in Bombay with the joint electorates, and practically no women at all but all men : the Depressed Classes and everyone voting and she topped the poll. That is in a municipal election. Then there was not only her but another lady, and we have had examples in elections in Universities in Patna where women have been elected by men, and no difficulty on the communal question has arisen.

C389. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* When the point is whether a woman will be elected, no doubt the communal feeling will be less in a direct election than it will be in an indirect election ?

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur : Certainly. Whenever the indirect election is going to be by means of the Council, it is going to be permeated by communalism.

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†C406. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* In those Councils where they have actually been members I understand it has been by nomination ?

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur : Yes, there is no such thing as election.

C407. *Sir Hari Singh Gour :* To the Legislative Assembly they have never been nominated so far ?

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Never.

C408. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* Is there a disqualification ?

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur : I think not.

Mrs. Hamid Ali : May I point out in connection with this that it is very lately that the Provinces have done away with the disqualification ?

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It has been done very, very recently ; in some Provinces so recently that they have scarcely had time for another election since the disqualification was done away with.

(11)

Mrs. P. K. Sen and Mrs. L. Mukerji

‡C588. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* Is it to be inferred that these communal differences would very likely spread to the women if the women were to enter the professions ?

Mrs. L. Mukerji : I do not think so. I think that woman by nature is free from such communal feelings on account of her sex.

C589. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* For instance, today the struggle or scramble for jobs and professional appointments is really confined to the men ?

Mrs. L. Mukerji : Yes.

C590. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* Largely, because women in India are not earning members of the family ?

Mrs. L. Mukerji : I quite see your point.

C591. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* Therefore, to take the case of education, if a large section of women along with men were entering that profession, and other professions as a result of education, or your own analysis, perhaps the thing would develop among women ?

†Mintues of Evidence, Vol. II-C, 29th July 1933, p. 2327.

‡*Ibid.,* p. 2354.

Mrs. L. Mukerji : It is quite possible. I cannot answer that point until we see the result.

C592. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* I appreciate that, but I just wanted to put the point to you ?

Mrs. L. Mukerji : I feel in a future time, when our women will be in a position to go into the professions, that the communal business might die out altogether. I anticipate that.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I hope so.

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†C610. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* There is just one question I would like to ask you, Mrs. Sen. You have explained your views with regard to the representation of women in the Federal Lower House, and you have stated your objection *to* the provision made in the White Paper for indirect election ?

Mrs. P. K. Sen : Yes.

C611. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* I do not find anywhere your views as to the provisions made for the representation of women in the Provincial Legislatures, except, of course, that you have expressed generally that you would not like any provision which savours of communalism ?

Mrs. P. K. Sen : Yes.

C612. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* Have you anything to suggest on that ?

Mrs. P. K. Sen : I did not quite follow the question.

C613. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* In the Provincial Legislatures several seats are provided which are to be filled by women ?

Mrs. P. K. Sen : Yes.

C614. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* No detailed provisions are laid down in the White Paper as to how those seats are to be filled. It is Appendix III of the White Paper, on page 93, under "General", Madras, out of 152, 6 women ; Muhammadan, 29, including one woman. This is all the provision that exists in the White Paper, so far ?

Mrs. P. K. Sen : We would like to do away with all these communities, if you would give us six seats in each of the Provinces. That would be much better, and we should be able to fill these seats with the best women available.

C615. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* Have you any other method by which these six seats could be filled up ?

Mrs. P. K. Sen : Yes ; capital city, for the Federal Assembly. I have already answered that question. It would be the same for the Provincial Assembly also. The capital city would be the constituent area ; it would be a small electorate. It would not mean so much expense, and women from all over the Provinces would be able to stand for the seats.

C616. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* You would have one capital city to return six women in Madras ?

Mrs. P. K. Sen : No. They would have their separate constituencies

†Minutes of Evidence, Vol. II-C, 29th July 1933, p. 2355.

for different principalities of the Province.

C617. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* The question I wanted to ask was how far you agree ? Would you be prepared, as a matter of concession to the communal sentiment of the various communities, that while making arrangements on the basis of a joint electorate for the return of such women in the Legislative Councils, to have a permission reserving a certain number of seats, for instance, for the Muslim women, keeping the total the same ?

Mrs. P. K. Sen : We are against communal reservation.

C618. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* I can quite understand your objection to having a separate electorate of Hindu women to return five Hindu women and a separate electorate of Muslim women to return one Muslim woman. What I want to know is this : Whether you have also the same objection to a system in which both the Hindu women and the Muslim women would vote together in a common constituency — a joint constituency, with this reservation, that, at least, one seat would be reserved for a Muslim woman ?

Mrs. P. K. Sen : They would all vote for the Muhammadan lady.

C619. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* I know that you would probably be so generous that you may give more. Would you be prepared to approve a reservation being made by law that just one should be reserved for a Muslim woman ?

Mrs. P. K. Sen : Yes ; that is already there, and we have to accept that.

C620. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* That may be on the basis of separate electorate, it is not stared how it would be. Therefore, I wanted to get your opinion on the matter. The detailed provisions as to how these six seats in Madras are to be filled are not found in the White Paper ?

Mrs. P. K. Sen : That should be a joint electorate of men and women.

C621. *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :* I do not know. At least Mr. Butler might be able to enlighten us as to how these six seats are going to be filled ?

Mrs. L. Mukerji : We do not, if it can be avoided, want any communal distinction.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I quite follow you. I am asking you whether you would be prepared to moderate your objection, to this extent, that you would have a joint electorate with one seat reserved, so as not to disturb the communal balance.

Mr. Butler : I think that Dr. Ambedkar will find this at "The precise electoral machinery to be employed in the constituencies for the special women's seats is still under consideration."

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Therefore, I was asking whether these seats would be filled by separate electorates of women in the general constituency ; it is not made clear here. I do not know how it is done, because I find in the Table given on seats allocated under separate heads. Under "General", six women's seats, under "Muhammadan", one ; that rather gives me the impression that you would have a separate electorate of Muslim women only, so that the result would be that 28 would be men, and one a woman.