



International Journal of Humanities & Social Science Studies (IJHSSS)

A Peer-Reviewed Bi-monthly Bi-lingual Research Journal

ISSN: 2349-6959 (Online), ISSN: 2349-6711 (Print)

ISJN: A4372-3142 (Online) ISJN: A4372-3143 (Print)

Volume-IV, Issue-I, July 2017, Page No. 110-115

Published by Scholar Publications, Karimganj, Assam, India, 788711 Website:

<http://www.ijhsss.com>

Government of India Act 1909 and Exponent from Indian

Bureaucrats

Anupam Jangid

Research Scholar, Department of History, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

Sangeeta Sharma

Associate Professor, Dept. of History, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

Abstract

British bureaucracy, 'famously defined as 'Steel Frame of the British Empire' which played an important role in maintaining British Empire in India, had also remained a decisive factor in constitutional change in India. It has been seldom realized that in addition to economic, political, religious and ideological factors, bureaucratic responses were critical to constitutional development in India. Since India was a distant empire, the British Government was largely dependent on the bureaucrats for its sustenance and preservation. Their assessment of the situation and ground realities formed major criteria in the promulgation of constitutional reforms in India.

Keywords: Constitutional reforms, Indian bureaucrats, Separate electorates, Advisory council

Introduction: British Empire since their establishment in India had only one aim to maintain their power in India. And for this it was necessary to have strong administrators. I.C.S was one of the most famous and lured services in the world. The members of the Indian Civil Services had, since the establishment of British administration in this country, enjoyed immense prestige and power. They had performed and were performing duties much wider in scope and more responsible in nature than any that was normally done by their counterparts in Britain. Their functions had not been simply administrative but political as well in character. Before Lord William Bentinck, the higher civil service was completely British. In the early days of the Company rule, Warren Hastings favored Indians on responsible positions, but his successors in office, since Cornwallis, followed a contrary policy. Henceforth, the professional bureaucracy of British India was an all-white affair until the last decade of the Company's rule. The Parliamentary Committee on the eve of renewal of Charter of 1833 strongly recommended the case of Indians, "At present natives are only employed in subordinate positions in revenue, judicial and military departments. They are said to be alive to the grievances of being excluded from larger share in the

executive government. It is amply borne out by the evidence on score of incapacity for business or the want of application or trustworthiness, while it is contended that their admission under European control, into the higher offices would strengthen their attachment to British dominion, would conduce to a better administration of justice and would be productive of a great saving in the expenses of Indian government".¹

The Government accepted the recommendations. The Charter Act of 1833 provided that "no native of the British territories in India nor any natural born subject of his Majesty resident there in should, by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour or any of them be disable from holding any place, office or employment under the Company"². Sir Edward Blunt in his book '*The I.C.S, The Indian Civil Service*' remarks, "there is however, more truth in the criticism that competition whilst nominally throwing open the services to Indians, actually debarred them from entering it, because their cast and custom forbade them to go overseas"³. Thus it was in 1864 that the first Indian S.N.Tagore passed the I.C.S exam. Later under the pressure of nationalists the civil service was further Indianised by the Statute of 1870 and created a new service called Statutory Civil Service. But still there was an increasing demand by the Indians to hold the competitive exam both in India and London. In 1893 the House of Commons passed a resolution to that effect; but it could not be given effect to, because of the supposed disorder consequent upon reduction of British elements and alleged position of the Muslims"⁴. The Secretary of State's announcement of August 1917 put in the "forefront the contemplated increased association of Indians in every branch of administration and the introduction of Responsible Government"⁵. Consequently the Montford report recommended greater proportion of the Indian element in the service. On their recommendation, examination began to be held in India also and a fixed percentage of candidates were to be appointed from candidates examined in India. 33% posts on the cadre were to be filled by the Indians and an annual increase of 1¹/₂ % was allowed for 10 years. To the extent of 1/3rd reserved for Indians, the government could make nomination to secure fair representation of different communities and provinces⁶. After the recommendations of the Islington Commission (1912-15) and Government of India Act of 1919, member of Provincial Services could also be promoted to the I.C.S. even after examination held in India. Thus the strength of Indians in the I.C.S. registered a rapid increase from 1919 onwards. In Bombay Presidency, for instance, their percentage in the I.C.S. before 1916 was 16.5. But Indian recruitment to the I.C.S. there rose by 75 percent between 1921 and 1925, 40 percent during 1926-7 and 57 percent during 1928-34. While expressing concern over the shortage of Europeans in the Civil Service, The Government of Bombay emphasized that 'the youngest of the pre-1916 recruits has already 19 years of service, and that all of them will have completed their service, and the majority will have retired, in six to ten years. The senior men then will be 75 percent Indians. He therefore stressed the need to raise European recruitment to a proper level. A resort to selection as a substitute for competition was designed to make up the shortage of Europeans. In January 1939, the number of Indians in the I.C.S. did not exceed 589 in comparison to 599 Europeans.⁷ The total strength of the cadre directly recruited thus

