

village, so that the evil forces which brought about the disease may pass away. Fortunately, they forgot that he had a turban on the head, and he too forgot to remove the turban. And the burning fire and the pot in which the fire was placed were so hot that practically half his cranium was burnt. I find no mention of this in the Report of the Commission. I know of a case in the Hyderabad State, in the Aurangabad district, where a certain Scheduled Caste woman was declared by the villagers as a witch who was responsible for some kind of an epidemic that was prevalent in that village. They questioned her. She could hardly prove her innocence; there was no method of proving. The result was that not only she was belaboured, but her house was burnt, and the members of her family were subjected to ignominies of the worst sort. I do not find any mention of that in the Report of the Commissioner.

My hon. friend, the Home Minister, I think, will admit that the Scheduled Caste people, for good reason or for bad reason, 10-00 A.M. are in the habit of sending their complaints to me as well as to the Government officers, and I too possess a long list of these tyrannies and oppressions. I thought that it would be right to expect some reference to these complaints in this public document. But there is none whatever. And I have been wondering whether this Report of the Commissioner, so far as the record of complaints is concerned, is a doctored and tutored document. The Commissioner seems to have completely forgotten one of the most important objectives that underline the creation of his office. The object was that public conscience should be energised by the presentation of the ugly treatment which the caste Hindus meted out to the Scheduled Castes, so that those who are enlightened enough may go among the public and tell them whether this is a behaviour worthy of a civilised people. But when you do not present these facts, when you suppress them for one reason or another, this important motive and object in the creation of this office, I think, is completely nullified. I do hope that in the next report which the Commissioner will prepare, he will bear this thing in mind, and not be ashamed to present facts as they are

presented to him by the suffering masses, the untouchables. That is the first comment that I have to make over the nature of the report submitted to us by the Commissioner.

It is quite clear that in such cases as have been referred to by the Commissioner, there have been many violations of the law, and there have been an endless series of tyrannies and oppressions practised upon the Scheduled Castes. This is a matter which, I suppose, is a matter which is within the portfolio of the Home minister. To what extent are the laws made especially for the Scheduled Castes or the general laws made for all people respected, and to what extent are the breaches committed punished? Sir, on the first day, when the Hon. Home Minister presented the Report to the House, I happened unfortunately to come a little late. But I did catch him towards the end of his speech. And the impression that was left upon me, of the speech that he had made, was that what he had said was said in a spirit not merely of lightheartedness, but—he will forgive me if I say this—with a certain amount of levity. He asked: What is the use of prosecuting people? People will begin to do *Satyagrah*, people will begin to do all sorts of things. Therefore, let us not rely upon what might be called the vindication of the law. Well, if that is the attitude of the Home Ministry, then of course nothing can be expected. The lawlessness, which is being practised continuously for thousands of years against the Scheduled Castes, has been lawful, and will continue to be lawful, because it is impossible for the Scheduled Caste people themselves to come forward to prosecute the breaker of the law. As the Commissioner has said, the Scheduled Caste people are economically so subservient to, so dominated by the caste Hindus, that it is quite impossible for them to come forward to challenge the very people on whom they depend for their economic livelihood.

That is an admission which the Commissioner has been making from the very beginning. It occurs in his first report, it occurs in his second report and he repeats it in his third report that it is useless to depend upon the Scheduled Castes themselves to vindicate their rights. They have neither the

economic independence against their oppressors nor have they got the means to prosecute their oppressors.

The second thing which the Commissioner does not seem to emphasise very much and which I know very well myself from my experience of twenty years is that in a large number of cases the police force is in league with the caste Hindus. Ninety per cent, of the police force is drawn from the caste Hindus. Only a few per cent, and a very small one is now being recruited from the Scheduled Castes but this only to the posts of police sepoy. There are no officers amongst them. The result is that the upper grade policemen are in league with the caste Hindus. More often they refuse to record the complaints of the Scheduled Castes when they go to the Thana, in their station diary even though the offence may be cognisable. They throw them out, turn them out and tell them to go away. They do not record the complaint and secondly if they do, they probably would conduct the investigation in such a slipshod manner that ultimately the case fails. In this situation I ask the Hon. the Home Minister whether he thinks that there is any duty upon him or not. I ask him whether the breaches of the law which are being reported and witnessed by Scheduled Castes or other people are not breaches of the fundamental law and the fundamental rights? Are not fundamental rights part of the Constitution? If you are allowing a large mass of bullies and hooligans to trample upon the fundamental rights, are you not bringing the Constitution to contempt? Is it not your duty to create a special department either within the Home Ministry itself or separately for this purpose? The United States has got a Judicial Department, the duty and the function of which is to see that the Constitution and the Federal laws are respected. I think it is high time that the Home Minister realises that if the Constitution is to function, if it is to be the law of the land, if all people are to recognise it, his duty is to see that it is enforced, and the only way in which he can enforce it is to take upon himself the duty of enforcing it and not leave it even to the State Governments who can never do it, not even to the Police who has no desire to do it, and not even to the Scheduled Castes who have no means

to do it. Therefore I hope that he will take the matter more seriously and attend to it in the manner in which a statesman ought to.

