

# **Public Works Department**

## **Note for the**

### **RETRENCHMENT COMMITTEE**

**1992**



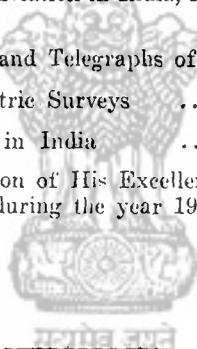
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## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT NOTE.

Before entering upon an examination of the Public Works Department with the Government of India, in order to report on the lines laid down in Finance Department Memorandum No. 32-R., dated the 5th July 1922, it is perhaps desirable to set forth, for the information of those who may not be conversant with the activities of the Public Works Department, what the scope of the duties assigned to it comprise. The subjects dealt with in the Public Works Department Secretariat of the Government of India have, therefore, in this note been detailed and grouped under the following heads :—

*Part I.*—General, including Roads and Buildings; Establishments, New Capital, Delhi, and Delhi Province, Imperial Estates at Simla, Calcutta, Dehra Dun and elsewhere, Civil Works, Viceregal Estates, Accounts, Miscellaneous, etc.

*Part II.*—Irrigation and other provincial reserved subjects.

*Part III.*—Civil Aviation.

*Part IV.*—Posts and Telegraphs, Telephones, and Wireless.

2. The staff of the Public Works Secretariat, including the offices of the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs and of the Superintending Engineer, Simla Imperial Circle, will be found at pages 25 to 27 of the Government of India List (Reference No. 1). The duties of the Secretary in the Public Works Department are as follows :—

He is (i) Head of the All-India Public Works Department (as distinct from the Post and Telegraph Department).

(ii) Chief Engineering Adviser to the Government of India.

(iii) Adviser on Civil Engineering Education and Training.

(iv) Chief Engineer of all the Minor Administrations.

(v) Agent in connection with the location of the Government of India at Delhi, Simla and Calcutta.

(vi) An official Member of the Legislative Assembly.

(vii) In attendance on the Hon'ble Member, His Excellency the Viceroy and the Governor General's Executive Council,

in addition to having to conduct the ordinary duties of a Secretary to the Government of India in inter-departmental noting, correspondence with local Governments and communications and despatches to the High Commissioner and Secretary of State on Public Works and Posts and Telegraphs matters.

3. Up till July 1921, the Public Works Department had been a self-contained entity, dealing only with the subjects given under Parts I and II referred to in paragraph 1 above, but it was found necessary to give relief to the member in charge of Commerce, Industries and Railways, and following the delegation of certain powers under the Government of India Act, 1919 to Governors' Provinces, it was then arranged to transfer the Branch of Posts and Telegraphs with its allied Telephones and Wireless, together with Civil Aviation, from the Commerce to the Public Works Department. This transfer is represented by 18 of the officers shown in the Government of India List (reference No. 1). The scope of duties in the Public Works Secretariat was thereby widely extended, and next to no relief was obtained as a set-off by reason of the transference of the complete control of certain subjects to Provincial Governments.

4. It may be explained that the reduction of work in the Public Works Secretariat, as a result of the introduction of the Reforms, has turned out to be much less than was anticipated. The volume of work coming under Tramways, Internal Navigation, Ports and Docks, Road Traffic, Electricity, which have now been transferred, was never very great. Similarly, the number of ordinary roads and buildings projects, in which local Governments were interested, amounting to over Rs. 20 lakhs in value, which, in pre-Reform days, had to come to the Government of India, was also small, so that little relief has been obtained now that these subjects are transferred and the Government of India relieved of the responsibility of passing them on to the Secretary of State. Although the

Hydro-Electric Survey (see reference No. 7) has been part completed much remains to be done and a Central Water Power Board is required for advisory and co-ordinating purposes. On the Irrigation side the Government of India still have to deal with projects of over Rs. 50 lakhs and with excesses over estimates in certain cases. The nett result has been that the reductions in the Central Government by the Reforms re-arrangements have been largely over-balanced by the additional duties imposed by the centralization of audit on the one hand, and by the heavy work created by "Resolutions" and "Questions" in the two Legislative Chambers and by the time taken up in debate and in representative attendance on the Legislative Assembly on the other. Moreover, Engineering Education has been taken over from the Education Department, and there is much work to do in connection with technical standardization and co-ordination, as also a growing business in connection with the large office and residential properties which are in the possession of the Imperial Government in Simla, Delhi, Calcutta and elsewhere. For Simla, this accounts for 7 officers shown in the Government of India List (reference No. 1).

5. Having now sketched the organization and duties of the Public Works Secretariat, we may proceed to make a study of the possible alternatives for reorganization with a view to effecting reductions and economies. Taking the Public Works proper, it will be seen that the staff consists of—

	Pay charges Rs. per mensem.
(1) Two-thirds time Secretary on Rs. 3,750 per mensem . . . . .	2,500
(2) One Deputy Secretary on Rs. 2,150 per mensem . . . . .	2,150
(3) One Under Secretary . . . . .	1,625
(4) One Assistant Secretary . . . . .	1,188
With the normal proportion of ministerial establishment attached to the Public Works Secretariat, there are also the following officers :—	
(5) Inspector-General of Irrigation on Rs. 3,500 per mensem . . . . .	3,500
(6) Assistant to the Inspector-General of Irrigation (appointment has come under reduction). . . . .	Nil
(7) Chief Engineer, Hydro-Electric Survey (appointment has come under reduction). . . . .	Nil
Total pay of officers . . . . .	10,963
Total pay of establishment . . . . .	17,439
Total Rs. . . . .	28,402

Unless the Central Government intend to renounce their powers of general superintendence and control over engineering questions and matters and in regard to engineering education and training, a proposal greatly to be deprecated, it is difficult to see what possible reductions can satisfactorily be made here.

6. It may, of course, be contended that either the Secretary or the Inspector-General of Irrigation, or both, could be dispensed with, leaving only a Deputy Secretary to deal with departmental matters, but, seeing that the Inspector-General of Irrigation is, and must always be, a touring officer, this would place a comparatively junior officer in as adviser on engineering matters, a position which would not be at all suitable in or out of the Department. Another suggestion which has been put forward is that any engineering questions required to be dealt with by the Government of India could be referred to the Chief Engineer, Delhi. Possibly, though probably not satisfactorily, this arrangement could be made with the completion of the New Capital in 1925, but, for the present, it is wholly out of the question, since the Chief Engineer, Delhi, already has his hands full in carrying out his duties in the construction of the New Capital and in the Public Works maintenance of the Delhi Province, and he cannot be in attendance at the same time on the Chief Commissioner, Delhi, for his normal duties, and on the Government of India at Delhi, or at Simla,

for miscellaneous references. I should be failing in my duties to the Government of India if I allowed any weight to be attached to this suggestion.

7. The abolition of the appointment of Inspector-General of Irrigation has been a long drawn out controversial subject between the Public Works and Finance Departments, but, as it has been dealt with in Part II of this report under the "Irrigation" heading, it will not be referred to here, other than to state that the Inspector-General of Irrigation cannot continue in his present position, and must either come under reduction altogether or else be given greater powers of supervision and control. The alternative to the Secretary, Public Works Department, would appear to be in the appointment of an Inspector-General of Roads and Works and Engineering Education, but, having regard to the position under the Reforms, it is difficult to assign suitable duties to an appointment of that nature unless radical changes are made. Whilst on this subject, it must be admitted that the present arrangements are not altogether satisfactory. Our Imperial building construction and maintenance work is carried out by Provincial agency on percentage charges, and we have to take what we get and pay the bill without any form of technical supervision or inspection on our part. The Director-General of Archæology has recently had occasion to remark on this weakness with reference to the execution of work for his Department by Provincial agency. The road system throughout India and Burma has been handed over to Provincial Governments and Administrations without so far any reservations for "roads of military importance" having been imposed as is permissible under the Act of 1919. This, in itself, is unsatisfactory in principle and in practice. The main roads were built out of the general taxpayers' money and are largely public and not provincial property, and these main arterial road communications should remain vested in the State and be State-aided according to the practice obtaining in France and England, and following the example of the Federal-aided roads in America. That is to say where, with the rapid increase of motor traffic knowing no road limits, and growing importance of main road communications, Western countries have centralized under National, State or County and Urban or Rural Road Boards, we, in India, where, with slender railway lines, the maintenance of through road communications is absolutely vital to the internal and external security of the country, have deliberately transferred our old Imperial, Provincial and Local roads, all taken together, over to the outright charge of provincial ministers. We need not, however, labour this subject further at this stage, suffice to say that a central Road Board with wide powers is needed. Hydro-Electric power is another subject which has no provincial boundaries and for the general control of which a central Water Power Board should be constituted without delay. The subject of Engineering Education and Training requires that suitable standards shall be maintained, and, in other directions of Engineering, in Archæology and in Architecture overhead attention and co-ordination is an everyday necessity. Lastly, the Imperial estates are very valuable properties which demand close supervision.

