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WHAT I SAY IS THAT BE FIRM AND SINCERE

During the course of an interview on the 27th, Oct. 1951 at Jullunder, press correspondents asked Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, certain questions with regard to Kashmir, India's relation with Commonwealth etc. Answers given by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar are given below : —Editors.

Question : What is your opinion about the Kashmir problem ?

Answer : I fear that a plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir may go against India. In order to save Hindu and Buddhist population of Jammu and Ladakh, from going to Pakistan, in such an eventuality, there should be zonal plebiscite in Jammu, Ladakh, and Kashmir.

Question : Why has Churchill come to power again in Britain ?

Answer : The defeat of the Labour Party was probably due to sudden emergence of Iranian Oil and Egyptian question.

The British general electorate probably thought that if the Labour Party came into power, Mr. Bevan would dominate, which meant that the defence of Great Britain would be weakened.

Question : What effect the return of conservative party will have on India ?

Answer: I do not think it will have any effect, except probably that Mr. Churchill may raise the question of sterling balances, and probably there may be some change in British attitude towards Pakistan. Mr. Churchill has not been very fond of Hindus in India, his sympathies naturally are with Pakistan.

Question : With Mr. Churchill in power, Do you think India should continue to remain in the Commonwealth ?

Answer: Are we in the Commonwealth ? I have not been able to understand our Prime Minister. In 1929 he insisted that India will not be satisfied with Dominion Status. In 1942, when the 'Quit India Movement' was started he was the man who opposed 'Quit India Movement' which attitude was opposed to the attitude taken in Lahore. When I framed the Constitution he strongly

objected to India becoming a Dominion and suddenly he went to London for talks and came back and made a declaration that India should be in the Commonwealth.

Question : But what do you think India should do at present ?

Answer : I cannot say anything. It is a very complicated question. India should do whatever is to her advantage. If the country thinks that it is not to her advantage to remain in the Commonwealth, she should go out. What I say is that be firm and sincere.

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