Now, I come to the subject matter of education. It is quite satisfactory I must admit, that the Government has been spending annually more and more on the education of the Scheduled Castes. If my friend will forgive my mentioning myself., he will realise that it was for the first time in the year 1942 that the Government of India, at my instance when I was a Member of the Executive Council, accepted that they too had the responsibility for the education of the Scheduled Castes. Theretofore, education was purely a provincial subject. It was only so far as the Muslims and Hindus were concerned, that the Government of India had taken upon themselves the responsibility of supporting the Aligarh University and the Benares Hindu University by an annual grant of Rs. 3 lakhs. I raised the question whether the Government which had recognised its duty for the Muslim and the Hindus, had not also a duty for the Scheduled Castes, and the Government of India agreed that it was a legitimate question and that the answer to that question could not be except in the affirmative. They granted Rs. 3 lakhs as a grant for the education of the scheduled castes from the Central funds. While, I am satisfied with the progress that is being made year by year by the enlargement of the educational grants for the Scheduled Castes, there are two points with which I am greatly dissatisfied. One is this: At the time in 1942 when this question was raised by me for the first time in the Government of India, it was agreed that the responsibility for the education of the Scheduled Castes up to the university standard in India was to be borne by the Provincial Governments and that whatever contributions the Government of India made towards the education of Scheduled Castes would be devoted for their education in foreign countries. According to that understanding, the first batch of Scheduled Caste students was sent to England, although there was great, difficulty in the matter of getting admission to English and American universities, because they were overflooded. Yet we here in the Government of India pressed upon the foreign

universities that as it was for the first time that the lowest of the low people were being sent for higher education, the foreign universities should show them some consideration. The result was that we were able to get admission for about 30 Scheduled Caste students. Thereafter, in 1945 the old regime ended, and the Congress regime came in 1946. I had hoped that a system which had been inaugurated in 1943 or so and which had been given effect to and in which the Government's responsibility for the education of the Scheduled Castes in India and their education outside was accepted, would be continued, but to my great surprise, great chagrin almost I must say I found that Mr. Rajagopalchari who became the Education Minister in the Congress regime and who has a great knack for giving a pious look to an impious act abolished the system of sending Scheduled Caste students to foreign countries, and since that time there had hardly been any student belonging to the Scheduled Castes who has gone abroad for further studies. I think that this is—what shall I say?—a most dangerous thing from one point of view. No doubt the Hindus do not like my criticism, but I am firmly convinced that my criticism is right, and I must repeat it notwithstanding the opposition with which it may be met.

Shri B. K. P. Sinha (Bihar) : But the Scheduled Castes are also Hindus.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes, if you call them so. I am statutorily a Hindu.

Shri B. K. P. Sinha : Factually also.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Sir, the point is this. In this country, for reasons into which I need not go now, the fact is quite clear that the higher classes receive the highest education. Their children go to Cambridge, their children go to Oxford, their children go to the Columbia University and to all the other foreign universities.

Dr. K. N. Katju : Perhaps my hon. friend is probably not aware that Harijans or members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes are being sent to the foreign countries.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : You are repenting, I see.

Dr. K. N. Katju : They are benefited by it.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I cannot hear.

Dr. K. N. Katju : May I just say a few words? I heard him complain just now that the system of awarding foreign scholarships to the members of the scheduled castes has been given up and was being given up in 1946 by Rajaji. I was only just saying that foreign scholarships are being given today and that scheme was tried last year for one year and that scheme has now been made permanent for five years.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : You are reviving it because you have seen the folly of it.

Dr. K. N. Katju : It has been renewed. The scholarships are now being given.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : After an abeyance of several years.

Dr. K. N. Katju : I am not concerned with that point.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : You should look into the history of your department. You cannot simply say, 'I don't know' What I was saying was this. Notwithstanding what my hon. friend said, I think the criticism that I am making is very valid and very fundamental. Here in this country you find really two nations—a ruling nation and a nation which is a subject nation.

