

Proceedings of the Joint
Conference of the All India
Congress Committee and the Muslim
League Reform Committee Calcutta
1916.

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
JOINT CONFERENCE
OF THE
All India Congress Committee
AND THE
Moslem League Reform Committee
HELD AT
THE INDIAN ASSOCIATION ROOMS
CALCUTTA
On the 17th & 18th November, 1916.

MADRAS

PRINTED AT THE LAW-PRINTING HOUSE, MOUNT ROAD

Proceedings of the Joint Conference of the Members of the ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE and the MOSLEM LEAGUE REFORM COMMITTEE held in the rooms of the Indian Association, Calcutta, on the 17th and 18th November, 1916, with Mr. SURENDRANATH BANERJEA as President.

PRESENT :

All India Congress Committee :

BENGAL.

1. Mr. Surendranath Banerjea.
2. Dr. Sir Rash Behari Ghose.
3. Hon'ble Mr. Bhupendranath Basu.
4. „ „ Ambika Charan Mazumdar.
5. „ Dr. Nilratan Sircar.
6. „ Mr. Provas Chandra Mitter.
7. „ „ Kishori Mohan Chaudhuri.
8. „ „ A. Rasul.
9. Mr. Narendra K. Basu.
10. „ Krishna Kumar Mitter.
11. „ Lalit Mohan Das.
12. Dr. Pramathanath Banerjea.
13. Mr. Prithwis Chandra Ray.
14. „ Satyananda Bose.

15. Mr. Krishnadas Ray.
16. „ Satish Chandra Chatterjee.
17. „ J. Chaudhuri.
18. „ Basanta Coomar Bose.
19. „ Surendranath Mallik.
20. Principal Heramba Chandra Maitra.

UNITED PROVINCES.

21. Hon'ble Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru.
22. „ Mr. C. Y. Chintamani.
23. Hon'ble Pandit Gokaran Nath Misra.
24. Rai Krishnaji.
25. Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru.
26. Munshi Iswar Saran.
27. Mr. A. P. Sen.

PUNJAB.

28. Lala Harkishen Lal.
29. Mr. Dhanapat Rai.

BEHAR.

30. Syed Hasan Imam.
31. Hon'ble Mr. Mazhurul Haque.

BURMA.

32. Dr. P. J. Mehta.

MADRAS.

33. Mr. N. Subba Rau Pantulu.
34. Dewan Bahadur L. A. Govinda Raghava Iyer.
35. Mrs. Annie Besant.
36. Hon'ble Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri.
37. „ Rao Bahadur B. N. Sarma.
38. „ Rao Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao.
39. „ Mr. A. S. Krishna Rao.
40. Mr. G. A. Natesan.

41. Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Iyer.
42. „ T. V. Muthu Krishna Iyer.
43. „ K. N. Aiya Iyer.
44. „ A. P. Patro.
45. Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya.

BOMBAY.

46. Mr. N. M. Samarath.
47. Hon'ble Mr. Gokuldas Parekh.
48. Mr. Ramanbhai M. Nilkanth.
49. Professor V. G. Kale.

BERAR.

50. Mr. R. V. Mahajani.

CENTRAL PROVINCES.

51. Rao Sahib Callyanji M. Thacker.
52. Mr. N. A. Dravid.

Moslem League Reform Committee :

1. