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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	506	Press Mis.
Dated	18-5-	1866.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

FROM

A. J. ARBUTHNOT, Esq.,

Chief Secretary to the Government of Fort Saint George,

TO

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,

HOME DEPARTMENT.

SIR,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th October last, forwarding copies of a correspondence which has taken place regarding the constitution of the Postal Department, and its relations to the several local Governments, and calling for the opinion of the Governor in Council on the views and recommendations submitted in Mr. Riddell's letter of the 22nd May last.

2. The Governor General in Council is aware that the Madras Government have, on more than one occasion, expressed their dissatisfaction with the present constitution of the Postal Department, on the ground that under the present system the working of an important branch of the administration is entirely removed from the control and even from the cognizance of the local Government; and although not prepared to endorse the very strong opinions which have been expressed on this point, or to recommend the abolition of the office of Director General, the Madras Government, as at present composed, think it very desirable that some such Rules as those suggested in the 6th paragraph of Mr. Cust's letter of the 14th December 1864, and in the 36th paragraph of Mr. Riddell's letter of the 22nd May 1865, should be laid down, with the view of enabling the local Government to bring their local knowledge and experience to bear upon those points in the management of the Department, the settlement of which must be more or less dependant upon local circumstances.

3. The practical suggestions which His Lordship in Council would make are as follows:—

1st.—That no line of postal communication should be closed, or its direction or character, *e. g.*, from Mail cart to Runners or *vice versa*, altered without a previous reference to the local Government through whose limits it passes.

2nd.—That no Post Office should be closed without a similar reference.

3rd.—That the local Government should have the power to order the opening of any experimental Post Office, and its continuance for six months.

4th.—That the opinion of the local Government should be taken previous to the introduction of any new measure of general interest or importance, such as Railway sorting, &c.

4. The Governor in Council does not concur in the opinion of the Director General, that whatever power over the Post Office is given to the local Governments should be absolute, and such as could be exercised without reference to any other authority. Every one of the matters above referred to, including those specified by Mr. Riddell, on which he recommends that the decision of the local Government should be final, is a matter involving questions of expenditure, on which, under the system of financial administration at present in force, the ultimate decision must rest with the Government of India. For instance, in the case of a line of Postal communication, if it were clear that it did not pay, and that there were no special circumstances to justify its retention, the Madras Government are not prepared to say

that it should not under any circumstances be closed without the consent of the local Government. All that the Madras Government desire is, that in all questions depending upon local circumstances or requirements, the local Government should be consulted, and should have the opportunity of consulting such of its officers as from their position may be qualified to give useful advice. They are confident that any representations, which, under the proposed Rules, they may have occasion to make to the Government of India, or any opinions which may be expressed by them on references made either by the local Postmaster General, or by the Director General, will receive the fullest consideration from the Supreme Government.

5. With reference to Mr. Riddell's remark, that certain matters referred to in paragraph 6 of Mr. Cust's letter are not matters in which any Member of the local Government or any Secretary would be likely to have any special knowledge, I am to observe that the several matters referred to are all more or less connected with local circumstances, and that it would be competent to the Government, if it required further information, to obtain it from the Collector of the District or other local official.

6. The Governor in Council would suggest, in conclusion, that, in the event of the recommendations now made being adopted, the references to the local Government should, as a general rule, be made by the local Postmaster General, accompanied in each case by a statement of his own views.

FORT SAINT GEORGE,
18th May 1866.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

Chief Secretary.

Public Dept.

N^o 3266.

From

S. C. Bayley Esq.
Secretary to the Govt. of India

To

The Secretary to the Govt. of Fort St. George
Dated Simla the 25th October 1865

Home Depart.
Post Office

For

From Secy to the Govt. of India Home Depart.
to Director Genl. of the Post Office N^o 6504
Dated Dec. 1864
From Dir. Genl. of the Post Office to Secy to the Govt.
of India N^o 2013, 22 May 1865

I am directed to forward a copy of the

correspondence noted in the
margin for submission to His
Excellency the Governor in

Council with a request that the Government
of India may be favored with an expression
of the opinion of His Excellency in Council on
the views and recommendations of the Director
General of the Post Office.

