Chapter 2

Labour Welfare Laws and Role of Dr. Ambedkar

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LABOUR WELFARE LAWS AND ROLE OF Dr. AMBEDKAR

One hundred and fifteen years ago, on 14th April, 1891, Dr. Bhim Rao Ramji Ambedkar was born at Mhow, to an army officer Ramji Sakpal, who had received a boon from a Sanyasin to the effect that his son would leave mark on history. Though Dr. Ambedkar is primarily known as a leader of the untouchables and later on as the chief architect of the constitution of India, his contribution in other spheres is also equally substantial.

Dr. Ambedkar had remarkable scholastic career. He passed his matriculation examination in the year 1907 from the Elphinstone High School and joined the Elphinstone College. It was during this period at the Elphinstone college that Dr. Ambedkar received a scholarship from the great Sayaji Rao of Baroda. He passed his B.A. examination in the year of 1912. Though he joined the Baroda state Force as a lieutenant, he was not destined to be an army officer. There he resigned from his service on account of his father's sudden death. Ambedkar's self-development started with his selection by the Maharaja of Baroda for higher studies in the United States of America in 1913. He got his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in economics from Columbia University in 1915 and 1916 respectively. He then left for London for further studies. He was admitted there to the Gray's Inn for Law and also allowed to prepare for the D.Sc. at the London School
of Economics and Political Science. But he was called back to India by the Dewan of Baroda. Later, he got his Bar-at-law and D.Sc. degree also. He had studied for some time at Bonn University in Germany.

Life in America, a foreign land, was a unique and moving experience in life. To him life at Columbia University was a revelation. It was a different world. It enlarged his mental horizon. A new kind of existence began his life gleamed with a new meaning!\(^1\)

Ambedkar fully utilized the moratorium granted to him to develop his personality in the proper manner. He developed a strong cognitive need, an impulse to explore the world around them. Moreover, his urge to read books and master ideas and ideologies was unusually high. He had not only thought clearly about his own philosophy of life but also about the purpose for having a meaningful life. This can very well be understood from a speech which was broadcasted on radio during the last two years of his life. Where he said “Everyman should have a philosophy of life; for everyone must have a standard with which to measure his conduct.\(^2\)

It is interesting to note the topics of the master's and doctoral thesis written by him in 1915 and 1916 respectively. The first one was entitled “Ancient Indian Commerce”. The latter was entitled “National Dividend of India – A Historic and Analytical Study” – in its, thesis form and “The evolution of provincial finance in British India” in its
book form. These titles indicate that he was interested at that time in the historical analysis of Indian social and economic systems. A paper read by him in an anthropology seminar while doing his M.A., was entitled “Castes in India, their mechanism genesis and development”. His interest in the study of the genesis of the caste system particularly indicates that he was trying to understand at that time the historical background on the basis of which he could interpret the nature of his existence as a person born in an untouchable caste in India.

After returning to India in 1917, Maharaja of Baroda appointed Dr. Ambedkar as his military secretary on account of Dr. Ambedkar's experience. However, the young Doctor was not treated as an officer or a scholar but as a mere untouchable. He left the job and returned to his shack in the Bombay labour district. He had served as Professor in Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics, Bombay. Professorship was however, a means not an end itself to Dr. Ambedkar.

Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar came in closer contact with the Maharaja of Kolahapur in 1919. he secured from the Maharaja some help for the fortnightly paper which he wanted to start. This paper was started on January 31, 1920 under the title “Mook Nayak”, leader of the dumb. He was not its official editor it was his mouthpiece.
In 1926, Dr. Ambedkar was elected as a Member of Legislative Council (M.L.C.), Bombay province and after that became a Member of Simon Commission in 1928. A round table conference was being held in London in 1930 he was selected a suitable representative for the said conference. Dr. Ambedkar’s progress was not stagnant. He became the principal, law college of Bombay and elected Member of Legislative Assembly (M.L.A.), Bombay province in 1932 and 1935 respectively.

**Dr. AMBEDKAR AS A LABOUR LEADER**

Dr. Ambedkar had been so much concerned about the issues of the down-trodden, that he founded an Independent Labour Party in August 1936, and drew up a comprehensive programme which answered all the immediate needs and grievances of the landless, poor tenants, agriculture and industrial workers.

The programme elucidated the following points:

Although the party admitted that the new constitution fell short of responsible government still it had decided to work according to the constitution.

The party believed that the fragmentation of holdings and the pressure of population over them, were the causes of the poverty of the agriculturists and the way out was rehabilitation of old industries and the starting new ones. In order to raise the efficiency and
production capacity of the people the party declared itself in favour of an extension programme of technical education and the principle of state management and state ownership of industries where necessary. The manifesto promised to undertake legislation to protect agricultural tenants from the exactions and evictions by the landlords and to extend the same benefits to them as would be provided for industrial workers, with suitable changes.³

Dr. Ambedkar was not only concerned with agricultural labour, but he had also a major programme to wipeout the tears from the eyes of industrial labourers as well.

For the benefit of industrial workers the manifesto of Independent Labour Party declared that the Party would endeavour to introduce legislation to control the employment, dismissal and promotion of employees in factories; to fix maximum hours of work; to make provision for adequate wages and for leave with pay and to provide cheap and suitable dwellings for workers unemployment, it observed, would be relieved by introducing schemes of land settlement and by starting public works. It promised the lower middle class adequate protection in matters of house rents in industrial centres and big towns.⁴

Dr. Ambedkar's labour party agendas were attracted on high footing from the sections of social scientists, politicians, social reformers and journalists. He had given top priority to labour issues and social reforms visa-vis economic cultural and political reforms.
Commenting upon this programme, an English daily said that although it disfavoured multiplication of political parties, the new Party which Ambedkar had just organized in the (Bombay) province could be of considerable use in developing, the life and moulding the future of the country. Emphasizing that there was both scope and need for such a Party, and hoping that it would together with the socialists, present a strong defence against the sweeping tide of communism, it concluded: "It (Party) is not for special electorates and compartmental franchise, the new party would probably within a brief period be one of the most powerful political group in the country."

As regards his Independent labour party, Dr. Ambedkar said that it would endeavour to educate the masses in the methods of democracy, place before them the correct ideology, and organize them for political action through legislation.

Dr. Ambedkar launched his election campaign, but his new party was to face the opposition from the biggest political party of the land, the Indian National Congress, a party which was equipped with men, money and surrounded with the halo of patriotic sacrifices. It was surprising that Ambedkar who had presided over the All India Conferences of the depressed classes and was the voice of the dumb millions, could not create an All India Party to fight the elections. His new party was confined to the Bombay province only.
The first election under the new constitution proved to be an astounding success for Dr. Ambedkar's Independent Labour Party. Ambedkar was elected with a thumping majority, out of the seventeen candidates put up by the party fifteen came out successful.

**Dr. AMBEDKAR'S MOVEMENT TOWARDS LABOUR ISSUES**

Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar was one of the very few Indians who struggled to alter the course of Indian history through social and economic democracy. He was deeply concerned over economic and social exploitation of depressed classes particularly labour class.

In September, 1937 he presided over a district conference of the depressed classes at Masur. In the course of his address he told his audience that it was his well considered opinion that Gandhi was not the man to look to the interests of the working classes and the poor. He was convinced that congress was not a revolutionary body and thus was not courageous enough to proclaim the ideal of social and economic equality, enabling the common man to get leisure and liberty to develop himself according to his liking. That was not possible, he observed, as long as the means of production were controlled by a few individuals in their own interests. According to Gandhism, he said, the farmer would be the third bullock to be harnessed to the plough along with the two natural ones.6

As regards the labour movement carried on by the communists, he added that there was no possibility of his joining them. He declared
that he was a confirmed enemy of the communists, who exploited the labourers for their political ends.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was of the view that India's economic backwardness was the sad result of the slow progress made in the field of land reforms. To do away with this kind of evil, he was in favour of introducing co-operative system of farming. In his view, the landless labourers did not get due share in public farming.⁷

Dr. Ambedkar himself was doing his best to promote the interests of the agricultural masses that laboured under unbearable disadvantages. On September 17, 1937, during the Poona session of the Bombay Assembly, he introduced a Bill to abolish the Khoti system of land tenure in Konkan.

It must be noted that in the first popular Provincial Assembly, Ambedkar was the first legislator in India to introduce a Bill for the abolition of the serfdom of agricultural tenants. By his Bill he aimed at abolishing the tenure with a view to securing occupancy rights to the tenants. He desired abolition of the Khoti tenure and substitution of the ryotwari system, to make provision for payment of reasonable compensation to the Khots for the loss of their rights and to give those inferior holders, who were in actual possession of land, the status of occupants with the meaning of the land revenue code, 1879. But as the government postponed the issue, Ambedkar could not move the
Bill. Dr. Ambedkar also, introduced a Bill to abolish the Mahar Vatan for which he had been agitating since 1927. It was at last abolished under the Bombay inferior village vatsans Abolition Act I of 1959.

Undoubtedly Dr. Ambedkar was the man who fought against all odds of the Indian Society. Economically and Socially destitute masses’s hardships was his major concern. His whole struggle was against the exploitation of the depressed classes, particularly labour classes, whether organized or unorganized.

On December 30, 1937, while presiding over a conference of the depressed classes at the Sholapur district, he expressed his views in the most logical manner and raised three problems:

The first was whether they would be ever given an equal status in Hindu society; the second was whether they would get the proper share of national wealth; and the third was what would be the fate of self-respect, self-help movement? With regard to the first he said, it was not possible as long as the caste system existed. As to the second, he expressed strong resentment at the treatment they got from the congress which was ruled by the capitalists. He observed that, as long as the congress was in the hands of the capitalists, they could not rely on the present government to do anything for the betterment of their economic condition. It was, therefore, he proceeded, necessary to form a united front against the capitalists, who were out to exploit them. He
told them that the time had come for them to win their economic independence. Respecting the third point, he said that they should remember one thing that they had nothing to lose and everything to gain by the step. They had only to shed the fear of death. The conference supported whole-heartedly the Mahar Vatan Bill introduced in the Assembly by their leader.9

As labour leader Dr. Ambedkar made an important speech in Sholapur. Infact, the local Christians were eager to hear his view on religion. He said that he wanted a religion which instructed people how they should behave with one another and prescribed for man his duty to another and relation with God in the light of equality, fraternity and liberty. He told the Christians that their co-religionists in southern India observed caste system in Churches. Besides they lagged behind politically. If the Mahar boys became Christians they lost their scholarships – Thus there was no economic gain in their being Christians. Moreover, the Indian Christians, he remarked, as a community never fought for the removal of social injustice.10

Dr. Ambedkar busied himself with a march of the peasants. Which he was to head to the council hall in Bombay. Peasants from outlying districts such as Thana, Kolaba, Ratnagiri, Satara and Nasik came to Bombay in trains and steamers. The processionists carried posters bearing slogans such as “Down with the Khoti system”, “Support Dr. Ambedkar’s Bill”. The first demand presented by the
deputationists was the enforcement of the minimum standard of wages for agricultural labourers. The second was that all the arrears of rent should be remitted since the revenue arrears had been also remitted. They urged that immediate legislation should be made to provide with or without compensation for the abolition of the Khoti system and the inamdar system; and landlordism, which was economically wasteful and socially tyrannous, must go. The last demand was for reduction of fifty percent of irrigation rates payable by small holders.

The leaders returned to the Esplanade Maidan and addressed a mammoth meeting. Ambedar made a very powerful speech. He said that the number of books he had read on communism exceeded the number of books read by all communists leaders put together.11 But he was of the opinion that the communists never looked to the practical side of the question. He observed that there were two classes in the world – the haves and the have nots, the rich and the poor, the exploiters and the exploited, the third one, the middle class, was very small. He, therefore, exhorted the peasants and workers to think over the causes of their poverty and told them that they lay in the richness of the exploiters. The way out for them was to organize a labour front without any regard to caste or creed, and to elect to the legislatures those who were their real representatives. If they did so, they would have shelter, clothing and they who produced the food and wealth of the nation would not die from hunger. The force, logic and sharpness
of his views would put any communists leader into the shade. His opponents were afraid that Ambedkar would develop into a dangerous leader of the peasants, workers and the landless.

Dr. Ambedkar was now fully engrossed in the promotion of the welfare of the down-trodden. For a time it seems that he availed himself of every opportunity to hear and study their grievances on the spot, to guide them, and to represent their grievances to the government. He was the voice of their woes, their views and their vows. The poor classes of Ahmednagar sought his guidance, and so he addressed a conference of peasants and workers on January 23, 1938, at Ahmednagar.

