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IN THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE

Twenty-third Sitting—16th September 1931

HEAD 2

*(Questions connected with the Election of Members
of the Federal Legislature)*

**Dr. Ambedkar:* My Lord Chancellor, I am speaking for the first time as a member of the Federal Structure Committee. Every new member, in availing himself of the very kind opportunity that you gave him for making a general statement of his position with regard to the problems which this Committee will have to face, has given expression to his sense of appreciation of the great services which you, Sir, have rendered to this Committee; and he has also added a proviso making it plain that the safety of his own community, or of the interests he represented, was a condition precedent to any consent that he might give to the establishment of responsibility in the Central Government. Lord Chancellor, if I do not follow my predecessors in this, it is not because I have no feelings to express on the matter. On the contrary, my feelings are very deep; and if I do not give expression to them it is because I prefer to obey the mandate that you gave us this morning, that all these matters shall be taken as understood.

With these few preliminary remarks I propose to submit my views on the various sub-heads included under Head No. 2. In doing so I do not wish to follow the order of the sub-heads as they are given in the Memorandum which has been circulated to us, nor do I propose to express my views on every item that has been included in that Memorandum. I will only touch upon the topics on which I think I have a definite opinion to express and a definite contribution to make.

The first thing that I propose to deal with is the subject of the composition of the Federal Legislature; and before I proceed with that subject let me make my position clear with respect to the question as to whether the Federal Legislature of future India shall be unicameral or bicameral. Now,

*Proceedings of the Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee (R.T.C. Second Session), Government of India, Central Publication Branch, Calcutta, 1932, Vol I, pp. 120-32.

I confess at the very outset that I have never been a believer in a bicameral system. I have never accepted that the Second Chamber has any utility at all; but I also agree that, although I have that conviction in me, there are many others who do not accept that position, and I know that in this Conference it will not be possible for us to convince them that a Second Chamber is not necessary. Secondly, I also feel that, if the relations of the two Chambers are properly regulated and there are ways by which the fangs of a Second Chamber could be clipped by proper safeguards so that it could be made safe for a democratic government in India—I do not wish to raise any objection to a bicameral system being introduced in India.

Having said that, let me turn to the question of the representation of the British Indian Provinces in the Federal Legislature of India. In doing that, the first question with which we are concerned and confronted is whether the representation shall be direct or whether the representation shall be indirect. It seems to me that, so far as the Lower Chamber of the Federal Assembly is concerned, there can be no two opinions. It must be constituted by direct election. I am quite conscious of the fact that the Simon Commission, in dealing with this question, recommended that the Lower Chamber, instead of being constituted by direct election, should be constituted by indirect election; and in support of that they observed that, as a matter of fact, there was no distinction between direct election and indirect election, and that indirect election was only direct election one step removed. Now, logically, perhaps that position is correct; but I submit that psychologically there is a great difference between direct election and indirect election. In my opinion, what is of the utmost importance is that the people of India should be impregnated with the sense that, in the last resort, they are responsible for the good government of the country. And I venture to suggest that, unless the Indian citizen is made to feel that it is he who can make or unmake the government, we shall never be able to succeed in establishing the true foundations of a responsible government in India. Now, if my suggestion is correct, then it follows that we must have some system of election whereby a direct contact will be established between the government and the citizens of the country; and therefore I submit that the blind of an indirect election between the Central Government and the citizens must be removed, and they must be allowed to see the effect of their election upon the government of the country and upon their welfare. I can, under no circumstances, consent to a system which will not provide for direct election to the Lower Chamber of the Federal Assembly.

