

Deliberation on separate electorates and course of action after gandhi irwin pact...

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The Second Round Table conference was held in a less auspicious environment. In India, Lord Irwin was replaced by Lord Willingdon, who remained India's Viceroy till 1936. In England, The Labor Government was now replaced by a National Coalition Government. Samuel Hoare was the Secretary of State for Government of India. Meanwhile, there was a strong reaction in India against the statement of Winston Churchill who called Gandhi a "Naked Seditious Fakir".

With the advent of the coalition Government in England, the whole atmosphere of the Second Round Table conference got changed and the sole outcome of this session was the widening of the gap between Congress and the minorities. So, on one side, minorities were in opposition, who wanted to reach at an agreement amongst them. On the other side, it was the antagonistic British Government, which was for anything opposite to the Indian aspirations. The result was that Gandhi came back, disappointed, and without any achievement.

Due to wide-scale participation, the Government claimed that Congress did not represent the interests of All India, whereas Gandhi claimed otherwise. Gandhi iterated the need for a partnership between Britain and India as between two equal nations. His demands were that a responsible government must be established immediately and in full, both at the center and in the provinces, Congress alone represented political India, the untouchables were Hindus and should not be treated as 'minority', and that there should be no separate electorates or special safeguards for Muslims or other minorities.

In separate electorates, the representatives of a particular community are elected or voted by eligible voters belonging to the same community. But these claims of Gandhi were rejected by other Indian delegates. The conference was deadlocked on the minorities' issue for the separate electorate and was now being demanded by the Muslims, Dalits, Christians, Anglo Indians, and Europeans etc. Demanding a separate electorate, in my opinion, is not only unjust but also politically and culturally problematic. The rejection of this idea seems to have worked in the favor of this country's future.

Gandhi-Irwin Pact, an agreement was signed on March 5, 1931, between the 'two Mahatmas' (as Sarojini Naidu puts it), M. K. Gandhi and Lord Irwin. It concluded a period of civil disobedience in India against the British rule that had started with the Salt March.

The main Conditions of the Pact were that political prisoners not convicted for violence should be immediately released, the government has to return all the confiscated properties which had not been sold to third parties, remit all the fines that had not been collected, and the tax on production and selling of salt by people along the coast should be removed. In return, the Congress agreed to participate in the Second Round Table Conference and put an end to the Disobedience Movement.