remained at 1084. But in less than three years of the start of War the number of Europeans in the I.C.S fell from 599 to 573, while that of Indians rose from 587 to 625. The grip of the 'steel frame' over Indian administration had already been loosening since the First World War. The Second World War accelerated the pace of decline. However, another important factor which contributed to Indianization of Service was, the establishment of the Provincial Autonomy in 1937, thereafter the alteration for these services had fast begun to erode among the Europeans.⁸

India's constitutional development is rooted in British India i.e. Indian constitution has its origin in the Constitutional Acts that were enacted during British rule. The British Parliament felt the need to regulate Company's rule through some rules and regulations regarding its officers in India which led to passing of many Constitutional Acts in India. Various constitutional acts were passed during 1774 to 1935. The study here shows the reaction and attitude of Indian bureaucrats towards the making of the Government of India Act 1909. Before the enactment of the Indian Councils Act of 1909, with the object of satisfying the constitutional requirements of the Indian Empire, the Government of India had of their own initiative taken into consideration the question of giving the people of India wider opportunities of expressing their views on administrative matters. Therefore opinions of the local government and their officials were invited on this important subject.

Three important considerations should be kept in mind while analyzing the responses of the Indian bureaucrats towards the constitutional reforms till 1909. Firstly there was preponderance of British officials and the number of Indian officers was too paltry to engender in them courage to voice their opinion freely. Moreover they were too overawed by British imperialism to express their reaction either in favour of nationalist movement or constitutional development. Also this was period when freedom for India was still a dream and an elusive. This was also an era when British rule was seen as blessing and a benevolent institution by wide section of people. Many British and Indian officials submitted their views on the given tentative proposals like formation of an Advisory Council (Imperial and Provincial both), enlargement of the powers of the Legislative Assembly at Centre and Provinces and on the matter of separate electorates.

Thus views of the Indian officials can be seen beneath.

1. Advisory Council:-- V. Ramchandra Rao Pantulu Garu, Deputy Collector in charge of the treasury Godavari district,⁹ Muhammad Baziullah Sahib Bahadur, Deputy Collector, Anantpur,¹⁰ Aziz-ud-din, Khan Sahib, Khan Bahadur, Collector of South Canara,¹¹ Rao Bahadur K. Jagamadham Chetti Garu, Chairman, Municipal Council Canjeevaram¹² were all in favour of constituting an Imperial Advisory Council and Provincial Advisory Council but they thought that if ruling chiefs and the territorial magnates i.e. landlords are included in it then it will be of no use. Also its success would depend on the intrinsic worth of the individuals (intellectual class like Diwans) appointed and the value attached to their opinions by the government and the public. Whereas Hon'ble Nawab Muhammad Raza Khan, Khan Bahadur, M.C.S. (retired Collector and present Member, Legislative Council),¹³ Diwan Bahadur R.Raghunath Rao, retired Deputy Collector in the Madras

Presidency, and ex Minister in Indore,¹⁴ Diwan Bahadur N. Subrahmanyam Avargal, Administrator-General of Madras,¹⁵ K.V.Srinivasa Aiyanger Avargal, Treasury, Deputy Collector Anantpur¹⁶ were against the formation of these Advisory Councils both at centre and provinces as they viewed that it would not prove of any real benefit or value for the purpose of eliciting opinion on measures which the government had in contemplation. Also at that time there were no such intellectual persons in the country who, might properly constitute members of the Advisory Council.

