

Home (1918) Department.
Education

Ordinary SERIES.

G.O. No. 66

DATED 21. 1. 18

INDEXED

[Despatch Abstract.]

Legislative Council.

Recording notes connected with the resolutions on the subject of the cancellation of the orders in G.O No 559, dated the 1st May 1917 prohibiting students from the attending political meetings which were proposed to be moved at the meeting of the ----- held on the 20th November 1917 but which were withdrawn.

NOTES CONNECTED WITH RESOLUTIONS ON MATTERS
OF GENERAL PUBLIC INTEREST.

[Meeting of 29th November 1917.]

[SUBJECT.—Cancellation of G.O. No. 559, Home (Education), dated 1st May 1917, regarding students and politics.]

The Hon'ble Mr. B. V. NARASIMHA AYYAR :—

VI. This Council recommends to His Excellency in Council that G.O. No. 559, dated 1st May 1917, regarding the attendance of students at public meetings, etc., be cancelled.

The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur V. K. RAMANUJA ACHARIYAR :—

XI. This Council recommends to His Excellency the Governor in Council that it is absolutely necessary to withdraw G.O. No. 559, Home (Education), on the subject of students and politics.

The Hon'ble Mr. B. VENKATAPATI RAJU :—

XXIII. This Council recommends to the Governor in Council that the Government be pleased to reconsider the orders issued in G.O. No. 559, Home (Education), dated 1st May 1917, and confine to the Disciplinary Regulations, Chapter VIII A of the Madras Educational Rules.

The Hon'ble Mr. P. SIVA RAO :—

XLIV. This Council recommends to His Excellency the Governor in Council that the G.O. No. 559, Home (Education), dated 1st May 1917, may be cancelled.

The Hon'ble Mr. K. SADASIYA BHAT :—

XLV. That this Council recommends to His Excellency in Council that G.O. No. 559, Home (Education), should be withdrawn.

HOME (EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT.

In their circular No. 332-35, dated the 4th May 1907, the Government of India drew attention to the dangers with which higher education in India was threatened by the tendency of both teachers and pupils in colleges and schools to associate themselves with political movements and take a prominent part in organizing and carrying out overt acts of political agitation. They observed :—

“1. This tendency is of comparatively recent growth, and the Government of India have hitherto refrained from adopting specific measures to counteract its effects in the belief that parents, teachers and the more sensible or less impressionable students could not fail to realize that the spirit of lawlessness and resistance to authority thus engendered among the young is bound in the long run to set back the advance of genuine education, to injure the material prospects of the students, and to subvert the traditional foundations of Indian family life. The Governor-General in Council entertains no doubt that the great majority of sensible Indian parents whatever may be their political opinions, regard with the gravest apprehensions the imminent danger that education will be interfered with and the efficiency of schools and colleges impaired by the minds of pupils and students being diverted from their proper work and by the relaxation of discipline which must inevitably result from their being allowed to take part in political agitation.

“2. The question affects the entire field of higher education, but the principle to be applied and the procedure to be adopted will differ according as school-boys or college students, school-masters or professors of colleges have to be dealt with. The case of the pupils of high schools presents little difficulty. In the interests of the boys themselves it is clearly undesirable that they should be distracted from their work by attending political meetings or engaging in any form of political agitation. . . .

"3. The case of students of affiliated colleges stands on a somewhat different footing. They are no longer school boys but undergraduates, and a certain proportion of them are Bachelors of Arts who may reasonably claim some wider liberty of action than is permitted to school boys. In regard to them, therefore, the Government of India are not prepared to lay down as a general rule that more attendance at political meetings, as distinguished from taking an active part in their proceedings, would necessarily call for the adoption of disciplinary measures against the college. Although, however, they admit that the degree of discipline which is essential for a school boy may be inappropriate and even undesirable in the case of a student, still they must insist upon the principle that colleges exist for the purpose of education, and they cannot regard with indifference the conversion of such institutions into centres for the dissemination of political doctrines of whatever character. If therefore certain students of an affiliated college were to attend political meetings and there so conduct themselves as to bring undesirable notoriety upon their college, or to engage in political agitation in such a way as to interfere with the corporate life and educational work of the place, and still more if such propaganda assumed the form of picketing and open violence, it is obvious that the local Government concerned could no longer remain passive but would be bound, in the interests of education, to take steps to procure the withdrawal from the college, at any rate for a period, of the privilege of affiliation to the University."

