerals may be allowed for specific purposes even after fifteen years. But my original amendment is that clause (3) of article 301-A should be deleted.

We who are Members of the House and are members of the Congress have been following the Congress. The Congress has decided that fifteen years should be the deadline and beyond that we need not go. Therefore we should not think what will happen after fifteen years. Let us not make provision for posterity and bind them. When our representatives meet after fifteen years they will decide what to do. So far as we are concerned we decide for fifteen years. The Congress has ordered the progressive use of Hindi and it can be done by the amendments I have suggested and within fifteen years we can do it. My proposal is that in ten years we should finish all the commissions and committees. Parliament shall determine the ways and means by which Hindi is adopted, in years not exceeding fifteen. Following strictly the language of the resolution of the Congress Working Committee I have framed the amendments and I hope the House will accept them.

**Shri L. Krishnaswami Bharathi** (Madras: General): Has not the Congress passed a resolution that Hindustani shall be the official language ?

**The Honourable Pandit Ravi Shankar Shukla :** So far as the Working Committee's resolution is concerned I do not think the word 'Hindustani' is used. It says Hindi shall be the official language in the Devanagari script. If some Member has the resolution he may give it to the honourable Member.

**Shri Ram Sahai :** \*[Mr. President, I support the motion moved by Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar. But I may be permitted to submit, Sir, that I fail to understand the reason or the significance of inclusion of Chapter III in the part relating to language. When Hindi in Devanagari script has been accepted as the official language and an interim period of fifteen years has also been provided for, to replace English by Hindi I do not see why a separate provision on different lines should have been embodied, in respect of Supreme Court and High Courts in this part. It is for this reason that I have sent in three amendments: the first is to the effect that Chapter III of this part be deleted. My second amendment is to the effect that in article 301-F, the Period of fifteen years must be specifically mentioned as has been done in article 301-A. My third amendment seeks that the courts of the States where Hindi has already been adopted as the official language should be exempted from the operation of the article relating to them in this part. All the three amendments of which I have given notice have the one and the same object, that is, that on the commencement of this Constitution Hindi must continue to be used for all official purposes in the States where it has already been accepted as the State language. When our ultimate object is the establishment of Hindi as the official language for the whole of the country, I fail to understand why the States, where Hindi is in use and has already made considerable advance should be asked to replace Hindi by English for fifteen years. This proposition appears to me very strange. I would

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\*[ ] Translation of Hindustani Speech.

therefore, request Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar to consider over difficulties in this respect and not to force the States, where Hindi has already made considerable progress, to learn English afresh.

The argument may be, advanced that the judges of the Supreme Court being unacquainted with Hindi, may be faced with some difficulty in regard to the judgment of High Courts that go up to that court in appeal. In this connection I may submit that the arrangement for the supply of the English version of the judgment can be made. Or at the most, the High Court Judges may be asked to write the judgments in English. But it will never be proper to direct the High Courts to conduct all the proceedings in English. In Madhya Bharat the language of the, Legislature is Hindi. All the Bills, resolutions and amendments are drafted in Hindi and the proceedings of the House are conducted in Hindi. So it will have no meaning, rather it will be an anachronism, to introduce English in these States for fifteen years and again to replace the later by the former on the expiry of that period. The Constitution that we framed for our High Court lays down that Hindi shall be the language of the High Court or Madhya Bharat. In view of this I do not find any reason why we should be forced to unlearn Hindi which we have learnt and developed with great pains and to use English in its place for fifteen years and then again to go back to Hindi, after the end of that period. I may particularly mention that in Gwalior Hindi was adopted in 1901 and from 1902 all maps and documents etc. were begun to be prepared in Hindi. By 1919 all the correspondence save the correspondence with foreign countries and with the Resident has been carried on in Hindi and now everything is being done in Hindi. Since the Union of Madhya Bharat has been formed, many of the other States of this Union also, where Urdu had till then been in use, have adopted Hindi. There is no justification, therefore, in asking these States to adopt English. All these factors deserve thorough consideration.

Honourable Pandit Shukla has just informed us that he has constituted a committee in his province for translation purposes. This committee has been formed only recently. I may be permitted to inform the House that in Gwalior such a committee has been in existence for the last ten years and it has already prepared the Hindi version of almost all the laws of the Central Government such as the Evidence Act, the, Contract Act, the Criminal Procedure Code, the Transfer of Property Act, etc., etc. The language used in the translation is very very simple. I wish I could read out to honourable Members certain translations just to give them an idea of it and I am sure the House would appreciate the same but since the time at our disposal is very short I am not doing so. It would be improper to use English for all official purposes, in my State where for the last fifty years constant efforts were being made for making Hindi the official language of the State and where in point of fact all laws have already been translated into Hindi within the period of the last ten years.

Recently there were three sittings of the Legislature of Madhya Bharat and sixty-eight Bills were passed and those were in Hindi. Of course we give English version also along with the original Hindi version. But authenticity is given to the Hindi versions, and not to the English one. At the most the States, where Hindi is already in use, may be asked to supply an authentic English versions of laws etc. for the purpose of the Union. But it can never be fair to ask them to adopt all their Bill etc. in English.

I have come to know from the talks I had with some friends that Hindi, in their opinion, is not yet well developed to give accurate expression to thoughts, I beg to submit that this motion is wrong. Not only Hindi has been the official

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language for the last fifty years of the Gwalior State, but for the last twenty five years, even the 'Law Reports' which publishes important Judgements of the High Court, is also being published in Hindi. Apart from this journal, another monthly Law journal is also being published for the last ten years and it too publishes the judgments of the High Court. Hindi has fully developed there during the last fifty years, and it will not be proper now to replace it by English.

The controversy at present is raging about numerals. I would like to make one thing clear in regard to this question. Of course it looks odd to introduce the English form of numerals in Hindi script, but in view of the situation obtaining at present, we should have no objection at all in accepting it. If our friends from South India want to introduce international numerals, which in fact belong to us, I must appeal to the Chair as also to the House to accept them. It will not be proper for us to reject their proposal. That is why I have not put in any amendment in regard to numerals.

While fully supporting Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar's proposal, except Chapter III contained in it, I would request him to embody some provision, in it, so that it may be possible that Hindi is retained in the States; where it is in use and has made considerable progress. I would like to impress upon him the fact that the progress that Hindi has made in our State will be very helpful in adopting Hindi in the Union. But if he wants that even in these States also English should take the place of Hindi for all official purposes for fifteen years, I can only say that it will take us back and retard the development of Hindi.

Therefore, my humble submission to him is that he should thoroughly consider this problem and propose a measure, whether by accepting my amendment or we amendment of any other friend or by accepting a new amendment, to bring about a situation whereby Hindi might not be banished from the States where it is fully in vogue and where for the last fifty years every business including all the works of the offices, is being carried on in Hindi, and all the laws have been framed in Hindi. For no reason can it be proper to stop the progress of Hindi in those States.

Therefore, without taking more time of the House, I want to submit in regard to my amendment that it may be accepted in some form or other so that this object may be fulfilled.]

The Assembly then adjourned till Nine of the Clock on Wednesday, the 14th September 1949.

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