2. Reconstitution of Legislative Councils:- V. Ramchandra Rao Pantulu Garu, Deputy Collector in charge of the treasury Godavari district¹⁷, Aziz-ud-din, Khan Sahib, Khan Bahadur, Collector of South Canara,¹⁸ Rao Bahadur, K. Jagamadham Chetti Garu, Chairman, Municipal¹⁹, Diwan Bahadur R. Raghunath Rao, retired Deputy Collector in the Madras Presidency, and ex Minister in Indore²⁰, Diwan Bahadur N. Subrahmanyam Avargal, Administrator-General of Madras²¹, K.V. Srinivasa Aiyanger Avargal, Treasury, Deputy Collector Anantpur²² were all in favour of enlargement of the Legislative Council. They hopes that more number of elected members should be there and also the senate of University of Madras and the corporation of Madras should each be allowed to nominate one member i.e. the mercantile class should have their representation. Also Ramchandra Rao Pantulu Garu²³ advocated that for the Legislative Councils there should be freedom of speech and free access to the Viceroy when necessary for all the councilors. Only one of the officer despite being Indian, Hon'ble Nawab Muhammad Raza Khan, Khan Bahadur²⁴, opposed the enlargement of the Legislative Councils, both Imperial and Provincial. Almost all the officials opposed the official nomination and were in favour of elections so that more number of Indians members could come to the Councils but the elections should not be based on caste/class/ religion etc.

3. Separate Electorate:- Hon'ble Nawab Muhammad Raza Khan, Khan Bahadur²⁵, V. Ramchandra Rao Pantulu Garu²⁶, seemed to be in favour of separate electorates and suggested that the property qualifications suggested for being a member of the Council was too high and requires to be reduced. He also stated that the several provisions by which it is sought to prevent one class, profession, or caste predominating in the Council are absolutely necessary and have his cordial approval. He wished that facilities were given to the retired public servants drawing a pension of not less than Rs. 3000 per annum being returned to the Council. Their practical experience in administration and their acquaintances with the actual conditions in various districts are likely to be of great value and their entry in the Legislative Councils deserves to be encouraged.

Diwan Bahadur R. Raghunath Rao²⁷, Diwan Bahadur N. Subrahmanyam Avargal²⁸, K.V. Srinivasa Aiyanger Avargal²⁹, Muhammad Baziullah Sahib Bahadur³⁰, M.V. Narayanswami Pilla Avargal B.A., Deputy Collector, Tiruvallur Division,³¹ Rao Bahadur, K. Jagamadham Chetti Garu³², were not in favour of the method of giving representation to different communities. Aziz-ud-din, Khan Sahib, Khan Bahadur³³, suggested that a special Mahummaddan electorate should be constituted of five members of different Muslim caste. They recommended three years for Legislative Councils and five years for Advisory

Councils and territorial representation should be followed. Also qualification of the voters and the candidates should be reduced.

Conclusion: Thus these opinions of the Indian civil servants clearly show that most of them were not in favour of formation of the Advisory Council and if constituted then the method of representation of members should be fair and proper. They felt that only the landlords and the ruling chiefs have been considered worth and given representation but this class do not represent the whole of India. They were of the opinion that now there was growth in the number of educated Indians and believed that this class if given representation both in Imperial and Legislative councils would always think for the betterment of the Indian masses. Also most of them rejected the concept of separate electorates as it will only fulfill one motive i.e. dividing the nation on the name of class and religion.