An Hon. Member : Question.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The backward classes are all subject peoples. They have no authority in any place. None whatever. They have no place in Administration—they have no place in the Executive and the Executive and the Administration is entirely monopolised by the higher classes. They are monopolising it by reason of the fact that they have been able to get the highest education. Why not examine all the Secretaries of your Departments in the Government of India? The son and daughter of every Secretary in the Government is to be found in Cambridge or Oxford. Twice and thrice they have made journeys in order to lodge their children there because they have the amplest means. The backward class man's son cannot get even primary education. This sort of

revolution in the two different classes is going on for centuries—it is an intolerable business because we cannot allow one class to rule for ever. For some time they may but they must see that the other classes also become educationally qualified in order that they too may hold the reins of government. We are not going to be subject people all the time.

Shri H. P. Saksena (Uttar Pradesh) : There are no classes in India. This is a classless country.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Therefore what I am saying is this, that if you really want to unify the people, to bring all the people on level, then it is not enough that you should get the highest education and others should get the lowest and not even the lowest. It is from that point of view that you must introduce the system of foreign education. It was with that aim that I struggled to get some quota from the Government of India and asked them to put the responsibility for university education upon the provinces. The States have been jolly glad to throw the responsibility upon you. What do they do ? They are having prohibition, making people sober. Personally for myself I think a sober man who is an ignoramus is not to be preferred to a man who is educated and who drink a bit. I prefer the latter. I am glad to hear that my hon. Friend is now reviving the system of sending scheduled caste boys to foreign countries. I congratulate him.

Now, Sir, the other thing which has recently come to my notice is this, that the Education Department has issued a circular—I think a month or two ago—to the effect that those scheduled caste boys only who have secured 50 per cent. marks in the examination shall get scholarships. Others will not get. I am wondering whether a generous Government with a sympathetic heart desiring to elevate the scheduled castes would ever think of prescribing so hard a test as securing 50 per cent. You must consider the condition in which the scheduled caste boy lives. Probably his father or mother has not got even a room set apart for his study. He probably has not got a lamp to sit by at night and study. He is living in the midst of a crowd. How do you expect him to secure 50 per cent. marks in the examination ? It is an absurdity—utter absurdity. You must, for some time allow the ordinary

standard *viz.*, of 33 per cent. which has been recognized by all the universities and which is being recognised by you also for the purposes of employment in the Government of India. If a boy who merely passes is fit to be employed by the Government of India, why is he not fit for the grant of scholarship for further education unless you want deliberately to put some kind of an impediment in the growth of their education? The difficulty is this. The admissions take place some time in the last week of June. Various colleges admitted scheduled caste students without asking for fees because they knew that the Government of India would give them the scholarship. After three months of the joining of the College, the Ministry comes out with a circular saying that only those who have secured 50 per cent. will get scholarships. What are the colleges to do with the boys whom they have admitted on the assurance that the previous system will continue in operation? What are the boys going to do who have got themselves admitted into the college? I hope my hon. friend the Home Minister will look into this matter and take it up with the Education Minister and ask them to square up this difficulty, at any rate so far as this year is concerned. You may do what you like next year provided you give enough notice both to the students and to the colleges as to what you propose to do.

Then I come to the question of services. The Commissioner has divided his figures with regard to the services under three groups—the Army, the All india services and the Central Services of the Government of India. With regard to Army, I find that in certain categories the position has deteriorated. In 1952 there were two Second Lieutenants belonging to the scheduled castes. In 1953, the position is “nil”. Of Junior Commissioned Officers, in 1952 there were 601. In 1953 the number is 435. Non-Commissioned Officers, in 1952 there were 3,273. In 1953, the figure has gone down to 2,533. Other ranks, in 1952, the number was 22,288. In 1953 it has gone down to 18,666. I am quite unable to understand this deterioration in the position of the scheduled castes in the Army. The Army, I thought, is the one place where not much intellectual calibre is necessary, I mean in the other ranks.

