

Home (1918) Department.
Education

Ordinary SERIES.

G.O. No. 1496

DATED 25. 11. 18

INDEXED

[Despatch Abstract.]

Legislative Council.-

Communicating to the Director of Public Instruction
an extract of Proceedings connected with Resolution moved at
the meeting of the ----- held on the 13th August 1918
regarding moderation of ^{marks} schools in the S.S.L.C. scheme and
calling for a report on the subject.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Resolution XXII ² XIV O.F.-13.

NOTES.

Reh'd 5/10
16/10

1584
17
894/17
804/17
821/16
726/16
260/16
1161/15
590/15
957/12
477/12
169/12
188/10
649/09
598/09
427/09
212/08
510/08

NOTES CONNECTED WITH RESOLUTION ON MATTERS OF
GENERAL PUBLIC INTEREST.

[For the Meeting of the 13th August 1918]

[SUBJECT.—*Inquiry into the system of moderation of marks for the School Final Certificate scheme.*]

The Hon'ble Mr. A. S. KRISHNA RAO PANTULU:—

~~XVII.~~ *This Council recommends that His Excellency the Governor in Council be pleased to inquire into the present system of moderation of marks for the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate scheme, with a view to abolish or modify that system.*

HOME (EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT.

The system of moderation of marks referred to by the Additional Member has been co-existent with the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate scheme. The need for such system is explained in the following paragraph of the report of the special committee that considered the draft scheme in 1908 (paragraph 15 of the committee's report on page 3 of G.O. No. 510, Educational, dated the 9th July 1908):—

"We have not overlooked the fact that different headmasters may set very different standards and that there may even be cases of unfair treatment of individual pupils. The latter will, we hope, be few in number and they will in all probability come to light. To ensure a reasonable uniformity of standard the opinion of the headmaster will be expressed by means of marks and these marks will be 'moderated' by the marks awarded at the public examination. In this way it will be possible to place the pupils of different schools upon a common footing and at the same time to attach great weight to the opinion of the school staff as to the relative merits of the pupils in any one school."

2. When the scheme was published, criticisms were received which struck a note of alarm at the introduction of this element of moderation in the scheme. The Government in passing orders expressed the hope that the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate Board would be able to devise a suitable method which would not only check the vagaries of individual headmasters but also secure as far as possible uniformity of standard—paragraph 6 (iii) of G.O. No. 427, Educational, dated 21st July 1909.

3. From 1915 onwards the University of Madras came to have a definite representation of University members on the Secondary School-leaving Certificate Board and the work transacted by these members is summarized in the following extract from the last quinquennial report on public instruction:—

"The University nominees are appointed as joint examiners and the question papers are set in consultation with them by the examiners appointed. The instructions to assistant examiners for the valuation of answer books are issued at the examiners' meeting conjointly by the examiner and the joint examiner concerned. The University nominees also assist in editing the reports which examiners have since 1912 been required to submit. Copies of these reports which contain comments on the candidates' work and answers and suggestions for future guidance are communicated in whole or in part to the various schools. A further direction in which a closer connexion between the University and the public examination has been established is in regard to the moderation of marks. Marks have been moderated since 1915, so as to take into account not only the marks gained at the public examination, but also though to a lesser degree, those obtained at school. The moderated marks are entered in the school-leaving certificates in accordance with instructions received from the Syndicate in addition to the public examination marks."

Since 1915, the University has also been controlling admission of secondary school-leaving certificate holders to collegiate courses of study—please see the rules framed by that body to regulate such admissions.

vide the copy
in the file
on Resoln. X

4. At the meeting of the Legislative Council held on the 20th November 1917, the Hon'ble Mr. B. Venkatapati Raju asked the following question:—

"92. Will the Government be pleased to state whether the Government is aware that the moderation system in the secondary school-leaving certificate examination gives scope to headmasters to misuse it by allotting a high percentage of marks to a select few and abnormally low marks to others to keep the average mark of the class normal, ensuring thereby the success of the former, and whether the Government, in view of such a scope for abuse of the moderation system, consider it advisable to suggest the abolition of the system altogether and insist upon lighter test at the public examination so as to secure a greater percentage of passes?"—page 10 of G.O. No. 1582 Home (Education), dated 14th December 1917."

The answer given thereto was as follows:—

"The Government are not aware that the moderation system has been misused. Nor do they consider it desirable to take action in the direction proposed by the Honourable Member."

5. It would thus appear that there is no need for an enquiry as suggested by the Additional Member. The resolution may therefore, it is submitted, be opposed. Orders are requested as to who should take charge of the resolution, whether further information should be called for and whether it should be discussed in the Executive Council.