References:

1. Malley, O. (1965). *Indian Civil Services*. F. Cass and Company, London, U.K., 206.
2. Blunt, Sir Edward (1937). *The ICS, The Indian Civil Services*, London, U.K. 46.
3. Malley, O. (1965). *op.cit*, p .19.
4. Pande, R. *Indian Administration*, p.392.
5. Mishra, B.B. *The Bureaucracy in India-An Historical Analysis of Development up to 1947*, p.236.
6. Ramchandra Rao Pantulu Garu, M.R. Ry. V. (1908). Deputy Collector in charge of the treasury Godavari district to the Collector of Godavari, dated Cocanada, the 15th January 1908, No. D. Dis. 39/ Accts, p 188, Papers relating to Constitutional reforms in India, Calcutta, volume 3.
7. Bahadur, M.B.S. B.A. (1908). Head-quarters Deputy Collector, Anantpur to the Collector of Anantpur, dated Camp, the 13th January 1908, No. D. Dis. 87, *ibid* p 41.
8. Aziz-ud-din, Khan Sahib, Khan Bahadur, Collector of South Canara to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Camp Kasaragod, the 7th February 1908, No. Dis. 17 R./Ver, *ibid* p 123.
9. Rao Bahadur M.R. Ry., Jagamatham Chetti Garu, K. (1908). Chairman, Municipal Council, Conjeevaram to the Collector of Chingleput, dated the 15th February 1908, *ibid* p 95.
10. Hon'ble Nawab Muhammad Raza Khan, Khan Bahadur, M.C.S. (retired Collector and present Member, Legislative Council) to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Saidapet, the 31st January 1908, *ibid* p 34.
11. M.R. Ry. Diwan Bahadur R, retired Deputy. Raghunath Rao Collector in the Madras Presidency, and ex Minister in Indore to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Kumbakonam, the 15th December 1907, No. 824, *ibid* p 67.
12. M.R. Ry. Diwan Bahadur N. Subrahmanyam Avargal, Administrator-General of Madras to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated the 17th February 1908, *ibid* p 88.
13. M.R. Ry. K.V. Srinivasa Aiyanger Avargal, Treasury, Deputy Collector Anantpur to the Collector of Anantpur, dated the 27th January 1908, *ibid* p 38.

14. Ramchandra Rao Pantulu Garu., V. (1908) *op.cit.*, Papers relating to Constitutional reforms in India, Calcutta, volume 3..
15. Aziz-ud-din, Khan Sahib, (1908) *op.cit.*, Papers relating to Constitutional reforms in India, Calcutta, volume 3..
16. Jagamadham Chetti Garu, K. (1908). *op.cit.*, Papers relating to Constitutional reforms in India, Calcutta, volume 3..
17. Raghunath Rao, (1908) *op.cit.*, Papers relating to Constitutional reforms in India, Calcutta, volume 3.
18. Subrahmanyam Agarwal, N. (1908). *op.cit.*, Papers relating to Constitutional reforms in India, Calcutta, volume 3.
19. Srinivasa Aiyanger Avargal, K.V. (1908) *op.cit.*, Papers relating to Constitutional reforms in India, Calcutta, volume 3.
20. Ramchandra Rao Pantulu Garu., V. (1908) *op.cit.*, Papers relating to Constitutional reforms in India, Calcutta, volume 3.
21. Nawab Muhammad Raza Khan,(1908) *op.cit.*, Papers relating to Constitutional reforms in India, Calcutta, volume 3.
22. V. Ramchandra Rao Pantulu Garu.,(1908) *op.cit.*, Papers relating to Constitutional reforms in India, Calcutta, volume 3.
23. Raghunath Rao, (1908) *op.cit.*, Papers relating to Constitutional reforms in India, Calcutta, volume 3.
24. Subrahmanyam Avargal, N. (1908).*op.cit.*,Papers relating to Constitutional reforms in India, Calcutta, volume 3.
25. Srinivasa Aiyanger Avargal, K.V. (1908) *op.cit.*, Papers relating to Constitutional reforms in India, Calcutta, volume 3.
26. Muhammad Baziullah Sahib Bahadur, (1908) *op.cit.*, Papers relating to Constitutional reforms in India, Calcutta, volume 3.
27. Narayanswami M.R. Ry. M.V.; Pilla Avargal B.A., Deputy Collector, Tiruvallur Division to the Collector of Chingleput, dated the 14th Feburary 1908, *ibid* p 94.
28. Jagamadham Chetti Garu, K. (1908) *op.cit.*, Papers relating to Constitutional reforms in India, Calcutta, volume 3.
29. Aziz-ud-din, Sahib, Khan, (1908) *op.cit.*, Papers relating to Constitutional reforms in India, Calcutta, volume 3.