2. Accordingly the following regulations were inserted in the Madras Educational Rules:—

(1) Graduate and under-graduate students on the rolls of colleges under public managements are forbidden to take an active part in political agitation directed against the authority of the Government. Principals may further at their discretion forbid students to engage prominently in any public movement with which it seems undesirable that persons in *statu pupillari* should be associated.

(2) If students of such colleges attend political meetings and there conduct themselves in any manner which is forbidden or unbecoming or engage in political agitation in such a way as to interfere with the corporate life and educational work of the college, the Principal of the college may suspend or expel them or refuse the grant of term certificates for a specified period and may also report their case to the University with the view of their being dealt with under Regulation 96 of the University Regulations.

(7) No manager or member of the staff or of the establishment shall be permitted to take part in political agitation directed against the authority of Government or to inculcate opinions tending to excite feelings of political disloyalty or disaffection; and the pupils should not be permitted to attend political meetings or to engage in any form of political agitation.

3. Owing however to attempts made by recently started political movements to bring under their influence students in colleges and schools and the need for protecting students from the undesirable consequences of such association the Government consider it necessary to supplement the instructions already issued. Accordingly the following further instructions were issued in G.O. No 559, Home (Education), dated the 1st May 1917:—

"The Government therefore direct that no under-graduate student in any college and no pupil in any school shall be permitted to take part in public political discussions, to attend political meetings, to join any political association or to take part in any movement with which it is, in the opinion of the educational authorities, undesirable that persons still in *statu pupillari* shall be associated. His Excellency in Council directs that heads of colleges and schools, whether under public management or otherwise, shall strictly enforce these directions. In doing so they should have regard not merely to the declared purpose of a meeting, but also to the speakers who will address it."

4. The object and scope of the instructions was fully explained by His Excellency the Governor in his speech at the meeting of the Legislative Council held on the 24th May 1917 which is extracted below:—

"The question paper contains a reference to one of the recent orders issued by the Government on the subject of school boys and students at colleges. This subject has been under the consideration of the Government for some time and I take this opportunity of communicating our conclusions upon it to the Council rather more fully than has hitherto been possible.

"There is no foundation whatever for the suggestion that one of these orders was issued purposely at a date inconvenient to the Cuddalore Conference. The Honourable Member who asked a question in that sense is not, I believe, originally responsible for that suggestion of which

he has been, I fear, the innocent victim. The facts are, as I have already said, that this subject has for some time been under the consideration of the Government and the college recess was deliberately chosen for the issue of these orders as likely to be convenient to all concerned.

"Let me say in the first place that the object which the Government has in view is purely educational. Students remain as free as heretofore in their leisure to acquaint themselves, in world which they are about to enter. For support in the enforcement of these orders the Government look with confidence to school and college authorities, to the parents and guardians of scholar-student, and in the case of colleges to the students themselves.

"There is no foundation so far as I am aware for any general complaint against the conduct of college students in the Madras Presidency; and these orders have not been provoked by any action on the part of the students. Indeed they have been issued in justice to the students and to their rights as students, in order to secure to them during their student life full opportunities for study, for their equipment for life, and for the development and formation of character before entering upon their life's work. Immersed as most of us here are in public affairs, is there one of us who does not wish that he were better equipped for the discharge of his public duties? There may be some who are fortunate enough to have no regrets for time here, I congratulate them with all my heart. But I make bold to say that there is not one of us who does not recognize that, once these years have passed by, such opportunities are gone never to return in their early fullness. As the responsibilities of life increase, so do leisure and other means of self-improvement and cultivation diminish, to the infinite regret of most of us and probably to the detriment of our usefulness in the world. Thus these orders are intended to do justice to the students to secure to them their rights as students and the same opportunities as are enjoyed by students in other countries; rights and opportunities which no wise parent and met with some adverse criticism; and in certain quarters, in which paradoxically the force of the educational considerations involved is admitted, the action of the Government has been decried as opposed to the best interests of the country and Government regret to observe that it has been openly challenged by the announcement that counter-measures will be taken. I cannot think however that such criticisms will carry weight. I do not believe that the purpose of the Government in this matter will be misunderstood by students or by parents and guardians or by the college authorities; and it is satisfactory and creditable to those concerned that there should be already signs that in this matter the Madras Government has the support not only of educationists but also of the general body of public opinion."

