

# MINORITY SAFEGUARDS

To The Editor "Sunday News" of India

OF late efforts are being made by some critics to bring to the notice of the public and the framers of the Indian Constitution, the apparent inconsistencies in some provisions of the Draft Constitution. Articles 10 (3) and 296 which provide for reserving posts in favour of backward communities and which contemplate the claims of minority communities to be taken into consideration in making appointments, have been subjected to a lot of criticism on the ground that one of the important elements in the secular nature of the State, namely, equal distribution of services among the citizens in accordance with their individual needs and not on communal and religious considerations, will be negated by these articles.

Again Articles 292 and 294 which provide for reservation of seats to Muslims, Scheduled Castes and Indian Christian communities are being similarly assailed with the same criticism that these provisions are fundamentally inconsistent with the conception of a secular state. Apparently these fears look like real but Indians and non-Indians familiar with the evils of the caste system in India will not see anything inconsistent in them. The relative position of minorities in India has not improved overnight with the dawning of a new era in India.

Religious, social and political disabilities and the consequent economic inequalities suffered by the victims of the caste system have not disappeared with India's attaining independence. No doubt with the rest of Indians the Scheduled Castes have become free of foreign domination but have not become free of caste domination. The framers of our Constitution have in view the injustice suffered by these communities and hence they have incorporated these apparent inconsistencies in the Draft Constitution. These special concessions will continue only for a limited period during which legal and moral forces will be let loose to undo the past injustice and to remove the inequalities so that the backward communities will gain religious, social, political and economic equality with other Indians.

## Readers' Letters

There and then, the inconsistencies in the conception of the secular state can be done away with.

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