I have the honor to be

Sir,
Your most Obedient Servant

S. C. Bayley
Secretary to the Govt. of India

Public Dept.

Memorandum for Order.

Letter from the Secretary Govt of India
Dated 25 Oct. 1865 No 3266.

In the foregoing letter this Govt. is asked for its opinion on the views and recommendations ~~made~~ by the Director General of the Post Office of India in regard to the constitution of that Department and its relations to the several local Govts.

2. Those views and
recommendations are
stated in a letter from
Mr. Riddell in reply to
one addressed to him by
the

St. Louis
Public 1068
Ref. 1068

the University of the
East of London
Thames Dept
L.P. 5266

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Regulating the
operation of Indian the
new & western nations
of the Government of the
the office of the
in the same manner
as the

the Secretary to the Govt
of India in the Home Deptt
in which he was informed
that the Govt. of India
wished "to secure for the
"Local Govts, a cognizance
"of and influence in the
"Postal arrangements con-
"nected with their respective
"jurisdictions and at the
"same time to maintain
"a general central adminis-
"tration of the Department,
"the operations of which
"are to a very large
"extent of an Imperial
"character."

3. It was to be con-
sidered in the first instance
whether, with the view
of carrying out that
object, the present ar-
rangement under which

the Postal arrangements
throughout India are
under the direction and
control of a Director
General, acting under
the immediate orders of
the Govt. of India, should
not be superseded by
an arrangement under
which the agency for the
central control of the
Post Office should form
part of the general cen-
tral Government.

4. It was to be con-
sidered in the second
place whether all ~~the~~
^{of a certain kind}
proposals affecting the
local Post office arrange-
ments in the jurisdiction
of any Local Govt. should
in future be submitted
by the Post Master General
through

through the Local Govt.,
the orders thereon being
communicated direct to
the Post Master General
and a copy sent to the
Local Govt. The follow-
ing is the class of
proposals which the
Govt. of India were of
opinion might be dealt
with in this way:

- (1) The abolition of any
existing Post Office or
Post Line, or the erection
of any new Post Office
or Post line.
- (2) The alteration of the
direction of any Post
line or system of Post lines.
- (3) The change of the char-
acter of any line, e.g.,
from a Runner to a
Mail Cart or horse
line, or vice versa.

(4) The alteration of the
salary of any of the
superior grades of the
Department, such as
Post Masters, Inspectors
and Mail Superintendents.

(5) The alteration of the
local jurisdiction of
Inspectors or Mail Super-
intendents, or the creation
of any new jurisdiction.

(6) The introduction of
any new measure of
general interest or
importance, such as
Railway-sorting.

5. Mr. Riddell discusses
at length the question
whether or not it is
expedient to abolish the
office of Director General.
He is opposed to its abo-
lition on the ground
that such a

measure

measure would leave
the Department without
an executive head and
would make no provision
for what may be termed
in India the imperial
functions of the Post
office as distinguished
from its local duties.
"The Post Office," he observes,
"is required to connect
"the most distant parts
"of the Empire by speedy
"and regular communi-
"cation, to provide for the
"organization of a system
"of main trunk lines with
"branches radiating from,
"and dependent upon,
"the main lines. If the
"Department were without
"a head, the maintenance
"of any such general

"system would be practi-
"cally impossible; a slight
"change of arrangement
"would involve a corres-
"pondence between two
"or three Post Masters General,
"followed up by commu-
"nication between two or
"three Governments; and,
"in the very probable case
"of difference of opinion,
"by an appeal to the
"Govt. of India."

2nd that there is a
mass of petty details
which concern all Post-
offices equally and must
be settled by some cen-
tral authority, - such
as questions regarding
forms, systems of ac-
count, of sorting, claims
for compensation.

that

3^d, that in Northern India
the Post Master General
if placed under the
local administration
would have no fewer
than seven masters.

b. On the second question
raised by the Supreme
Govt., viz., whether certain
classes of proposals
should be submitted by
the Post Master General
through the local Govt.,
Mr Riddell considers
that "whatever power
over the Post office is
given to the local Govt.
ought to be absolute and
such as could be exer-
cised without reference
to any other authority"
and with this view he
~~suggests~~

suggests that no line of
Postal communication
should be closed without
the consent of the local
Govt. through whose limits
it passed; second, that
no Post office should be
closed without the same
consent; third, that the
local Govt. should have
the power to order the
opening of any experi-
mental Post office, and
its continuance for six
months."