8. On the facts before us, further retrenchment in the Public Works Department Secretariat proper is a very doubtful economy, having already been effected to the lowest limit, and it is now either to carry on with the present organization, strengthening the hands of the Inspector-General of Irrigation and adding Road and Hydro-Electric Power Boards to the Existing Air and Wireless Boards, or for the Imperial Government to let pass into insignificance its already too weak position of control and supervision in Public Works matters. The country is not ripe for the loss of a guiding and helping hand in highly technical subjects of far reaching importance of general development and advance. The Indian Empire is not suited for the independent autonomy of Provinces, Administrations and States in Engineering subjects.

9. It now only remains to touch lightly on the position of the Government of India settlements at Delhi and Simla. The group of Imperial offices at Calcutta may be left out of consideration, being separate and self-contained. At Old and New Delhi there are various offices and residences either in occupation or under construction, and these form the subject of another report, a copy of which is submitted, *vide* reference No. 2. The construction position of the New Capital will shortly be investigated by a Committee specially constituted for the purpose. The Delhi Province under the Chief Commissioner has its Public Works Department amalgamated with that of the New Capital under a Chief Engineer common to both. Simla is a complete Public Works Department Circle of its own and must remain so for the present, although, with

the completion of the New Capital works in 1925, it will no doubt be possible to bring it under the Chief Engineer, Delhi, as an Imperial enclave. It is highly inadvisable to attempt any establishment economies in the Simla Imperial Circle, as valuable office and residential properties are concerned and important issues are at stake. The reduction of the Circle to a divisional charge would be most unwise and cannot be entertained in the Public Works Department.

10. Having said so much for the Public Works side of the Secretariat, we may now briefly examine the Posts and Telegraphs, Telephones, Wireless and Civil Aviation branches of the organization. The last named may, perhaps, here be passed over lightly, as the subject has been dealt with at some length in Part III of this note where it will be seen that, although little is being done in this direction this year, the near future offers possibilities, or rather insistent demands, for great development and expansion. India, of all countries in the world, calls for aerial exploitation. Taking Posts and Telegraphs, Telephones and Wireless together, there is not much to be said, as this is, in effect, a separate attached department under the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs which, as stated before, was only twelve months ago attached to the Public Works Department for Secretariat purposes; and whether the attachment is to this or any other Department of the Government of India is neither here nor there. As an essentially commercial department of a quasi-technical nature it is probably as well placed where it is as it would be anywhere else in the Secretariat. The establishment charges, consisting of—

	Rs.
(1) One-third time of Secretary at Rs. 3,750 per mensem	1,250
(2) Half time Deputy Secretary at Rs. 2,350 per mensem	1,175
(3) Assistant Secretary at . . . . .	1,166
	—
Total for officers . . . . .	3,591 per mensem
Total for clerical establishment	2,993 per mensem
	—
Total . . . . .	6,584 per mensem
	—

are not susceptible of any appreciable reduction in any case, and need not be considered in that light. The Secretariat work, which deals with higher establishments, the larger telephone licenses, wireless concessions, mail contracts, the Indo-European Telegraph Department (which is separate from the Director General and under the India Office), and questions of rates and policy, is heavy and exacting and since Posts and Telegraphs is a central subject cannot be delegated out of the Central Government. The only point which arises here is that of the position of the Director General *vis-a-vis* the Government of India, which, in a general review of the position and work of the whole branch, is discussed in detail in Part IV of this note. As to this, the conclusion that may be arrived at is, perhaps, that the Branch should continue to be attached to a Department of the Government, but, in consideration of the fact that the Director General controls a total strength of about 120,000 of all ranks, that the official position of the Director General himself should be raised to a far higher place on the Warrant of Precedence.

11. To recapitulate, the Posts and Telegraphs Branch can neither be abolished nor reduced. To whatever Department it may be attached, it must continue to exist as a part of the Imperial Secretariat. No more economical arrangement than the present one can be suggested nor is any reduction in the present staff feasible. It will, moreover, be impossible to do without a Secretary, who can devote at least one-third of his time to this work.

With regard to the remaining of the Public Works Secretariat, no reduction of staff appears to be possible until 1925 or 1926 when work on the New Capital at Delhi is completed. If, however, economies in staff have to be effected at once certain reductions would be possible provided that :—

- (1) The Central Government are prepared to do without regular Irrigation and Engineering Advisers, and,

- (2) It can be arranged for other Departments to take over some of the work now done by this Department, for example, questions affecting establishment, *without increasing their own staff*. On these assumptions, the following economies might be effected :—

	Retrenchment.
(1) Abolish the Secretary, Public Works two-thirds time	Rs. 2,500 per mensem.
(2) Do. the Inspector-General of Irrigation	Rs. 3,500 per mensem.
(3) Do. the Under Secretary, Public Works	Rs. 1,625 per mensem.
(4) Do. the Assistant Secretary	Rs. 1,188 per mensem.
(5) Reduce the Public Works Establishment, etc., going with the above	Rs. 13,100 per mensem.
Total	Rs. 21,913 per mensem.
	Say <u>Rs. 22,000 per mensem</u>

As a set off to the above retrenchment, there will, however, be fresh expenditure in other directions in connection with technical establishment and educational matters, everyday consulting and advising references and Imperial Estates Agency, which may be represented by an outlay estimated to cost about Rs. 12,000 per mensem. This presupposes that the present Civil Aviation staff remains on in either case and that the Deputy Secretary, Public Works Department, with a proportionate clerical staff is retained to carry on the Public Works Department routine work in the Government of India Secretariat and to prepare technical cases for the Honourable Member and for His Excellency the Viceroy as also for the Legislative Chambers.

12. It will be seen that a possible saving of about Rs. 10,000 per mensem could be made by effecting these changes in the Central Administration, and sacrificing the present staff. The reductions would probably not be of long duration, as the necessity for having experienced advisers on technical matters on the spot with the Central Government would soon arise and it remains to be seen whether the breaking up of the existing efficient machinery and scattering of the trained staff would afford justification for such drastic methods. A further consideration is that, having once caused a general dislocation, would the new organization be satisfactory and efficient, and will the Legislative Assembly be easily persuaded to rebuild afresh, and on suitable lines, if it is found that all is not well and that the Central Government have to be strengthened.

S. D'A. CROOKSHANK,

*Colonel,*

*Secretary to the Government of India  
in the Public Works Department.*

SIMLA ;

24th July 1922.

Public Works Department Note for the Retrenchment  
Committee

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PART I.

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*General Engineering.*



## PART I.—GENERAL ENGINEERING, ETC.

Before the introduction of the Reforms, the Public Works Department of the Government of India dealt with work, which for the purposes of this examination, can be divided up under the following heads :—

- I.—Buildings and Roads projects exceeding Rs. 20 lakhs in value inclusive of establishment charges.
- II.—Certain proposals for residences for officers in which what was called the “ permissible outlay ” was exceeded.
- III.—All proposals for work which local Governments did for the Imperial Government as Agents, for example, work for the Postal Department, etc.
- IV.—Works of importance in local Administrations, (as opposed to local Governments, which have their own Chief Engineers) for which the Secretary in the Government of India performs the duties of Chief Engineer, for example, Rajputana, Central India, Baluchistan, etc.
- V.—Proposals connected with the building programmes of Delhi and Simla and the disposal of all matters relating to accommodation, both residential and office, leases, etc., at these places.
- VI.—Engineering and budget matters relating to the various Viceregal Estates.
- VII.—Questions affecting establishment in the department generally.
- VIII.—Technical and accounts business connected with the Imperial Legislative Councils affecting the department.
- IX.—Current references from Provincial Governments and local Administrations, and every day routine work with other departments of the Government of India.

2. On the introduction of the Reforms, only the work under Headings Nos. I and II disappeared, but, as the volume of such work was never very great, the actual relief experienced was trifling compared with the increase of work under some of the other heads. Under Heading III, that is, work which the Provincial Governments carry out on behalf of the Central Government, the position varies year by year according to the funds available and, it may perhaps be mentioned, is at present far from satisfactory as the shortage of funds is putting off the regular execution of increasingly essential repairs and renewals and is holding up the execution of projects which are necessary for the development of the country and the growth of business. This state of affairs also applies to Heading IV, namely, work done by the local Administrations.

Under Head V, work is heavier now than ever before, as every endeavour is being made to complete the New Capital (see Reference No. 2) for occupation by the year 1926, and the Imperial properties at Simla have been greatly increased during the last few years and are now very important and valuable. As regards the construction of New Delhi it may be mentioned that all important proposals are dealt with in detail by a Government of India Committee in the Public Works Department, and until work on the capital is completed, it is essential that this procedure should be maintained.

The main expenditure being incurred at Simla is in connection with the provision of residential accommodation for Government servants. For the time being this work, on account of financial stringency, is being severely curtailed, but this curtailment can only be temporary. It may be noted that accommodation, both residential and office, is extremely limited both in Simla and in Delhi, and as at the same time the demands are heavy and insistent there is a growing amount of estate work and management which is dealt with in the Public Works Department. The Central Government also retain a close interest in all matters pertaining to the Imperial Government buildings at Calcutta. These buildings are at present fully occupied either by offices under the Central

Government to the number of 43 or are leased to the Bengal Government for the use of their offices. They comprise many of the largest blocks of buildings in the centre of Calcutta, and, by reason of their important position, are very valuable property. Questions regarding the upkeep of these buildings and the allotment of accommodation in them are dealt with by this Department, and require a considerable amount of attention in view of the great difficulty there is in obtaining suitable office accommodation in Calcutta.

As regards Head VI, the Viceregal Estates comprise the properties of Viceregal Lodges at Delhi and at Simla, the estate at Mashobra, 'Belvedere' at Calcutta, and properties at Dehra Dun. The work connected with these estates, by reason of its nature, requires special attention, and all proposals of an important nature are referred to the Public Works Department who also carry out the half-yearly inspections.

Coming now to establishment questions under Head VII, under the Reforms, local Governments have been given considerably greater powers in establishment matters than they had previously, and as a result, it has been found possible to do away with one of the branches of the office and the Establishment Branch, as reconstituted, now deals with work coming under the following heads :—

- (1) Indian Service of Engineers.
- (2) Temporary engineers.
- (3) Specialist appointments.
- (4) Engineering education.
- (5) Establishment questions relating to Delhi, Simla, all Minor Administrations, and Viceregal Estates.
- (6) Miscellaneous.

Matters relating to these subjects will continue to come to the Central Government whether they are retained in the Public Works Department or distributed out elsewhere.

Head VIII is practically a new subject as the business connected with the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State as compared with that for the Imperial Legislative Council has been created by the Reforms. Being additional to normal work, and likewise heavy in itself, and requiring practically the whole time attendance in Council of the Secretary, Public Works Department, this new activity makes a considerable increase in the work of the department for which no relief is in sight.

3. It was confidently expected that the introduction of the Reforms would greatly decrease the work of all Departments, but this expectation has not been realized in the Public Works Department. On the contrary in certain directions there has been an increase of work since formerly when the Administrative Department and the Public Works Department had agreed upon a scheme, the Finance Department in most cases agreed and provided funds at once. As contrasted with this simple procedure, the present-day system is very cumbersome as practically all new proposals have to be submitted to the Standing Finance Committee and the Legislative Assembly, and only those who have had actual experience of the old and the new system can appreciate how much work has been created.

Similarly in matters appertaining to audit objections, the work of the Department has increased. In pre-Reform days, the Auditor General submitted once a year an Audit Report bringing to light the shortcomings in matters affecting the department at large. Now we receive this report quarterly which involves extra work. In other directions which are being taken up with the Finance Department, the Audit have set up practices which it is hoped will be improved upon.

All this goes to show that, in spite of Reforms or on account of Reforms, there remains a considerable amount of every day work of a general technical or quasi-technical nature to be dealt with in the Public Works Secretariat, and it is difficult to see what arrangements whereby retrenchments could be effected can be suggested. Breaking up the existing organization and scattering the subjects broadcast is far more likely to result in immediate inefficiency than

to effect economies of any lasting value, as other departments have not the machinery for taking over additional and in most cases novel subjects, and their first instinct will be to set up new appointments for the purpose. It is at the same time futile to talk of reducing the work unless there are effective means of doing so which are not at present in sight. So long as there are minor administrations controlled by the Central Government, Imperial properties throughout India and Burma and also overseas, central subjects and all-India Services, and also general knowledge learning Councils, it does not seem possible for the Central Government to divest itself of its responsibilities and obligations of a technical character in the Public Works Department, such as are disposed of in the General Engineering Branch, which has been reviewed and examined in the foregoing paragraphs.



Public Works Department Note for the Retrenchment  
Committee.

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PART II.

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*Irrigation and other Provincial Reserved Subjects.*



*Part II.—Irrigation and other Provincial Reserved Subjects.*

“ Water supplies, Irrigation and canals, drainage and embankments, water storage and water power ” are reserved provincial subjects, being included in item 7 of Part II of Schedule I of the Devolution Rules : over such subjects, the duties of superintendence, direction and control laid upon the Central Government by Section 33 of the Government of India Act 1919 are not bound by any statutory limitation as in the case of transferred provincial subjects, but the spirit of the Reforms is towards granting to local Governments, in the administration of provincial subjects, the largest measure of independence of the Government of India which is compatible with the due discharge by the latter of their responsibilities. Irrigation, water power, etc., occupy, however, a unique position amongst the reserved provincial subjects in that the powers of local Governments are limited and the sanction of the Secretary of State is necessary to capital expenditure upon irrigation and navigation works, including docks and harbours, and upon projects for drainage, embankment and water-storage and the utilisation of water-power in any of the following cases, namely :—

- (a) where the project concerned materially affects the interests of more than one local Government ;
- (b) where the original estimate exceeds 50 lakhs of rupees ;
- (c) where a revised estimate exceeds by 15 per cent. an original estimate sanctioned by the Secretary of State in Council ;
- (d) where a further revised estimate is proposed, after one revised estimate has already been sanctioned by the Secretary of State in Council.

It is evident, therefore, that unless the Government of India are to transmit projects for such works to the Secretary of State without comment, without scrutiny and without advice as to whether sanction should be accorded or withheld, the responsibilities of the Government of India in respect of irrigation, water-power, etc., are heavier than in the case of other reserved provincial subjects. It is very questionable whether the Secretary of State will be willing to dispense with the close scrutiny to which the Government of India have always submitted projects received from local Governments, or to be deprived of the advice which he has heretofore received, and it is extremely doubtful whether this scrutiny and advice should be withdrawn : it is certain that he cannot obtain such up to date advice in England from specialists in a branch of engineering not practised in that country, nor obtain the benefits of independent criticism based on personal knowledge and actual experience of local conditions. If no such scrutiny is to be made either in the Government of India or the India Office, the reason for the restriction of powers of local Governments is not apparent and may be withdrawn.

2. From the purely administrative point of view the principle that the wishes of the provincial Government and legislature should ordinarily be allowed to prevail is no novelty as far as irrigation matters are concerned. From time to time the powers of local Governments have been increased and, even before the Reforms, they were for all practical purposes largely autonomous. Actual interference by the Government of India was confined chiefly to the scrutiny of proposals beyond the powers of the local Governments, which were large, amounting to Rs. 20 lakhs in the case of capital expenditure. In maintenance and general management and in the levying or revision of water rates, the local Governments had complete liberty of action. Intervention by the Government of India even before the Reforms was not of such a character as to trench upon the sphere of administration of a local Government : its object was to ensure that the best technical practice was followed on important works and to save the state and posterity, as far as was humanly possible, from the incubus of unsuccessful projects. Intervention was, in fact, based on technical grounds and therefore related to matters which were outside ordinary administration. The same objects are still desirable and perhaps in a higher degree, and the Government of India by retaining its control (as modified by the increased powers of local Governments) will not be running counter to the spirit of the Reforms. The relaxation of all scrutiny by the Government of India of proposals submitted by local Governments for the

sanction of the Secretary of State will not result in giving appreciably greater administrative freedom to local Governments and legislatures, but will only result in the proposals not receiving essential independent technical criticism, such as in other countries is given by consulting engineers.

