
“Provisions for a settlement of the communal problem put forward jointly by Muslims, Depressed Classes, Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians and Europeans

CLAIMS OF MINORITY COMMUNITIES

1. No person shall by reason of his origin, religion, caste or creed be prejudiced in any way in regard to public employment, office of power or honour, or with regard to enjoyment of his civic rights and the exercise of any trade or calling.

2. Statutory safeguards shall be incorporated in the Constitution with a view to protect against enactments of the Legislature of discriminatory laws affecting any community.

3. Full religious liberty, that is, full liberty of belief, worship observances, propaganda, associations and education shall be guaranteed to all communities subject to the maintenance of public order and morality.

No person shall merely by change of faith lose any civic right or privilege, or be subject to any penalty.

4. The right to establish, manage and control, at their own expense, charitable, religious and social institutions, schools and other educational establishments with the right to exercise their religion therein.

5. The Constitution shall embody adequate safeguards for the protection of religion, culture and personal law, and the promotion of education, language, charitable institution of the Minority Communities and for their due share in grants-in-aid given by the State and by the self-governing bodies.

6. Enjoyment of civic rights by all citizens shall be guaranteed by making any act for omission calculated to prevent full enjoyment an offence punishable by law.

7. In the formation of Cabinets in the Central Government and Provincial Governments, so far as possible, members belonging to the Musalman community and other minorities of considerable number shall be included by convention.

8. There shall be Statutory departments under the Central and Provincial Government to protect Minority Communities and to promote their welfare.

9. All communities at present enjoying representation in any Legislature through nomination or election shall have representation in all Legislatures through Separate Electorates and the minorities shall have not less than the proportion set forth in the Annexure but no majority shall be reduced to a minority or even an equality. Provided that after a lapse of ten years it will be open to Muslims in Punjab and Bengal and any minority communities in any other Provinces to accept Joint Electorates, or Joint Electorates with reservation of seats, by the consent of the community concerns. Similarly after the lapse of ten years it will be open to any minority in the Central Legislature to accept Joint Electorates with or without reservation of seats with the consent of the community concerned.

With regard to the Depressed Classes no change to Joint Electorates and reserved seats shall be made until after 20 years' experience of Separate Electorates and until direct adult suffrage for the community has been established.

10. In every Province and in connection with the Central Government a Public Service Commission shall be appointed, and the recruitment to the Public Services, except the proportion, if any, reserved to be filled by nomination by the Governor-General and the Governors, shall be made through such Commission in such a way as to secure a fair representation to the various communities consistently with the considerations of efficiency and the possession of the necessary qualifications. Instructions to the Governor-General and the Governors in the Instrument of Instructions with regard to recruitment shall be embodied to give effect to this principle, and for that purpose, to review periodically the composition of the services.

11. If a Bill is passed which, in the opinion of two-thirds of the members of any Legislature representing a particular community affects their religion or social practice based on religion, or in the case of fundamental rights of the subjects if one-third of the members object, it shall be open to such members to lodge their objection thereto, within a period of one month of the Bill being passed by the House, with the President of the House who shall forward the same to the Governor-General or the Governor, as the

case may be, and he shall thereupon suspend the operation of that Bill for one year, upon the expiry of which period he shall remit the said Bill for further consideration by the Legislature. When such Bill has been further considered by the Legislature and the Legislature concerned has refused to revise or modify the Bill so as to meet the objection thereto, the Governor-General or the Governor, as the case may be may give or withhold his assent to it in the exercise of his discretion, provided further that, the validity of such Bill may be challenged in the Supreme Court by any two members of the denomination affected thereby on the grounds that it contravenes one of their fundamental rights.

SPECIAL CLAIMS OF MUSALMANS

A. The North-West Frontier Province shall be constituted a Governor's Province on the same footing as other Provinces with due regard to the necessary requirements for the security of the Frontier.

In the formation of the Provincial Legislature the nomination shall not exceed more than 10 per cent of the whole.