Coming to the constitution of the Upper Chamber, I approve of the method suggested by the Federal Structure Sub-Committee—namely, that it should be constituted by the method of indirect election in which the Provincial Legislative Councils will form the constituencies. I approve of the system because the election, instead of being carried out by the watertight methods of separate or communal electorates, will be carried out on the basis of proportional representation. Now, I think it is a great advantage in a country like

India, where, unfortunately, owing to various circumstances, we cannot avoid the separate representation of distinct communities—where we cannot ignore safeguarding the interests of various groups—to have in the constitution a Chamber which will be non-communal, a Chamber the members of which will have a mandate which will not be drawn exclusively from one particular community, but a mandate which will be broad-based. There is only one comment, however, that I would like to make on this proposal. I have no objection to—indeed, as I have stated, I approve of—the system of proportional representation ; but there is one point which I think ought to be mentioned. All members of the Committee are aware that the minorities in India are not only anxious to have their interests and their communities represented in the various legislatures, but they are also insistent upon the fact that they shall get a certain minimum quantum of representation. Now, my fear is that, although proportional representation may give them some representation in the Upper Chamber, we do not know—for we can never be certain of the results of proportional representation—we do not know that the various communities will succeed in getting the quantum of representation which they want. I would therefore like to suggest that, to this recommendation of the Federal Structure Sub-Committee, a proviso something on the lines of Article 35 of the Austrian Constitution should be added. That proviso, of course, does not speak of the representation of the communities ; it speaks of the representation of political parties. But it can be easily made applicable to the representation of the communities. This is how the proviso reads :

“The members of the Federal Council and their substitutes shall be elected by the Provincial Diets for the duration of their own legislative period according to the principles of proportional representation ; but at least one seat must fall to the Party having the second highest number of seats in the Provincial Diet or (if several parties have an equal number of seats) the second highest number of votes at the last election to the Provincial Diet. When the claims of several parties are equal, the matter shall be decided by lot.”

I do not say that this could be taken bodily and adopted in the Indian Constitution; but that the principle enunciated there, that along with the institution of proportional representation there shall be a proviso which will guarantee a quantum of representation, may be adopted in the constitution.

Now, this is all I have to say so far as the representation of the Provinces of British India in the Federal Legislature is concerned. I come now to the other part of the subject, namely, the representation of the Native States in the Federal Legislature. This subject raises two issues for consideration. One is whether each and every State shall be represented individually or whether they shall be grouped for the purposes of representation; and the second issue Which arises out of it is how they shall be represented, whether by election or by nomination.

I take issue No. I. The Federal Structure Sub-Committee has recommended that this is a matter that can be left to the States themselves. With all respect

to the Sub-Committee, I beg to differ from their position. I do not think at all it is a matter for the States to decide. My view is it is a matter for the Federal Structure Committee to decide as to which units shall be recognised as units of the Federal Constitution which we are making. Just see what would be the result of leaving the whole thing to the Native States themselves. First of all I will assume that each State is represented in the Indian Federation. If that happens, my submission is that the Federation which we will have in India will be a mammoth Federation. Let us look at this comparatively. In the German Empire there were only 25 units of the Federal State ; in Australia we have only 5 ; in Austria 8 ; in Canada 4 ; in Switzerland 22 ; in the United States, the largest Federal State 48. In India, on the assumption I am making that every State is to be represented, we shall have a Federation which will have something like 570 units. Assume, on the other hand, that all the States are not represented in this Federation which we are contemplating and that only some States are to be represented; then the question which arises is: what is going to happen to the ideal which we have set before ourselves that in the new constitution which we are going to have every inch of Indian area should be represented ? What is going to happen to the States that are going to be left out in the cold ? That is a problem which we shall have to consider.