It is a cardinal principle in engineering followed by all states and large corporations, that projects of magnitude should be referred to independent criticism, so as to avoid the dangers inherent in a one-man project. This is all the more necessary in India, where the Chief Engineer alone has the ear of the provincial Government and his views in technical matters must inevitably prevail. Without independent examination the position is fraught with great danger.

The above remarks refer to the future when local Governments will themselves borrow the necessary sums to carry out irrigation works, the benefits from which will remain in their own hands. But as regards existing works, for which the Government of India has borrowed sums totalling Rs. 7,820 lakhs, the position is different. Rule 24 of the Devolution Rules provides for the payment by local Governments of the interest charges, but makes no provision for the transfer of the capital liability or for the amortization of the Central Government's debt. Until some such transaction takes place it would appear impossible for the Government of India completely to relax control.

3. It has been stated above that the control exercised by the Government of India in irrigation matters has principally been limited to technical matters and an attempt will now be made to show that the "superintendence, direction and control" vested in the Government of India over irrigation, etc., should continue in its present form. Irrigation in India differs in two important respects from other branches of engineering. In the first place, irrigation as a whole owes its development in every country in the world to state enterprise whilst in other branches of engineering the lead has been taken and the science and technique built up largely by private enterprise. In the second place, irrigation in India differs from other branches of engineering in that it has no model to follow. In railways, waterworks, electrical and other engineering, India can learn much from the established practice of other countries: in modern irrigation engineering, however, India has held the lead, a position which has imposed on the Public Works Department the task of creating, almost unaided, the science and technique of the subject. In other branches of engineering, established practice and fresh discoveries are disseminated through a copious literature, the technical press and engineering societies; irrigation in India on the other hand has to rely almost entirely on the accumulated experience of Public Works Department engineers, and possesses no other medium for co-ordinating this experience than the central technical control which has hitherto been exercised. Thus in proportion to the extent to which this control is withdrawn, the provinces will be thrown upon their own resources in the matter of fresh knowledge. Mistakes or advances made in one province will only by chance carry their lessons to another and the progress of irrigation engineering in India will inevitably slacken: and this at a time when it is particularly desirable to add to the material resources of the country, for without added prosperity, the Reforms will become an empty constitutional change.

4. In considering how far the Central Government should, with due regard to its own responsibilities, continue to exercise control over irrigation, some idea of the magnitude of the interests involved is necessary. In 1919-20, the record year up to date, the area irrigated by Government irrigation works was over 28 million acres or nearly 29 million acres including areas in Indian States. To the end of 1919-20, the capital invested by Government in these works amounted to Rs. 7,820 lakhs, whilst the estimated value of the crops raised on these irrigated areas was Rs. 15,641 lakhs. The length of Government irrigation channels now in operation exceeds 55,000 miles. Projects not fully developed along with others under construction or awaiting sanction will bring the irrigated areas up to some 36 million acres or 40 million acres if areas in Indian States be included. Projects costing 3,500 lakhs of rupees are now under construction, while projects estimated to cost some 7,200 lakhs of rupees are under consideration. These figures only include projects such as are by rule beyond the powers of sanction of local Governments. The technical

adviser in irrigation matters, water rights, etc., to the Government of India is the Inspector-General of Irrigation. Prior to 1906, this post was combined with that of the Secretary to Government of India, Public Works Department : in that year, however, the posts were separated, partly because of the impetus given to the construction of new irrigation works by the recommendations of the Irrigation Commission of 1901-03, but principally because the Inspector-General of Irrigation, in order to be of practical use, must tour extensively, a condition which is quite incompatible with the work required to be done by a Secretary to Government, both in the office and in the legislature. The Inspector-General of Irrigation and his establishment cost Rs. 54,688 in 1913-14, Rs. 80,300 in 1921-22, and are estimated to cost Rs. 58,050 during the current year. The decrease in the present year's figures from those of 1921-22 is due to the abolition of the post of Assistant Inspector-General of Irrigation from 1st April 1922, as a matter of economy.

By comparison with the interests at stake the cost of maintaining central technical control is practically negligible, and it would be false economy to allow the present financial stringency to operate as a factor in determining the degree of control to be exercised over the irrigation works in India, probably one of the most striking examples of state enterprise in the world.

It may be argued that contributions should be made by local Governments to cover the cost of the post, because the advice of the Inspector-General of Irrigation is intended to perfect the proposals of local Governments, the benefits from which remain with those Governments. But in the first place, if it be admitted that it is one of the functions laid upon the Central Government to exercise some control over irrigation, it is difficult to support the claim for contributions on the ground that the efficient discharge of the Government of India's duties benefits local Governments. In the second place, it will be admitted that the prosperity of a province reacts upon imperial revenues, because a prosperous province yields a greater return in the way of taxes on income, customs duties, etc., which go to the Central Government. Finally, the provinces already pay large contributions towards the upkeep of the Central Government, and it would be unjust to call upon them to pay separately for every appointment, the existence of which confers any direct benefit upon them, more especially in a case such as this, where the appointment was in existence at the time when the amount of the contribution was fixed.

5. From the fact that the Secretary of State has reserved to himself special powers over expenditure on irrigation works and that he makes plain his displeasure at any evidence of inaccurate estimating either in costs or revenue, it may be inferred that he intends to take the same active interest in these matters that he has done in the past ; and in this connexion it should be noted that certain definite responsibilities have been laid upon the Government of India by the Secretary of State to act on his behalf. For instance, the rule in paragraph 397 of the Public Works Department Code to the effect that no important modification on the part of a local Government of a project sanctioned by the Secretary of State is permitted without the sanction of the Government of India, was introduced at the instance of the Secretary of State after his sanction was requested to revised estimates of the cost of projects, sanctioned by him, on the plea that the local Governments had altered the original project and found it would cost more. As long as the Secretary of State retains his special powers of sanction, he will naturally require such alterations to be referred to him or to some other authority to whom he delegates his powers ; and it would be a result inconsistent with the reforms if it became necessary to submit such cases to the Secretary of State instead of to the Government of India simply because no technical establishment were retained by the latter. The only alternative would be a still more irresponsible procedure whereby the Secretary of State conferred on local Governments the power to alter at will, and to any extent, projects sanctioned by him, thus reducing his sanction to a pure formality, on receipt of which local Governments could do as they pleased and construct something entirely different.

6. Having regard to the great part which central control has hitherto played in the development of irrigation in the past, to the sphere of usefulness still awaiting it in the future and to the very definite nature of the responsibilities of the Government of India to the Secretary of State in this matter, the Public Works Department cannot advise any further relaxation of technical control over

provincial Governments in irrigation matters. On the contrary, it is very necessary that the powers of the Government of India, at present largely in abeyance owing to the lack of definition as to the control to be exercised, should be reasserted. It is considered that the Inspector-General of Irrigation should be empowered to visit the construction of works connected with estimates sanctioned by the Secretary of State, without waiting for an invitation from local Governments, and that he should as heretofore advise the Government of India on material alterations affecting the estimates both in cost and in revenue. Further, his duties should include the collection and dissemination of technical information, and he should keep the various provinces in touch with each other, and inspect their systems and works, not as now by request, but under the authority of the Government of India, informing them of successful measures adopted elsewhere and the best way of rectifying past mistakes, thus minimising the work involved in the scrutiny of projects. He should also be responsible for the preparation of the annual and triennial Review of Irrigation in India.

7. The above remarks have been made mostly in connexion with irrigation, which is, at the present time, by far the most important reserved provincial subject dealt with in the Public Works Department. It is scarcely necessary to insist on the application and close connexion of irrigation to famine relief, but a few further instances of the activities of the Public Works Department in reserved provincial subjects may be noted. The limited powers of local Governments, referred to in paragraph 1 above, apply also to inland navigation works, docks and harbours and to water power, which appear as items 31, 30 and 7 in Part II of Schedule I attached to the Devolution Rules. As regards water power, a hydro-electric survey of India was undertaken by the Central Government in pre-reform days on the report of the Industrial Commission with a Chief Engineer in charge ; but such surveys have now been relegated to local Governments, and the post of Chief Engineer abolished. Amongst his other duties, he compiled the annual reports on these surveys and the triennial Review (Attached Reference No. 7). Hydro-electric projects costing more than 50 lakhs will still come to the Government of India for submission to the Secretary of State, and proposals for the establishment of a Hydro-Electric Power Board to deal with them and with water power generally are before the Government of India. Inland waterways in India are chiefly in Bengal ; and the Secretary of State has recently accorded his sanction to two canals, estimated to cost nearly 400 lakhs of rupees.