Ambedkar was now bent upon organizing the peasants as well as the railway workers. He now turned his attention to the latter. A big conference of untouchable Railway workers was convened at Manmad, on February 12 and 13, 1938. Addressing this conference of twenty thousand workers, he described vividly how in his boyhood he had carried tiffin-carriers to his relatives in the mills and had gained close knowledge of the problem. He told them that the condition of labour was quite different in those days. Labour leaders did not try to remove the injustice inflicted upon untouchable workers as they feared a split among the workers. He stated that the conference was the first of its kind. They had hitherto agitated for the removal of social injustice and grievances and had fought out with considerable success. The result
was that they got political representation. Now they had taken up the
work of the removal of their economic grievances. Hitherto they met as
pariahs but now they met as workers. Hitherto he was called the
enemy of the Nation. He was now called, he added, the enemy of the
labour.\textsuperscript{12}

According to him, he said, there were two enemies of the
working classes in the country and they were Brahminism and
capitalism. "By Brahminism", he stated, "I do not mean the power,
privileges and interests of the Brahmins as a community. That is not
the sense in which I'm using the world. By Brahminism I mean the
negation of the spirit of liberty, equality and fraternity. In that sense it
is rampant in all classes and is not confined to Brahmins alone
though they have been its originators. The effect of Brahminism were
not confined only to social rights such as interdining and
intermarrying. It denied them also the civic rights. So omniscient is
Brahminism that it even affects the field of economic opportunities.\textsuperscript{13}

Dr. Ambedkar then asked the untouchable workers to compare
the opportunities of their class with those of a worker who was not an
untouchable, and said that the untouchable worker had less
opportunities of obtaining work, recurring service or advancement in
his respective occupation. He observed that it was notorious that there
were many appointments from which a depressed class worker was
shut out by reason of the fact that he was an untouchable. A
notorious case in point was that of the textile industry. In the railways it was their lot to work as gangmen. Not to speak to other posts they were not even appointed porters because porters were used as domestic servants by the station master, and being untouchables they were dropped out. The same condition prevailed in the railway workshops. He asked his critics how they would consolidate the working classes when they did not remove such glaring injustice and particularly which was wrong in principle and injurious to the principle of solidarity. In other words, he hold the workers that they must uproot Brahmanism, the spirit of inequality among the workers. He, then referred to trade unionism in India and said that it was in a sorry state. It was a stagnant because its leadership was either timid, selfish or misguided. The workers between different unions was far more deadly that what existed, if any at all, between workers and owners. The Communists had misused the power which they had once recurred.

Dr. Ambedkar was surprised to note that M.N. Roy opposed the existence of a separate party of labour inside or outside the congress. He said that Roy was a puzzle to many as he was to him. A Communist opposes to a separate political organization of labour—a terrible contradiction in term! A point of view which must have made Lenin turn in his grave. It might be, he added, that Roy looked upon the destruction of imperialism as the first and foremost aim of Indian
politics. But if, he proceeded, after the disappearance of imperialism, labour would require to fight the landlords, millowners and money lenders who would remain in India to bleed the people, it should have its own organization from the moment to fight capitalism as much as imperialism.

Ambedkar delivered a very instructive, inspiring and thrilling speech in an other conference of depressed class youths. Where he said the rule in life, they should keep in mind, was that they must cherish a noble ideal. Whatever might be one's ideal either of national progress or of self-development, he cautioned, one should patiently exert one self to reach it. He further said that one should concentrate one's mind and might on one's goal. Man must eat to live and should live and work for the well-being of society.14

Encouraged by the success in the assembly elections, Ambedkar now turned his attention to the local board elections. He urged the depressed classes to vote for his party candidates, who were contesting elections to the Satara district local board. There he advised the Marathas to organize a separate political party independent of the congress; for, the congress which was dominated by the capitalists and Brahmins, he asserted, would not promote the interests of the peasants and middle classes.
On May 13, 1938, Dr. Ambedkar made a tour of Konkan districts. He presided over a conference of the depressed classes at Kankavli in a pandal named Ambedkar Nagar. Ambedkar in his exhortations to the conference said that out of two million Mahars in Maharashtra a few should struggle endlessly to win their rights and a living of self-respect for their community. They should give up the nasty habit of begging and of living on leavings. They should watch the work of their representatives in the assembly. He declared that he was determined to end their serfdom by abolishing the Khoti system, and if the bill which he had introduced failed, they should be prepared to launch passive resistance.

Dr. Ambedkar's relentless struggle against the odds of the Indian society in general and against the labour hazards in particular was on. He was expressing the facts of that time. He said that the congress party was postponing for the past ten months the Khoti abolition Bill introduced by him. If it failed for want of support, they should start a no-tax campaign; and he would be the first man to court jail on that issue. He told the farmers that he wanted to see a man amongst the peasants, who formed eighty percent of the population, occupying the Gaddi of the premier of the province.

On his arrival in Bombay, in the course of an interview, Ambedkar expressed great satisfaction at the growing support of the people to his party and their grateful appreciation of his efforts
towards abolishing their selfdom. He said that in its own way his Independent Labour Party (I.L.P.) was striving to redeem its election pledges, but if the congress ministry refused to give relief through constitutional methods, and if people's faith in it was thus lost, the alternative was obvious. He, however, was surprised at the attitude of the socialists, who, he said, had been all those years shouting for the confiscation of all zamindari lands and the abolition of the capitalist system, but were now inactive when a concrete Bill was brought forward to put an end to the Khoti system.  

**Dr. Ambedkar's Struggle with the Congress on Industrial Disputes Bill, 1938**

The consideration of the Industrial Disputes Bill was taken up in September 1938 by the Bombay legislative assembly. Ambedkar and Jamnadas Mehta opposed the Bill tooth and nail. Ambedkar described the Bill as bad, bloody and blood thirsty in as much as it made a strike under certain circumstances illegal and affected the right of the labourer to strike. Moreover it did not ask the employer to disclose his budget and sought to use police force against the workers.

Dr. Ambedkar stated that according to him strike was a civil wrong and not a crime, and making a non serve against his will, was nothing less than making him a slave. To penalize him was to make a worker slave and as defined in the constitution of the United States, he proceeded, slavery was nothing less than involuntary servitude. He,
then, observed that a strike was nothing else than the right to freedom of one's services on any terms that one wanted to obtain. If the congressmen accepted that the right to freedom was a divine right, then, he contended that the right to strike was also a divine right. The Bill, he continued, being retrograde and reactionary, restricted the right on the labourer to strike and made strike illegal and impossible. Ambedkar then teased the government by saying that it was a government which claimed to be elected on labour votes; but it did not stand by its election pledges. It was democracy, headed that was enslaving the working class, and therefore it was a mockery of democracy. Dr. Ambedkar and another labour leader Jamna Das, with their great power of debate and superior intellect so much be laboured and hammered the Bill that the treasury benches were pushed into hot water. But the Ministry was determined to pass the Bill, which they ultimately did.

