

Educational
~~Letter~~ (1916) Department.

Miss SERIES.

G.O. No. 691-Ed

DATED 23-6-16

[Despatch Abstract.]

Europe an boarding schools. Receiving
 letter from the Government of India forwarding
 copy of the proceedings of the Imperial Legislative
 Council re. resolution on the same passed
 on the 15th March 1916 by the Hon Mr J H
 Ashcroft recommending the constitution of
 a committee to enquire into the physical condition
 of and the dietary arrangements for the
 children attending —

2287.1.16 + previous papers

C.N. 1574 Esf



No. 358

Government of India,
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.
(Education)

Simla, the 25th April 1916.

From

The Hon'ble Sir E.D. MacLagan, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.,
Secretary to the Government of India,

To

The Secretary to the Government of Madras,
Educational Department.

Sir,

I am directed to forward for information and for such action as local conditions may be considered to justify a copy of the proceedings of the Imperial Legislative Council regarding a Resolution moved in Council on the 15th March 1916 by the Hon'ble Mr. J.H. Abbott recommending the constitution of local committees to inquire into the physical condition of, and the dietary arrangements for, the children attending European boarding schools.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

Secretary to the Government of India.

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Extract from the Proceedings of the Indian Legislative Council assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1915 (5 & 6 Geo. V, Ch. 61).

The Council met at the Council Chamber, Imperial Secretariat, Delhi, on
Wednesday, the 15th March, 1916.

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**RESOLUTION *RE* CONSTITUTION OF A COMMITTEE
TO INQUIRE INTO DIETARY ARRANGEMENTS,
ETC., OF CHILDREN IN EUROPEAN BOARDING
SCHOOLS.**

The Hon'ble Mr. J. H. Abbott:—"Sir, I beg to move the Resolution which stands against my name:—

"That this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that wherever there are European Boarding Schools, committees consisting of officials and non-officials be constituted by the Local Governments for the purpose of inquiring into the physical condition of, and the dietary arrangements for, the children therein and reporting thereon to the Director of Public Instruction."

"In moving this Resolution I consider it peculiarly suitable to the present needs of the moment, the time when the problems of education and sanitation are so much before the public, and are receiving the earnest consideration of this Council.

"Perhaps there is no more supreme duty devolving upon the Government of a State than the careful care and upbringing of the child; for the boy or girl of to-day will be the citizen of to-morrow—soldier, doctor, lawyer, administrator, may be on the one hand, or on the other hand, the mother. The healthy development of the child, carefully moulding him year by year for the battle of life, depends wholly upon education of mind and body surroundings and nourishment. 'A sound mind in a sound body' is a very old saying, but nevertheless as true to-day as of yore; no mind can be developed, if the body, the temple of the soul, is ill-nourished, ill-cared for, and ill-clothed. These truisms have long been translated into Statutes in most European countries. The recognition of the appalling effects of under-feeding in schools has led in our Mother Country to the passing of the Education (Provision of Meals) Act of 1906, and the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, 1907. In furtherance of the same objects, the London County Council, and other local bodies throughout Great Britain have appointed Children's Care Committees, whose primary duties are to visit the Public Elementary Schools, seek out ill-nourished and sickly children, and see that proper care and nourishment is afforded them. And even if the parents cannot afford the required food, the State steps in and makes it their business to see that the growing child has a fair chance; that he obtains that bodily and mental nourishment so essential to mould him into a good and loyal citizen of the nation.

"Sir, I do not ask that the State should go quite so far in the case of European schools in India. All that I ask is, that some measure of protection may be afforded to the children attending such schools. Such schools are, and have always been, almost entirely under private management. The only European schools wholly State-managed are a few special secondary institutions of a particular character directly under Local Governments; these include the Lawrence Military Asylums of Ootacamund, Sanawar

and Murree. It is a well known fact that the management and administration of many of our privately managed and administered schools in India are not what should be desired, and are more or less in financial difficulties; and what is the consequence? Economy must be practised. And in many cases it is unfortunate to relate, economy lies in the direction of the curtailment and cheap supply of food. Sir, what is the result? Under these circumstances, such a condition of affairs must lead to the starvation of the bodies or minds of the pupils. It cannot be otherwise.