7. He is opposed to the
suggestion that the pro-
posals of the Postmaster
General on a certain class
of subjects should be
submitted through the
local Govt. His objection
is that "if proposals
by

by Post Masters General were to be transmitted through the local Govts., either the Director General's authority must be entirely set aside, or he must be placed in the invidious position of critic on the recommendations of all the Govts. of India."

D. Hitherto the Madras authorities have been very much opposed to the constitution of the Postal Department as at present organized. When the present arrangement of placing the Post of India under a Director General was first proposed by the Post office

office Commissioners in 1857, Mr. H. Forbes, the Madras member of the Commission recorded his protest against the arrangement in the following terms.

"It is part of the plan proposed by my colleagues, that henceforth the Post office in India shall be one great Department, and directed by one individual; that no local Govt. shall have any communication with it whatever, and that in the Govt. of India alone shall be vested its patronage and control. In support of this plan it is urged, that as there is but one legislative enactment, one code of rules, and one general system

"system, it is necessary
"that one individual should
see that uniformity of
practice is preserved. Se-
condly, that the want of
one competent controlling
authority over the whole
"has given rise to diversity
of practice, highly injurious
to the public service;" and,
thirdly, that as there is but
one Postmaster General for
Great Britain and Ireland,
so there needs but one for
the British Empire in India.
That Empire extends from
Behar to Cape Comorin,
from Kurrachee to Singapore,
and its means of communi-
cation are very generally
men on foot. The Director
General, if appointed, will
probably reside at Simla,
and will be expected to
exercise a careful super-
vision over the post throughout
Bengal, Madras, Bombay
and the settlements across
the bay. I am quite unable
to

"to see any analogy between
"this position and that of the
"Postmaster General in London,
"the utmost limit of whose
"control may be reached in
"a few hours by the rail, and
"whose orders may be con-
veyed in a few seconds by
"the telegraph, the furthest
"point of whose administration
"is, in fact, less distant from
"his office than is the north
"of Canada from the south
"of its adjoining province of
"Malabar. This Director General
"though he may be selected
"from any Presidency, can
"belong to only one; and yet
"in his hands it is proposed
"to vest the power of con-
firming or annulling the
"appointment of every dāk
"writer, in every part of
"India, to make which power
"of any value it must be
"presupposed that he is per-
sonally acquainted with the
"merits and demerits of all
"the candidates for office. —
"India, it is true, is one Empire,
"but no single code of laws
has

1851
"has yet been enacted for the
"government of its diverse
"races. The judicial system
"differs in each Presidency,
"the Revenue Administration
"varies, and even its financial
"accounts, in which, if in
"anything, uniformity would
"be practicable, are kept
"on a totally different plan
"under all the different Govts.
"Diversity of practice in detail
"there probably has been, and
"in the peculiarities of the
"Govt. of India such diversity
"must ever be; but I cer-
"tainly am not aware of
"any difference which has
"been highly injurious to the
"public service; nor do I
"conceive that the Govt. of India
"will be willing to purchase
"exemption from the few
"references occasionally made
"on postal questions, at a cost
"of Rs 50,000 a year. It is
"my opinion that, in this
"straining after uniformity
"of practice, we shall lose
"not only the object we profess
"to have in view, but all effectual
"control."

"control also; that the utmost
"endeavours of the Director General
"will fail to attain his end; and
"that his entire ignorance of
"the requirements of at least
"two-thirds of his charge, and
"the immense distance from
"which he will exercise control
"will make his interference
"an unmitigated evil wherever
"it shall be exercised. The
"office will cost the State
"annually half a lac of
"rupees, and will be either
"mischievous or a sinecure.
"I am also, as a general prin-
"ciple, opposed to the system
"of centralization which the
"proposition involves. It has of
"late years been imperceptibly
"gaining ground, and the
"Govt. servants in the provinces
"have acutely felt, by the
"diminution of their own
"authority, how, by slow degrees,
"all power is centering at the
"Presidency. This proposition
"is a great extension of the
"evil, and I am unable to see
"how, when all other depart-
"ments have suffered from
"the minor evil, its exaggera-
"tion should be beneficial to
"the

