

Shri Biswanath Das (Orissa : General): Sir, I wish I were able to congratulate our Honourable colleagues—the members of the Drafting Committee, but I am sorry I cannot do anything except disapproving portions of this article.

Sir, we have been accustomed to the notion of having two cultures, namely the oriental and the occidental cultures. But our honourable, friends the wise men of the Drafting Committee, have not only given us idea of multicultures but also perpetuated cultural zones; they have not only given scope to perpetuate these cultural zones, but they have also given scope for various kinds of linguistic and script difficulties, not only in India, but also in the Provinces to come in. Thanks to Pakistan it has created a refugee problem for India, a refugee problem where friends migrating not in thousands and lakhs, but in millions are to be distributed all over India. I would appeal to you, to visualise the difficulties of provinces, wherein people from different linguistic areas like Sind, Frontier and East Bengal are to be distributed in various provinces and States in India. Are you going to give them a right to perpetuate their script and their language irrespective of the fact how small or how few they may be?

I should appeal to you to consider this question coolly and seriously. Are your finances so very extensive as to provide for anything that is called upon to be done, even for a small percentage of people? For myself, personally, I have no objection because I yield to none in my anxiety to give all necessary facilities in India to linguistic minorities and groups. But are you going to give this latitude as called upon here?

It was probably in the year 1938, the Honourable Prime Minister of Madras, who now adorns the gaddi of our mighty ancestors, Indraprastha, I mean His Excellency Rajagopalachariar, told a deputation of Oriya gentlemen at Berhampore railway station that "Well, the time will come when you and your people living in Madras will have to learn in the language of the province. Each minority population distributed in a province has to learn the language of the province."

A different principle has been enunciated altogether in this article. Those who know say there are Oriyas in Andhra and Andhras in Orissa who know the language of the place in which they are staying. So also is the case with people living in Gujarat, the U. P., in Bengal and such like places. Are you, gentlemen, going again to revive the whole thing in all its freshness? This is a serious question and I want you to think seriously over this.

I thank my friend, Mr. Jaipal Singh, for having given a full picture of what his demand is going to be. I want you also to consider that aspect of the question. These are not easy things taken away by snap words. I would therefore appeal to you to consider the whole question in its entirety with all the repercussions it might bring on the future of India.

Shri Biswanath Das : I know this more than my honourable Friend, having had a longer period of legislative experience. My own misfortune is that I am not able to face you however much I would like. Therefore from the nature of things I am called upon to address my friends however much the rules desire that I should address you. There need therefore be no attempt at coaching in this respect.

Shri Biswanath Das : Thank you very much. He should save himself and me from advising. The British Government had given us religious minorities. What are those religious minorities? I claim that my Muslim brothers are blood of my blood and bone of my bone. They are mine and I belong to them and they belong to me. There is absolutely no difference so far as their culture is concerned. The culture is ours. It is oriental culture, I do not again see any reason why any trouble would come in on the score of language. So far as my Muslim brethren are concerned, I may say that no less a person than the ex-Prime Minister of Bengal had told me during his visit to Orissa that he was surprised to see that some Muslims in Orissa could talk better Hindi than he himself could do. That is the position of Muslim friends in our country. Go to the South, and you find Muslims in Andhara, Tamilnad and the rest talking Telugu and Tamil and not Urdu. Therefore, their language and culture are one. I would therefore appeal to the honourable Members of this House to look at that aspect of the question.

Having said so much on (1) and (2), I come to (3)(b) which states that the State shall not in granting aid to educational institutions discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority whether based on religion, community or language. Therefore, hereafter be it clearly understood that every minority, living in the remotest village, will claim a special aid for an institution in his language, and that has to be conceded: otherwise both the High Courts and the Supreme Court are his places of refuge. That is a serious thing and I appeal to you to consider this very seriously.

Having stated so much about this, I come to the question of linguistic provinces, which has been referred to by my friend. It took my breath away to hear Mr. Jaipal Singh giving out his dicta on the question of linguistic division of provinces. Orissa was first in the field to begin this agitation for linguistic provinces.

Shri Biswanath Das : I am not. But this was stated and I am replying to it. Orissa first began agitation for linguistic provinces. Others followed us. Therefore the people and the Government of India had to think about this question and the result was that, the Government of India in their despatches of 1911 enunciated accepting the principle which was subsequently adopted by Congress in 1921, namely, the linguistic division of provinces and the Federation of India above them. That was the principle that was accepted not only by an alien Government, who never had sympathy for our aspirations but also by all the thinking minds of India, belonging to all schools of thought, including Muslims, Christians and other religious denominations. Therefore, it comes too late in the day in the mouth of my honourable Friend, Mr. Jaipal Singh now to decry this position. If you want an Adibasi-stan, by all means demand it and those who want to concede it let them say so openly. I am not here to side-track issues. The difficulties such as those pointed out should be borne in mind and I appeal to my friends to take a serious view of the difficulties that I have placed before them and the finances that are required to put into operation article 23 in this regard. Though I bow down to the joint wisdom of the House and my party, I must clearly state before the honourable Members of this House that I do protest against some of these provisions and I have already stated my arguments.