"It has been forcibly brought to my attention, although I have not sought for the information, that children in a robust state of health, are sent to such schools by parents, but when they return home for periodical vacations, they present a more or less washed-out anæmic appearance. These conditions cannot be attributed to any other causes than that of want of sufficient nourishment, insanitary environments, and perhaps, too, at times, aggravated by harsh or even cruel punishment.

"Sir, incredible as it may sound, the prisoners in His Majesty's jails in India are better protected by law regarding dietary and sanitary arrangements than are the pupils of our Schools. Take, for example, the fact that the inmates of a jail are periodically weighed, that a minimum scale of food allowance is fixed, which guarantees that each prisoner must receive the quantity of food allowed him by the regulations governing such institutions; that should harsh punishment be unjustly inflicted on one of them, the mode, the method, and the punishment can be investigated, criticised and reported to the authorities superior to those who are in charge. Should any one individual be found to lose weight, appear ill-nourished, or to suffer in any way for want of care and attention, the fact has to be reported to the Inspector-General of Prisons. Such, Sir, is the attention bestowed on criminals—where any abuses which may exist in jails are discovered, investigated, and the necessary action promptly taken. Such a systematised state of affairs does not exist in any of our privately-managed Boarding Schools; and I plead, on behalf of our children, with all the eloquence at my command, that such be introduced, that a food-scale definitely defining the minimum allowance for children be framed, and be binding on School Authorities; that each child at regular stated intervals be weighed and measured by school authorities in the presence of their Medical Officer, and the weight and measurement be notified to the parents concerned in the monthly report of the child. Surely the off-spring of those men, so large a proportion of whom give their best service to the State, are entitled to the same privileges criminals enjoy?

"Sir I do not propose, with the limited time at my disposal to describe fully the duties of Committees, which I ask in my Resolution to be appointed, but, with your permission, I shall endeavour to briefly outline their duties. It is most essential that the Committees once constituted should comprise only entirely independent persons fully representative, and thoroughly capable; and should in all cases be nominated by the Collector or Deputy Commissioner of the district. The members, individually or collectively, should pay strictly surprise visits to the schools under their care, paying particular attention to the food—the quantity and quality supplied. They should also pay attention and check the weights and measurements of the children. Should any child be found to be losing weight, or to show signs of emaciation, or to bear marks of severe punishment, the Medical Officer should furnish his report forthwith, together with that of the Visitor or Visitors, as the case may be, to the Director of Public Instruction of the Province concerned. They should immediately determine if the cause of emaciation is due to insufficient nourishment, to ill-treatment, or to any other fault of the school; or whether the cause is due to some organic disease; and if the latter, prompt action should be taken to arrest the disease; and the parents should, as in all case of sickness, be immediately informed of the condition of the child. In all cases the suggested visitation of such Committees, systematically, regularly and conscientiously made, would act as a great safeguard over the children to whom the country owes a solemn duty.

"Sir, I must now conclude. I have tried to portray the feelings which have actuated me to bring forward this Resolution, and I leave the matter to

the Council, with the assurance that they will give the subject the attention it deserves."

The Hon'ble Sir C. Sankaran Nair:—"Sir, the Government of India realise that the children attending schools must be in such a physical condition that they may be able to take advantage of the education therein imparted. Otherwise the curricula ought to be modified or steps taken to improve the physical condition of the children. Inquiries are already being made by Local Governments, by means of individual inspections of school children by medical officers, to collect information to enable the Government or school authorities to take remedial and precautionary measures. With the experience already gained, the Government of India have no doubt that such inquiries will be more vigorously prosecuted. My Hon'ble friend will, therefore, understand that the Government of India are in full sympathy with the object that he has in view. Nevertheless, I regret that the Government cannot accept his Resolution. It is not necessary now to refer either to the facts which he has stated or to the reasons that he has advanced. I am free to accept many of the statements he has made. Some of the arguments do not appeal to me, but it is not necessary to refer to them all. If Hon'ble Members will refer to the Resolution itself, they will see that the Government are thereby requested to constitute a Committee, consisting of officials and non-officials. Many of these schools are under the supervision of governing bodies, and it is their duty to make the inquiries that are referred to in the speech of my Hon'ble friend. There is no reason to supersede them, unless it appears that the Committees that might be appointed would perform the duties much better. Again, leaving aside medical officers for the present, it is very doubtful whether officials who have the leisure to attend to these duties can be found in all these places. And my Hon'ble friend wants independent persons—entirely independent persons, fully representative and capable. Such men are not easily found. To lay, therefore, an obligation on the Local Governments to appoint Committees consisting of such officials, it may not be possible to find them; or consisting of such representative persons—it may not be possible to find them either; is out of the question. But if my Hon'ble friend wishes it, the Government are prepared to go far to meet his views. There is no reason why the Local Governments should not appoint such Committees where the conditions are favourable and where the Government can get officials and non-officials of the character referred to by my Hon'ble friend. We are prepared, therefore, to forward a copy of my Hon'ble friend's Resolution, with his speech and the Proceedings of this day, to the Local Governments for them to take action where the local conditions justify it. Further than that we are not now prepared to go.