may be that in the higher staff it is required—much intellectual eminence. But we are not talking about them. But taking the other ranks, we find that the figure has gone down from 22,000 to some 18,000. Why? The Army, I understand, has been expanding, and with the expansion of the Army one would naturally expect an increase in the number of scheduled caste men in the Army. In all other places, you say they are unsuitable. And that is a very ambiguous phrase. All public service commissions and appointing authorities have learnt that phrase by heart. You simply say the man is unsuitable, and there is an end of the matter. But in the Army what is there to be unsuitable? What is the unsuitability about? There you have certain measurement of the chest. There are very few people among the scheduled caste's who would not fulfil that test. Then you have certain tests of height—some 5 ft. 4 inches or so. Well, I think all scheduled caste candidates would fill up that height (Interruption). Very few, there may be, I admit, who may fail. But given these physical standards of health, chest measurements and height, I should have thought that almost every scheduled caste man was fit to be in the military service. And when you are denying them service in other departments of the Government of India, surely you ought to make some concession to them in departments like the Army and the Police where education is not a matter of any considerable moment. But there again you have been behaving in a stepmotherly fashion. I do not know whether the Home Department evertakes interest in these figures, or knows them and pursues the matter. Surely, the Commander-in-Chief ought to be asked by them as to why this deterioration has taken place.

Then, Sir I come to the All-India Serviced There are what they call the Administrative Service and the Indian Police Service. Recruitment to these, I think, started through the Public Services Commission, in the year 1952. My hon. friend Shri Datar will correct me, if I am wrong. But I think that is the year.

The Deputy Minister For Home Affairs (Shri B. N. Datar) : About 1946.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : No, I am not counting those whom they recruited from the Provinces. No scheduled caste man was recruited except one or two; the rest they found to be utterly unfit, although the Provincial Governments thought them quite fit. The Central Public Service Commission found them utterly unfit. That is all past history and I am dealing with the present. Has there been any recruitment to the Indian Administrative Service since 1952—when the new Constitution came into force? I have not seen single scheduled caste candidate being chosen by the Public Service Commission for the Indian Administrative Service—not one. I have not seen a single candidate being chosen by the Public Service Commission for the Indian Police Service either. It is only last year that I struggled with the Public Service Commission and induced them to accept one for the Indian Police Service. I wonder whether the Home Department which is in charge of services look upon this matter as of no moment or looks upon this matter as a matter of high moment. These are executive services. My hon. friend knows very well the difference between an executive service and an administrative service. An administrative service is more or less a clerical thing. The executive service possesses the power of direction. It has directive authority. Now, I want to say and I want to say it quite fearlessly that 2,000 clerks are of no value as compared to one officer holding an executive post. In Hindi we call it “Maarneki Jagah”. What are these poor clerks? You will see in fortresses—but you have none in U.P.—in my part of the country the place is full of Maratha fortresses.

Shri B. N. Datar : “Maar Quilla” We call it.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: आदमी वहाँ बैठकर फायर कर सकता है दुश्मन को,

Now, these executive posts are posts from where direction can be given. The clerks need all kinds of protection. Any officer may spoil their character-roll by writing a bad remark or saying that the man is no good. The only way he can be protected is by having somebody in the executive service who might look into this matter and see no injustice is being done. Similarly with regard to the policy laid down by the Government. Whether that policy will fructify and yield

results depends upon who are the people who are charged with the duties of executing that policy. If the executive authority is unsympathetic, is antagonistic, that policy, however good it may be, can never fructify. And let me add, that so far as my experience goes, the whole of the administration which is now composed of caste Hindus, is the most unsympathetic administration that the scheduled castes have to suffer under. This is because of the unsympathetic character of the administration. And when we have been shouting for representation in services, that claim is being maligned by calling it communalism. What we are trying to do is to reduce the communalism of the other people. We are not asking for communalism. I hope my hon. friend will remember this. Until and unless your administration and your executive becomes more sympathetic to the scheduled castes, none of your laws and none, of your administrative policies will bear any fruit.

Then let us come to, what are called, the Central Services. Here I am taking only the figures of permanent posts, not the temporary ones, as they stood on 1st December, 1952. The Commissioner says that the Ministry of Railways, the Ministry of Communications, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Information and other organisations under its control have not supplied information on this point. Therefore, these figures relate to those departments which have supplied the information.

The figures are very telling. In class I the actual strength is 752 and the scheduled castes number 10; according to the proportion fixed by the Home Ministry that ought to have been 175. Class II (gazetted posts) total number is 642 while the scheduled castes number only seven; that ought to have been 107 according to the proportion; class I (non-gazetted) total number is 1123 and the scheduled castes number 44; that ought to have been 185. Class III total number is 10,372 and the scheduled castes number 536 and this ought to have been 728. In class IV, the total number is 8807.

Dr. P. C. Mitra (Bihar) : How many of them applied ?

