

10

*** Dr. Ambedkar to the Marquess of Linlithgow**

MSS. EUR. F. 125/124

NEW DELHI, 29 October 1942

My dear Lord Linlithgow,

In the course of my second weekly interview with you I told you that the position of the Scheduled Castes was very unsatisfactory and that the Central Government had not done what I thought it was bound to do for their treatment. On that you very kindly asked me to prepare a Memorandum for your consideration containing the grievances of the Scheduled Castes and the remedies for removing them. All this of course must be within your recollection. Indeed it is you who reminded me several times since then if the Memorandum was ready. Unfortunately owing to the heavy pressure of work which fell on me since I took charge, I could not give to the work of preparing the Memorandum the priority which I should have liked to give to it. I am, however, happy that at last I have been able to submit it for your consideration.

2. The @Memorandum unfortunately has become a very lengthy document. I had a choice between making the Memorandum a short one containing bare recital of the grievances and the remedies to remove the same or to make it an exhaustive one containing not only the grievances and the remedies but also the reasoning in support of the remedies suggested. I have chosen the latter alternative. In doing so I have had to bear in mind the fact that the grievances set out in the Memorandum and the remedies suggested for their removal will go to different Departments for their opinion, and unless the Memorandum contained the reasons, the remedies can have very little chance

*The Transfer of Power, Vol. III, No. 125, pp. 165-68.

@ The Memorandum has been included in section I of Part II of this volume.—Ed.

of being accepted.

3. For Convenience I am setting out below in bare outline the grievances and the remedies which are included in the accompanying Memorandum :—

I. Political Grievances—

	Pages
1. More representation in the Central Legislature	5-9
2. More representation in the Central Executive	9-10
3. Assurance of fair representation in the Public Services—	
(i) By declaring the Scheduled Castes as a minority and by reserving 13 ½ per cent, of the annual vacancies for them.	10-21
(ii) Raising the age bar 	21
(iii) Reduction in Examination Fees 	21
(iv) Appointment of Scheduled Caste officer to protect Service rights of the Scheduled Castes.	21-22
4. Representation on the Federal Public Service Commission	22
II. Educational Grievances—	
1. An annual recurring grant of Rs. 2 lakhs for scholarships to Scheduled Caste students studying for Science, Engineering and Technology at the different Universities.	23-25
2. An annual grant of Rs. 1 lakh for education in Science, Technology and Engineering in foreign countries to students belonging to the Scheduled Castes.	23-25
3. Scholarships and free-ships for Scheduled Caste boys at the Indian School of Mines conducted by the Central Government.	25-26
4. Appointment of two representatives of the Scheduled Castes on the Central Board of Education established by the Government of India.	26-27
5. Facilities for technical training by reserving—	
(a) apprenticeships in Government Printing Presses, and	27
(b) apprenticeships in Government Railway workshops	27-28
III. Other Grievances—	
1. Provision for adequate publicity of the social and political grievances of the Scheduled Castes.	29-30
2. Special provision for securing for members of the Scheduled Castes a footing in the Government Contracts system in the Public Works Department.	30-31

4. I give this Summary because I quite realize that it will not be possible for you to find the time necessary to go through the whole of it. I wish you could find time to read the whole of the Memorandum. But if you cannot read the whole, I would request you at least to read Part IV (pages 32-36) of this Memorandum. In that Part of the Memorandum I have instituted a comparison between the condition of the Scheduled

Castes and the Anglo-Indians and the efforts made for the betterment of the latter. I request you to read it because I feel sure that by its perusal you will see how just and modest are the demands I have made and what the Government of India has done for the elevation of a class not more unfortunate than the Scheduled Castes.

5. I need not say that I hope the grievances of the Scheduled Castes will be remedied before you go. Believe me, I have read with genuine sorrow that you will be quitting your office in April next. I have no idea who is going to be your successor and what attitude he will adopt towards the Scheduled Castes. In you I have learnt to place great confidence as the benefactor of the Scheduled Castes. You have done the greatest deed towards them by giving them a place in your Executive Council. It is a most revolutionary act for which there can be no parallel in India's history. I have no doubt and no member of the Scheduled Castes has any doubt that if you knew the grievances of the Scheduled Castes you would never hesitate to set them right. It is from this point of view that I say that I am happy to have to seek justice for my people from one who knows that justice is due to them. I know you have the will to do it and that you will not like to leave it to your successor to do what you wish to do, and what you can do. I need hardly say that for this act of justice myself and the 50 millions of the Scheduled Castes will ever remain grateful to you.*

Yours Sincerely,
B. R. AMBEDKAR

••

* Dr. Ambedkar submitted a further memorandum to Lord Linlithgow under cover of a letter dated 8 January 1943, in which he slated that this memorandum presented the case against the Constituent Assembly from the standpoint of the Depressed Classes and set out the questions on which the Depressed Classes had desired him to obtain an assurance from the Secretary of State. MSS. EUR. F 125/125. *See* No. 336, para. 9.