But, My Lord Chancellor, I have raised this question not because I am alarmed at the number of States that are going to be the units of the Indian Federation. The thing that disturbs me is this : are we going to recognise every Indian State as an independent unit of the future Federation of India, irrespective of the question whether the units so recognised are capable of bearing the burdens of modern civilisation; or are we going to admit into our Federation units which are going to be units of the utmost lowest possible vitality ? I am sure that when we are discussing this question of the Indian States, we are not quite aware of the multiplicity and variety of the circumstances which will be found in the different States; and, with your permission. My Lord Chancellor, I propose to read a small passage which gives a description of the existing Indian States. I am reading from a book called "The States and their People in the Indian Constitution" by D. V. Gundappa. Now this is really the position. He gives a table with which I do not wish to trouble the Committee ; I will read his comment :

"From the foregoing tables, it will be seen that as many as 454 States have an area of less than 1,000 square miles; that 452 States have less than 1,00,000 population; and that 374 States have a revenue of less than Rs. 1 lakh. British India, with an area of 10,94,300 square miles and a population of nearly 222 millions, is divided into 273 Districts. The average area of a British Indian District is therefore 4,000 square miles and its average population about 8,00,000. If the suggestion were made that each District in British India should be constituted into a State, how ridiculous would it be considered ? Yet it is only some 30, among

the 562 States, that possess the area, population and resources of an average British Indian District Some of the States are so absurdly small that no one can help pitying them for the unfortunate dignity imposed upon them. As many as 15 States have territories which in no case reach a square mile ; while 27 others possess just 1 square mile. Fourteen States exist in Surat district, not one of which, according to the list of 1925, realised a revenue of more than Rs. 3,000 in the previous financial year. Three of these States could not boast of a population of 100 souls, and 5 of a revenue of Rs. 100."

The smallest revenue mentioned is Rs. 20 for the year.

H.H. The Maharaja of Bikaner: May I say that bears out what I said yesterday—that there is a confusion of thought in talking of these units of Indian States' territory as States or sovereign States ?

Dr. Ambedkar: No. There is none.

H.H. The Maharaja of Bikaner: And I am afraid that even this another from an Indian State, about whom Sir Mirza will be able to say more, has fallen into the same error.

Dr. Ambedkar: May be. With all respect to His Highness The Maharaja of Bikaner, I will ask this question : if he has a special definition of what a State is, and if he is going to follow that definition in the matter of admission of States into the Indian Federation, we should like to know what is going to happen to those who are excluded by the definition he has in mind.

H. H. The Maharaja of Bikaner: I think all that will be dealt with in due ours later.

Dr, Ambedkar: This Federal Structure Committee cannot blindly give to the States what they want.

H.H. The Maharaja of Bikaner: Nor can the States : we cannot sign a blank cheque either. We have to appreciate each other's difficulties.

Chairman: Dr. Ambedkar, perhaps you will help me with regard to that. You read a most interesting extract, which I followed with a very great care ; but I should like to ask you what are the conclusions that you draw from that extract.

Dr. Ambedkar: What I say is this—that this is a most critical occasion. I say so for this reason that once you accept the proposition that every State, whatever the attributes of the State may be, is entitled to become a member of the Indian Federation, then you give that State an independent right of existence for ever.

H.H. The Maharaja of Bikaner: It has that right now.

Dr. Ambedkar: That is so by the kindness of the British Government; but my submission is that this is a state of affairs which I for one am unable to contemplate or agree to, and for this reason. After all, no unit in these modern lays can exist on a scale such as modern civilisation demands unless it has sufficient resources at its command ; and it is no use trying to please the fancy of an Indian Prince simply because he delights to call himself a Prince by Jetting his State be a separate entity, irrespective of the considera-

tion whether his people can benefit by it.

H. H. The Maharaja of Bikaner: They are not called Princes.

Dr. Ambedkar: I submit that at any rate this Committee should lay down certain qualifications which a State must fulfil before it can be admitted into the Indian Federation.

Chairman: This is very interesting. Are you able to help us at all with regard to what the qualifications should be?

Dr. Ambedkar: I would prescribe a certain area and a certain revenue as the tests. I cannot say offhand what the area should be and what the revenue should be; but I take my stand on the fact that, if the Ruler of a State wants his State to exist as an independent State and to become a part of the Indian Federation, he should be able to prove that his country has the necessary resources and capacity to give to its citizens a civilised life. That is the stand I take.