6. Perhaps the remarks of the Director of Public Instruction may be invited u.o.

E.A.V.—26-7-18.

T.K.—26-7-18.

The moderation of marks, which was originally done solely for the purpose of reducing the marking in schools to a uniform standard, is now evidently used to suit the purpose of the University also, i.e., for declaring candidates eligible for collegiate course. The existing rules for the latter object are put up. There have been some interpellations for the coming meeting complaining against this system. The Director of Public Instruction has noted in connexion with one of them that the matter is being reconsidered, though he was averse to declaring the fact at this stage. If the matter is to be considered again, it has apparently to be first dealt with by the University and we cannot well give an undertaking to reconsider the question. In promising an enquiry, however, there seems to be no harm especially in view of the Director of Public Instruction's statement referred to above; but the last nine words of the resolution should obviously be withdrawn. If the enquiry leads eventually to no modification, the resolution, if accepted, should admit of that result also. The Director of Public Instruction may be consulted.

C. RAMANUJA ACHARIYAR—28-7-18.

R. RAMACHANDRA RAO—28-7-18.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

The Honourable Member does not know what he is talking about. Moderation does no harm to the candidates who can pass or fail either on their moderated or unmoderated marks. What they really want is to pass or fail or both mixed.

I should say that Government is satisfied that there is no occasion for inquiry.

J. H. STONE—30-7-18.

HOME (EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT.

For orders as to whether the resolution may be opposed and whether the Director of Public Instruction may be asked to take charge of it.

C.R.—31-7-18.

R.R.—31-7-18.

Yes.

P[ENTLAND]—31-7-18.

Extract from the Proceedings of an Adjourned 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 re-assembled at the Council Chamber, Fort St. George, at 11 a.m. on Friday, the 16th day of August 1918.

RESOLUTION RE INQUIRY INTO THE SYSTEM OF MODERATION OF MARKS FOR THE SCHOOL FINAL CERTIFICATE SCHEME.

The Hon'ble Mr. A. S. KRISHNA RAO:—"I beg to move—

'XIV. This Council recommends that His Excellency the Governor in Council be pleased to inquire into the present system of moderation of marks for the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate scheme, with a view to abolish or modify that system.'

"I do not think that, while dealing with this resolution, I need enter into any elaborate discussion of the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate scheme, which was referred to in connexion with another resolution yesterday. The main point underlying this resolution is the present system of the moderation of marks for the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate scheme, which has been adopted to help boys in getting admission into colleges. Amongst the regulations laid down by the Syndicate there is one regulation which says that the marks obtained at the public examination or the marks at the school might be moderated according to a certain method suggested in order to secure admission into the college. As to the method to be adopted they definitely laid down:—'The individual mark gained by him for the last year at school in each subject will be multiplied by the average mark for the school at the public examination and the result divided by the average mark of his class for the last year at school. The figure thus obtained will be added to the individual mark gained by him at the public examination and the total will then be divided by two to obtain the final moderated mark.' The chief difficulty which has arisen on account of the system of moderated marks is owing to the uncertain, indefinite and unsatisfactory method of awarding marks for school work and it has not been possible to adopt any definite standard for the purpose of awarding marks for the school work which is being done at the discretion of the headmaster and his assistants. There is no doubt the provision that the inspecting officer will have to check the manner in which the marks are being awarded; but it may be fairly admitted that with the limited time at his disposal, it has not been possible for the inspecting officer to exercise an effective check over marks given for the school work as leisurely and as satisfactorily as they should be checked. This question was considered by the various inspecting officers and some of the opinions received from them are embodied in the report of the Director of Public Instruction for 1916-17 which will bear out what I say. This is what is stated by the Director of Public Instruction: 'The system under which marks are awarded has also evoked criticism. The nature of this criticism may be gauged by the following quotations:—

"Mr. Ransford says: 'Giving of marks is very uneven. It is exceedingly rare to find a teacher who can give marks at all sensibly for oral work, questions which might be suitable for compositions are given in oral work, and the result is an answer of tremendous length and generally abominably expressed.'

"Mr. Brierley says: 'There are loud complaints, however, that the marks system has invested dishonest teachers with inordinate powers, but if the inspecting agency is vigilant it is possible to minimize the causes for such complaints.'

"M.R.Ry. A. Rama Rao says: 'The school marking is often found to be liberal, but this is probably no more than what should be expected, seeing that the school marking is confined to the immediate lesson, which is probably fresh in the minds of the pupils.'