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The scheduled castes number 1251 but ought to have been 1478. Class IV servants, I think, are

chaprasis and there you find the number of scheduled castes people fairly large. There are the figures which must be within the ken of the Home Ministry. They have laid down a proportion and surely, it is their duty to see that that proportion is carried out by the different Ministeries. Why has there been this defalcation on the part of the various Ministeries and why has the Home Minister not taken any action? If he had taken any action, what is the action that he took in order that the scheduled castes receive their quota which is fixed by him? Sir, it is a very black picture, if I may say so, very black. It reminds me of a cartoon which was drawn by the Germans during the last War. The cartoon depicted an old negro gentleman in Washington. When war was declared, the negro—as everybody knows, negroes are not well disposed towards the whites in America; they are always very angry, quarrelling with them for not giving them equality of opportunity—suddenly felt very patriotic and he said that he must transfer some of his patriotism to the young boy who was his son. He went to the market and purchased an American National Flag—small one which the boy could hold—and gave it to the boy. He said, “My son, I want to show you today our capital, our capital”. The boy did not realise what it meant. Holding the boy by the right hand—and the boy holding the flag in his left hand—the old man took him round and round in Washington City, showed him the Supreme Court, the Congress House, the Senate and so on and so on and ultimately, after lunch, came down to the White House, stood there for a minute or two, and said to the young boy, “My dear boy, this is the House of our President”. But the boy said, “Father, what are you talking? He is a white man and how do you praise him?” The old man said, “Oh, shut up, that is only outward”. That is to say, inside he is quite black. I think that might well be applied to the Home Minister; notwithstanding the white dress, he is very black inside and the evidence is the neglect which has been shown in the matter of seeing that the Home Ministry’s own orders are carried out. Nothing has been done.

I have dealt with services and I will deal now with the question of propaganda. I see that the Government of India

has sanctioned about Rs. 50 lakhs for the year 1953-54 for the purposes of carrying on propaganda against untouchability. The scheme, I understand, is that a part of the money is given to private agencies chosen by the State Governments and part of the money is given to all-India or Organisations directly by the Government of India. That is the scheme. I have no idea what my hon. friend means by the abolition of untouchability. What is untouchability? Let us understand it very carefully. Untouchability, so far as I understand it, is a kind of a mental disease of the Hindus. It is not a disease from which I am suffering, not any tumour which I have got, not a rheumatic pain or any of the physical disabilities which can be removed but it is a mental twist; every Hindu believes that to observe untouchability is the right thing. I do not understand how my friend is going to untwist the twist which the Hindus have got for thousands of years; unless they are all sent to some kind of a mental hospital, it is very difficult to cure them and I do not want them to be sent there. Therefore, let us understand what we talk and what we are doing. Besides, all must realise that untouchability is founded on religion. There is no doubt about it and let us not be ashamed of realising it. Manu, in his law book, very definitely prescribes untouchability. He said that the untouchables shall live outside the village, that they shall have only earthen pots, that they shall not have clean clothes, that they shall beg for their food and so on and I cannot see how you blame the Hindus. For thousands of years, by the teaching of this dirty law, they have got inculcated in their mind the doctrine that untouchability is a most sacred thing. The Hindu has been taught that the most pious and best of life is that of a rat who lives in a hole, unconnected with anyone, he must not touch this, he must not touch that, he must not eat this, he must not eat that, etc. and this is a kind of life which a rat observes by living in a hole. A rat would not allow another rat to come into its own house. That is the position and all that we can do is to see that untouchability which, as I said, is a mental twist of the Hindus does not protrude so much into public life as to involve the civil liberties of the people.

Dr. P. C. Mitra: Untouchability is only a custom and usage.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : If you want to study that subject with me, I can spend a few hours with you.

Therefore, Sir, this propaganda business is quite impossible for me to understand. I agree with my hon. friend Mr. Kunzru that it may result in nothing else but a waste of public money.