That indifferent attitude created a big tide of opposition outside the legislative assembly in the industrial towns and cities which voiced disapproval of the Bill. A one day strike was declared by the Independent Labour Party (I.L.P.) for Monday 7th, November 1938. A whirlwind propaganda was carried on in the city of Bombay preparatory to the strike on the one hand, and for the frustration of the strike move on the other hand.
In another development, sixty different Unions sent out their calls to workers. A meeting of the council of action of the Trade Union Congress (T.U.C.) was held under the Chairmanship of Jamnadas Mehta on November 6, at 8 a.m. to give final touches to their programme for November 7. Ambedkar, Parulekar, Mirajkar, Dange, Nimbkar and others were present. The council planned a procession and decided to launch peaceful picketing in front of all mills and factories, and sent forth an appeal to workers in industrial towns to express their indignation at the Bill.

The Government of Bombay summoned about three hundred armed reserved police with twelve officers from the bordering districts of Bombay and placed them at strategic points near the mill gates in the city. The mainspring of action was the I.L.P., which had distributed among the workers thousands of handbills through its volunteers.

Dr. Ambedkar addressed a labour rally held at Kamgar Maidan on November 6, 1938, he condemned the congress ministry on different counts, and said it was the duty of the workers to make the strike a success.

It was the first successful strike launched against a popular government by labour leaders in the teeth of opposition from the interested parties. Manned and maintained by men of congress
persuasion and capitalists, most of the newspapers sided with the government; and the Anglo-Indian newspapers, which wanted the government to remain in office, were hostile to the move for the strike. They all published fabricated reports with a view to minimizing the importance of the strike and Ambedkar’s growing influence upon the working classes.\textsuperscript{17}

Two things emerged from this strike, it was proved on all counts that Ambedkar could dominate the labour field also. His organization played a very important role and proved supreme. His reputation as a labour leader was established; and it prepared a background for his future relationship with the all India labour problems.

Ambedkar and the communists made a United front on the issue of labour welfare. Ambedkar, however, had shrewdly kept his party and organization intact and aloof from those of the communists and yet could effectively dominate the field.

So great was this event that Swami Shajanand, the peasant leader from U.P., saw Ambedkar at his residence in Bombay on December 25, 1938, and had a talk with him about the labour problem in Bombay and the agrarian reform in general. He tried to persuade Ambedkar to join the congress to form a United front against imperialism. Ambedkar replied that he would be glad to liquidate the I.L.P. and join the congress party if the congress decided to fight imperialism. But he said that the congress was using the
constitutional machinery to advance the interests of the capitalists and other vested interests by sacrificing the interests of peasants and workers, and therefore he could not join such an organization.\(^\text{18}\)

**Dr. AMBEDKAR AS A LABOUR MEMBER OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (1942-1946)**

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar joined as member of the Viceroy's Council on the 20\(^\text{th}\) July 1942. He was asked to look after the portfolio of labour. The appointment letter issued by his Majesty's office in this regard reads as under\(^\text{19}\)-

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**GEORGE R.I.**

George the sixth by the grace of God of Great Britain, Ireland and the British dominions beyond the seas, King defender of the faith, Emperor of India.

To,


**GREETING!**

We do by this, our warrant our sign manual appoint you, the said Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar to be, during our pleasure, a member of the executive council of our Governor-General of India.

(II) And we do hereby appoint that so soon as you shall have entered upon the duties of your office, this our warrant shall have effect.

Given at our court at St. James, this ninth day of July in the year of our Lord, one thousand nine hundred and forty-two and in the sixth year of our reign.

By his Majesty's command

Sd/- L.S. Amery
After joining the Viceroy's labour executive council Dr. Ambedkar played a vital role in the field of labour welfare. The Hon'ble Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, member for labour, Government of India, delivered a speech at the joint labour conference in New Delhi on Friday, August 7, 1942. He said, the previous conferences were representative of governments only – the representatives of the central government, provincial governments and some of the Indian State's governments – formed the only constituents of the conference. The most necessary and the most important elements, namely, the employers and the employees, were not represented at these conferences. Care was no doubt taken to establish contact and even to consult the organizations representing the employers and the employees.20

The representatives of employers and employees were also invited to take part in that conference. In his address Dr. Ambedkar said, "It is for the first time in the history of these labour conferences that the representatives of the employers and employees have been brought face to face within the ambit of a joint conference."20

Dr. Ambedkar stressed the need of uniformity of labour laws. He said, so long as the government of India was a unitary government, uniformity in labour legislation was not difficult to obtain. But the federal government created by the government of India Act of 1935 by including labour legislation in the concurrent legislative list had
created a very serious situation. It was feared that if there was no central legislation each province might make a particular law specially suited to itself, but different from that of its neighbour by allowing provincial considerations to dominate over considerations of general and national importance.

Dr. Ambedkar framed the objectives to the conference which previous members could not do. In the words of Dr. Ambedkar, the (Previous) conferences were called to supply a most necessary corrective to this tendency and to foster among provincial governments a regard for the wholesome principle of uniformity in labour legislation with which the three previous conferences were mainly concerned. It will remain one of the object which the conference will pursue. But to this I would like to add two other objects, namely, the laying down of a procedure for the settlement of industrial disputes and the discussion of all metters of all India importance as between labour and capital. Our conference will have, therefore, three main aims and objects:

- the promotion of uniformity in labour legislation;
- the laying down of a procedure for the settlement of industrial disputes; and
- the discussion of all matters of all India importance as between employers and employees.
In regard to the first it is unnecessary to say why we have included it in our aims and objects. Uniformity in labour legislation can never cease to be a matter of importance to so large a country like India with its many administrative and provincial jurisdictions. It must, therefore, continue to occupy our attention in the future as it has done in the past.\textsuperscript{22}

Dr. Ambedkar was how much conscious about the relation between employer and workman, it can be proved by his wordings. According to him, in designing the last item, which is the discussion of all matters of all India importance as between employers and employees, included in our aims and objects we have deliberately used wide language so as not to exclude from the deliberation of the conference anythings that is of importance to labour and capital. But I like to tell you what we have in mind in employing..... this broad expression “matters of all India importance” we want to include in it all matters relating to labour welfare and the maintenance of labour morale. So understood, I need hardly say this object, though placed last, may be regarded as the highest in importance. We certainly regard it as most urgent.\textsuperscript{23}

Dr. Ambedkar proposed to constitute two bodies, namely, a Plenary conference, and (2) a standing committee. The plenary conference will be composed of representatives of the central government, of provinces, of states, of employers and of employees.
While the constitution of standing advisory committee would be more rigid. The standing advisory committee will be composed of representatives of the government of India, representatives of provinces, representatives of states, representatives of employers and representatives of employees with the labour member of the central government as Chairman.

