

Government of Madras

REVENUE (SPECIAL) (WAR) DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. 248, 2nd June 1919

Imperial Indian Relief Fund

Requesting Collectors of districts to bring His Excellency the Viceroy's appeal for further funds for the — to the notice of the public in their respective districts.

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

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

Number of copies	Letter
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Government of Madras

REVENUE (SPECIAL) (WAR) DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. 248, 2nd June 1919

Imperial Indian Relief Fund

Requesting Collectors of districts to bring His Excellency the Viceroy's appeal for further funds for the — to the notice of the public in their respective districts.

Read—the following paper:—

Letter—from Major C. W. Gwynne, Secretary, Indian Soldiers' Board and Joint Honorary Secretary, Imperial Indian Relief Fund.
To—the Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras.
Dated—Simla, the 3rd May 1919.

- I am directed to address you on the subject of the appeal for further funds for the Imperial Indian Relief Fund recently made by His Excellency the Viceroy. In order that the necessity for that appeal may be better understood, I am to enclose a note on the administration of the Fund hitherto, the objects it has had in view, its present financial position and the reasons which have rendered an appeal necessary at this stage. The information contained in this note from which details have been purposely omitted because the publication of an elaborate report would be inopportune before the *post bellum* schemes have been carried out, may, it is hoped, prove of assistance in bringing the appeal home to the public.

2. While contributions are urgently required for the Imperial Indian Relief Fund, it is recognized that the numerous calls upon the public, to which there has never failed to be a generous response, have greatly increased the difficulty of raising money at the present time. The experience gained, however, by local Governments during the war will indicate to them the best methods of bringing in fresh contributions and of tapping new sources and I am accordingly to say that it is not proposed to hold a second 'Our Day,' nor to offer any suggestions for extracting money from those who are unwilling to give. Nor is any quota to be fixed which each province should be asked to make endeavours to reach. It is thought that provincial patriotism will supply the necessary stimulus, and that each province will be able to devise means appropriate to its own special circumstances of raising contributions to the limit of its capacity.

3. Finally, I am to say that it is hoped that, in spite of the great difficulties of raising money during a year of scarcity, following four years of war during which many appeals have been made to the public, difficulties which are fully realized by the Central Committee, no effort will be spared to ensure a prompt, generous and effective response, in every district in every province, to this appeal. The whole of the funds so collected should be credited to the Central Fund, as they will be utilized for the *post bellum* scheme. Out of the total collections, money will be allotted to the provinces in the ratio of their needs; and each province will be invited to frame its own proposals for the relief of the Indian classes of beneficiaries within its jurisdiction, subject to the final approval of the Indian Soldiers' Board, and to act as the almoners of the Board.

Copy of the foregoing forwarded, for necessary action, to the Foreign and Political Department.

ENCLOSURE

A note on the administration of the Imperial Indian Relief Fund.

In general terms the object of the Imperial Indian Relief Fund has been the alleviation of distress in India caused by the war: in particular the primary objects have been—

- (i) to relieve distress among the families of those who have gone to the front;
- (ii) to assist the widows and orphans of those who die in service.

In utilizing the amounts collected no distinction has been made between officer and private, European and Indian, combatant and non-combatant, the only tests being absence on field service and the straitened circumstances of the family.

A secondary object has been to relieve acute local distress among the poorer classes of the people caused directly by the war and through no fault of their own.

2. It is unnecessary to describe in detail how relief has been carried out. In brief, assistance has been given in the case of Indian classes falling under (i) through the agency of Brigade Area Committee while to those falling under (ii) immediate assistance has been given as soon as the heir appears before the pension board. Donations have also been given of Rs. 100 and Rs. 50, respectively, to Indian officers and men when invalided out of the service. In the case of British personnel, both officers and men, relief has been dispensed through the agency of the Soldiers and Sailors Families Association, the case of each family being considered by the Committee of that Association on its merits, and funds being allotted by the Imperial Indian Relief Fund. In addition, in the case of the families of British soldiers killed or who died on active service and of permanently disabled soldiers domiciled in India, a donation of Rs. 200 has been made through Brigade Area Committees and a second donation of the same amount after a period of six months to the families of soldiers killed or who died on service.

