

8

***ON THE BOMBAY UNIVERSITY ACT AMENDMENT BILL: 2**

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Sir, before I move my amendment to clause 3 I should like to correct a typist's error which has crept in the amendment as it stands on the paper. The amendment should read :

“An incorporated college is any institution founded and managed by the University itself for the study of a special group of subjects not provided in any adequate way in other colleges; and so on.”

Sir, this amendment which I propose to move is a consequential amendment which depends upon the passing of the main amendment to clause 25 of the bill which I shall be moving. If that amendment is not passed it will not become necessary for me to move this amendment. I therefore submit that I may be allowed to move this amendment after my main amendment to clause 25 is passed. If I move this amendment now and later on if my main amendment is lost, I shall be wasting the time of the House.

* * *

RELATION OF COLLEGES TO THE UNIVERSITY

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Mr. President, the first part of my amendment to clause 7 is a consequential amendment depending upon the amendment to clause 25. I therefore request you, Sir, to hold it over till the amendment to clause 25 is disposed of.

The Honourable the President: I will hold it over.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: As regards my second amendment to clause 7. I understand the Honourable Minister desires to have some time to consider whether he can devise some amendment to my amendment to which both of us can agree.

The Honourable the President: Will the honourable member move his amendment.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: My second amendment to clause 7 runs thus :

Add the following clause to the bill :—

“7(b) For the purposes of grants-in-aid from Government Treasury the University alone shall be recognised by the Government and no grants-in-aid shall be given to any college except through the University.”

*B.L.C. Debates, Vol. XXI, pp. 250-53, dated 1st October 1927.

I should like to insert the word “except” after the word “college” in the amendment of which I have given notice. It had been left over through mistake of the typist.

Sir, my reasons for moving this amendment are these. Under the new Act the University has been charged with the responsibility of undertaking the work of education far more directly than it was ever done before. Now, although the responsibility for teaching has been placed upon the University by the provisions of this Act, it must be recognised that the colleges which will be affiliated to the University will be the primary bodies which will carry on the practical work of teaching under this University. Now, Sir, I submit that unless the University is allowed some control over the colleges to regulate the work of teaching that is carried on in the colleges, I think it would not be fair to hold the University responsible for maintaining the standard of education. It must be given power to control the colleges and to regulate their work of teaching if the University is to discharge this responsibility. Now, Sir, under the existing law, the only means of control which the University has over these colleges is that the University appoints, I understand, what is called a committee of inspection, which committee visits these colleges at certain stated intervals, makes inspections and finds out what are the defects in their organisation and equipment. That committee I understand.

Mr. P. R. Chikodi: I rise to a point of order. I should like to know what the exact wording of the amendment of the honourable member is.

The Honourable the President: It was read out, the word “except” has been added.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Now, Sir, I find that the only means of control which the University has over these colleges, whereby it can enforce its regulations on the colleges, is through the report of this committee of inspection. I understand that this committee of inspection occasionally goes round on a visitorial tour, and makes reports on the defects in the college organisation, and that report, I understand, is submitted to the standing committee of the University; and the standing committee reports to the syndicate its opinion on the defects pointed out by the committee of inspection. That is all that is done today by way of enforcing the rules of discipline which the University has framed in the matter of controlling the colleges. Now, I submit that that is not sufficient, because if the colleges do not follow the directions given by the University on the basis of the report of this committee of inspection then the only effective power which the University has got over these colleges is the right to disaffiliate those colleges. Now, I submit, Sir, that that is a power which is too drastic; it is a power which is the power of annihilation. The University has really, as a matter of fact, no power to amend the ways of the colleges. In other words, under the existing system of control which the University has got over the colleges, the University today can only make or unmake a college, either by granting affiliation or by disaffiliating a college. The University,