A resolution setting up a plenary labour conference and a standing committee was unanimously adopted at the tripartite labour conference.

Mr. V.V. Giri, President of the All India Trade Union Congress, welcomed the institution of the conference and hoped that it would busy itself not merely with discussions but with the question of the advancement of labour conditions and peace in industry.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, President of the Indian Federation of labour, remarked that the method of the conference should ensure peace and contentment in industry particularly at this critical period.

WHAT LABOUR WANTS: Dr. AMBEDKAR’S PERSPECTIVE

According to Dr. Ambedkar, labour has obtained security through legislation. It has obtained the right to safety, care and attention, through the conditions of welfare which have been enforced by the central government upon the employers for the benefit of the labour. Labour is not content with securing merely fair conditions of
work. What labour wants is fair conditions of life...... Labour wants liberty. There is perhaps nothing new in this. What is new is labour's conception of liberty. Labour's conception of liberty is not merely the negative conception of absence of restraint. Labour's conception of liberty is not confined to the mere recognition of the right of the people to vote. Such liberty is very positive. It involves the idea of government by the people. Government by the people, in the opinion of labour, does not mean parliamentary democracy. Parliamentary democracy is a form of government in which the function of the people has come to be to vote for their masters and leave them to rule. Such a scheme of government, in the opinion of labour, is a travesty of government by the people. Labour wants government which is government by the people in name as well as in fact. Secondly, liberty is conceived by labour includes the right to equal opportunity and the duty of the state to provide the fullest facilities for growth to every individual according to his needs. Labour wants equality. By equality labour means abolition of privileges of every kind in law, in the civil service, in the Army, in taxation, in trade and in industry; in fact the abolition of all processes which lead to inequality....Labour wants fraternity. By fraternity it means an all-pervading sense of human brotherhood, unifying all classes and all nations, with peace on earth and good will towards man as its motto$^{24}$
Dr. Ambedkar further observed that, more serious opponents of labour are, of course, the nationalists. They accuse labour of taking an attitude which is said to be inconsistent with and injurious to Indian nationalism. .... As to nationalism, labour's attitude is quite clear. Labour is not prepared to make a fetish of nationalism. If nationalism means the worship of the ancient past - the discarding of everything that is not local in origin and colour - then labour can not accept nationalism as its creed. Labour cannot allow the living faith of the dead to become the dead faith of the living. Labour will not allow the ever expanding spirit of man to be strangled by the hand of the past which has no meaning for the present and no hope for the future, nor will it allow it to be cramped in a narrow jacket of local particularism. Labour must constantly insist upon renovating the life of the people by being, ever ready to borrow in order to repair, transform and recreate the body politic. If nationalism stand by in the way of this rebuilding and reshaping of life, then labour must deny nationalism .... labour's creed is internationalism. Labour is interested in nationalism only because the wheels of democracy - such as representative parliament, responsible executive, constitutional conventions etc-work better in a community united by national sentiments. Nationalism to labour is only a means to an end. It is not an end in itself to which labour can agree to sacrifice what it regards as the most essential principles of life.25
Dr. Ambedkar gave a lot of importance to labour. He opined, the country needs a lead and the question is who can give this lead. I venture to say that labour is capable of giving to the country the lead it needs. Correct leadership apart from other things, requires idealism and free thought. Idealism is possible for the Aristocracy, though free thought is not. Idealism and free thought are both for labour. But neither idealism nor free thought is possible for the middle-class. The middle class does not possess the liberality of the aristocracy, which is necessary to welcome and nourish an ideal. It does not possess the hunger for the new order, which is the hope on which the labouring classes live. Labour, therefore, has a very distinct contribution to make in bringing about a return to the sane and safe ways of the past which Indians had been pursuing to reach their political destiny. Labour's lead to India and Indian is to get into the fight and be United.26

**Dr. AMBEDKAR'S VIEWS ON 'LABOUR' AND 'PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY'**

Dr. Ambedkar has touched every issue relating to labour classes during his tenure as labour member of the viceroy's Executive Council. During that period explained the failure of parliamentary democracy in the perspective of labour. He delivered an impressive speech at the concluding session of the All India Trade Union workers' study camp held in Delhi from 8th to 17th September 1943 under the auspices of the Indian Federation of labour. He opined his views on parliamentary democracy and labour in a very systematic manner.
He observed, the government of human society has undergone some very significant changes. There was a time when the government of human society had taken the form of autocracy by despotic sovereigns. This was replaced after a long and bloody struggle by a system of governments known as parliamentary democracy. It was felt that this was the last word in the framework of government. It was believed to bring about the millennium in which every human being will have the right to liberty, property and pursuit of happiness. And these were good grounds for such high hopes. In parliamentary democracy there is the legislature to express the voice of the people; there is the executive which is subordinate to the legislature and bound to obey the legislature and there is the judiciary to control both and keep them both within prescribed bounds. Parliamentary democracy has all the makes of a popular government, a government of the people, by the people and for the people. It is, therefore, a matter of some surprise that there has been a revolt against parliamentary democracy, although not even a century has elapsed since its universal acceptance and imagination. There is revolt against it in Italy, in Germany, in Russia and in Spain, and then are very few countries in which there has not been discontent against parliamentary democracy. Why should there be this discontent and dissatisfaction against parliamentary democracy? It is a question worth considering. There is no country in which the urgency of considering this question is greater than it is in India. India is negotiating to have parliamentary democracy. There is a great need of
some one with sufficient courage to tell Indians “Beware of parliamentary democracy, it is not the best product as it appeared to be” 27.