"Mr. Callaghan says: 'The system of giving marks is still unsatisfactory. Marks are seldom given for oral answers in class.'

2 RESOLUTION RE INQUIRY INTO THE SYSTEM OF MODERATION OF MARKS FOR THE SCHOOL FINAL CERTIFICATE SCHEME.

(Mr. A. S. Krishna Rao ; Mr. Venkatapati Raju ; [16TH AUGUST 1918.
the President ; Mr. Stone.)

"Mr. Champion says: 'The marks awarded at the public examination were and are more dependable than those assigned for daily work in school. It is not surprising that college Principals and prospective employers have confined their attention almost exclusively to the marks awarded at the public examination.'

"Mr. Green says: 'Methods of marking in school may have improved theoretically, for most schools can now present a fairly sound mark scheme, but the scheme is rarely carried out satisfactorily. Masters still lack the judgment or the courage to discriminate between the good and the bad. The marks in most schools disclose a dead level of mediocrity which by no means agrees with facts. In the less efficient schools, school marks diverge too favourably from marks obtained in the public examination.'

"Then it is stated: 'It may appear to some from the foregoing remarks and from the subsequent review of the methods of teaching that the picture is gloomy, that the schools are not flourishing and that the ceremonies of dead fashions still cling too closely to the teaching. Such a conclusion would be misleading; the picture has its bright as well as its dark side, there are many successful and efficient schools, and there is no lack of vitality in the teaching. My remarks on the Secondary School-leaving Certificate Scheme may fitly end with four further quotations.' So far as the scheme is concerned, it is a good one. It is clear from this report that so far as the giving of marks in the schools is concerned, it is a matter which calls for an inquiry. The rules for the moderation of marks suggest that apart from individual cases in which teachers did not give marks properly there is a tendency to show the results properly by adjusting the marks. They give very good marks to some to show the school average low. Apart from loud complaints, referred to by one of the Inspectors, there have been complaints which the headmasters or their assistants will openly acknowledge, as to the giving of marks arbitrarily which amounts almost to jobbery. There is a case for inquiry into the system of giving marks. I do not say that the system be done away with. After an inquiry is made, it will be time enough to consider whether the system should be altered."

The Hon'ble Mr. B. VENKATAPATI RAJU:—"I have great pleasure in seconding this proposition. The moderation of marks is not a matter which will help the candidates to secure the necessary number of marks at a public examination by moderating the class marks by certain formulae which human ingenuity can suggest. If the examination had been conducted in the same way as examinations are conducted in other countries, there would not have been any need for moderation. There is both trust and distrust in teachers. Without any system of marks, they can allow teachers to certify as to who can go to the higher class. But when you distrust, you allow teachers to give students marks. With this hard system of examination there is a temptation in the way of teachers to manipulate the marks. If we abolish this moderation system and go back to the old system of examination, where you make the papers more difficult it will be worse. Having in view, the desirability of seeing that a proper number of candidates pass an examination either under the one system or the other, you may devise any system you like which will suit the people at large."

His Excellency the PRESIDENT:—"I understand that there has been an adjustment between the Honourable the Director of Public Instruction and the Honourable Mover by which the Honourable Mover was agreeable to an amendment that has been suggested. Would it not be better to have the final form of the resolution?"

The Hon'ble Mr. J. H. STONE:—"This is the amended resolution."

His Excellency the PRESIDENT:—"Who is responsible for this amended resolution? We must know who is responsible for it, having regard to the business character of this meeting."

The Hon'ble Mr. A. S. KRISHNA RAO:—"I have no objection to the amended resolution. I have asked for an inquiry and the Director of Public Instruction says that there is no objection to having an inquiry made if there is no reference to the moderation system in the resolution."

His Excellency the PRESIDENT:—"The words of the resolution have not been submitted to me."

The Hon'ble Mr. J. H. STONE:—"The point is that I shall have to reply either to the one resolution or the other."

The Hon'ble Mr. A. S. Krishna Rao then read the modified resolution which was as follows:—

"This Council recommends His Excellency the Governor in Council be pleased to cause an inquiry be made into the manner in which marks are awarded for school work under the scheme for the award of secondary school-leaving certificates."