"Though the Resolution is confined to the constitution of Committees to make inquiries, in his speech my Hon'ble friend has gone very much further. He asked that a food scale definitely specifying the allowance for children should be framed by the school authorities. That goes very much further than what he indicated in the Resolution itself, and therefore I do not refer to that part of the Hon'ble Mover's speech.

"For the reasons I have given, Sir, we are unable to accept the Resolution."

The Hon'ble Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee:—"Sir, I have just one word to say in connection with the Resolution and the speech of my Hon'ble Friend. The Resolution confines itself to European boarding schools. There are Indian boarding schools quite as important and far more numerous than the European boarding schools. Is the attention of the Government to be drawn solely and exclusively to European boarding schools in preference to Indian boarding schools?"

The Hon'ble the Vice-President:—"Order, order. The Resolution we are discussing is one relating to European boarding schools. As the Hon'ble Member knows, we are not discussing Indian boarding schools."

Educational Dept.

CNo. 1074.

Memo. No. 1574-1
with reference to the accompanying
draft of the proceedings

of the Imperial Legislative Council
regarding a Resolution moved in
Council on the 16th March 1916
by the Hon'ble Mr. J. H. Abbott,
recommending the Constitution of
local committees to inquire into
the physical condition of, and the
dietary arrangements for, the
children attending European board-
ing schools, the S.P.D. is requested to
offer his remarks on the suggestion
so far as it relates to the
European boarding schools
in this Presidency.

PP
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the S.P.D. with a copy of the
Council Prop. [to be ret. with reply].

The Hon'ble Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee:—"I just
wanted to suggest that, as the Government is going to make an inquiry, they
might include the case of the Indian boarding schools also. That is all I have
to say, and I hope that my Hon'ble friend, the Education Member, will con-
sider the matter favourably."

The Hon'ble Mr. Abbott:—"I must thank the Hon'ble the
Education Member for the sympathetic way in which he has dealt with my
Resolution, and I feel sure that something will come of it. I do not think
I need refer to what the Hon'ble Mr. Banerjee said just now. I did not know
how far any interference in this matter was possible or desirable in Hindu and
Muhammadan schools. I therefore did not include them in my Resolution."

"With these remarks I withdraw my Resolution."

The Resolution was, by permission, withdrawn.

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DEPARTMENT.

Received



Registered

1916.

Subject.

Memo

Submitting remarks on the proposal regarding the constitution of local committees to enquire into the physical condition of, and the dietary arrangements for the children attending the European boarding schools.

ENCLOSURES.

No.

R. C. No. 3817/15.

Spare copies

Station MADRAS, Dated the 30th May 1916

From (Name) The Hon. Mr. J. H. SPONHILL, B.A., B.Sc., M.I.E.E.

(Designation) Director of Public Instruction, Madras.

To The Secretary to the Government of Madras, Educational Department.

Sir,

With reference to Government Memorandum No. 1574 - 1 Educational, dated 8th May 1916 requesting my remarks on the Hon'ble Mr. Abbot's recommendation regarding the constitution of local committees to enquire into the physical condition of, and the dietary arrangements for the children attending European boarding schools, I have the honour to invite attention to the proposals submitted in this office letter R. C. No. 1497/13 dated 7th October 1914 regarding the medical inspection of European schools in reply to para 2 of G. O. No. 238 Educational dated 26th February 1914, and to state that Government have deferred passing orders thereon

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Since received and
is being dealt with
separately.

thereon pending receipt of the report on the medical inspection of pupils in the Corporation schools in the city of Madras, vide para 3 of G. O. No. 22 Educational dated 7th January 1916. These schools have since been inspected and Colonel Donovan's Report thereon has just been received and will now be submitted to Government. It seems to me that the question of local Committees may be considered along with the general question of medical inspection. A considerable number of European schools have Committees already, and it is doubtful whether specific action is required or is desirable to constitute committees to enquire into the physical condition and dietary arrangements of the pupils. The existing committees might resent any action taken by such committees. They would, on the other hand, welcome a medical officer, and it seems that the committees proposed by the Hon'ble Member could do nothing which could not be more easily effected by the medical inspecting officer.