8. A perusal of the foregoing note will, it is thought, go to show that the relaxation of the control of the Government of India over the provincial transferred subjects referred to is not in sight, but rather that in the interests of the Provincial Governments themselves, for the development of the resources of India and Burma at large in these directions, for co-ordination between Provinces and between Provinces and States and Administrations, and for the benefit of the general administration of the Indian Empire and of India as a world's market, it is increasingly desirable that the technical super-control given under the guiding hand of the Central Government should be extended and increased. America sets us an example of federal aid and control over her States in engineering subjects of national importance, and instead of reducing our powers and relieving ourselves of our responsibilities, we in India, of all countries in the world which from tradition and practice require a central co-ordinating authority and strong Imperial Government, should take heed of that example and of past history and strengthen our position in all engineering subjects of all-India importance.

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PART III.

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*Civil Aviation.*



Civil Aviation is a central subject, appearing as item 5 (b) in Part I of Schedule I attached to the Devolution Rules : expenditure, which is not incurred by local Governments for the development of purely local air routes or on landing grounds and aerodromes not connected with main air routes, must fall on the central Government.

2. The present position is that Civil Aviation in India is practically in abeyance for financial reasons. The demand of Rs. 51,000 for 1922-23 has received a considerable amount of ridicule in the press and was reduced by Rs. 3,000 by the Legislative Assembly in what practically amounted to a vote of censure on Government for not making any steps for encouraging flying in India. No comparison is possible with expenditure in 1913-14 as no such head of accounts existed then, but for 1921-22 the revised estimate amounted to Rs. 1,81,000.

Details of the grant for 1922-23 are as follows :—

	Rs.
1 Chief Inspector .. .. .	14,400
1 Clerk and 2 servants .. .. .	2,340
Travelling and other allowances .. .. .	5,800
Upkeep of aerodromes .. .. .	8,750
Contingencies .. .. .	500
Construction of an aerodrome at Allahabad .. .. .	4,000
Air route from Cairo to Karachi .. .. .	12,400
Rounding .. .. .	—190
	48,000

3. The Public Works Department have considered whether the retention of a whole time Chief Inspector of Aircraft was necessary and with a view to economy consulted the Army Department last March as to whether an officer of the Royal Air Force could be detailed when necessary to carry out the duties now performed by the Chief Inspector of Aircraft. The Air-Officer Commanding Royal Air Force, while anxious to assist the cause of civil aviation as far as possible was unable to agree to the proposed arrangement, all officers of the Royal Air Force having already whole-time employment of their own. He added that the Air Ministry would have to be referred to, and their concurrence was improbable. He suggested as an alternative the employment when occasion arose of *ex-Royal Air Force* Officers on reasonable remuneration.

This alternative was considered by the Air Board with the Central Government who unanimously agreed that the Chief Inspector of Aircraft must be retained. It was felt that the average *ex-Royal Air Force* Officer would not possess the expert technical qualifications required to enable him to investigate such matters as the structural strength of a machine in which it is proposed to carry passengers. Indeed it is obvious that supervision exercised in this manner through the casual employment of non-officials would not only have little value but be almost dangerous. Moreover the law standing as it does, some form of inspection is necessary.

4. A further consideration which carries great weight with the Air Board is that as a signatory to the International convention, India has undertaken to co-operate as far as possible in :—

(a) The collection and dissemination of statistical, current, and special meteorological information.

(b) The publication of standard aeronautical maps, and the establishment of a uniform system of ground marks for flying, special attention being given to marks along chosen international routes. These obligations require some machinery to carry them out.

5. It is true that the Chief Inspector of Aircraft is not as fully employed as he would be if civil aviation in India had progressed further. But this is evidence not of extravagance but of the length to which economy has already been pushed. Owing to financial stringency his activities have been curtailed to the minimum. For example the Air Board were desirous of making a definite start this year on the establishment of the Calcutta-Rangoon Air Route. They also

proposed to utilize some of the aeroplanes received as a gift from the Home Government for the purpose of experiments to determine the suitability to Indian conditions of different materials, structural forms, and mechanical details. The opportunity was unique as the machines had been obtained free of cost, and the services of a qualified aircraft designer were available in the person of Mr. Kemp, Chief Inspector of Aircraft to the Government of India. Both these schemes for developing civil aviation in India had to be dropped for financial reasons.

6. The Chief Inspector of Aircraft is now considering the following propositions :—

- (a) *Calcutta-Rangoon air route.*—The comparative efficiency and economy of aeroplane and seaplane under the conditions obtaining on this route.
- (b) *Bombay-Rajkot (Kathiawar)-Karachi Air Route.*—A commercial concern has come forward with proposals to undertake this service if the Post Office and the Government of India will co-operate.
- (c) *Forest and Delta Surveys in Burma by photography from the air.*—This is being investigated by the Burma Government at the instance of the Forest Department.
- (d) *Transport of Passengers, mails and goods in Burma.*—The Chief Inspector of Aircraft has been asked to advise as to the practicability of the skimmer, a wingless seaplane, for transport on certain rivers in Burma.
- (e) *Transport of materials by airship for Hydro-Electric work in mountainous tracts.*—Colonel Battye who is in charge of hydro-electric work in the Punjab has asked Mr. Kemp for advice in this matter, as there are many possible power sites to which transport of objects exceeding a man load in weight by land is practically impossible. This has opened a new field of utility for aircraft.

7. The Chief Inspector of Aircraft also has the duties of inspection and certification required under the Aircraft Act. They are not yet very numerous in the present state of civil flying. During the years 1921-22 the following inspections and investigations were carried out :—

- 12 certificates of airworthiness granted after inspection to see the machines were fit for the purpose for which they were to be used.
- 11 periodical inspections with the same object.
- 5 technical investigations undertaken with the help of the Royal Air Force with the object of obtaining information likely to be of use in civil flying.
- 2 accidents.
- 3 examinations of pilots for grant of certificates.
- 12 examinations of ground engineers.
- 31 examinations of landing sites.

The Chief Inspector of Aircraft made 10 tours to various parts of the country and has advisory duties to perform. He acts as a liaison officer with the Royal Air Force.

8. The Chief Inspector of Aircraft also has a certain amount of secretariat work. As the only technical adviser on the civil side of aviation it is his duty to keep in touch with developments in other parts of the world, and to advise in all matters concerning flying. He has to prepare a meteorological hand-book, to compile route information, and general aeronautical intelligence matter. In view of the nature of the duties to be performed as outlined in this note, the retention of a whole time officer is clearly necessary. The only alternative seems to be for India to withdraw from all participation in civil flying both internal and international, a retrograde course which cannot be seriously contemplated. Moreover, judging by the note of censure on the Government for the backward state of its aviation policy which was expressed by the Legislative Assembly in the debate on the demands for Civil Aviation during March last, it is abundantly clear that the Government will be expected to put forward a programme of training and advancement in that direction in the year 1923-24, and consequently there will be all the more use for the services of the Chief Inspector of Aircraft who has now had nearly two years' experience of Indian climatic conditions—experience which it would be most uneconomical to throw away.

9. Finally at a meeting of the Air Board on the 22nd June 1922, at which General Sir John Salmond, K.C.B., C.M.G., C.V.O., D.S.O., and Group Captain Chamier, C.M.G., D.S.O., O.B.E., and Wing Commander Hewlett, D.S.O., O.B.E., by invitation attended, it was seen that :—

- (1) The prospects of the early commencement by a private company of a daily air service both ways between Bombay and Karachi were distinctly favourable.
- (2) This service would require close and constant inspection which the Royal Air Force were not called upon to give and were not prepared to give.
- (3) The provision of a civil staff under the Chief Inspector of Aircraft would therefore be necessary.
- (4) The Air Ministry had hopes to carrying the Cairo-Baghdad service on into Karachi in the near future.
- (5) It was reasonable to expect that by providing suitable subsidies and making available the landing grounds required, companies would come forward to supply air mail services between Karachi-Calcutta and Calcutta-Rangoon.
- (6) That the establishment of an aviation school for the training of Indians was more than desirable and that as the Royal Air Force could not undertake this obligation it would be for Civil Aviation in India to take it up.
- (7) The Royal Air Force were unable to carry out the duties required under the Aircraft Act unless given special staff for the purpose.

