

DEMAND FOR “POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE”

London, November 1 (Reuter)

There is a possibility of the Scheduled Castes of India aligning themselves with the Muslim community if they do not receive separate representation in the new Indian Government, according to Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, leader of the Scheduled Castes, now in London.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was commenting to Reuter to-day upon a report from Toronto that Mr. Ameen Tareen, an Indian student at the Toronto University and a former Lahore journalist, stating that Dr. Ambedkar had advised his people to embrace Islam if they failed to obtain satisfaction. “I have not given advice to that effect,” Dr. Ambedkar said. “But that situation may arise. Many of my people in India are seriously considering that question. We hope that the Congress and Mr. Gandhi will see light and agree to give the Untouchables political independence from the Hindus. It is a great pity that Mr. Gandhi had not been able to make the distinction.

“Personally, I feel that if Mr. Gandhi and the Congress give them political independence, there will be greater unity, “Co-operation and goodwill between the Hindus and the Untouchables,” but if Mr. Gandhi and the Congress seek to bring the “Untouchables” under the political dominance of the Hindus and to make them political slaves of the Hindus, the ‘Untouchables’ would rebel and would endeavour to seek their salvation by joining some other community.”¹

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¹: The Bombay Chronicle, dated 2nd November 1946.