B. Sind shall be separated from the Bombay Presidency and made a Governor's Province similar to and on the same footing as other Provinces in British India.

C. Musalman representation in the Central Legislature shall be one-third of the total number of the House, and their representation in the Central Legislature shall not be less than the proportion set forth in the Annexure.

SPECIAL CLAIMS OF THE DEPRESSED CLASSES

A. The Constitution shall declare invalid any custom or usage by which any penalty or disadvantage or disability is imposed upon or any discrimination is made against any subject of the State in regard to the enjoyment of civic rights on account of Untouchability.

B. Generous treatment in the matter of recruitment to Public Service and the opening of enlistment in the Police and Military Service.

C. The Depressed Classes in the Punjab shall have the benefit of the Punjab Land Alienation Act extended to them.

D. Right of Appeal shall lie to the Governor or Governor-General for redress of prejudicial action or neglect of interest by any Executive Authority.

E. The Depressed Classes shall have representation not less than set forth in the Annexure.

SPECIAL CLAIMS OF THE ANGLO-INDIAN COMMUNITY

A. Generous interpretation of the claims admitted by Sub-Committee No. VIII (Services) to the effect that in recognition of the peculiar position of the community special consideration should be given to the claim for public employment, having regard to the maintenance of an adequate standard of living.

B. The right to administer and control its own educational institutions, *i.e.*, European education, subject to the control of the Minister.

Provisions for generous and adequate grants-in-aid and scholarships on the basis of present grants.

C. Jury rights equal to those enjoyed by other communities in India unconditionally of proof of legitimacy and descent and the right of accused persons to claim trial by either a European or an Indian Jury.

SPECIAL CLAIMS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

A. Equal rights and privileges to those enjoyed by Indian-born subjects in all industrial and commercial activities.

B. The maintenance of existing rights in regard to procedure of criminal trials, and any measure or bill to amend, alter or modify such a procedure cannot be introduced except with the previous consent of the Governor-General.

Agreed by—

HIS HIGHNESS THE AGA KHAN (Muslims),

DR. AMBEDKAR (Depressed Classes),

RAO BAHADUR PANNIR SELVAM (Indian Christians),

SIR HENRY GIDNEY (Anglo-Indians),

SIR HUBERT CARR (Europeans).

ANNEXURE
REPRESENTATION IN LEGISLATURES

Figures in brackets=Population basis 1931 figures and depressed percentages as per Simon Report.

Census	Stength of Chamber	Hindus					Total	Anglo-Indians	Tribal etc.	Europeans
		Caste	Depressed	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs				
ALL India (1931)		(47.5)	(19)*	(66.5)	(21.5)					
Upper	.. 200	101	20	121	67	1	6	1	4	
Lower	.. 300	123	45	168	100	7	10	3	12	
Assam	.. 100†	38	13	51	35	3	..	1	10	
Bengal	.. 200	38	35	73	102	2	..	3	20	
Bihar and Orissa	100	51	14	65	25	1	..	1	5	

* Represents percentage in Governor's Provinces of British India.

† Population figures exclude Tribal Areas.

ANNEXURE—contd.

REPRESENTATION IN LEGISLATURES

Figures in brackets=Population basis 1931 figures and depressed percentages as per Simon Report.

Strength of Chamber	Hindus		Total	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs	Anglo-Indians	Tribal etc.	Europeans
	Caste	Depressed							
Bombay	200	28	116	66	2	..	3	..	13
On Sind being separated weightage of Musalmans in Bombay to be on the same footing as to the Hindus in the N.W.F.P.									
C.P.	100	20	78	15	1	..	2	2	2
Madras	200	40	142	30	14	..	4	2	8
Panjab	100	10	24	51	1.5	20	1.5	..	2
U.P.	100	20	64	30	1	..	2	..	3

Sind and N.W.F.P. Weightage similar to that enjoyed by the Musalmans in the Provinces in which they constitute a minority of the population shall be given to the Hindu minority in Sind and to the Hindu and Sikh minorities in the N.W.F.P.

Explanatory Memorandum to the said Memorandum

1. The suggested details for community representation have not been agreed by the Hindus or the Sikhs, but the full representation claimed by the latter in the Central Legislature is provided for.

2. The proposed distribution of seats for the different minorities constitutes a whole scheme and the detailed proposals cannot be separated one from another.

3. This distribution of seats follows the principle that in no case is the majority community to be reduced to the position of a minority of even equality.

4. No representation is provided for Commerce, Landlords, Industry, Labour, etc. It being assumed that these seats are ultimately communal and that communities desiring special representation for these interests may do so out of the communal quota.

5. The allowance of 33½ per cent representation to Muslims in the Central Legislature is based on the assumption that 26 per cent shall be from British India and at least 7 per cent by convention out of the quota assigned to the Indian States.

6. In the Punjab the suggested common sacrifice by the Muslims, Caste Hindus and the Depressed Classes, would permit of a weightage of 54 per cent, being given to the Sikhs, giving them representation of 20 per cent, in the Legislature.

7. The proposals may be taken as being acceptable to well over 115 millions of people, or about 46 per cent of the population of India.” *

The British Premier tried in his own way to bring the Indian delegates to a frame of mind for a settlement. The Premier's daughter gave a party to choice delegates. The Maharaja of Baroda,

*This appeared as appendix III in the original proceeding of the Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee, Pp. 1394-99.

Dr. Ambedkar, Sir Mirza Ismail, Jinnah, Tambe and few others attended it. The British Premier took some of the delegates to his country home at Chequers. They had a talk there relating to the Indian problem, but there, too, they could not come to a settlement.

The Minorities Sub-Committee submitted its report to the Conference. The last paragraph of that report recorded that “the Minorities and Depressed Classes were definite in their assertion that they could not consent to any self-governing constitution of India unless their demands were met in a reasonable manner.”

Like Joshi, Jadhav and Paul, Dr. Ambedkar dissented from the proposals of the Franchise Sub-Committee as in their opinion the proposals were inadequate, and they pleaded for immediate introduction of adult franchise. In the written speech, which he could not make for want of time, Dr. Ambedkar warned the British Government that it would be betraying the Depressed Classes if by limiting the franchise the Labour Government left them to the mercy of those who had taken no interest in their welfare.

Such was his sincerity and devotion to the problem and to the welfare of his people that Dr. Ambedkar worked day and night, sought interviews, gave interviews, supplied information, and even addressed a meeting of some Members of the British Parliament to acquaint them fully with the problem of the Untouchables. He took every opportunity of contributing articles to foreign journals, of issuing statements to the foreign press and of addressing meetings in London with the sole object of exposing the intolerable humiliations and unbelievable suffering under which the Depressed Classes were groaning in India for ages. In appeal after appeal to the Press he said that the cause of the Untouchables in India needed the support of the enlightened world. He, therefore, urged that it was the sacred duty of the people at large to help the solution of their problem on the basis of humanity!

The result was that the world came to know for the first time that the fate of the Untouchables in India was worse than that of the Negroes in America. The appeal moved some of the British leaders and consequently a deputation consisting of some Members

of the British Parliament such as Miss Eleanor, Miss Ellen, Norman Angle and a few others, waited on Lord Sankey and pleaded for investing the Depressed Classes with franchise, and for removing their disabilities. Lord Sankey promised that in their proposed political set-up they would be placed with the other classes and masses of India. Some of the British papers, however were hostile to Dr. Ambedkar because he said, "I do not oppose the move for Dominion Status" * He said that he, too did not mind their indifference or opposition to his cause.

Dr. Ambedkar's profound study, great industry and conquering intellect created a tremendous impression upon the delegates and the British statesmen. He inspired respect as well as hatred in different circles. The *Indian Daily Mail* reporter observed: "Dr. Ambedkar pointed out that he had a mandate to see that no responsible Government was established, unless it was at the same time, accompanied by a truly representative Government. He voiced a fear that the proposed form of Government would be one of the masses by the classes and his protest found much echoing sympathy in the Labour and Liberal Parties of Great Britain."

After recording the reports of the different Sub-Committees, the Round Table Conference adjourned on January 19, 1931. This was followed by a debate on India in the House of Commons. During the course of the debate, one voice echoed the grievances of the Depressed Classes. It was Issac Foot who was a man of broader sympathies. Referring to the disabilities of the Untouchables, he said, "If we do not establish safeguards for their protection, their blood may cry out against us. If I had any advice to give to future Governors, it will be 'Let your main concern be for these people.' They may be defenceless now, but one day they will be strong. As there is justice upon the earth, there is no bank

* Dr. Ambedkar's letter 19th December 1930.

that can keep back for ever the accumulated sufferings of these people. The real test of the progress of India twenty years hence will be ‘what have you done for these people?’ This speech was an eloquent tribute to Dr. Ambedkar’s ceaseless work in London.

Before leaving London, Dr. Ambedkar expressed his opinion on the work of the Round Table Conference in a letter to his secretary Shivtarkar that although he was in two minds as to the outcome of the Conference, he was confident that it had laid the foundation of the self-government of India. Viewed in this light the Conference was a success. Yet viewed from another angle, he observed that the foundation had more of sand than mortar.* Hence the foundation was not strong enough. But so far as the rights of the Depressed Classes were concerned, it was a tremendous success, he added.

The notable contribution of this session of the Round Table Conference to Indian political thought was the evolution of the conception of a United India. Another solid outcome was the definite emergence of the Depressed Classes in the political picture of India, and more important was the brilliant and moving exposition of their insufferable conditions by Dr. Ambedkar before the bar of world opinion. Owing to disagreement on the question of seats, which the different communities sought to secure in the proposed legislatures, and on the system of election whether separate or joint electorates with reserved seats should be employed, the Conference was adjourned. Besides, it must have been thought that taking any vital decision at that time was like reckoning without hosts ; for Congress, the major political party of India, had not participated in the proceedings. Dr. Ambedkar left for India, embarking at Marseilles on February 13, 1931.”¹

* Dr. Ambedkar’s letter, 21st January 1931.

¹:Keer, Pp. 154-157.

“DEPRESSED CLASSES AND FUTURE CONSTITUTION

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, who also arrived in Bombay on Friday the 27th February 1931 morning was given an enthusiastic reception at Ballard Pier by a *battalion of the Ambedkar Seva Dal* Interviewed by a representative of *The Times of India* he made the following statement:” The Round Table Conference is to my mind a triumph of statesmanship. It would be an idle pretence to say that there are no defects in the Constitution as outlined by the Conference, but in my opinion they are not of a vital character. Even assuming the contrary to be the truth there is yet time and opportunity for all those who believe in a peaceful solution of the Indian problem to step in and improve the framework. My greatest disappointment arises from the fact that the Constitution as outlined by the Conference is most undemocratic in as much as it is based on a very restricted franchise. It is a great pity that Mr. Gandhi, judging from the reports of his pronouncement on the results of the Conference, seems to have entirely lost sight of this aspect of the Constitution and is laying stress on elements which, I venture to think, are the most trivial and the most transient. Those of us who represented the Depressed Classes and labour fought for adult suffrage and although we failed, because all other parties played false to their position as signatories to the Nehru Report. I for one have been living in the hope that when Mr. Gandhi comes to lay down his terms of settlement he will see to it that the Constitution to which he will be a party will be a thoroughly democratic one.

If Mr. Gandhi fails us in our efforts to secure political power to the common man and woman in India, I would not hesitate to call his act as the greatest betrayal of trust and his campaign of civil disobedience as the worst exploitation of the masses for the service of the classes. In view of the fact that Mr. Gandhi’s political philosophy is not known to many it may be advisable for those leaders of the masses who count themselves among his followers and disciples to ask from him a declaration of his views on the question of adult suffrage before they give him any further support in his campaign of civil disobedience.”