The necessity for the retention of the Chief Inspector of Aircraft would therefore appear to be firmly established.

10. It is evident that no appreciable reduction of expenditure can be effected in the other items comprising the grant for 1922-23. The sum provided for the upkeep of aerodromes is merely an estimate for keeping those five in existence clear of bushes and will only be expended as necessary. The Allahabad landing ground has to be completed and the sum of Rs. 4,000 is provided for this. The Government of India is committed by a promise to the Air Ministry to pay a half share of certain costs of the Cairo-Karachi route up to the limit of Rs. 12,400 which liability must be met.




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PART IV.

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*Posts and Telegraphs.*



## PART IV.

In considering the possibility of retrenchment in the Secretariat establishment dealing with the Post and Telegraph Department the following three main issues arise :—

- A. What is the work done by the Post and Telegraph Branch of the Public Works Department at present ?
- B. Must this work be done in the Secretariat ? Can it not be replaced by some cheaper and simpler system ?
- C. If the present system continues, can the existing Secretariat staff be reduced ?

2. *Note on work done in the Secretariat in connection with Posts and Telegraphs.*—The Director General is solely responsible to Hon'ble Member for the actual detailed administration of his Department. Hon'ble Member is responsible to the Governor General in Council and to the Legislative Assembly for the general lines of policy adopted and for the general efficiency of the administration of the Department. The function of the Secretariat staff is to assist Hon'ble Member in two main directions :—

(a) *Financial.*—The Staff examines the proposals received from the Director General, which come under two main categories :—

- (i) Proposed changes in rates of pay and allowance ; increases in strength of establishment, which now numbers about 116,000 men ; contracts for conveyance of mails, etc. It has to watch whether an increase in one direction may lead on to similar demands elsewhere and to reject proposals for which a strong *prima facie* case has not been made out. It has to see that cases are fully worked out and preliminary objections disposed of before it supports them. It is only when Hon'ble Member is satisfied by the Secretariat staff that a solid case has been made out that he supports this class of proposals to Finance Department. The last word in such cases usually lies with Finance Department. The Department's main function is to see that Finance Department are not troubled with incomplete or weak cases. Owing to the thorough revisions recently carried out throughout all grades of the Department, the volume of this work is not great.

Similarly, it deals with all other proposals for expenditure in excess of the Director General's very wide financial powers. After Government in the administrative and financial Departments have approved of them it prepares memoranda explaining them in detail to the Standing Finance Committee. The Department and the Director General are represented before the Standing Finance Committee and the Director General as well as the Secretary in the Public Works Department are seated in the Legislative Assembly for purposes of debates and budgets.

- (ii) There is a large class of cases in which Finance Department are interested but which are usually regarded as primarily administrative ; *e.g.*, changes in postal rates of every class, telegraph and wireless rates, trunk and station telephone rates, royalties, etc. The financial question whether each of these branches is paying its way and what rate is estimated to be necessary in order to give a fair yield on the capital invested or to cover working expenses is comparatively simple, and will become still simpler when, as a result of Messrs. Price, Waterhouse and Company's examination, Finance Department introduce a commercial system of accountancy in the Post Office in lieu of the present system. The main difficulty in these cases is the commercial and political reactions and not merely the financial question. These issues are therefore examined very carefully in this Department before being placed before Hon'ble Member for decision.

(b) *Administrative.*—The bulk of the work in the Secretariat is of a purely administrative character and concerned with the general policy adopted and general superintendence over the administration of the Director General. In such cases Finance Department are either not concerned at all, or only to a negligible extent. A list of some of the chief items of this class of work that have come up for consideration during the last six months is given in paragraph 9 of this note. The function of the Department is to examine these cases on their merits from the point of view of general administration and to place the *pros* and *cons*, before Hon'ble Member in order that he may be in a position to arrive at an independent decision and to relieve him of the disposal of particular cases, when the general policy approved by him is sufficiently known.

3. *Possible alternatives to the present Secretariat system.*—It has been suggested that the Director General as a responsible head of the Department with expert knowledge of the details of its administrations should be the sole adviser of Hon'ble Member in matters concerning his own Department, and that his status should be altered to that of Secretary to Government in addition to his present duties. The advantages claimed for this change are that the delay in having proposals examined and questioned by non-experts, whose criticisms, however plausible, may in fact be quite beside the mark and merely give rise to unnecessary noting, will be avoided. The Director General will personally explain and discuss his proposals with Hon'ble Member without the intervention of any third party. His powers without any Secretariat control would be very great, and therefore, as a condition of the adoption of this proposal, it has been suggested that a Financial Adviser, as a sort of financial watch-dog, should be attached to the office of the Director General. The effect of this system would be to retain a close financial control over the Director General while relieving him of administrative control. Noting between him and the Public Works Department Secretariat would be abolished and work expedited. On financial questions he would be in a position to deal direct with Finance Department without the interposition of a third party.

To this course there are very considerable objections :—

- (a) The system would leave all the power with the Director General and all the responsibility with Hon'ble Member, who would have no independent staff to examine the proposals which were placed before him from the point of view of common sense and general administration. Hon'ble Member would be in the hands of the Director General, who would naturally be an enthusiast for his own Department, and he would have to arrive at decisions without having all the *pros* and *cons*, independently placed before him. When, as will usually happen in the future, the Hon'ble Member is not an officer of administrative experience his difficulties *vis-a-vis* the Director General will be enhanced. It is true that the present Director General is an officer with exceptionally wide outlook and experience both in the Post Office and in general administration. But it seems probable that before many years pass the post of Director General will be held by departmental Post Office or Telegraph officers. This will further augment the difficulties of the situation.
- (b) The Director General must tour. His responsibilities are immense, and are constantly increasing owing to the growth of the ordinary activities of the Department and to the expansion of special branches such as Wireless and Telephones. He has to control a staff of about 116,000 men with whom he must remain in constant touch. For large portions of the year Hon'ble Member would be without a Secretary at the headquarters at all and the Director General as a Secretary would be out of touch with the Government of India Secretariat. The Director General would be the sole representative of the Department in the Legislative Assembly to answer questions, to meet resolutions, to pilot legislation, etc. In addition to this political work and his great administrative responsibilities it would be beyond one man's power, however able, satisfactorily to perform the duties of a Secretary to Government.

(c) The proposal would apparently involve no real retrenchment. The following expenditure in the Secretariat would be abolished :—

	Rs.
(a) Secretary one-third of his time .. .. .	1,250
(b) Deputy Secretary one-half of his time .. .. .	1,150
(c) Assistant Secretary full time .. .. .	1,250
(d) Branch of Secretariat 12 men including the Superintendent ..	3,423
Total .. .. .	7,073

Simultaneously with this reduction the following additional expenditure would be involved :—

	Rs.
(a) Financial Adviser : approximately .. .. .	2,500
(b) Additional Assistant Director General for Secretariat work ..	1,000
(c) Office of Financial Adviser : 12 men .. .. .	3,423
Total .. .. .	6,923

There is no reason to expect that the Financial Adviser would be only a part time job. What with the preparation of the budget ; and the introduction of accounting on a commercial basis this would be a full time appointment, and since the Director General's financial powers are already so large the Financial Adviser could not be vested with enhanced delegated powers so that there would be no great reduction in the amount of work going to Finance Department under this system.

4. *Second alternative.*—A new system might be instituted under which the Director General would be appointed as a minor Member of Council, corresponding to Ministers in the United Kingdom who are not in the Cabinet but who are called to Cabinet meetings only when questions concerning their own Departments come up for discussion. The advantages claimed for this system are that it would remove the difficulties referred to in paragraph 3 (a) above and make the administrative head of the Department directly responsible to the Governor General in Council and to the Legislative Assembly for his policy and administration. It would cut out a great deal of office work, expedite the disposal of cases and follow in its main lines an arrangement which is believed to be working satisfactorily in the United Kingdom. This proposal would also, of course, involve the appointment of a Financial Adviser to the Director General, who would presumably be an independent officer of the Finance Department exercising approximately the powers of a Deputy Secretary in that Department.

