

Final Reading Of Constitution

CENTRE'S POWERS CRITICISED

From Our Special Representative

NEW DELHI, Nov. 17.

The final reading of the Draft Constitution commenced here today in the Constituent Assembly when Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Chairman of the Committee, moved for its adoption without an introductory speech.

Criticisms voiced by members in the House centred round the alleged concentration of power at the Centre at the expense of Provincial units.

Mr. Lakshminarayan Sahu (Orissa) a member of the short-lived Opposition Party, complained that the Provinces had been reduced to glorified municipalities, while Prof. K. T. Shah (Bihar) feared that the future Prime Minister would become a virtual dictator under the provision. Prof. Shah, however, felt that in spite of its shortcomings and defects, the Constitution should be utilised for bettering the lot of common people provided it was worked in proper spirit.

"SLUR ON SELF-RESPECT"

Speaking on behalf of the States people, particularly of Mysore, Mr. K. Hanumanthaiya remarked that the whole Constitution betrayed suspicion of Provinces and people. He characterised the special powers given to the Centre in the event of certain contingencies in Indian States affairs as a slur on the self-respect of the people, but hoped that the States' leaders would not give any chance for this special power to be brought into effect.

Mr. R. K. Sidhwa (V.P.) and Prof. N. G. Ranga (Madras) and the Depressed Classes leader, Mr. V. I. Munishwami Pillay (Madras), were full of praise for the Constitution and congratulated Dr. Ambedkar and other members of the Drafting Committee on the epoch-making document they had produced for the administration of free India. The discussion will be resumed tomorrow.

(Details on page 5)