

“DAWN” ON AMBEDKARS POLITICAL MISSION TO ENGLAND

1st January, 1947

After a month of patent labour in Britain where he met leading members of the Govt. as well as of the opposition, Dr. Ambedkar, the Scheduled Castes leader, has returned to India where his main work lies. The trip to London was undertaken in order to place his community's case before the British Public in a realistic manner. Congress propaganda for the last several years has created a wrong picture of the existing divisions in the country and even the Cabinet Mission was taken in by its false presentation of facts.

The All India Scheduled Castes Federation is the representative organisation of the Community and Congress has come in as an interloper to disrupt the strength and solidarity of the organisation. The statement by the Cabinet Mission members in the House of Commons that the Congress represented the Scheduled Castes is correct only to the extent that this powerful political organisation backed up with its immense resources succeeded in capturing many seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes. That did not mean that the true representatives of the community have been returned to the various legislatures.

Dr. Ambedkar's immediate task in Britain was to demolish this myth and he has done it in the memorandum which he has submitted to the British political leaders. The memorandum itself has not been published but from the interview Dr. Ambedkar gave on his arrival in Karachi it is clear that he has gained some measure of success in his mission. He has established personal contacts with several leading personalities in Britain including Mr. Attlee and Mr. Churchill, and he speaks confidently that when the matter comes to be examined by the Parliament at the time of passing the Act transferring sovereignty some definite steps are sure to be taken to ascertain the real wishes of the Minorities as to the safeguards they need. It is also cheering to hear from the Doctor that there is not only a great deal of sympathy among the British Public for the Scheduled Castes' cause but also general resentment that the Cabinet Mission should have ignored the claims of the

community. Even among the labour party people the feeling is said to be growing whether after all what the labour Government has done for the solution of the Indian constitutional problem is the right thing to do. This is certainly a gain for once the British public gives up wishful thinking and faces the realities of the Indian situation, solution of the Indian problem should become less difficult.

Dr. Ambedkar insists on separate political representation for the Depressed Classes as the only means by which their dispute with the Congress can be settled and once this is granted, he thinks, there will be absolute peace between the Congress and the Scheduled Castes. As one who has suffered in his earlier days from Caste Hindu tyranny and ostracism he cannot easily be brought round to trust the Upper Classes among the Hindus nor can he safely place the destiny of his community to their tender mercies. Adequate statutory protection of their rights against Caste Hindu encroachments is a wise course that dictates his line of action. He says, he is wedded to constitutional means of seeking redress of his community's grievances and only after they have been exhausted will he look to other courses. Here is the olive branch extended to the Congress.

The Scheduled Castes leader has denied any secret pact between the Scheduled Castes Federation and the Muslim League. What pact secret or otherwise, can there be except that they are both alive to the common peril that faces them and the country by the in position of Caste Hindu Congress rule over this sub-continent? The character and Composition of the Congress leadership is such that it has given grave fears among wide sections of the people and if the League and Scheduled Castes are drawn together, it is out of a realisation of the common danger and how best to face it in the general interest and well being of the people as a whole. The life of the Depressed Classes in this country has been that of slaves for ages and they are determined to end it. It is for them to decide as to how best they can do it and not for the Congress to dictate.

“Dawn”¹

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SECTION III

ON BUILDING OF NATION AND ITS DEMOCRACY