The Hon'ble Mr. J. H. STONE:—"Before saying anything on this resolution, I might just point out to the Council the real object of this moderation. I do not want it to go out to the world that I am in sympathy with this resolution. The object of moderation is to admit of marks, given in the school, being taken into account in determining the eligibility of persons for admission to the University course, by eliminating so far as possible differences of standard as between school and school. This moderation does not do anything to secure fair treatment as between pupil and pupil in the same school. That was not the object, but the Honourable Members said and I have also seen it in the press that teachers in some schools are sacrificing the fair treatment of their pupils in order to get favourable school average. The lower the school average is, the more favourable the moderation operates to the pupils. But the higher

RESOLUTION RE INQUIRY INTO THE SYSTEM OF MODERATION OF MARKS FOR THE SCHOOL FINAL CERTIFICATE SCHEME. 3

16TH AUGUST 1918.] (Mr. Stone ; Mr. Narasimha Ayyar ; the President.)

marks actually given to pupils make the school average high. That is the danger for the teacher who gives high marks. The Headmaster gives higher marks to pupils who do well and give less to others than what they ought to have. The Honourable Member relies a good deal on what is said in the report on Public Instruction. No inspector loudly complains as stated by him. Mr. Brierley merely says that there are loud complaints, but he does not say what he himself thinks about them. He says that 'if the inspecting agency is vigilant it is possible to minimise the causes for such complaints.' I am quite willing to accept the resolution as it stands amended that Government should cause an inquiry to be made. I am willing to have the inquiry made. The Government are not asked to initiate the inquiry, but they will ask the Director of Public Instruction to make the inquiry which he will do through his inspectors.

"I do not myself believe that there is any reason or general cause for complaint in regard to the bona fides of the staff of any school. I do not believe that the staff of any school are trying to juggle with the marks and so treat their pupils unfairly. Although I am prepared to make an inquiry and see what justification there is for these complaints, and also inquire into the general subject of giving marks, I do not wish it to be understood that I am casting any aspersions on the great body of teachers or admitting that their bona fides can be properly called into question."

The Hon'ble Mr. B. V. NARASIMHA AYYAR:—"In its amended shape the resolution is so watery that it is almost worthless, and I do not know what good is going to be done by this amendment. The Government are inquiring into matters of education from time to time and this is one of those inquiries—some inquiry is to be made into some matter. The main object of the mover as disclosed in his original resolution has not been furthered. The main object of our examiners in India seems to be to plough as many candidates as possible."

His Excellency the PRESIDENT:—"I cannot allow a general discussion on the system of examinations."

The Hon'ble Mr. B. V. NARASIMHA AYYAR:—"What there was in the original motion is lost in the amendment. We do not know with what object this inquiry is to be made. We know that the income-tax resolution was moved with one object, but its acceptance and enforcement defeated that object. The same is the case with regard to this resolution. I would, therefore, heartily vote against this amendment, because there are greater chances of evil coming out of it than good."

His Excellency the PRESIDENT:—"I will only make one remark. We are going to have facts before us and we can form our own opinion on the facts collected. That is what the Director of Public Instruction has in view."

The amended resolution was put and agreed to.

N. E. MARJORIBANKS,
Acting Secretary to Govt., L. & M. (Legislative) Dept.

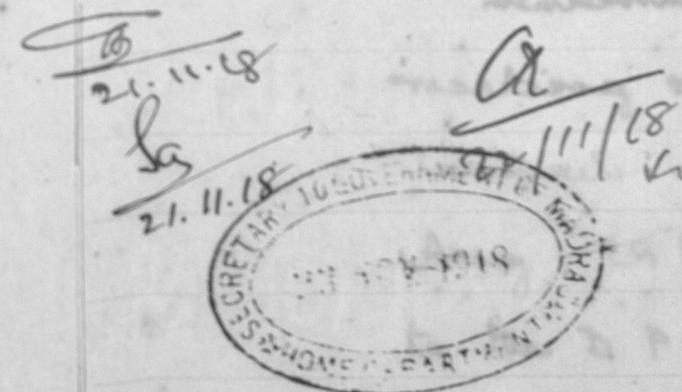
NOTES.

Page 6

None (Ed. 11)

A copy of the printed extract of the Council Process relating to this resolⁿ has been added to the file (pp 4-5 ante). It will be seen therefrom that the resolⁿ was accepted in an amended form and Mr. Stone undertook to have an enquiry made into the manner in which marks are awarded for school-work under the S. S. Ter. Scheme. It is perhaps desirable that the Govt. should eventually get a report as to the results of the enquiry though this question of marks is purely a matter for Dept^l enquiry and action.

2 Subject to orders a draft order is subd^d.



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the hill. The ground is very
loose & the plants are very
small. The plants are very
small & the ground is very
loose.

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284191

DATED

Account No.

ENCLOSURE to C. No.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT

STATEMENT WITH LISTS.

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