# THE REPORT

OF THE

# UNIVERSITY EDUCATION COMMISSION

(DECEMBER 1948-AUGUST 1949)

VOLUME I



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#### INTRODUCTION

## Appointment and Procedure of the Commission

- 1. Appointment of the Commission. 2. Members of the Commission.
- 3. Terms of Reference. 4. Procedure of Work. 5. Inauguration.
- 6. Tour of Universities. 7. General Observations,
- 1. Appointment of the Commission.—We the members of the Commission appointed by the Government of India "to report on Indian University Education and suggest improvements and extensions that may be desirable to suit present and future requirements of the country" have the honour to submit our Report. We are grateful for the opportunity which we were given to survey the work of the universities, to assess their contribution to the educational progress of the nation, to appraise the value of their objectives and achievements and to examine their structure and functions in view of the great changes that have occurred in the political, economic and social life of the country in recent years.
- 2. Members of the Commission.—The scope of our enquiry is set forth in the resolution of the Government of India, Ministry of Education, No. 55-5/47-D/3, dated the 4th November 1948.

The following were appointed members of the Commission:-

- 1. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, M.A., D. Litt., LL.D., F.B.A., Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics at the University of Oxford. (Chairman)
- 2. Dr. Tara Chand, M.A., D. Phil. (Oxon), Secretary and Educational Adviser to the Government of India.
- 3. Dr. (now Sir) James F. Duff, M.A., (Cantab), M. Ed. (Manchester), LL.D. (Aberdeen), Vice-Chancellor, University of Durham.
- 4. Dr. Zakir Hussain, M.A., Ph.D., D. Litt., Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi—(now Vice-Chancellor, Muslim University, Aligarh).
- 5. Dr. Arthur E. Morgan, D.Sc., D. Eng., LL.D., Former President, Antioch College, First Chairman, Tennessee Valley Authority, President, Community Service Inc.
- 6. Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, D.Sc., LL.D., D.C.L., F.R.C.O.G., F.A.C.S., Vice-Chancellor, University of Madras.

- 7. Dr. Meghnad Saha, D.Sc., F.R.S., Palit Professor of Physics; Dean, Faculty of Science; and President, Post-Graduate Council of Science, University of Calcutta.
- 8. Dr. Karm Narayan Bahl, D.Sc., (Panj.); D. Phil. and D. Sc. (Oxon), Professor of Zoology, University of Lucknow.
- Dr. John J. Tigert, M.A. (Oxon.) LL.D., Ed. D., D.C.L.,
   D. Litt., L.H.D., formerly Commissioner of Education of the United States, and President Emeritus of the University of Florida.
- 10. Shri Nirmal Kumar Sidhanta, M.A. (Cantab.), Professor of English and Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Lucknow. (Secretary).
- 3. Terms of Reference.—The terms of reference of the Commission were to consider and make recommendations in regard to:—
  - (i) The aims and objects of university education and research in India.
  - (ii) The changes considered necessary and desirable in the constitution, control, functions and jurisdiction of universities in India and their relations with Governments, Central and Provincial.
  - (iii) The Finance of universities.
  - (iv) The maintenance of the highest standards of teaching and examination in the universities and colleges under their control.
  - (v) The courses of study in the universities with special reference to the maintenance of a sound balance between the Humanities and the Sciences and between pure science and technological training and the duration of such courses.
  - (vi) The standards of admission to university courses of study with reference to the desirability of an independent university entrance examination and the avoidance of unfair discriminations which militate against Fundamental Right 23 (2).
  - (vii) The medium of instruction in the universities.
  - (viii) The provision for advanced study in Indian culture, history, literatures, languages, philosophy and fine arts.
    - (ix) The need for more universities on a regional or other basis.

- (x) The organisation of advanced research in all branches of knowledge in the universities and Institutes of higher research in a well co-ordinated fashion avoiding waste of effort and resources.
- (xi) Religious instruction in the universities.
- (xii) The special problems of the Banaras Hindu University, the Aligarh Muslim University, the Delhi University and other institutions of an all-India character.
- (xiii) The qualifications, conditions of service, salaries, privileges and functions of teachers and the encouragement of original research by teachers.
- (xiv) The discipline of students, hostels and the organisation of tutorial work and any other matter which is germane and essential to a complete and comprehensive enquiry into all aspects of university education and advanced research in India.
- 4. Procedure of Work.—We were anxious to receive the help of those who had experience of university education or had shown interest in its problems. A comprehensive questionnaire was circulated to the members of the Constituent Assembly, Premiers and Ministers of Education in the Provinces and States, Vice-Chancellors of universities, Directors of Public Instruction, Heads of Colleges and Heads of Departments in universities, educationists, publicists and other prominent men throughout the country. In all about 2,900 copies of the questionnaire were sent out.

Correspondents were invited to submit answers on those aspects of the university problem in which they were specially interested. About 600 replies were received from the people addressed. The very full and varied answers received in response to our enquiry provide an interesting survey of the present conditions of university education. We are grateful to our witnesses and correspondents for their most helpful co-operation. The Questionnaire and summaries of written memoranda and of evidence are submitted in a separate volume. The publication in extenso of the memoranda and evidence would have required several volumes and might not have added appreciably to the value of the present abridged account. They are, however, sent to the Ministry of Education for purposes of record.

We also obtained from the colleges and institutions of the universities statistical and other information of importance for the consideration of our problem, relating to the number of students, residential accommodation, salaries of teachers, security of tenure, age of retirement, published contributions by the teachers, number

of working days etc. We wish to express our thanks to the Vice-Chancellors, Directors of Public Instruction, Registrars, Heads of Colleges, and others for their great courtesy in helping us with this information.