Sir Maneckjee Dadabhoy: Am I to understand from my friend's statement that he would not permit a small State with small territory and small income to come into the Federation?

Dr. Ambedkar: Coming to the second part of the question, namely, the representation of the Indian State in the Federal Legislature, the Indian States have made it clear that they will come into the Indian Federation only if they are permitted to nominate their representatives to the Federal Legislature. Now, with all respect to the Indian Princes, I am afraid I cannot agree with them, and I must insist that their representation shall be by election. In making my submissions on this point, Lord Chancellor, the first thing I should like to point out is that, to my knowledge, there is no precedent in any constitution except one, which I am going to mention in a minute, where State Governments are allowed to nominate their representatives in the Federal Legislature. To recognise that a Unit of the Federation is entitled to representation in the Upper Chamber of the Federal Legislature is one thing; but it is a totally different thing from the other proposition, namely, that it is the Governments which should nominate their representatives to the Chamber. The two things are, in my opinion, totally distinct; and the only example I know in which such an arrangement was accepted and embodied in the constitution was the Constitution of the old German Empire, in which the Governments of the States were permitted to send their representatives to the Bundesrat. It may be that our brother Delegates on the other side of this table take their stand on this provision in the Constitution of the old German Empire. Before I proceed further I would just like to make this comment — that I am not sure if the Princes understand full well all the implications of this provision in the old German Empire. The representatives of the various States in the Bundesrat were no doubt regarded as ambassadors of the various States, working with definite instructions, but there was also this tremendous consequence flowing from it, namely, that the Bundesrat had the power to examine what might be called the credentials of the ambassadors. Not only that, but the Bundesrat had the power to

enquire into dynastic matters concerning the various Princes governing the German States, because it followed that, unless a Prince was lawfully recognised as the head of the State, his delegation had no right to sit in the Bundesrat. Now, I wonder whether the Princes who base their claim on this analogy.....

Colonel Haksar : They do not.

Dr. Ambedkar : I wonder if they would permit the Federal Legislature of India to have such powers as the Bundesrat possessed. But, Lord Chancellor, I am not going to discuss this question by referring to precedents or to analogies ; I am going to discuss this question on a totally different basis and by applying totally different tests. One thing we are all clear about is this, that we are framing a constitution for establishing a system of responsible government for India. And although we are discussing various matters, I, for one, can never forget that that is the principal objective and the principal task of this Committee. It follows from this that no concession can be made, no scheme can be adopted, if ultimately it is found that that concession or that scheme is going to compromise the system of responsibility or is going to whittle down the system of responsibility at which we are all aiming.

Now, applying that test, it follows that you cannot consent to the claim of the Princes for nomination of their representatives.

Colonel Haksar : In which House ?

Dr. Ambedkar : In either House; and for this reason. First of all, anyone who reads the Report of the Federal Structure Sub-Committee will find that not only do the Princes want to come into the Legislature, but they also want to be represented in the Central Executive of the country; and it is only right that the Princes should have that objective, because they would gain nothing by merely coming into the Legislature—their real gain consists in having a hand in the Executive of the country. Now, bearing that point in mind, what I say is this—that you have in the Federal Structure Sub-Committee laid down that the system of responsibility in the Central Legislature will be a system of collective responsibility. If the representatives of British India are going to come into the Federal Legislature by election, and if the representatives of the Indian States are coming into the Federal Legislature by nomination with definite instructions from those who will nominate them, I, for one, fail to understand how the system of collective responsibility—with divided mandates, with different instructions—is going to work in the future constitution of the country.