Secondly, I do not undersand why this matter should be left to these what are called organisations of social workers. A social worker in this country is a professional, he has no such things as inner sympathy. He is a professional. If the Muslim league wants him, he will probably serve the Muslim League; if the Hindu Mahasabha wants him, he will serve the Hindu Mahasabha; if the Congress wants him, he will serve the Congress. He is a professional and there is no such thing as, for instance, an inner love. As Tolstoy has said— rightly said—before you serve, you must learn to love., No man can serve anybody unless he loves him. These professionals have no love; they are simply trying to make their livelihood and therefore, perhaps, I would not be suprised if they are getting remuneration from all the three. I do not wish to comment on it. The proper thing, if my hon. friend wants to do, seems to me to be to take hold of these unemployed graduates. There are plenty of them, intelligent educated boys, who can be said to have some kind of modern outlook in life or who might be said to have developed some public conscience in the matter. You employ them on some reasonable salary, give them a motor-bike or a cycle and give each man seven, ten or fifteen villages, an ask him to go round village by village, hold public meetings, address the people on the question of untouchability and tell them that this is something which is going to bring disgrace upon this country in the modern world. That way it would be far more fruitful and far more effective than the kind of thing that my hon. frined is doing. Why these social organisations have a fascination for the Congress Government, I do not know. In olden times, during the British regime, the Centre acted administratively through the Collector. Money was given to him and he was

asked to discharge certain functions in certain fields. He could be held accountable to the Government. Money was safe in his hands. If you do not like the Collector then employ the kind of agency that I have submitted, namely, a group of intelligent boys who would be longing to do this service. This kind of a thing, a motley crowd, calling itself by some kind of a name to attract people is of no consequence at all.

Then , Sir,

Shri K. B. Lall (Bihar) : Will they not be professional ?

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The Government servant is not a professional. Why ? You want to use them later for canvassing votes for you in the elections. That is the whole trouble about it.

Now, Sir, regarding the other point, namely, selection of certain agencies by the Government of India and giving them funds to do this propaganda work, the Commissioner has made some observations on some communication that passed between me and the Home Department. He has said that other agencies have accepted the offer of the Government to receive money and to do propaganda. I was one naughty boy who refused and he thought that it might be well in bringing this default on my part to public notice. I wish he had given him the full letter which I had written to the Home Department. I think Mr. Datar dealt with the matter if I mistake not, and he will recall that what I said was this that the bodies that were chosen by the Government of India, were political parties like the Harijan League and some other League, something like that, were all political bodies. The Federation was also a political body. So I think it was wrong for Government to hand over public funds to political bodies who may use the funds for political propaganda and not for the elevation of the Scheduled Castes, and I told him that there was the Chairman of another body which was being built up in Bombay, which was a purely social welfare body. It had large funds, somewhere between two and three lakhs of rupees. They were going to build a hall and carry on activity. Of course I forgot to mention therein that that body, although it was formed in Bombay, was not confined in the matter of its social

work either to the Bombay city or to the Bombay State. It was open to them to do any kind of social work in any other part of India. The only thing was that its centre and head office would be in Bombay. Mr. Datar rejected my suggestion and put this matter in the report. All that I want to say is this. If Mr. Datar had communicated to me that he did not accept my suggestion, I am sure within myself that I would have changed my mind and accepted the offer in the name of the Federation because beggars cannot be choosers if for no other reason, and I even now say that if he insists that the Federation is the only body which the Government of India would entrust the money with, well, I have no hesitation, but I still maintain my view that this work ought not to be entrusted to political bodies.

Now, Sir, I come to the question of the economic emancipation of the Scheduled Castes. This, I think along with education and services is the most important thing for the raising of the status of the Scheduled Castes. Now what are the means of raising the economic status of the Scheduled Castes ? Obviously the economic emancipation of the Scheduled castes will depend upon the opportunity that they get for what might be called entry into gainful occupation. Unless and until doors are open to them where they can find gainful occupation, their economic emancipation is not going to take place. They are going to remain slaves, if not slaves, serfs of the land-owning classes in the villages. There can be no doubt on that point at all. Now, Sir, out of these gainful occupations I personally feel no doubt that the most important thing on which Government ought to concentrate is the giving of land to the Scheduled Castes. They must be settled on land so that they might obtain independent means of livelihood, cease to be afraid of anybody, walk with their heads erect and live fearlessly and courageously. I think this is a thing which all the Ministers are agreed upon. I take it that the one thing that Government ought to do is to provide land for the Scheduled Castes. Let us take that question. Firstly, is there land available to be given to the Scheduled Castes ? Has Government any power to sequester land from those who are owning land now, take it away and give it to the Scheduled

Castes ? Is it possible for the Scheduled Castes to be financed by the Government in the matter of purchasing lands if land was to be sought ? These are the three ways by which land could be given to the Scheduled Castes. Government should by law limit the holding of those who hold land and take away the excess and hand it over to the Scheduled Castes. Secondly the Government may finance the purchase of land if any is to be sold.

