

WISDOM AND STATESMANSHIP WILL DAWN TO PREVENT INDIA FROM BEING DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS

As per message received on 6th October 1939, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had been invited to see His Excellency Viceroy on Monday, the 9th October 1939.¹ Accordingly His Excellency the Viceroy granted interview to Dr. Ambedkar on the 9th October 1939. In addition, Mr. V D. Sawarkar, Sir Mohammad Yakub were also granted interviews.²

Thereafter Dr. Ambedkar issued the statement:

New Delhi, October 10, 1939.

“The minorities problem will never be solved unless Mr. Gandhi and the Congress give up their egoistic and insolent attitude towards persons and parties outside the Congress. Patriotism is not a monopoly of Congressmen and persons holding divergent views to the Congress have a perfectly legitimate right to exist and be recognised,” declared Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in a statement to the Associated Press prior to his departure for Bombay this morning.

Dr. Ambedkar, who came to Delhi yesterday, had a long interview with His Excellency the Viceroy. He is understood to have fully acquainted His Excellency with the viewpoint of his community *vis-a-vis* the constitutional advance of India. In this connection, Dr. Ambedkar stated that the working of the Poona Pact had been far from satisfactory. In the absence of multimember constituencies the real representatives of the Scheduled Classes were not returned to the legislature. He intended to raise this question at the next revision, which he anticipated would be earlier than originally planned. Unless some method of securing the representation of the real.... representatives of the Scheduled Classes was found, he was afraid he would have to insist on separate electorates for his community.

1. : The Bombay Chronicle, dated 7th October 1939.

2. : The Bombay Chronicle, dated 10th October 1939.

Hindu-Muslim Problems

Referring to the Hindu-Muslim problem, Dr. Ambedkar said that he did not believe in the allegations that the Muslims were being tyrannized or terrorized in the Congress provinces. What the Muslims and the other minorities wanted today was a share in the Government of the country and a status of equality with governing classes. This was being denied by the Congress? which so far had refused to recognise any class or community outside its organisation.

Muslims, he said, had so far been wanting safeguards which meant that given the necessary protection they were prepared to live with the other communities. Today a demand had been raised to divide India into Hindu and Muslim India, and if this attitude was allowed to take hold of the masses, there was no hope of a united India. Today the solutions lay with the Congress and with the majority community, and what was required was large heartedness, statesmanship and the realisation of realities.

“Might Be too Late”

It might be too late tomorrow, said Dr. Ambedkar. The problem could be solved and must be solved. The problem was no longer that the minorities should be treated fairly and squarely. It was that the minorities must be made to feel that they were a part and parcel of the Government of the country. It had now become a question of dignity and self-respect.

Dr. Ambedkar concluded by saying that today he found it very difficult to dissuade his community from merging itself in some other larger community, but the continuance of the present attitude of the Congress might make his voice ineffective. The responsibility of driving away the Scheduled Classes to another fold would lie with the Congress. “I hope that wisdom and statesmanship will dawn on the Congress,” he said, “in time to prevent India from being divided into two parts, and Scheduled Classes merging themselves with a powerful and influential minority.”¹

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1. : The Times of India, dated 11th October 1939.