There is also another way in which the system of responsibility is going to be affected by the nomination of the Princes to the Federal Legislature. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru yesterday very rightly condemned the existence of the official nomination bloc, and for the simple reason that, being at the beck and call of the Executive, the nominated bloc makes the Executive irresponsible to the Legislature. I think that is the gist of his argument for not supporting the official bloc. Now, the question that I wish to raise is

this: Are we quite certain that the Princes' nominees to the Federal Legislature will not play the part of the official speaking for myself, I will be quite candid and say that I am not certain about it; and I will make my position quite clear as to why I say that. We all know that the Princes carry on the administration of their States under what is called the system of paramountcy, and I think we all know that one of the incidents of the doctrine of paramountcy is that the Paramount Power claims the right of advising the Princes on the matter of important appointments.

H. H. The Maharaja of Bikaner: Not in all. It may be in one or two cases.

Dr. Ambedkar: Well, I can only say that that is what the Butler Committee stated.

Colonel Haksar: Did they?

H. H. The Maharaja of Bikaner: Did they? If they did they were wrong, as they were in some other respects.

Dr. Ambedkar: I think I am right at least, that is how I have understood it. Add to this the fact that paramountcy in the new constitution is contemplated to remain a reserved subject. Now, supposing the Political Department, which will be exercising the powers of paramountcy, claims the right to advise the Princes in the matter of nomination to the Federal Legislature, what is the effect?

H. H. The Maharaja of Bikaner: It cannot and would not; and that would not be accepted by the States.

Dr. Ambedkar: What I say is this. Suppose the Political Department claims that the nomination of the Princes to the Federal Legislature is an important appointment, and as such the Political Department must exercise its right to advise the Princes—what happens? So far as I am able to judge, so far as I am able to conjecture, the only result will be that the Princes' nomination will in fact be nothing less and nothing else than the official bloc replaced in another form.

Colonel Haksar: It does not happen.

Dr. Ambedkar: And now, at this stage, My Lord Chancellor, I would like to say one thing.....

Sir Maneckjee Dadabhoy: But you have not given us the solution of that problem.

Dr. Ambedkar: I say election, absolutely.

Colonel Haksar: Dr. Ambedkar, would you at some time or other give us the reference to the Butler Committee's Report?

Dr. Ambedkar: I will try.

Colonel Haksar: Because you credit them with the assertion that the Political Department makes appointments in the important States.

Dr. Ambedkar: Well, Colonel Haksar, we will not wander into a controversy; but if paramountcy is not brought into operation many other influences could be brought to bear.

Colonel Haksar: You are departing from your position.

Dr. Ambedkar: No, I am not. I will give you the reference.

Now, My Lord Chancellor, there is just this one observation that I would like to make, which I have no doubt made earlier, but I would like to emphasise it. Of course, we are all trying to work out a federal constitution for India as a whole. But I would also like to emphasise that we are not here merely for the purpose of getting a change in the form of Government; a change from a unitary government to a federal government.

Chairman : Some people say ; whatever be best administered is best.

Dr. Ambedkar : Yes, but I thought we were all agreed on the fact that the thing that is best administered is responsible government. Therefore, although I am willing to make any concession possible in order to bring this Federation into existence, I cannot be a party to any concession or any compromise, as I said, which will only give us the skeleton of federation without the soul, namely, responsible government.

Frankly speaking, I really do not understand why the Princes should oppose the principle of election. Even in the old German Empire, where the right of the federal units to be represented by their governments was conceded, it was also conceded by the States that the Lower Chamber, the Reichstag, should be constituted by election by the people of the States. I cannot see what objection there can be on their part, because all that popular election to the Federal Assembly in the Native States would involve would be the dividing up of their territory into so many constituencies. I could quite understand their objection if we were saying that they must have legislative institutions in their own territory which would control their own administration ; but we are not saying anything of the sort. All that we are saying is this: permit us to divide your territory into constituencies and let your people elect your representatives who will come and vote in the Federal Assembly, not to decide upon your particular matters, not to determine the affairs of your State, but to discuss the affairs of India as a whole. I certainly do not understand what objection there can be from the point of the native States.

Sir Maneckjee Dadabhoy : And in small States also ?