The secondary object, namely, the relief of acute local distress among the poorer classes of the people has been carried out by the provincial committees established in each province. It has not been the policy of the Fund to make good losses suffered by the prosperous or well-to-do, nor to maintain in idleness labourers who have lost employment and have made no effort to obtain fresh work.

3. Up to date approximately 65 lakhs have been allotted by the Central Committee to Brigade Area Committees, and 3½ lakhs to the Soldiers and Sailors Families Association. In order that local distress might be relieved, Local Governments were permitted to retain up to 25 per cent of their collections except in the case of Bombay who retained the whole but promised to make a contribution of 15 lakhs to the Central Fund at the conclusion of hostilities. The total retained by provinces amounted on 31st December to Rs. 14,81,157, of which Rs. 7,99,665 has been spent.

4. Grants and donations for the purchase of extra medical comforts for the sick and wounded, to the Officers Families Fund and Indian Soldiers Fund in England, Indian Comforts for Troops Fund, St. John Ambulance Association, officers and crews of vessels sunk by the enemy, convalescent officers, Queen Mary's Technical School for disabled Indian soldiers, Bombay, and to the families of Postal and Telegraph employes who have gone on active service, have been made from time to time and substantial sums have been expended, though small in proportion to those devoted to the main objects of the fund.

5. The total amount spent by the Central Fund up to the end of February 1919 was approximately 92½ lakhs and the balance in hand on the same date was approximately 77½ lakhs.

6. Thus the grant of immediate assistance to sufferers of all classes in the manner indicated above has been kept steadily in view all through the war, but it is only the first step towards the fulfilment of one of the main objects of the fund, namely, the assistance of the widows and orphans of those who die in service and of officers and men who have been permanently incapacitated for further service. Though the immediate grant of whatever could be provided in all such cases would have been preferable, there were unknown factors, such as the total number of casualties at the end of the war, the duration of hostilities, and the final balance at the disposal of the committee, which prevented more than *ad interim* relief being given. The final measure of relief therefore had to be postponed to the end of the war. A *post bellum* scheme was outlined, which, in so far as Indian classes are concerned, has already been placed before local Governments. The principles on which it was proposed that relief should be assessed were the following:—

- (i) that an endeavour should be made to discriminate between cases of dependents and to grant relief only to deserving cases and with regard to the varying necessities of each case;
- (ii) that assistance should not be restricted to the nominated heir but should be given to dependents who stand nearest in relationship and are most in need of help;
- (iii) that the relief given should take the form of lump sum grants in preference to additional pensions except in the case of minors for whom a post office annuity might frequently be the most suitable form.

A provincial machinery was devised in order that the necessary investigation and classification might be carried out.

It was recommended that cases should be divided into the following three categories:

- (i) very necessitous cases amounting to destitution, e.g., widows with several small children and little or no means of support;
- (ii) medium cases where there is not destitution but a future decent livelihood will be a matter of difficulty;
- (iii) cases where the death of the deceased has resulted in no more than some fall in the standard of comfort and living.

7. The expectation was that each case would be considered on its merits, and with due regard to the circumstances of the beneficiary. At a comparatively early stage of the war, the average grant which it was hoped that the Committee would be able to allot in each class of case was worked out; but it is undesirable to publish details now, lest hopes be aroused which the vast increase in the number of sufferers might prevent us from fulfilling. Suffice it to say that, with the conclusion of hostilities, a rough estimate has been prepared of the cost of relief on our original hypothetical scale for both Indian and European classes. For Indian classes one and a half crores will be required as far as can be judged at present: and for European classes probably not less than 50 lakhs. These figures are of course very rough, as casualties are still being reported, with the result that frequent variations are rendered necessary in the calculations made, but they serve to indicate approximately the requirements of the fund.

