

Do you accept the proposals laid down in the White Paper as the final form which the Constitution of India should take, or do you think there is some room for evolution further ?

Mr. F. E. James : I think the answer to that is to be found in paragraph 1 of the Memorandum.

3886. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* That gives the answer, does it ?

Mr. F. E. James : That, I think, is the answer : “We consider the general scheme of the White Paper to be satisfactory as a whole and to form a reasonable basis on which to frame the future Constitution of India.”

3887. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* My question, if I may say so, was some what different. My question is this : Do you regard these proposals as the final form of India’s political constitution ?

Mr. F. E. James : May I refer you to the third sub-paragraph of paragraph 1 of the Memorandum, in which you will find the following words : “The Council of the Association reserves the right to determine its final attitude to the constitutional scheme when the Report of the Joint Select Committee has been published and the Bill for the future Government of India based upon that Report is presented to Parliament.”

3888. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* Forgive me ; that, again, is not an answer to my question. My question is somewhat different. My question is this : Do you think that there is any more room for the advancement of the political status of India beyond the proposals as they are laid down in the White Paper ? Have I made myself clear ?

Mr. F. E. James : Yes. Obviously the White Paper leaves room for modification or changes in the future.

3889. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* I used the word “advancement” ?

Mr. F. E. James : If you call it advancement, possibly.

3890. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* I will not pursue that point ?

Mr. F. E. James : But we are now considering only the proposals of the White Paper.

3891. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* In paragraph 52 you make the proposal that the Indian Legislatures should not have authority to effect the law of British Nationality, I quite follow that point. Then you go further on and say that it should not even have authority to prescribe what might be called Indian Nationality, on the analogy of the Canadian Act. I understand what you say. What I want to know is this. Do you want to put that as an absolute limitation which would prevent the Indian Legislature from constituting a status of an Indian National for any purpose whatsoever ?

Mr. F. E. James : No ; I think the paragraph is perfectly clear. We merely say that if India does desire to legislature in that way, India should not be permitted to do so to the exclusion of the European British Community in India.

3892. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* I put it this way : Supposing, for instance, a case arose which is similar to that which arose in Canada and which gave

rise to that Act; supposing there was necessity for Indian representation on any international tribunal and India wanted that right of representation should be reserved to Indian British subjects of His Majesty or Indian subjects of His Majesty, would you not in that case allow the Legislature to pass a law providing for such a status being created on the analogy of the Canadian Act, or for the matter of that, the South African Act?

Mr. F. E. James : The answer to that really is the last sentence of our paragraph. Perhaps Mr. Page will explain it in greater detail.

Mr. Page : I think, Sir, that you need be under no misapprehension that there is any such hidden meaning. The whole of our object as regards that paragraph is this, that the creation of what we may call an Indian citizenship should not affect, in our view, the rights of a British National as a British subject. What we really want to say is this, that we wish to preserve for all individuals of British nationality, while resident in India either temporarily or otherwise, all the rights to which an Indian subject of His Majesty similarly resident is entitled, and we wish to prevent the passing of any law, or the making of any regulation or rule, which would have the effect of restricting or taking away any of these rights. That is the whole object of that paragraph. We have not the slightest objection to the formation of an Indian citizenship.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : My Lord Chairman : Is it in order to put a similar question to Mr. Gavin Jones on the suggestions he has made, but if it is not, I will not pursue that point?

Chairman : If Dr. Ambedkar ask my personal view, it is that perhaps the matter is not sufficiently important at this stage to justify the time taken.

(6)

Sir John Perronet Thompson, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., Sir Alfred Watson and Mr. Edward Villiers

*4659. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar* : Just one question, Sir John Thompson. Yesterday you raised a question regarding making some provision for safeguarding the financial position of the Provinces, and, by way of illustration, you mentioned that under the present circumstances the water rate, which provides a very large part of the Provincial Revenue, is liable to be changed by Executive order—I think that is what you said yesterday?

Sir John P. Thompson : Yes.

4660. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar* : Is it not a fact that for a long time the Indians have been agitating that all this taxation which is raised by mere Executive order—and, as you know the Land Revenue is also raised by Executive order—should not be raised any further hereafter by Executive order, but should be raised by legislative enactments?

Sir John P. Thompson : Certainly there has been an agitation to that effect, as regards Land Revenue. I am not quite sure how far that goes in regard to the Irrigation rates.

*Minutes of Evidence, Vol. II-A, 6th July 1933, p. 540.