

14

*** Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Lord Pethick-Lawrence**

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PRIVATE AND SECRET

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THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI,

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14. Ambedkar has recently submitted to Council his proposals for Labour Legislation for the Budget Session of 1946. One was a bill to amend the Factories Act, to reduce hours of work from 56 hours to 50 hours per week. This will have to be reconsidered by Council when the comments from Provincial Governments have been received. A second proposal is to introduce a bill to fix minimum wages. All Provincial Governments are being consulted on this, but the bill is undoubtedly too ambitious in trying to fix minimum wages for too many industries. The schedule even includes Agriculture, though the administrative machinery to enforce minimum wages in all the 6,50,000 villages of India cannot possibly be provided. There was, however, a good deal of sympathy in Council for the proposal to introduce a bill governing at any rate those industries where sweated labour is believed to be employed. Provincial Governments are being consulted. Council accepted a non-controversial bill to amend the Workman's Compensation Act, and another called the Employment (Standing Orders) Bill designed to secure that workers in large industrial establishments know what their conditions of service are. Finally Council approved a proposal to introduce a bill to amend the Trades Union Act and refer it to a Select Committee. The bill makes recognition of Trade Unions compulsory on employers.

**The Transfer of Powers, Vol. VI, No. 268, p. 605. Only para 14 concerning Dr. Ambedkar is reproduced. Other paras are omitted.—Ed.*

15. At a later meeting Ambedkar introduced rather prematurely a unified scheme of insurance and social security for industrial workers. I fully sympathise with Ambedkar's desire to get a move on with such schemes, but in this one he had not secured the necessary measure of inter-departmental agreement, and it was not clear that all Provinces would be able to make administrative arrangements for implementing the medical part of the scheme. We hope, however, to get the remaining preliminary work done in time to introduce a bill in the Budget Session and make a motion to circulate it to elicit public opinion.

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