2. I would further state that Mr. Melville, the Inspector of European and Training Schools, has had experience at home which particularly fits him for reporting on the domestic arrangements of boarding schools, that, in his inspection, he gives particular attention to these, and that a perusal of his reports has led me to form the opinion that they are in general satisfactory.

3. The copy of the Proceedings of the Imperial Legislative Council received with the Government Memorandum under reference is returned herewith as desired.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

R. A. Arlene.

K.V. *M*
29.5.16.

For Director of Public Instruction.

Subject.

Constitution of committees to enquire into the physical condition of, and the dietary arrangements for, the children attending European boarding schools.

From the Government of India, Dept. of Education, No.358, dated the 25th April 1916.

From the D.P.I. No.3817, dated the 30th May 1916.

C.Nos.1574 & 1936 Edl. of 16.

In paragraph 7 of the resolution of the Government of India on their educational policy, that Government recommended to Local Governments a thorough enquiry into school and college hygiene by a small committee of experts, medical and educational (p.4 of G.O.No.394 Edl., d/1-5-13). This Government did not, however, consider such a step necessary, but they decided to institute a medical inspection of the seven elementary schools opened by the Corporation of Madras as an experimental measure (para.1 of G.O.No.1104 Edl., d/22-9-14) with a view to extend the system to other educational institutions if the experiment should prove a success. The work was entrusted to Lieutt. Col. Donovan I.M.S. and a report on the results of the inspection was called for

H for. (G.O.No.22 Edl., dated the 7th January 1916).

2. The conference on the education of the domiciled community held at Simla in July 1912 recommended that the Government should appoint medical officers to examine at least once during each school term, the pupils in each school (Resolution XI on p.6 of G.O.No.70 Edl., dated the 29-1-13). With reference to this recommendation the D.P.I., Madras, submitted a scheme for the medical inspection and supervision of European schools in the city of Madras as a preliminary measure. (page 2. of G.O.No.22 Edl. dated ⁴⁵7-1-1916). This scheme is lying over pending the receipt and consideration by Government of the report on the inspection of the elementary schools in Madras referred to in paragraph 1 above (para.3 of G.O.No.22 Edl., dated the 7-1-16).

3. The present file relates to the constitution of committees to enquire into the physical condition of, and the dietary arrangements for, the children attending European boarding schools. The D.P.I., ~~Madras~~ considers that such a step is not ~~necessary~~ necessary or desirable and that the scheme submitted by him for the medical inspection of European schools

will answer the purpose very well. The report on the inspection of elementary schools in Madras has been received and is separately under disposal. The scheme for the medical inspection of European schools will therefore be considered after the issue of orders on that report.

4. In these circumstances it is submitted that no action appears to be necessary on the Proceedings of the Imperial Legislative Council forwarded by the Government of India. It may be observed that that Government have forwarded the papers only for the information of this Government and for such action as the local conditions may be considered to justify. A draft order recording the papers is submitted for approval.

p. 1 of 2

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21-6-16*

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” ” ” ” ” 191 .

C. No. 1574, From the *Eggs*, led: *Sept*, No. 358, dated 25 - 4 - 1916.

” 1936 ” S. P. 9 ” 88-17 ” 20-5 — 1916.

191

ORDER.

No. 691^{Edl} ^{mis} 23.6.66, dated 191.

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To the D. P. J (Q40)
26/8/16

When given for copying

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191

READ AGAIN G.O. No.
191

DATED

CURRENT No.

ENCLOSURES TO C. No.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.

STATEMENT WITH DETT.

PAYERS NOT FILLED UP, BEING MEANT FOR DESPATCH
IN ORIGINAL.

N.B.—

A = Copy in full.

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P = Copy abstract only.

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