Dr. Ambedkar gave the reply of all queries relating to the failure of parliamentary democracy in various countries. According to him, why has parliamentary democracy failed? In the country of the dictators, it has failed because it is a machine whose movements are very slow. It delays swift action. In a parliamentary democracy the executive may be held up by the legislature which many refuse to pass the laws which the executive wants, and if it is not held up by the legislature it may be held up by the judiciary which may declare the laws as illegal. Parliamentary democracy gives no free hand to dictatorship and that is why it is discredited institution in countries like Italy, Spain and Germany which were by dictators. If dictators alone were against parliamentary democracy it would not have mattered at all. Their testimony against parliamentary democracy would be no testimony at all. Indeed parliamentary democracy would be welcomed for the reason that it can be an effective check upon dictatorship. But unfortunately there is a great deal of discontent against parliamentary democracy even in countries where people are opposed to dictatorship. That is the most regrettable fact about parliamentary democracy. This is all more regrettable because
parliamentary democracy has not been at a standstill. It has progressed in three directions. It has progressed by expanding the notion of equality of political rights. There are very few countries having parliamentary democracy which have not adult suffrage. It has recognized the principle of equality of social and economic opportunity. And thirdly it has recognized that the state can not be held at bay by corporations which are anti-social in their purpose. With all this, there is immense discontent against parliamentary democracy even in countries pledged to democracy. The reasons for discontent in such countries must obviously be different from those assigned by the dictator countries. It can be said in general terms that the discontent against parliamentary democracy is due to the realization that it has failed to assure to the masses the right to liberty, property or the pursuit of happiness. If this is true, it is important to know the causes which have brought about this failure. The causes for this failure may be found either in wrong ideology or wrong organization, or in both. I think the causes are to be found in both. As an illustration of wrong ideology which has vitiated parliamentary democracy I can only deal with two. Firstly, I have no doubt that what has ruined parliamentary democracy is the idea of freedom of contract. The idea became sanctified and was upheld in the name of liberty. Parliamentary democracy look no notice of economic
inequalities and did not care to examine the result of freedom of contract on the parties to the contract, should they happen to be unequal. It did not mind if the freedom of contract gave the strong opportunity to defraud the weak. The result is that parliamentary democracy is standing out as protagonist of liberty has continuously added to the economic wrongs of the poor, the downtrodden and the disinherited class. The second wrong ideology which has vitiated parliamentary democracy, is the failure to realize that political democracy cannot succeed where there is no social and economic democracy,......why parliamentary democracy collapsed so easily in Italy, Germany and Russia? Why did it not collapse so easily in England and the U.S.A.? To my mind there is only one answer – namely, there was a greater degree of economic and social democracy in the latter countries than it existed in the former. Social and economic democracy are the tissues and the fiber of a political democracy. The tougher the tissue and the fiber, the greater the strength of the body. Democracy is another name for equality. Parliamentary democracy developed a passion for liberty.28

Dr. Ambedkar elaborated the causes to the failure of parliamentary democracy in some countries. He further said that more than bad ideology it has bad organization which has been responsible for the failure of democracy. He, continued that, all
political societies get divided into two classes – the Rulers and the Ruled. This is an evil. If the evil stopped here it would not matter much. But the unfortunate part of it is that the division becomes stereotyped and stratified so much so that the rulers are always drawn from the ruling class and the class of the ruled never becomes the ruling class. People do not govern themselves, they establish a government and leave it to govern them, forgetting that is not their government.

Dr. Ambedkar not only raised the questions that why parliamentary democracy has failed, but he has given suitable answers with that facts that who was responsible for such failure. He said, the question is who is responsible for this? There is no doubt that if parliamentary democracy has failed to benefit the poor, the labouring and the down-trodden classes, it is these classes who are primarily responsible for it. In the first place, they have shown a most appalling indifference to the effect of the economic factor in the making of man’s life. ...... The common retort to Marx that man does not live by bread alone is unfortunately a fact. The labouring class far from being fat like pigs are starving, and one wishes that they thought of bread first and every thing else afterwards. Marx propounded the doctrine of the Economic interpretation of history. A great controversy has raged over its validity. To my mind Marx propounded it not, so much as doctrine as a direction to labour that if labour cares to make
its economic interests paramount, as the owing classes do, history will be a reflection of the economic facts of life more than it has been. If the doctrine of economic interpretation of history is not wholly true it is because the labouring class as whole has failed to give economic facts the imperative force they have in determining the terms of associated life. The labouring classes have failed to acquaint itself with literature dealing with the government of mankind. Everyone from the labouring classes should be acquainted with Rousseau’s Social Contract. Mark’s Communist manifesto, pope Leo XIII’s encyclical on the conditions of labour and John Stuart Mill on liberty, to mention only four of the basic programmatic documents on social and governmental organization of modern times. But the labouring classes will not give them the attention they deserve. Instead labour has taken delight reading false and fabulous stories of ancient kings and queens and has become addicted to it.

Dr. Ambedkar further stated, there is another and a bigger crime which they have committed against themselves. They (labour) have developed no ambition to capture government, and are not even convinced of the necessity of controlling government as a necessary means of safeguarding their interests. ..... Whatever organization there is, it has taken the form on trade unionism. I’m not against trade unions. They serve a very useful purpose. But it would be a great mistake to suppose that trade unions are panacea for all the ills of
labour. Trade unions even if they are powerful, are not strong enough to compel capitalists to run capitalism better. Trade unions would be much more effective if they had behind them a labour government to rely on. Control of the government must be the target for labour to aim at. Unless trade unionism aims at controlling government, trade unions will do very little good to the workers and will a source of perpetual squabbles among trade union leaders.²⁹

