

**Mr. B. Das** (Orissa: General): Sir, I agree with Sir N. Gopaldaswami Ayyangar that this is the most important chapter of the Union Constitution that has been placed before us. Sir, in the Fundamental rights we have not yet ensured that there should be social security for all. Social security means social justice for all and there should be certain minimum adequate standard of living for all. There should not only be public health and public safety, there should also be minimum education ensured for all. Unfortunately, Sir, we had an alien Government which lived for British domination. Its financial and economic policy was to take all it could take to maintain British Imperialism and British domination not only in India but throughout Asia. It gave nothing to the Provinces. If it gave to the poorer provinces like Orissa or Assam anything, it was just a sustenance allowance and nothing more. The British accession to India meant only expansion of British trade and commerce and there was development and prosperity only in ports like Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Karachi, and all communications led to these ports and hence these Provinces became so prosperous. Provinces that came later, I mean my own province of Orissa or even Assam, they were victims of circumstances like a poor man's home where children often come and they are not wanted by the parents because they cannot equip them properly for life or give them proper food or proper education.

Sir, I am sick of hearing in this House that in certain respects we are following the Government of India Act, 1935. Those of us who opposed the enactment of that Act and those of us who knew stage by stage how the stranglehold of Britain and the autocratic British Government was being perpetuated in the Government of India Act, feel ashamed and humiliated to hear that today when we are coming to Free India or Dominion India within a fortnight or so, we are trying to frame a constitution for India on the lines of the Government of India Act that perpetuated these strangleholds on India and postponed the formation of the Federal Government from 1935 to 1947. Sir, these few sections that we find in the Government of India Act, Sections 136 to 149—about finances and borrowing, about subventions and grants-in-aid—were not inserted with any intention of securing social security and social justice to the people of the Provinces that came into existence accidentally. We have seen how these sections were flouted when the World War II came in 1939. By a particular section, section 126 (a) which was passed in 1939, all the Provinces, all the Provincial resources and all the people of India were made the hand-maidens and slaves of the British Government, so that the soldiers of India could help the British Government to fight this war and achieve victory at the cost of India. We know what happened. Nearly Rs. 5,000 crores worth of material were sent out of India to Britain and her allies at controlled prewar rates and in the same way India was robbed of her food and the result was that 50 to 75 lakhs of people died in Bengal of famine and starvation. Another result was inflation. That was the social security and social justice that the Government of India Act gave us.

To me, Sir, it is painful that in the preamble of the Union Constitution it has not been clearly laid down that the objective is to maintain peace and well-being of the people and bring prosperity to the people of India—it has not yet been defined; I believe and I hope it will be defined. But I think it should be laid down that the first function of the State is to see to the well-being of the people,—not to rule as the British Government have so long ruled and exploited India for England's benefit and for India's misery and death. Therefore, Sir, I am glad to hear from Sir Gopaldaswami that a Financial Inquiry Committee will be appointed, but I hope such a Committee would contain not only eminent lawyers but also financiers, economists, etc., who can lay down what is the minimum standard of social security that India's present over-burdened and over-saddled financial and economic conditions will warrant for the people of India. In Part V we have provided for a strong Centre, but is it the duty of the Centre only to have administrative functions and legislative functions? I would very much like that the Union Powers Committee contained also men with knowledge of high economics and finance.

I know that my friend Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant was in it and he is of course a financial expert, but there might well have been others. It is social justice and social security that we want. The Administration is of course going on. I am sorry to express this view, but I have come to the conclusion that the Union Constitution has not lightened the administrative rigour that was in the Government of India Act. of course, they will bring the final Union Constitution before us and we shall examine it in October; but judging from the tendency of speeches that we have listened to in this House by our leaders and the members of the Union Powers Committee, I find that they want power-administrative power, legislative power and so on. But these are only the tools for the contentment and happiness of the millions by maintaining peace and tranquility in the country. It is the financial and economic chapter of the Union Constitution that will show what these people really mean, whether they want to ensure social justice or whether they want to evolve another bureaucratic government where power politics will dominate. Those who are in power whether they be my brothers or cousins, are bound to exercise their power in the same way as the British did. The reason is that most of us have grown old in the British tradition. It is very difficult, Sir, to discard that tradition and suddenly visualise democratic principles, so that we may render social justice and secure social security for our teeming millions. I therefore welcome the Union Powers Committee Report, which also will be discussed in the August Session. There I find the Committee members have gone a stage further than the draft of this Union Constitution Committee. There they say: (vide para 6 of 2nd report.) (Interruption).

**Mr. B. Das:** I know, Sir. It is on that question I am talking. That clause talks of giving charity to the Provinces. I do not want any charity, I am merely reading out what the Union Powers Committee have seen on this point, because that explains their attitude.

They, say:

"It is quite clear, however, that the retention by the Federation of the proceeds of the taxes specified by us would disturb, in some cases violently, the financial stability of Units and we therefore recommend that provision should be made for an assignment or a share of the proceeds of some of these taxes on a basis to be determined by the Federation from time to time."

Sir, whether it is the Finance Minister, or the President or the Federal Government, or whoever gives subvention or charities or grants-in-aid do not want that. I want that it should be statutorily provided for in the Constitution Act. My friend Sir Gopalaswami has told us that there would be an Expert Committee. But I would like that these grants-in-aid should be statutorily provided and they should not be charity grants of the Finance Minister, whoever he may be. He might be the best expert or the best friend of the poor man, it does not matter. These grants-in-aid or subventions should be reviewed periodically, say, every three years or five years. This is the suggestion that I put forward. I want them to state definitely what they are going to do for the teeming millions. The Provinces will come in as poor *zamindaries* and big *zamindaries*. While I support Clause 3 because it gives me a chance to enunciate my views before this House and which I hope the Union Powers Committee will accept, I hope that the sections in the Constitution Act will render social justice and ensure minimum standard of living to every citizen in India.