"the post. It is not necessary
 "for me to point out to the
 "Govt. the many inconveniences
 "which would result from
 "removing from its hands
 "all the patronage of, and all
 "the control over the post, a
 "Department which, in England,
 "is considered to be so inti-
 "mately connected with the
 "Govt., that its chief is,
 "always changed with the
 "Ministry; nor need I enlarge
 "on the anomalous position
 "in which many of its servants
 "would be placed when owing,
 "in matters of detail, a double
 "allegiance to Simla & Madras.
 "But as the proposition
 "will go before the Govt. as
 "made by the Commission
 "of which I am a member,
 "I am bound in honesty to
 "record my disapproval of its
 "every part."

4. When the arrangement
 of relieving the Postmasters
 General from all de-
 pendance on the Local
 Govts. was laid before
 the late Court of Directors,

Despatches
 15th Dec. 1852
 printed in Parliamentary
 Blue Book.
 The volume being
 large is not sent in
 illustration. All
 but the first note
 on the matter under
 illustration is
 given in this number.
 -ransom

the Court objected to the
 measure as being "wholly
 at variance with the
 principles and usage
 which obtains in other
 departments" and as
 not being "at all neces-
 sary for the purpose of
 securing the required
 uniformity of practice".
 The Court of Directors did
 "not doubt that advantage
 would arise from placing
 the Postmasters General
 at each Presidency in
 immediate correspondence
 with the officer who,
 under whatever denomi-
 nation, might be vested
 with the general super-
 vision of the Post office
 Department throughout
 India", but they were
 "of opinion that all
 "requisite arrangements
 might be

might be made without
~~that~~ supersession of the
"authority of the local
Govts which the Com-
missioners contemplated"
and which the Court
stated they should
"consider as most inju-
rious and objectionable".

The arrangement
however, as proposed
by the majority of the
Commissioners was
wholly ~~lost~~ ^{ruined} and since
1854, the local Govts
have exercised no control
over the Postal Department.

10. In 1861 in a letter
addressed to the Govt of
India in the course of
a correspondence re-
garding the relations of
the Supreme and Local
Govts, the ~~Indian~~ Govt

4th January 1861.

Received
by
the
Secretary
to
the
Govt
of
India

adverted to the arrange-
ment as one by which
in their opinion the
action of the Local Govt.
was most injudiciously
crippled. They remarked
that the public and
private convenience of
a Presidency depended
much on the smooth
working of the Postal
Department which
pervades all its Districts,
but over which the Local
Govts have now no
control whatever. The
letter went on to say, -
"the Govt cannot consider
that this tends to good
administration, or is
consistent with the
"dignity of Govts entrusted
"with the rule of extensive
"territories. The Post-
office Act, supplemented
by

by such orders as the
"Supreme Govt. might see
"cause from time to time
"to issue, would ensure
"uniformity of system
"and practice, and the
"Govt. consider that
"economy and other
"advantages would be
"gained by restoring the
"internal management
"of the department to
"the local Govts within
"their ranges. The Govt.
"are not aware that
"any real improvement
"has taken place since
"the expensive appoint-
"ment of Director of
"Post offices for all India
"was made. Such an
"officer must trust to
"the local Postmasters
~~General for the internal~~

X 11th Decr:
1862.

"management of the de-
"partment within their
"Presidencies, and it appears
"to Govt. that time and
"money would be econo-
"mized if these officers
"were placed under their
"own Governments, instead
"of corresponding with a
"distant official."

" In the following
year the subject was
again brought forward
in a letter from this Govt.
in the Revenue Depart-
ment with reference to
a proposal made by
the Director General that
the District Post which
is now managed by the
Collectors should be
placed under the Post-
master General. It was
stated in this letter that

the

the Govt. were favorable to the principle of the Director General's proposal and admitted that it was not desirable that two sets of Postal establishments under different authorities should be maintained as is now the case but that they were not prepared to transfer the District establishments to the Postmaster General if the whole Department was to continue, as the General Department at present is absolutely beyond their control and even cognizance. Reference was then made to various defects in the present ~~arrangement~~

in matters of detail of a nature which could not be dealt with by the Imperial Govt. and of undue interference on the part of the Director General, the instance given of such interference being an order for the reduction of the wages of runners to a rate below that which could be earned by any daily labourer.