Dr. Ambedkar : If they accept the view which I am urging, that election to the Federal Assembly cannot disturb their own administration—cannot cause any prejudice to their own States—then I submit that, so far as the problem of the representation of the States in the Lower Chamber is concerned, it will be easy of solution. The problem of the representation of the States in the Upper Chamber, of course, will remain to be solved ; and if it is to be solved by a method which will not involve the representation of the States by nomination, I beg to suggest two alternatives for it. The first alternative that I would suggest is the adoption of the Norwegian plan, where you have one elected Chamber popularly constituted, and where that Chamber elects out of its own members a Second Chamber, so that you will avoid thereby the difficulty of the States having to nominate their representatives in the Upper Chamber. Or, if that is not acceptable, there is another solution which I think may be offered. That is that the Princes may suggest a panel of candidates from which representatives may be selected to the Federal Legislature.

H. H. The Maharaja of Bikaner: By whom ?

Dr. Ambedkar: By the Lower Chamber. But in any case I must make it plain, so far as I am concerned, that I shall not be a party to any system which permits the representation of the States by nomination.

Now, My Lord Chancellor, I will take up the other head of discussion, namely, representation of special interests.

Chairman: You have got to No. (v)—provision made for the representation by special constituencies of special interests.

Dr. Ambedkar: The first thing I would like to make clear is this I do not want the Depressed Classes to be treated as a special interest. I want the Depressed Classes to be treated as a separate community for political purposes in the same way as the Muhammadans or the Christians are treated. They must have the same right of representation, not only in the Provincial Legislative Councils, but also in both Houses of the Central Legislature.

Chairman: When you say the same rights, do you mean to say they are to have the same number as the others ?

Dr. Ambedkar: No; the numbers that they will be entitled to on the basis of the principle that may be adopted in common with all.

Chairman : You said the same. Thank you.

Dr. Ambedkar: Now I come to the other interests which have so far been recognised ; namely, Trade, Commerce, Landholders and Universities.

Dr. Shafa'at Ahmad Khan : Not Universities ?

Dr. Ambedkar: No, we have not got Universities. I am afraid I cannot give my consent to the representation of these special interests. First of all, I do not quite understand why, for instance, a landholder needs any special representation. I do not know what are the difficulties and disabilities from which he would suffer if he were to stand out in a general constituency and seek the suffrages of his people. There is nothing to prevent him from doing that. In all other countries—for instance, in England and all European, countries—no provision is made, I am sure, for the special representation of such interests as Trade, Commerce and Landholders; they are allowed to find their place through the general electorates, and I think the same system should be adopted in India. My further objection to making any special provision for the representation of these interests is this : first of all, these interests get themselves represented by a very, very narrow constituency ; it is almost by a clique. Now, if their voting power were confined to matters which concern them, the evil would be comparatively small. But they do not only come on the basis of this restricted constituency into the Legislative Council; they vote upon all and sundry matters that come before the Legislative Council. One of the things that I have noticed in the Bombay Legislative Council is this, that we have there constituencies for Trade and Commerce. Now Trade and Commerce in the Bombay Presidency have been the monopoly of a special community which I am sorry to say is the most orthodox community known to me.

Mr. Jayakar: Politically ?

Dr. Ambedkar: Socially. Now, such members get these easy pocket constituencies in order to get themselves into the Legislative Council. Then, if any progressive measure is brought forward, they come and side with the orthodox and thereby defeat the ends of freedom and progress. I therefore object to it. If any such provision were necessary, I would make this concession—that any such interest, for instance Trade, Commerce or Landholders, may have the right to be heard in the Legislative Assembly or the Upper Chamber whenever a Bill affecting their particular interest is being discussed. The right of audience may be granted, but there is no necessity for granting them membership of the Legislature or the power of voting on any Bill that comes before the Legislature.