He (Dr. Ambedkar) continued, on the wrong policies of labouring classes, said, the third be setting sin of the labouring classes is the easy way which they are lead away by an appeal to nationalism. The working classes who are beggared in every way and who have very little to spare, often sacrifice their all to the so-called cause of nationalism. They have never cared to enquire whether the nationalism for which they are to make their offerings will, when established, give them social and economic equality. If the working classes have to live under a system of parliamentary democracy then it must devise the best possible means to turn it to their benefit. As far as I can see, two things are necessary if this object is to be achieved. First thing to do is to discard mere establishment to trade unions as the final aim and object of labour in India. It must declare that its aim is to put labour in charge of government. For this it must organize a labour party as a political party. Such party will no doubt cover trade unions in its organization. But it must be free from the narrow and cramping vision of trade unionism, with its stress on the
immediate gain at the cost of ultimate benefit and with the vested right of trade union officials to represent labour. It must equally dissociate itself from communal or capitalistic political parties such as the Hindu Mahasabha or the congress. There is no necessity for labour to submerge itself in the congress or the Hindu Mahasabha or be the camp followers of either, simply because these bodies claim to be fighting for the freedom of India. Labour by a separate political organization of its ranks can serve both the purposes. It can fight the battle of India's freedom better by freeing itself from the clutches of the congress and the Hindu Mahasabha. It can prevent itself from being defrauded in the name of nationalism. What is more important is that it will act as a powerful check on the irrationalism of Indian politics. A labour party in India would be most welcome corrective to this irrationalism which has dominated Indian politics for the last two decades. The second thing for labour in India to realize is that without knowledge there is no power. When a labour party is formed in India and when such a party put forth its claim to be installed on the Gaddi before the electorate, the question, whether labour is fit to govern, is sure to be asked. It would be no answer to say that labour could not govern worse or display greater bankruptcy in home or foreign affairs than the other classes. Labour have to prove positively that it can govern better. Let it not also be forgotten that the pattern of labour government is a very difficult one than that of the other classes. Labour government can not be a government of laissez-faire. It will be a government which must essentially be based on a system of control.
A system of control needs a far greater degree of knowledge and training than a laissez-faire government does. Unfortunately the labour in India has not realized the importance of study. All that labour leaders in India have done, is to learn how best to abuse industrialists. Abuse and more abuse has become the be-all and end-all of his role as labour leader. 30

**DR. B.R. AMBEDKER’S EFFORTS TOWARDS LABOUR WELFARE LEGISLATIONS**

Dr. Ambedkar resigned from Viceroy’s Executive Council in June, 1946. That period, (from July, 1942 to June 1946) though short, was remarkable in the history of labour welfare legislations in the country. He discussed in labour conferences and covered several aspects like wage differences, labour welfare funds, industrial disputes etc. He conducted labour conferences four times and suggested several measures for the labour welfare to the government and also made the government to implement those suggestions.

Government of India passed Mines Act for the welfare of labour who worked in the coal mines on 31.1.1944 and labour welfare fund was established. The main source of the welfare fund was levy on the coal brought out from coal mines. As the fund was very little the government failed to take steps for the welfare of labour. In this connection Dr. Ambedkar played a vital role in increasing the labour welfare fund by doubling levying of tax on the coal brought out. The labour welfare fund was increased and utilised for the safeguarding of
the health and safety of the workers. It also took care of drinking water for workers, facility of education, cultural activities etc. Which had promoted their welfare.

The Coal Mines Labour Welfare Ordinances, 1944 clearly stated that it specifies a number of items for which the fund may be utilized. The labour welfare programme to be financed from the fund aims at providing housing, water supplies, facilities for washing, improvement of educational facilities and standards of living among the workers including nutrition, amelioration of social conditions and the provision of recreation and transport facilities.31

The Indian Trade Union (Amendment) Bill was introduced by Dr. Ambedkar on November 8, 1943, in the legislative assembly and this Bill compelled the employers to acknowledge the trade unions.

It was quoted that, the Bill has three important features. In the first place, the Bill seeks to compel an employer to recognize a trade union. In the second place, the Bill imposes certain conditions on a trade union in order to make the trade union. .... The third feature of the Bill is to make non-recognition by an employer of a trade union, which has observed all the conditions prescribed in this measure and which has therefore qualified itself for recognition, an offence which is punishable by law.32

The Mines Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill was moved by Dr. Ambedkar for the welfare of the women workers, working in the
Dr. Ambedkar, as a Labour Member, arrived at Dhanbad to study working conditions in the coalfields. The programme included inspection of both surface and underground conditions of work. The labour member and party went 400 feet underground where they saw working conditions.

At another stage during the inspection of Bhulanbararee Colliery, the party saw stowing operations in progress. During the course of the surface inspection, Dr. Ambedkar had friendly chats with workers regarding their wages and earnings. The labour member then proceeded to the worker's quarters in the vicinity of the colliery. He inspected the furniture and other contents of the house and looked round to see the ventilation arrangements.

During the tenure of Dr. Ambedkar as labour member, lifting of ban on employment of women on underground work in coal mines was made. Dr. Ambedkar pleaded strongly in the favour of lifting the ban. He advocated for the equal pay for equal work and he got success in the field of coal mines. He said, “It is for the first time that I think in any industry the principle has been established of equal pay for equal work irrespective of the sex. We have also taken care that women shall not be required to work in a gallery which is less than 5½ feet”.
Dr. Ambedkar tried to help not only the industrial labour women, but also the other women. He said that it would be the foremost duty of Indian women to integrate themselves to help their fellow-sisters, who are under the despised and degraded professions like the flesh-trade, beggary etc. So educated women should join social work to educate, organize and unite all depressed women.\(^{34}\)

On April 8, 1946 Dr. Ambedkar introduced a resolution in Central Assembly and an Act was passed for the welfare of labour of Mica mines. The Act provided several amenities to child and woman labour like working conditions, working hours and wage differences etc. Later the Act was very helpful to various Mica mines labour welfare organizations in India.

"The government of India is prepared to do its best to put this (Mica) industry a sound and stable footing", observed Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, labour member addressing a Mica conference between representatives of the government of India, the Bihar government, trade associations and spokesmen of Mica labour, held at Kodarma (Bihar) on April 29, 1944\(^{35}\).

Referring to the question of labour and (Mica) industry, the labour member emphasized that if government was to help the industry it would not allow the industry to exploit labour. It had been said that India's monopoly was based on cheap labour. If this was true it was not a matter of compliment either to the industry or to labour.
If government was to intervene or to take measures in order to stabilise the industry, government would expect the industry to safeguard the interests of labour.\textsuperscript{36}

The labour member further observed, that government would require that labour must be assured a living wage, fair conditions of employment and general amenities, in the interest of maintaining labour welfare. He referred to the general policy that had been evolved to maintain labour by collecting money from industry and pointed out the welfare cess on coal as an example. The industry, he continued, must bear the cost of welfare by a special cess.\textsuperscript{37}

On April 28, 1944, Dr. Ambedkar, accompanied by others, visited a Mica mine, and a Mica factory. The party went down about 400 feet by means of a ladder installed in the mines, the labour member saw drilling and boring operations conducted through pneumatic drills worked by land lease compressors.

Later being a member of viceroy committee Dr. Ambedkar took steps to amend the Mica Mines Act twice. Due to amendments several amenities were extended to the women labour of mica mines like arrangements of cradles for infants and appointments of maids for nursing their children etc.