Sir, it is clear to everybody that land-holding in India is not merely a matter of economic livelihood. It is a matter of social status. A person holding land has a higher status than a person not holding land. Now it is quite clear that in the villages this matter of economic status is of the utmost importance to everybody. And no Hindu wishes that an untouchable should possess a piece of land so that he may reach a higher status than his community is entitled to under the social system. Sir, the question of a scheduled caste man getting a bit of land in the village seems to me to be utterly impossible. I do not know to what extent the Government will be able to make a law limiting the holdings. There might easily be a revolution. If the Government had, in passing land legislation, instead of giving the title of the property to the peasant, kept the title to themselves as paramount owners of land, they might have been able to pass a law that as the land belonged to the Government nobody would be allowed to hold more than a certain number of acres. But the Government has committed one of the greatest acts of folly in creating these peasant proprietors. Sir, once Talleyrand told Napoleon. "Why do you want all this bother with Europe ? Why do you want to create all this enmity ? Why should you not be content with becoming the King of France with me as your Prime Minister?" There were a certain number of soldiers standing outside the palace of Napoleon holding their guns with bayonets shining in the light of the sun. Napoleon was a very abusive person. He told Talleyrand : "You were so much done in a silk stocking. Do you see my battalions ?" He said, "Yes, I see them". Then Napoleon asked, "Why should I not be an Emperor ?" To that Talleyrand replied and my friends will remember that reply : "You can do anything

with these bayonets except sit on them. "Now, you have created these peasant proprietors. You can't sit on them : they will sit on you. You have bungled and bungled most wrongly notwithstanding the advice of many people not to do it. But just to win political elections, you did it and you are bearing the fruits of it now. However, this limitation of holdings therefore is an impossible thing.

I happened to study the report of the United Provinces Tenancy Committee appointed by my friend Mr. Govind Vallabh Pant. I know every line of it and I wonder whether the people who raised the cry that holdings ought to be limited know anything about the facts of it. What is the average holding in Uttar Pradesh ? The lowest is about 1 acre and the highest is about four or five acres. That is all that there is and the further fact is that every inch of land in the U. P. has been under cultivation and in occupation. You can do nothing there and that I am sure, is the case in most of the other States. Therefore my submission to the Hon. the Home Minister is this that unless you want to go on fooling the Scheduled Castes by telling them, 'Oh, keep quiet, we are going to give you a peice of land. Either we will have a ceiling ot we will finance your purchase. We will do this or do that, unless you want to go on fooling them like this, you ought to think of some other method of doing that. This is a problem which you must solve and if you do not solve it, you know what consequences there might be—most evil consequences. The fire is burning outside; it may easily come in and the Scheduled Castes may carry the banner and you and your Constitution will go under. Nothing will remain.

Now, Sir, I am going to make one suggestion to my hon. friend and it is this. I find from the Planning Commission's Report that a very large amount of what might be called cultivable waste is to be found in this country. According to the Planning Commission it is 98 million acres. Now, my suggestion to my friends is this. The Government is going, I understand, to amend the Constitution. They are fond of amending the Constitution. Why have a Constitution at all, I do not understand, if you are amending it every Saturday ? However, as you are amending it, I suggest that you amend

it and put the cultivation of waste land in List No. 1 so that it will come within the purview of the Central Government. The State Governments have not got the means of developing that land. They are living like dog in the manger, neither developing it themselves nor allowing anybody else to do it. Therefore there can be nothing wrong in taking over the waste land by amending the Constitution in List No. 1.

The second thing which I am going to suggest is one which many people may not find pleasant but I think there is no harm in suggesting. It is this, you again
11-00 A.M. levy the salt tax. The salt tax was the lightest tax that we had in our country. At the time it was abolished, the revenue was about Rs. 10 crores and it might easily go up to Rs. 20 crores now. No doubt, the abolition of salt tax was done in the memory of Mr. Gandhi. I respect him and I suggest to you that you levy the tax and create a Trust Fund in the name of Mr. Gandhi—Gandhi Trust Fund for the development or settlement of the untouchables. After all, the untouchables, according to all of us, were the nearest and dearest to him and there is no reason why Mr. Gandhi may not bless this project from Heaven, namely, levying the tax and using it for the development of waste land and settling the Scheduled Castes on this waste land. There is promise but a scope for performance. You know in the game of poker there is a difference between promise and performance. I give you a scheme where there is not only promise but there is also performance. I do not understand why the people of this country should not contribute through the means of the salt tax for the elevation of the Scheduled Castes. You may keep it quite outside the Budget just as a sort of a Gandhi Welfare Scheme which will perpetuate the name of Mr. Gandhi and which will give relief to the people whom he wanted to protect and whom he wanted to elevate. This is my suggestion to the Hon. the Home Minister and I hope he will give this matter his most serious consideration.