under the present system, has now power, whereby it can enforce its discipline and compel obedience on the part of the colleges to these rules of discipline, without resort to this extreme penalty of disaffiliation. Now, Sir, my amendment is such that it gives the University the power to amend the ways of the colleges and to compel obedience on the part of the colleges to the directions given by the University, without resort to this extreme measure of disaffiliation. I submit, therefore, that if the University was recognised by the Government as a unit—and I submit that it ought to be—and if the grants given to the different colleges by the Government were distributed through the University or, if possible, on the recommendation of the University, then my submission is that the University will acquire a power which, it is very necessary for it to enable it to enforce its discipline on the colleges. I think there is no other power which the University can be given which can effect this object, and I say the most necessary object, of enabling the University to enforce its rules of discipline over a recalcitrant college. Now, Sir, this view, that the University should be given financial control over these colleges, is a view which has also been laid down by the Royal Commission on University Education in London. In paragraph 41 of their report, they say :

“The power of the purse is indeed the most important means of control which the University should possess, if it is to organise teaching, with which it is concerned. All the other modern Universities, except Wales and Scotland are masters in their own house in regard to the assignment of State and municipal grants, because the University is one unit and not a congeries of many units.”

In this report the Commissioners also recommended that the same principle should be applied in the case of the University of London and my amendment is based upon this important recommendation of the Royal Commission on University Education in London. I should also like to point out in this connection that the organization of the Bombay University in its inception was fundamentally based upon the organization of the University of London. I think we are also tending in this Bill to amalgamate, so to say, or assimilate the position of the colleges under the Bombay University to the same position which colleges under the London University have been made to assume under the reforms effected as a result of the Royal Commission. The situation in both cases is the same: and I think the rule prescribed for regulating the relations of the colleges under the University of London to that University should with equal advantage be applied for regulating the relations of the colleges under the University of Bombay to that University. There might be some objection on the ground that probably the University may misbehave in the matter of making recommendation for grants-in-aid. I think there is no justification at all for the supposition that the University will have any private grudge against any particular college. I do not think that a University under the new Act will be composed of such irresponsible persons that they would for their own

whims or private ends sacrifice the interests of a particular college. I therefore submit that on these grounds my amendment should be carried.

***Discussion resumed**

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Sir, although I do not know what is going to be the fate of this amendment, I am rather glad to find that there are so many honourable members who have recognised the principle embodied in this amendment. I do not think that I should waste the time of the House in dealing with every sort of objection that is raised against this amendment, but I should first of all like to point out that so far as I am able to construe the amendment as I have put it down, I do not think that it makes the University in any sense the sole arbitrator in the matter of distributing the grants.

All that I say is this: that the grant shall be distributed through the university. It does not take away the power of control of the Minister of pay grant. He is the final determining authority in the matter of making grants notwithstanding this amendment. I do not think that the Honourable Minister of Education will object to have any consultation with such an important body as the university in the matter of making grants. I am sure that those honourable members who have stood up for the mofussil colleges and feared that university authorities would manipulate affairs in such a way as to affect the interests of the mofussil colleges would agree with me when I say that it is as much their duty as the duty of every one in this House to see that Government money that is paid as grants-in-aid is properly expended by the colleges. I think there cannot be a better body than the university to advise the Minister whether the money which has been raised from taxation and handed over to the mofussil colleges as grants is well spent or not. I think the Honourable Minister should be the last man to reject the views of an important body of which he is going to be the father by the passing of this bill.

There was a point made by the honourable member Mr. Jairamdas which was greatly appreciated by the Government benches. He said that this amendment was going to reduce the control of this House over the Minister. I do not see how that can be the result of my amendment. As I said just now the only object of my amendment is to strengthen the hands of the Minister. If that object is not clear I am prepared to accept any amendment which the Honourable Minister may move in order to make that meaning clear. I do not see how it can at all curtail the power of this House over the Minister or the power of the Minister. Even under this amendment the Minister will be the final authority to make these grants. The only object of the amendment is that the university as an intermediary body should be consulted for making grants. I do not think there is any serious limitation either on the power of the Minister or on the control of the House over the

Minister. The House on the other hand will be in a much better position to judge whether the provision made by the Minister is properly spent. With these words I commend my amendment to the House.

●●