During this tenure Dr. Ambedkar took steps to amend the Maternity Benefits Act and the Workmen Compensation Act of 1923.
After the amendments, the compensation to the workers who die during work, was increased from Rs. 4,000 to Rs. 4,500 and to the workers who were fully handicapped, the compensation was increased from Rs. 5,600 to Rs. 6,300. According to the Maternity Benefits Acts, several amenities were provided to women labour working inside as well as outside the Mica mines. Dr. Ambedkar inserted a provision prohibiting women working underground before confinement. He said that (confinement) period will be a period of ten weeks. So that no woman would be allowed to work underground for ten weeks before her confinement.

In 1944, Dr. Ambedkar initiated to amend the Factories Act of 1934 with several modifications. According to the modifications, washing facilities were arranged to the labour in every industry and changes also look place in working hours and earned leave facilities. Dr. Ambedkar gave so much stressed on the recommendations of International Labour Conference held in 1936. He laid emphasized more on length of holiday, qualifying conditions for a right to a holiday, pay during holiday and limiting conditions. According to Dr. Ambedkar, with regard to the question of qualifying conditions laying down as to when a worker will be entitled to claim a seven days holidays. As a matter of fact, there is really only one condition and that is, that the worker must have put in a period of twelve months continuous service. There is no other condition. With regard to the
question as to what is continuous service of twelve months, the Bill provides for what are called interruptions and declares that certain interruptions shall not invalidate the claims for holidays with pay. The interruptions which are mentioned in the Bill are interruptions arising out of sickness, accident, authorized leave, lock-out period and a strike period provided the strike is legal. Dr. Ambedkar further, explained the voluntary unemployment. He said, if the involuntary unemployment caused by the factory manager does not extend beyond 30 days, then that would not invalidate the claim of the worker for his right to holidays with pay. During the legislative assembly debates, Dr. Ambedkar opined his thorough views on holidays with pay for factory workers. He said, a worker is to be paid at a rate equivalent to the average of his earnings during the three preceding months barring overtime. I believed that is an equitable principle.38

Dr. Ambedkar followed the English pattern of working hours that is 48 hours work per week in India. He die hard opposed the proposal of twelve hours work in Industry by a worker39.

Dr. Ambedkar recommended 10 days earned leave for adults and 14 days earned leave for child labour. He recommended more holidays and less working hours to the labour during war time.

A Bill for the protection of minimum wages was also moved by Dr. Ambedkar on April 11, 1946. The Bill provided for constituting advisory committee and advisory Boards with equal representation.
from labourers and employers to advise the government. This Bill was enacted into law on Feb 9, 1948.

Dr. Ambedkar moved the Payment of Wages (Amendment) Bill in November 1944. He recommended many suggestions relating to the Definition of wages, prescribed period during which wages must be paid, authorized and unauthorized deductions, increament issue, absenteeism etc. Section 5 of the Payment of Wages Act, devided factories into two categories. In one category there were such factories which employ workmen whose number was less than 1,000. In the second category there were such factories which employ more than 1,000 employees. After making this division, the section provides that in the factories which fall into category No. 1, payment must be made within 7 days, while in the case of the latter the limit of the period is prescribed to be 10 days. Dr. Ambedkar opposed this provision and said that the number of workmen is never constant figure; it always changes. For instance, if the number of employees goes down by one, the category automatically shifts from category no. 2 to category No. 1. Similarly, if the number of employees is increased by one category No. 1 goes into a category No. 2. It is believed and I think very rightly - that this discriminating principle is neither very just nor administratively feasible. If the Payment of Wages Act was only applicable to perennial factories which are working throughout the day, there can be no difficulty arising from the section as it stands now. But in the case of seasonal factories, the difficulty that would
arise is absolutely genuine because, supposing an employee was discharged on the last working day of the factory and the factory being a seasonal factory was closed down thereafter then the second working day would come after a long interval which it would be difficult for anybody to imagine or to stipulate.\textsuperscript{40} So Dr. Ambedkar recommended the amendment in section 5 of the Payment of Wages Act and the said section was amended. Where the factory is a seasonal factory or where the factory is a perennial factory, every discharged workman will be paid on the seventh day and would not have to wait as he would have to in case the factory was seasonal factory and the Act stood it is now.

A very important piece of legislation, the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Bill, was introduced in the central assembly by Dr. Ambedkar on April 12, 1946 and the same Bill was passed and came into force on April 23, 1946. Explaining the object of the Bill Dr. Ambedkar said, the object of the Bill is to have the terms and conditions certified by a competent officer appointed for that purpose, and that it should form a sort of register of what the terms and conditions of employment are in any particular establishment. The Bill seeks to make a difference between mere registration of the terms and conditions of employment and adjudication upon the fairness and reasonableness of those terms and conditions of employment. In other words the Bill is merely enacting what might be called a rule of evidence .... if there is any dispute as to what the terms and
conditions were with regard to any particular establishment as between the employer and the workman, the evidence that the law will admit the documentary evidence, a certified copy furnished to the employer by the certifying officer, and that the oral evidence will not be permitted.

Infact Dr. Ambedkar was the first legislator in India to introduce a Bill for the abolition of the serfdom of agricultural tenants.  

During his period as a labour member, Dr. Ambedkar invited V.V. Giri to head the commission on 'Forced labour'. It was his feeling that Giri, with his knowledge and experience of labour problems, would be of great assistance in evolving suitable measures to deal this pernicious practice. But the commission could not be established because of the Indian Princes who protested to the viceroy against the idea of the commission.

Dr. Ambedkar was thus in office only for about four years, the period, though short, is landmark in the history of labour legislations and labour welfare in this country.
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2. Ibid p. 455.


5. Ibid p. 286.


8. Supra note 1, p. 296.


12. Supra note 1 p. 303.

13. The Times of India, 14 February 1938.

14. Supra Note 1, p. 305.

15. Ibid p. 310.


17. Ibid p. 315.


24. Supra Note 19 p. 36-37.


26. Ibid p. 43.


32. Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. IV (1943), 13th November 1943, pp. 252-54. As quoted in Supra Note 19, p. 113.


35. India Information, May 15, 1944, pp. 533-35.

36. Supra Note 19 p. 173 (Following Dr. Ambedkar’s views, our Apex Court has suggested to the Government that, “be a model employer”- The times of India, New Delhi, July 6, 2006, p.1.)

37. Ibid

38. Legislative Assembly Debates (Central), Vol. IV, 1st November, 1944, pp. 89-91.


41. Supra Note 1 p. 286