With regard to Labour I would say this. I do not know whether my friend Mr. Joshi will agree with me or not; but my own view is that, if the system of adult suffrage comes into operation—and I hope that, with the help and support of Mahatma Gandhi we shall be able to carry it through in this Conference—then there may perhaps be no necessity for the special representation of Labour; but if we adopt a system of representation which keeps out a large body of the working classes from the constitution, so that they cannot control the Government and influence it for bringing about their welfare and their prosperity, then there would certainly be a necessity for making special provision for the representation of Labour, and I think that could be done by recognising the various unions as the electoral colleges for the purposes of such representation.

The next topic to which I propose to refer is the question of nominated members. I suppose—I am not sure—that the object of having a bloc of nominated members in the Federal Legislature is principally to give support to what are called Crown subjects, or what in the Provinces, under the Dyarchical System, were called reserved subjects. First of all I should like to make it plain that I have a great horror of this nominated bloc of officials. If there is any institution which, in my opinion, has absolutely destroyed the system of responsibility in the Provincial Governments, which was sought to be introduced by the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, it is this institution of the nominated official bloc. It is this which has perverted the whole system. It is this group which has made possible, in the Provinces, Government by a minority against a majority. It is this group which has made alliances with all sorts of people and groups—not necessarily groups which needed its help or support, but groups which were ready to sell themselves for petty gains. I have, as I say, the strongest objection to a nominated official bloc.

My next submission is that this nominated official bloc is really not necessary at all for the purpose of lending support to what are called the Crown subjects. In the Provincial Constitution, where we have now the system of reserved subjects, we have various methods of supporting and safeguarding these reserved subjects. First of all, under section 72-D, we have a person in charge of these reserved subjects who is non-removable

and whose salary is non-votable; secondly, the Governor has been given the power of certifying expenditure which he thinks is necessary for the purpose of safeguarding the reserved subjects; thirdly, the Governor has the power to certify Bills which he thinks are necessary for the purpose of maintaining the efficiency of the reserved subjects; and lastly, the Governor has the power to veto any Bill to which he has an objection. My submission, Lord Chancellor, is that the safeguards which I have just mentioned—namely, non-removability of the person in charge of the reserved subjects, the non-votable character of his salary, the power of certifying expenditure which the Governor possesses, the power of certifying Bills necessary for the safety of the reserved subjects, and the ultimate power of the Governor to veto a Bill—are quite sufficient, in my opinion, to maintain the integrity of what are called Crown subjects.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru: May I ask you one question at this stage? You suggest there should be power of certification?

Dr. Ambedkar: I do not suggest there should be power of certification; I will deal with that matter at a later stage. What I am saying is that these are other alternative methods which are provided in the constitution beside the nominated official bloc. That is my argument. My submission is that, when you have such abundance of legislative and executive powers in the Government to safeguard what are called Crown subjects, there is no necessity for having an official bloc in the Legislative Council at all.

Secondly, what I say is this, that by having a nominated official bloc you disguise and conceal the real character of what is occurring. There are many measures which the Legislative Council probably would not have passed if the nominated official bloc had not been there, and which the Governor would have been obliged to certify or carry through in some other way under his special powers; but, because of the presence of a nominated official bloc, you have the anomalous position of giving the appearance to the outside world that the Legislative Council is working normally on the basis of majority rule, when as a matter of fact, the decisions have been taken by a minority with the help of the official bloc. I submit, therefore, there is no use in the future constitution of India for this nominated official bloc.

There is one last subject to which I should like to refer, namely, the question of the Oath. This question, in my opinion, is a very big one; and it is a question which opens up another big question, namely, that of common citizenship for India. In the short time which I have at my disposal I do not think it will be possible for me to discuss the whole subject; and I would therefore request that a special occasion may be provided when this question can be thrashed out, because I hold the view that there can be no real federation unless there is common citizenship. It would be a misnomer to call a constitution a federal constitution if it did not provide for a common citizenship. This, as I say, is a point which I cannot develop at the moment because there is not sufficient time.