8. The balance now at the disposal of the Committee is clearly insufficient to carry out these schemes and for this reason His Excellency the Viceroy has made an appeal for an additional crore of rupees. As a matter of administrative convenience it was felt that the relief of Indian classes would be more appropriately carried out through the agency of the Indian Soldiers' Board, which has been instituted with the definite object of safeguarding the welfare and interests of Indian soldiers. Accordingly, with His Excellency's approval, the administration of the funds which are being, and will continue to be, allotted for Indian classes has been taken over by the Indian Soldiers' Board. It has been decided that that Board should be invited to utilize for the relief of Indian classes three-fourths of the total funds available. The remaining fourth will be used for the relief of European classes, and will continue for the present at all events to be directly administered by the Committee of the Imperial Indian Relief Fund.

9. The Indian Soldiers' Board has already addressed local Governments on the subject of the relief of Indian classes and has asked to be furnished at an early date with the tabulated totals of the categories mentioned in paragraph 6. It is hoped that the information thus supplied will indicate provincial needs in the matter of relief. But there is no intention on the part of the Indian Soldiers' Board to adhere to any rigid or uniform system of relief for India as a whole. Provinces will be asked, when the Board is in a position to estimate with some degree of accuracy the amount likely to be available for each province, to formulate and submit for approval their own schemes with due regard to provincial circumstances, and ultimately to act as the almoners of the Board.

C. W. GWYNNE.

Order—No. 248, Revenue (Special) (War), dated 2nd June 1919.

Communicated to all Collectors who are requested to bring His Excellency the Viceroy's appeal to the notice of the public in their respective districts.

(True extract)

A. Y. G. CAMPBELL,
Acting Secretary to Government.

To all Collectors of districts.

Copy to the Private Secretary to His Excellency the Governor.
" Military
" Public (Political) Department (with notes).
" other Departments of the Secretariat.

Editors' Table.

REVENUE (SPECIAL) (WAR) DEPARTMENT.

NOTES CONNECTED WITH G.O. No. 248, REVENUE (SPECIAL) (WAR),
DATED 2ND JUNE 1919

[SUBJECT.— *Imperial Indian Relief Fund.*]

Previous papers :

G.O. 1099, Public, 1st September 1914
" 872 " 30th June 1917

Letter from the Indian Soldiers' Board, No. 98-I.S.B., dated 31st March 1919

*From the Honorary Secretary, Imperial Indian Relief Fund, No. 98-I.S.B., dated
3rd May 1919.*

Draft order put up is sent to Public u.o. for acceptance. I believe the draft will
not suggest the infringement of the rules too much.

A. Y. G. CAMPBELL—17-5-19.

PUBLIC DEPARTMENT.

The rule which has any bearing is perhaps special local ruling 1 in Appendix A
to Government Servants' Conduct Rules. Submitted that the file may be passed on
to Home (Miscellaneous) who deal with Government Servants' Conduct Rules.

T.M.R.—21-5-19.

A.H.—21-5-19.

E. M. GAWNE—22-5-19.

HOME (MISCELLANEOUS) DEPARTMENT.

Submitted that this department need not raise any objection to the draft order.
Attention is in this connexion invited to paragraph 2 of G.O. No. 1099, Public,
dated the 1st September 1914, in which the Government stated that there was no
objection to Collectors and Divisional Officers convening and speaking at public
meetings in the matter of inviting subscriptions for the Madras Presidency War
Relief Committee. The draft order in the present case is therefore unobjectionable.
With these remarks the file may be returned u.o. to Revenue (Special) (War).

T.C.N.—26-5-19.

P.DER.—26-5-19.

C. H. BROWN—27-5-19.

REVENUE (SPECIAL) (WAR) DEPARTMENT.

May issue?

S. WADSWORTH—28-5-19.

A.Y.G.C.—29-5-19.

The Government Order should go on the Editors' Table to secure greater
publicity. Please circulate also to His Excellency.

May be done when sending copy of Govern-
ment Order.

A.Y.G.C.—30-5-19.

Please also separately ask Political
to consider communication to the Native
States in this Presidency.

L. D[AVIDSON]—30-5-19.

A.Y.G.C.—30-5-19.

W[ILLINGTON]—30-5-19.

Issue.

A.Y.G.C.—31-5-19.

[G.O. No. 248, Revenue (Special) (War), dated 2nd June 1919.]

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