Our recommendations are largely based on the valuable evidence and the constructive suggestions we have received. We have endeavoured to interpret the hopes and ambitions of university men and women and tried to give form to their aspirations and ideals.

5. Inauguration.—The Commission held its first meeting in New Delhi on 6th December, 1948, when the Hon'ble Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Minister for Education, Government of India, addressed the meeting and explained to us Government's intentions in regard to the purpose and scope of the inquiry.

6. Tour of Universities.—After preliminary discussions the members of the Commission visited the different university centres as

follows :-

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13th to 15th December, 1948 .. Delhi University, Delhi.
19th December 1948 to 2nd .
  January, 1949 ...
                          .. Madras University, Madras.
3rd to 7th January, 1949
                          .. Osmania University, Hyderabad (Dn.)
                          .. Nagpur University, Nagpur.
8th to 11th January, 1949
12th to 19th January, 1949
                          ... Calcutta University, Calcutta (and
                                 Viswabharati, Shanti-Nikatan).
20th to 23rd January, 1949 .. Allahabad University, Allahabad.
24th to 29th January, 1949 .. Lucknow University, Lucknow.
30th
                        2nd
        January
                 to
                           .. Muslim University, Aligarh.
  February, 1949 🗼
9th to 14th February, 1949
                           .. Calcutta University, Calcutta.
15th to 17th February, 1949 ... Gauhati University, Gauhati.
18th to 20th February, 1949 .. Patna University, Patna.
                          .. Hindu University, Banaras.
21st to 25th February, 1949
26th to 28th February, 1949 . . Agra University, Agra.
                           .. Rajputana University, Jaipur.
Ist to 4th March, 1949
5th to 6th March, 1949
                           .. Ahmedabad.
6th to 12th March, 1949
                          .. Bombay University, Bombay.
                           .. Utkal University, Cuttack.
14th to 17th March, 1949
18th to 20th March, 1949.
                           .. Andhra University, Waltair.
22nd to 24th March, 1949
                          .. Annamalai University, Annamalainagar.
26th to 28th March, 1949
                          . Madras University, Madras.
                          .. Travancore University, Trivandrum.
29th to 31st March, 1949
                          .. Mysore University, Bangalore.
1st to 2nd April, 1949
3rd to 6th April, 1949
                          .. Mysore University, Mysore.
                          .. Mysore University, Bangalore.
6th to 7th April, 1949
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11th to 12th April, 1949 ... Saugor University, Saugor.
13th April, 1949 ... Jamia Milia Islamia, Delhi.
29th to 30th April, 1949 ... East Panjab University, Solan (Simla ... Hills).
15th to 16th July, 1949 ... Baroda University, Baroda.

15th to 16th July, 1949 ... Baroda University, Baroda.
17th to 19th July, 1949 ... Poona University, Poona.

The names of the universities and the colleges visited and the persons interviewed are found in Appendix 'A'.

Thus we were able to obtain a great deal of direct knowledge of the working of the universities and colleges. Within the limited time at our disposal, it was not possible for us to visit all the institutions and colleges which we would have wished to, but in the centres which we visited, we had discussions with the Ministers of Education, Vice-Chancellors, Members of the Syndicate (or Executive Council), leaders of public opinion, Principals and Professors and other members of the Staff, met them in small groups and heard their representatives. In many places we met the representatives of the students and acquainted ourselves with their points of view. We are indebted to them all for their very helpful attitude.

We are sensible of the inconvenience we caused by our visits to the university authorities and other generous hosts who looked after our comforts wherever we went. We gratefully acknowledge not only the generous hospitality but the enthusiastic co-operation we received from individuals, organisations and agencies, official and non-official. When we are indebted to so many, it will be invidious to mention names but we cannot refrain from mentioning the gracious hospitality extended to us in Government House, Lucknow by Shrimati Sarojini Naidu immediately before her fatal illness.

7. General Observations.—We were everywhere struck by a deep general awareness of the importance of higher education for national welfare and an uneasy sense of the inadequacy of the present pattern. While it is generally recognized that the universities should provide the best teaching over the entire field of knowledge of which its own resources may permit, that they should offer this teaching to the widest range of students irrespective of class, sex, caste or religion, that they should extend by original inquiry the frontiers of learning and, above all, mould and shape students not merely by the training of the intellect but by the disciplining of the spirit, university men and women were aware of serious shortcomings in the functioning of the universities in regard to these matters. The wonder is not that the universities have fallen short in many respects, but that they have achieved some measure of success in several directions. But this is no cause for complacency. The marked deterioration of

standards in teaching and examinations and increasing dissatisfaction with the conduct of university administration and elections to university authorities are matters of great concern. The universities as the makers of the future cannot persist in the old patterns, however valid they may have been in their own day. With the increasing complexity of society and its shifting pattern, universities have to change their objectives and methods, if they are to function effectively in our national life. A policy of drift in the vague hope that, if the universities are granted full autonomy and are permitted to pursue their own ends with intelligence and imagination, higher education will take care of itself, will be dangerous. Automatic and spontaneous adjustment will not take us to the future we want. We must develop a comprehensive positive policy within the limits of which there should be ample scope for pioneering and experimentation.

It is to the formulation of such a policy that we addressed ourselves after we reached Simla in the third week of April. We had to consider the evidence that we obtained in reply to the questionnaire, discuss questions of principle involved in university re-organisation, and set forth the best methods for implementing necessary changes in the present circumstances. The results of our survey are embodied in the Report.

The Commission is indebted to the members of its staff for the loyal and intelligent way in which they have served the Commission.