12. Mr. Riddell in his letter now under consideration notices this communication at some length. He objects that, except in the statement regarding the reduction of the runners' wages, the complaints preferred were too vague to be dealt with satisfactorily.

H-

It appears to me
that for some time
past the present system
has worked well, and
that if the suggestions
made by Mr. Riddell
in the 36th para of his
letter are carried out
with the addition that
the mode by which a
mail is conveyed shall
not be changed without
a previous reference
to the local Govt., no
very valid ground
of complaint will
remain. It must be
borne in mind that
up to the time at which
the Madras Govt. pre-
ferred this last com-
plaint against the
present system, the
local Govt. of the

no means efficient; and
I think it is very ques-
tionable whether under
the same management
the dissatisfaction of the
Govt and of the public
would not have been
quite as great if at that
time the control over the
Postmaster General had
rested entirely with the
local Govt. A fair
test of the efficiency
or otherwise of such a
Department as the
Post Office is the frequency
or infrequency of
complaints. For some
time past the number
of complaints of mis-
management have
been infinitesimally
small, whether in the
public prints or in
communications

communications ad-
dressed to Govt by
public officers or
private individuals.
Orders are requested.

by R

It is clear from para 4 of Mr Curtis's letter
of 14 Dec 1864 that the force of India have
no intention of returning to the state
of things which existed prior to 1854
or of replacing the ^{long} Port-Masters general
under the direct & sole control of their
superior for. This question is then for
past discussion -

For the rest it seems to me that the
suggestions contained in para 36 of
Mr Biddell's letter might be acquiesced
in - with the further provision that the
land as far as ^{before 1854} is concerned on any
- clause -

11. III. VI in para 6 of Mr Curtis's letter -
This might be tried for say a year, when
it might be seen how the modified sys.
- even worked and what if any
further changes were desirable

gp
I agree with Mr. Pycroft - and will adopt
the course he has proposed. Our Fort at Delhi
is managed with great efficiency, & although the
remarks recorded by Mr H. Forbes read well,
much of what was therein feared by that
Gentleman has proved to be visionary & baseless.
W.D.

I subscribe to the opinions enunciated above by
Mr. Pycroft and Mr. Phillips. N.P.

dis.

Public Department.
No. 506.

To

The Secretary to the Government
of India,
Home Department.

Sir,

I am directed to
acknowledge the receipt of
your letter of the 25th October
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2. The Governor General

Public Secy. 18 May 1866 L. 593

in Council is aware that the Madras Government have, on more than one occasion, expressed their dissatisfaction with the present constitution of the Postal Department, on the ground that, under the present system, the working of an important branch of the administration is entirely removed from the control and even from the cognizance of the local Government; and although not prepared to endorse the very strong opinions which have been expressed on this point, or to recommend the abolition of the office of Director General, the Madras Government, as at present composed, think

think it very desirable that some such rules as those suggested in the 6th para of Mr. Cus's letter of the 14th December 1864, and in the 36th para of Mr. Riddell's letter of the 22nd May 1865, should be laid down with the view of enabling the local Government to bring their local knowledge and experience to bear upon those points in the management of the Department, the settlement of which must be more or less dependant upon local circumstances.

3. The practical suggestions which His Lordship in Council would make are as follows:

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ment desire is that, in
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and should have the
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occasion to make to the
Government of India, or any
opinion which may be
expressed by them on references
made either by the local
Postmaster General or by
the Director General, will
~~not be rejected by the~~
~~Supreme Government without~~
having received the fullest
consideration from the Supreme
Government.
5. With reference to Mr.
Riddell's remark that
certain matters referred to
in para 6 of Mr. Cust's
letter are not matters in
which any member of the
local Government or any
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that the several matters
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ment, if it required
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Fort St. George,
18th May 1855

Public 1866 & 1867.

At 5000.

To
The Secretary of the Post
Office
India.

Recd 18th May 1866.