

DR. AMBEDKAR FEELS BRITISH WILL DO JUSTICE

London, November 7 (Reuter)

The belief that the British Government, if the occasion arose, would not hesitate to rectify any wrongs done to the Scheduled Castes, was expressed to Fraser Wighton, Reuter's Political Correspondent, in an interview tonight by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the Scheduled Castes Leader, who is flying back to India on Monday at the close of his mission to England.

Dr. Ambedkar, who came to protest at what he considers injustice that the Scheduled Castes have not been permitted to nominate their own representative to the Indian Provisional Government has seen all principal British Political Leaders, including the Prime Minister, Mr. Clement Attlee.

Dr. Ambedkar said that he was more than satisfied with the result of his visit to England. "I have found among all parties profound sympathy for the Scheduled Castes and their future," he said.

"This applies among all the parties and in all quarters", declared Dr. Ambedkar adding that he considered his visit had the effect of acquainting everyone in England of the peril in which Untouchables stand at the present moment having regard to the institution of the Constituent Assembly and the position they occupy in it.

I have no doubt that this question will not be forgotten or neglected by the various parties in Parliament whenever India comes up for discussion. That in itself is a great solace to the Untouchables, who all along were feeling that their case might go by the board."

Dr. Ambedkar added that he had met members of the Government and although it was natural that they should be hesitant to make any comments as to the future course of their action, he believed that if the occasion arose for their intervention, they would not hesitate to rectify any wrong done to the Untouchables.

Dr. Ambedkar said he was quite surprised to find that some of Mr. Gandhi's friends in London were critical of his attitude towards the Scheduled Castes. "In their opinion even if the Untouchables were Hindus, that in itself is not an objection to giving them separate electorates", he said. Mr. Attlee's knowledge of Indian situation impressed Dr. Ambedkar who thought that the Prime Minister was aware that the Scheduled Castes "needed to be looked after."

He also thought that "Mr. Churchill was very keen and desirous of seeing that the Scheduled Castes were protected* in any Constitution that might be framed."¹

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* See appendix - VII.

¹: The Bombay Chronicle, dated 9th November 1946.