Sir, I have done and I do not want to say anything more. The only thing that I would like to say is this that in all this effort which is being made by the Government, by the various social workers and the social agencies, there is one thing which

gives me a very sad thought and it is this that our Prime Minister has taken no interest in this matter at all. In fact, he seems to be not only apathetic but anti-untouchable. I happen to have read his biography and I find that he castigated Mr. Gandhi because Mr. Gandhi was prepared to die for the purpose of doing away with separate electorates which was given to the Scheduled Castes. He has said in his biography, 'Why on earth Mr. Gandhi is bothering with this trifling problem ? Sir, I was shocked and surprised to hear the Prime Minister—rather Mr. Nehru then in 1934—uttering these words. I thought that since the responsibility of Government had fallen on his shoulder he may have changed his view and thought that he must now take the responsibility which Mr. Gandhi was prepared to take on his shoulder, but I do not find any kind of a change in his mind. Sir, in the year 1952 a conference was held at Nagpur under the Presidentship of my hon. friend Babu Jagjivan Ram.

I understood that there was a very big *shamiana*. Two silver chairs were placed on the dais, one for Mr. Jagjivan Ram and one for Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. There was an audience of two hundred to three hundred and one thousand police. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was supposed to inaugurate that conference. I have got his speech here, but I do not wish to trouble the House by reading it, but this is the gist of it. He was, I am told, in great anger against Babu Jagjivan Ram for having organised the conference. He said loudly "I do not recognize that there is such a problem as that of the untouchables. There is a general problem of the economically poor and the problem of the untouchables is a part of that problem. It will take its place and receive its attention along with the other problems. There is no occasion, no purpose in bestowing any special thought upon it." Sir, if the Prime Minister is prepared to throw such cold water—not cold, water from the refrigerator, so to say—what enthusiasm can we expect from the rest of the workers who have taken upon themselves the duty or the responsibility or the interest in carrying on with this particular problem : I do not think that untouchability will vanish. They believe 'yes'. I think 'no', as I said, because it has a mental twist. It will take years

and years. At the same time, there is no reason why we should not strongly agitate for seeing, whether untouchability goes or not, that the social, economic, political and constitutional right of the Scheduled Castes are fully protected. To that extent efforts must necessarily be directed.

Sir, there is one other word I should like to say. People might say that I have taken most of the time with the Scheduled Castes. I have not said anything with regard to the tribes and I am not going to say anything, because there are many friends who are more qualified to speak about them than I am, I shall, therefore, not venture to enter that field, but there is one thing which, I think, one can say and should say, because I find there is a good deal of confusion in the minds of the people as regards the relative position of the Scheduled Castes, the tribal castes and the criminal tribes. Now, Sir, with regards to the Scheduled Castes, the position is this : they are prepared—in fact, not prepared—but they are already within the pale of civilization. They are not outside. Their struggle is to achieve equality of opportunity and equality of status. That is their problem. With regard to the tribal people, their problem is totally different. They are outside the Hindu civilization. And the question that has to be considered with regard to these tribal people is this ; do they want to come within the Hindu civilization and be assimilated and then acquire equality of status and equality of opportunity ? I was talking to many leaders of the tribal communities—many men and women of the tribal community—they seem to be most reluctant to come within the pale of Hindu civilization.

Dr. Shrimati Seeta Parmanand : Question.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : They prefer to live outside, they do not want to come in.

With regard to the criminal tribes, theirs is a purely economic problem : how well can you give them the opportunity to earn a decent living ? If they can get the opportunity to earn a decent living, they will cease to be criminals.

Now, Sir, one question asked is this. It seems to me a matter of great regret that the Hindu civilization which is so many

years old, some say six thousand years old—many people will not be satisfied with that period probably they want to take it back—never mind about it, let it be six thousand years old—has produced five crores of untouchables, some two crores of tribal people; and some fifty thousand criminal tribes people. What can one say of this civilization? With a civilization which has produced these results, there must be something very fundamentally wrong, and I think it is time the Hindus looked at it from this point of view—whether they can be proud of the civilization which has produced these communities like the untouchables, the criminal tribes and the tribal people. I think they ought to think twice—not twice a hundred times—they are conventionally called civilized—whether they could be called civilized with this kind of results produced by their civilization.

Sir, I thank you very much for this opportunity.