The objections to this arrangement seem to be as follows :—

- (a) With the exception of the Commander-in-Chief no officer in direct administrative charge of a Department is a Member of Council. It is desirable that Members of Council should be men of wide general experience rather than officers trained in a particular department throughout the whole or most of their service. It is on this point that the analogy of the United Kingdom breaks down. The Postmaster General in the United Kingdom is an outside man of general political experience and not a salaried officer of Government trained in the Department.
- (b) The proposal would entail legislation in the United Kingdom amending the Government of India Act. There may be political objections to appointing an additional salaried officer of Government, who for many years to come will probably be a European, on the Council.

- (c) The responsibility would be very great for one man and his staff on the direction would have to be considerably strengthened. This increase, together with the appointments of Financial Adviser and his staff, would counterbalance the saving on the abolition of the Secretariat establishment.

5. *Third alternative.*—The Director-General might be placed directly under the Finance Department instead of under the Public Works Department. It is not suggested that he should be a member of the proposed Board of Revenue, because--

- (a) the Post and Telegraph Department has never been regarded mainly as a revenue-producing department ; and
- (b) the experts in Income Tax and Customs who, it has been suggested, should be members of the Board, would not necessarily be the best advisers to the Director General on the larger questions of Post and Telegraph policy.

The alternative is to place the Director-General under Finance Department in much the same position as he now holds under the Public Works Department. This course would retrench some of the Secretariat establishment now employed in the Public Works Department and expedite the disposal of the Finance cases but on the other hand, as already pointed out, most of the work now done in the Public Works Department Secretariat is concerned with administrative questions of which Finance Department would not necessarily be the best judge. Then again the Finance Department appears to be already over-burdened, and it is doubtful if there would be any real acceleration in the disposal of business. It is also doubtful whether the Hon'ble the Finance Member would be prepared to accept the additional burden entailed by this proposal and if he were, it is probable that the saving in the Public Works Department would be set off by the appointment of additional staff elsewhere.

6. *Fourth alternative.*—The present system should continue. The objections to this are that the Director-General has to waste considerable time in explaining his cases in full detail to the Department and in noting on their questions and objections. It is invidious that a great administrative officer should be subjected to such control and criticism. The advantages of and objections to the present system have been explained in paragraph 2 above. Part of the objections to the present system could be alleviated by giving a higher status to the Director-General ; his position in the order of Precedence is far too low and he might well be given direct access to His Excellency the Viceroy and a standing equal to that of a Principal Staff Officer in the Army.

7. It remains to be seen whether any substantial retrenchment could be effected without loss of efficiency by adopting any of these alternatives.

8. *If the present system is continued can the existing Secretariat staff be reduced.*

- (a) The existing office staff is already gravely overburdened. A comparison of the receipts and issues of the Post and Telegraph Branch for the calendar years 1913 and 1921 shows the following results :—

	TOTAL NUMBER IN—		AVERAGE PER MAN IN—		Percentage of increase in 1921.
	1913.	1921.	1913.	1921.	
Receipts ... ..	2,172	7,042	271.5	580	206
Issues ... ..	3,222	5,865	403	733	82
Totals ... ..	5,394	12,907	674.5	1,613	139

In spite of this increase in receipts and issues, the clerical staff on the 1st April 1921 and the 1st April 1922, was, as will be seen from the statement appended to this note, of the same strength as in 1913, namely, 8 clerks and 1 Superintendent. Although a policy of decentralization has been consistently followed, and the Director General's financial powers considerably extended, the volume of Post and Telegraph work which comes before Government has increased enormously along with the rapid growth of the department as shown in paragraph 10 of this note. The business in connection with Posts, Telegraphs, Cables, Wireless, Telephones, Money Orders, etc., has also grown in complexity as well as in volume, and in 1919 it was found necessary to establish a special Wireless Branch of the Post and Telegraph Department under a separate Director of Wireless. The amount of work also in connection with the preparation of the budget and the explanation of the items to the Standing Finance Committee and the number of questions and resolutions affecting the Post and Telegraph Department has been increased immensely by the Reforms. Mention may further be made of the cases of work due to the activities of the unions and associations which have been formed to bring to notice the grievances of the employees of the Department, who in 1920-21 numbered 116,318. For these reasons it was proposed in October 1921 to subdivide the "Post and Telegraph Branch" into two sections, each with a Superintendent and a clerical staff of 6 men, in addition to fixing the entire strength of the Branch on a permanent basis; but the Finance Department was not at the time disposed to agree to the proposal. It is, however, quite clear that no reduction of the existing staff is possible, on the contrary an immediate increase is absolutely necessary.

- (b) As regards officers, the existing arrangement under which the work of the Post and Telegraph Branch is dealt with by a whole-time Assistant Secretary and by a Deputy Secretary who also deals with work from two branches of the Revenue and Agriculture Department was introduced in 1920 as the result of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 71 to 73 of the report of the Secretariat Procedure Committee, 1920. The increase in expenditure on the officers of the Post and Telegraph Branch which has occurred since 1913 is, therefore, due to a general revision of procedure which has affected other Departments also, and as such calls for no special explanation here. It may be mentioned that the Assistant Secretary of the Post and Telegraph Branch has been a specially selected officer of the Post and Telegraph Department.

9. Before bringing this note to a conclusion it will perhaps be of some interest to the general reader to set forth some of the more important administrative business recently dealt with in the Post and Telegraph Branch. Amongst others the cases for disposal were as follows :—

*Political.*—

- Questions and answers in Assembly and Council of State.
- Amendments to Post Office Act.
- Resolutions in Legislatures.
- Amendments to Rules under Post Office and Telegraph Acts.

*Telephones.*—

- Extension of licenses of telephone Companies.
- Policy in expansion of trunk telephones and priority.
- Policy in installation of automatic systems.
- Policy regarding telephones and telegraphs in Indian States.

*Wireless.*—

- Imperial Wireless Telegraph Chain.
- Wireless in Indian States.
- Policy in issuing licenses to firms and private individuals.
- Broad-casting.
- Feeder stations, owned by Local Governments or Army.
- System of controlling import of Wireless Telegraph apparatus.

*Postal.—*

- Persian Post Offices.
- Postal arrangements with Afghanistan.
- Disputes about Money Order Conventions with Kenya, Egypt, Seychelles.
- Relations with Indian States.
- Foreign mail contract.
- Contracts for motor services.
- Dispute with General Post Office about India's share of mail subsidy.
- Introduction of new stamps.

*Telegraphs.—*

- Future of Indo-European Telegraph Department.
- Cable Landing Licenses.
- Questions arising under International Telegraphic Convention.
- Revised system of distributing Reuter's news to Government officers.
- Censorship.

*Miscellaneous.—*

- Use of Codes.
- Revision of system of maintaining telegraph stores.
- New system for official telegrams (O. H. M. S.).
- Approval to appointments to all gazetted posts on pay exceeding Rs. 800.

*Mainly administrative, Partially Financial.—*

- Inland and Foreign Postal Rates for letters, parcels, etc.
- Royalties chargeable to companies owning telephones, wireless sets, etc.
- Trunk and Station telephone rates.
- Inland and Foreign Telegraph rates.
- Imperial Heavy Parcels Service.

10. Finally the following is a statement showing the growth of the Post and Telegraph Department :—

	1913-14.	1920-21.	Percentage of increase.
<b>Main classes of business—</b>			
Postal articles posted ... ..	1,049,921,980	1,389,378,082	32 33
Money orders issued ... ..	30,986,373	38,504,814	24 23
Savings Bank Accounts ... ..	1,638,725	1,877,957	14 59
Telegrams ... ..	16,596,697	19,054,781	14 81
<b>Total Staff—</b>			
Postal ... ..	93,955	102,885	9 50
Telegraph ... ..	11,982	13,443	12 19
Total expenditure Rs.	4,50,77,341	8,31,13,804	84
Total revenue Rs.	5,39,06,014	9,44,61,571	75

From which it will be seen that so far as the Posts and Telegraphs Branch is concerned, the natural development and the conditions following the introduction of the Reforms under the Act of 1919 render a return to the previous arrangements and scale a practical impossibility.

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## **Comparative Statements of Expenditure.**

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## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

DEMAND No. 13.

(Including Posts and Telegraphs Branch).

Similar statements have been prepared for the other heads of expenditure with which this Department is concerned, viz., Demands Nos. 9, 10, 11, 24,\* 31, 59, 60 and 61, and have been submitted to the Finance Department with explanatory notes in the particular head concerned.