5. The question was discussed at a Conference of Principals of Colleges held at Government House on the 18th July 1917. The nature of the discussions is set out in the subjoined extract:—

"The Principal of the Maharaja's College, Vizianagram, said that discussion of politics and religion was entirely prohibited in his college, as it was feared that it could only result in acute differences of opinion and friction. It was pointed out that political meetings were generally held in the vacation and that principals of colleges could not exercise influence or control at such times. In some cases parents themselves encouraged their children to work as volunteers at political meetings. A suggestion was put forward that the responsibility should be thrown on the promoters of such meetings. If the principal or any member of the college staff were required to watch and report which students attended political meetings, such espionage might destroy the good relations which should exist between students and teachers. His Excellency remarks that the practice of attending public political meetings had been on the increase among students and that the Government strongly held and were frequently advised that this could not fail to distract them from their proper work. He asked whether it would be possible for that practice to grow up without the cognizance of the principals and staff of the colleges or right that they should disregard it. It was suggested that its control was a matter for the police. His Excellency pointed out that that was entirely contrary to the view of the Government. Dr. Skinner said that if principals of colleges had been addressed privately calling attention to the evils, the effect might have been good. He added that he thought the Government Order was a mistake and expressed the opinion that if students were in these matters to be placed under the surveillance of the college staff mutual confidence would be impaired. Mr. Davey suggested that another course might be adopted: students might be openly and frankly warned not to attend a particular meeting and that a professor would be there to take note of the students who went to that meeting in spite of such warning. He contended that this was not espionage. It was urged, on the other hand, that such a step would be against the course suggested.

"His Excellency observed that in view of the numerous and strong representations which had reached the Government before the order was issued the Government could come to no other conclusion than that the issue of such an order was urgently necessary in the interests not only of students but also of their parents. It was unnecessary for him to repeat upon this occasion what

Pr. 799 T
2/12/07
Chapter VIII A
of the Madras
Educational Rules

(C)

(Q)

(R)

shall obtain orders later on

My 3/11/17

psq / uo

No resolutions were withdrawn.

wait for leg use

My 3/12/17

he had already said publicly as to the purpose of the order, which was briefly to protect the interests and rights of students during the years of their education, to help them to concentrate their efforts on the work proper to those years, and to avoid distractions of all kinds. If students were fully informed as to the limits of conduct laid down for them by their college authorities, no question of espionage must necessarily arise at all. This order was an educational order, issued in the interests of education, and to be enforced not by the police whose employment in any way in this matter the Government considered highly undesirable and indeed out of the question, but by college authorities. For its enforcement the Government looked with confidence to the principals of colleges, recognising that the practical working of the order, for which rigid rules are not at present appropriate, must be left to experience. There would be no alteration of the order. His Excellency concluded by saying that he was particularly grateful to those who had discussed the various bearings of the order from different standpoints, that the Government desired to support and facilitate the endeavours of principals of colleges, and that at all times any further suggestions for achieving the purpose in view would receive full consideration."

6. Subsequent to the issue of the order there have been disturbances among students in certain centres, e.g., Trichinopoly, Guntur, Madanapalle and Madurai. The memorial has also been addressed to Government by the students of the Basel Mission College, Calicut, and a deputation of certain citizens of Trichinopoly headed by the Hon'ble Mr. V. K. Ramanuja Achariyar is shortly to wait on His Excellency the Governor. The special session of the Madras Provincial Conference held recently has also protested against the terms of the order. The principal arguments advanced by the memorialists are:—

(1) that the Government Order is superfluous in the face of the disciplinary regulations contained in Chapter XVIII-A of the Madras Educational Rules;

(2) that the order prohibits these students even from attending political meetings and that it takes away from them a privilege accorded to students in every civilized country and also deprives them of the chances of obtaining valuable education by attending the lectures of eminent men;

(3) that it vests in heads of colleges who are in several cases actuated by strong racial and political prejudices to pronounce upon the character of the speakers at public meetings;

(4) that it gives rise to a pernicious and sometimes revengeful spy system and thereby brings about suspicion and mutual mistrust among the students;

(5) that it has a tendency to make the teachers act as spies and to diminish the respect and love which they otherwise command from their students.

(6) that it is an encroachment upon the legitimate aspirations of the younger generation who ought to be the citizens of the future;

(7) that the mere attendance of students at political meetings cannot prove harmful as apprehended in the Government Order referred to above;

(8) that the powers vested by the Government Order in principals of colleges and heads of institutions are often likely to be abused, inasmuch as the attendance of students at a meeting which may have little or no flavour of politics about it or which cannot be easily defined as purely or quasi-political or even non-political might be interpreted as an abnormal case of the violation of the Government Order and of course as a breach of discipline.

