

REACTIONS TO THE BRITISH CABINET PLAN DR. AMBEDKAR'S PROTEST TO CHURCHILL

The Cabinet Mission published a "State Paper" on 16th May 1946 making no provisions for safeguarding the interest of the Untouchables. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had taken serious note of it and written to Mr. Churchill to look into the matter. In response to the letter written by Dr. Ambedkar, Mr. Churchill responded positively. The letter written by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar is as under :Editors .

"Mr. Winston Churchill cited the American Declaration of Independence in promising that the Conservative Party "would do its utmost to protect the future of the 60,000,000 Untouchables in India".

"Replying to a protest from Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, that the British Cabinet Mission's Proposals for an Independent Indian Government were a shameful betrayal" of the cause of the Untouchables, the Opposition Leader told Dr. Ambedkar in a telegram : "We shall take our stand on the broad principles set forth in the American Declaration of Independence that all men are born free and equal and entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

The text of Dr. Ambedkar's message ran : "The Cabinet Mission's proposals are a shameful betrayal of the cause of sixty millions of Untouchables. No representation in the Constituent Assembly, no representation in the Advisory Committee, no protection by treaty, will mean handing over the Untouchables, bound hand and foot. Untouchables all over India are grateful to you for your speech in Parliament. The future of Untouchables is very dark. We depend upon you for safeguarding their interest."

Mr. Churchill replied, "You may ensure that the Conservative Party, will do its utmost to protect the future of sixty million Untouchables whose melancholy depression by their co-religionists constituted one of the gravest features in the problem of the Indian sub-continent. We shall take our stand on the broad principles set forth in the American Declaration of Independence that all men are born free and equal and entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness".¹

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¹: Jai Bheem dated 18th June 1946