## Hydro-Electric Survey.

## I. Comparison :—

				1913-14.	1921-22.	1922-23.
				Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Pay of Officers	...	...	...	1,46,456	1,69,600	1,78,960
Pay of establishment	...	...	...	1,14,936	1,62,350	1,98,020
Allowances, etc.	...	...	...	24,903	40,000	64,960
Contingencies	...	...	...	34,789	45,150	40,760
			Total	3,21,084	4,17,100	4,82,700

Appropriations in aid ... .. Nil.

## II. Increase of expenditure in 1922-23 compared with 1913-14 :—

				Rs.
(a) due to revision of pay	...	...	...	65,008
(b) due to increase of establishment	...	...	...	61,822
(c) other causes	...	...	...	34,786
			Total	1,61,616

## III. Numbers employed :—

				1st April 1914.	1st April 1921.	1st April 1922.
(1) Administrative and clerical—						
(a) permanent	...	...	...	97	91	103
(b) temporary	...	...	...	29	28	34
(2) Technical	...	...	...	5	6	6
(3) Industrial	...	...	...	...	...	...
			Total	131	125	143

## IV. Functions in 1922-23 compared with 1913-14—

				Permanent.	Temporary.	Cost where possible.
				Rs.		
(1) Added (Posts and Telegraphs Branch)	...	...	...	12	6	50,160†
(2) Transferred (Electricity)	...	...	...	1	...	4,200†
(3) Abolished	...	...	...	...	...	...
			Total	11	6	45,960†

† Excluding allowances.

Note.—The above does not include the pay, allowances, etc., of the Inspector-General of Irrigation.

## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

DEMAND No. 13.

*(Excluding Posts and Telegraph Branch).*

Similar statements have been prepared for the other heads of expenditure with which this Department is concerned *viz.* Demands Nos. 9, 10, 11, 24, 31, 59, 60 and 61, and have been submitted to the Finance Department with explanatory notes in the particular head concerned.

## I. Comparison :—

				1913-14.	1921-22.	1922-23.
				Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Pay of officers	...	...	...	1,46,456	1,69,600	1,57,950
Pay of establishment	...	...	...	1,14,936	1,62,850	1,75,296
Allowances, etc.	...	...	...	24,903	40,000	58,127
Contingencies	...	...	...	34,789	45,150	37,400
			Total	3,21,084	4,17,100	4,28,773

Appropriations in aid ... .. Nil.

## II. Increase of expenditure in 1922-23 compared with 1913-14 :—

				Rs.
(a) due to revision of Pay	...	...	...	65,008
(b) due to increase of establishment	...	...	...	14,890
(c) other causes	...	...	...	27,791
			Total	1,07,689

## III. Numbers employed :—

				1st April 1914.	1st April 1921.	1st April 1922.
(1) Administrative and clerical—						
(a) permanent	...	...	...	97	91	91
(b) temporary	...	...	...	29	28	28
(2) Technical	...	...	...	5	6	6
(3) Industrial	...	...	...	...	...	...
			Total	131	125	125

## IV. Functions in 1922-23 compared with 1913-14—

				Permanent.	Temporary.	Cost where possible.
						Rs.
(1) Added	...	...	...	...	...	...
(2) Transferred (Electricity)	...	...	...	1	...	4,200
(3) Abolished	...	...	...	...	...	...
			Total	1	...	4,200

NOTE.—The above does not include the pay, allowances, etc., of the Inspector-General of Irrigation.

## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

DEMAND No. 13.

(Inspector General of Irrigation.)

## I. Comparison.—

—		1913-14.	1921-22.	1922-23.
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Pay of officers	... ..	42,000	62,350	62,350
Pay of establishment	... ..	362	500	480
Allowances, etc.	... ..	10,827	15,870	13,460
Contingencies	... ..	1,499	1,580	2,140
		54,688	80,300	78,430
For rounding	... ..	...	...	—30
Total	... ..	54,688	80,300	78,400

Appropriations in aid . . . . . Nil.

## II. Increase of expenditure in 1922-23, compared with 1913-14.—

	Rs.
(a) due to revision of pay	118
(b) due to increase of establishment	20,350*
(c) other causes	3,244
Total	23,712

## III. Numbers employed.—

—		1st April 1914.	1st April 1921.	1st April 1922.
(1) Administrative and clerical—				
(a) permanent	... ..	4	5†	5†
(b) temporary	... ..	...	...	...
(2) Technical				
(3) Industrial				
Total	... ..	4	5	5

†1 I.G.I.  
1 A.I.G.I.  
3 Peons.

5

## IV. Functions in 1922-23. compared with 1913-14.

	Permanent.	Temporary.	Cost where possible. Rs.
Abolished	1	..	20,350

\*Represents provision for the post of Assistant Inspector-General of Irrigation which, owing to Retrenchment, has been abolished with effect from the 1st April 1922. Savings to this extent, plus savings on allowances, will therefore be effected.

## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

DEMAND NO. 13.

(Post and Telegraph Branch).

## I. Comparison :—

Heads.	1913-14†.	1921-22.	1922-23.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Pay of officers ... ..	11,924	32,130	21,010(b)
Pay of establishment ... ..	21,006	24,800(a)	22,724
Allowances, etc. ... ..	6,152	‡	6,823
Contingencies ... ..	4,483	‡	3,361
Total ... ..	43,515	...	53,927

Appropriation in aid . . . . . Nil.

## II. Increase of expenditure in 1922-23, compared with 1913-14 :—

	Rs.
(a) Due to revision of pay . . . . .	3,359
(b) Due to increase of establishment . . . . .	8,126(c)
(c) Due to other causes . . . . .	—1,073
Total . . . . .	10,412

## III. Numbers employed :—

—	1914.	1st April 1921.	1922
(1) Administrative and clerical (excluding menials) —			
(a) permanent ... ..	12½	4	4
(b) temporary ... ..		9½	9½
(2) Technical ... ..	...	Nil	...
(3) Industrial ... ..	...	Nil	...
Total ... ..	12½	13½§	13½§

## IV. Functions in 1922-23 compared with 1913-14.—No change.

\*See detailed notes, page 31.

(a) Calculated on the actual staff employed in the Branch on 1st April 1921. The decrease in the figures for 1922-23 is due to a Senior Assistant in the Branch on Rs. 470 being exchanged for a clerk on Rs. 196.

(b) Does not include an amount of Rs. 14,320 representing half the pay of the Deputy Secretary whose whole pay has been included in the budget estimates of the Revenue and Agriculture Department.

(c) Due to the abolition of the post of an Under Secretary whose one-third pay was debitable to the Posts and Telegraphs Branch and the creation of the post of an Assistant Secretary.

‡See Note (2), page 31.

‡Details could not be extracted for the reasons explained in Note (1), page 31.

§Of this half represents a moiety of the time of one Deputy Secretary, who devotes half his time on Posts and Telegraphs work in this Department although shown in budget estimates as whole-time under Revenue and Agriculture Department.

*Detailed notes.*

(1) The main heads of business of Posts and Telegraphs including Telephones and Wireless Telegraph, which are dealt with in the " Posts and Telegraphs Branch," appertained to the Commerce and Industry Department of the Government of India in 1913-14, subsequently they were dealt with by Commerce Department and were transferred to the Public Works Department in August 1921, in connection with a redistribution of business among different Departments ; but the Branch, although working as a more or less separate section in each of the Departments of which it has successively formed part, has never been treated as a separate division for budget purposes. Consequently only approximate figures for the " Posts and Telegraphs Branch " can be given for the years 1913-14 and 1921-22. No account has been taken of the Secretary's or Hon'ble Member's pay.

(2) No record exists of the actual strength of the " Posts and Telegraphs Branch " when it formed part of the Commerce and Industry Department ; but it appears that there were altogether 6 Branches, with 2 Under Secretaries, in that Department in 1913-14, and the cost of the Branch for that year has been arrived at by taking 1-6th of the total cost of establishment, allowances and contingencies of the Commerce and Industry Department shown in the Civil Estimates for the same year.

(3) The figures shown for 1913-14 under the item " III. Numbers employed " are, as far as can be ascertained in the absence of attendance registers (not preserved), believed to be accurate.

(4) In 1913-14 there was no Deputy Secretary in the Commerce and Industry Department of which the Posts and Telegraphs Branch then formed part. In the year 1921-22 half the pay of the Deputy Secretary, who does Revenue and Agriculture work and Post and Telegraph work, has been taken.





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