7. The above arguments appear to be based on the assumption that ~~the~~ students require little or no guidance in their most impressionable period of life and that heads of institutions cannot be trusted to exercise the discretion vested in them properly. No attempt is made to refute the fact that serious injury is caused to a student's studies by his attending political meetings and his future prospects in life are thereby frustrated.

8. It will be seen from the Chief Secretary's note, dated the 5th October 1917, that it has been decided not to modify the orders already issued.

9. Orders are requested whether the resolution should be discussed in Council, whether further particulars should be called for and as to who should be in charge of it.

N.K. 2-11-17

CA-3-11-17

There is to be a deputation on the 7th Nov. Please submit this file also to H.E. the Governor for reference. Regarding the five resolutions, I

A question on the subject was also asked at the meeting on 15.10.17. See No. 10313 10.8.17

(H)

fo. 1286 11.10.17

R.R.R. 3.11.17

6
5
Extract from the Proceedings of a Meeting of the Council of the Governor of Fort St. George assembled for the purpose of making Laws and Regulations under the provisions of the Act of Parliament, 5 & 6 Geo. V, Ch. 61.

The Council assembled at the Council Chamber, Fort St. George, at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, the 20th day of November 1917.

RESOLUTIONS RE STUDENTS AND PUBLIC MEETINGS.

The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur V. K. RAMANUJA ACHARIYAR:—"Your Excellency, myself and certain friends of mine at Trichinopoly made a representation on this question on the 7th of this month. I know Your Excellency has this question under consideration, and I know Your Excellency is anxious to make a satisfactory settlement. I will not, therefore, move this resolution."

With the permission of His Excellency the President the following resolution of which notice had been given was then not moved:—

"III This Council recommends to His Excellency the Governor in Council to withdraw G.O. No. 559, Educational, on the subject of students and politics."

His Excellency the PRESIDENT:—"There are other resolutions in the same sense in the names of other Honourable Members. I will be glad if they express acquiescence in the same way."

With the permission of His Excellency the President, the Hon'ble Mr. B. Venkatapati Raju, the Hon'ble Mr. P. Siva Rao, the Hon'ble Mr. K. Sadasiva Bhat and the Hon'ble Mr. B. V. Narasimha Ayyar deferred moving the following resolutions to the same effect standing in their names.

The Hon'ble Mr. B. V. NARASIMHA AYYAR:—

"IV. This Council recommends to His Excellency in Council that G.O. No. 559, dated May 1917, regarding the attendance of students at public meetings, etc., be cancelled."

The Hon'ble Mr. B. VENKATAPATI RAJU:—

"XI. This Council recommends to the Governor in Council that the Government be pleased to reconsider the orders issued in G.O. No. 559, Home (Education), dated 1st May 1917, and confine to the Disciplinary Regulations, Chapter VIII-A of the Madras Educational Rules."

The Hon'ble Mr. P. SIVA RAO:—

"XXVI. This Council recommends to His Excellency the Governor in Council that the G.O. No. 559, Home (Education), dated 1st May 1917, may be cancelled."

The Hon'ble Mr. K. SADASIVA BHAT:—

"XXVII. That this Council recommends to His Excellency in Council that G.O. No. 559, Educational, should be withdrawn."

R. A. GRAHAM,
Acting Secretary to Govt., L. & M. (Legislative) Dept.

Submitted that the paper may be
 one no. 66 of 21.1.18
 misc. or

Recorded

Ca
 18.1.18

my
 21/1/18

Relative Council

inding notes
 reached with the
 how was on the
 of the cancellations
 order in f.

59 & 1.5.17 possibly

to form attending
 local meetings which
 proposed to be moved
 meeting of the
 on 20.11.17 but
 which were not held

am

received
 when the paper
 after it is docketed
 it is very
 request for
 resolution

Ca
 21.1.18

When given for copying
When copied
When examined
When signed

191

REAN AGAIN G.O. No.
191 . DATED

CURRENT No.

CLOSURES TO G. No.

DER OF GOVERNMENT

OF GOVERNMENT.

EMENT WITH DITTO.

SPERS NOT FILED UP, BEING MEANT FOR DESPATCH
IN ORIGINAL.

A A A A A A A

N.B.—
A = Copy in full.
B = Not to be copied.
P = Copy abstract only.
Q = Copy heading only.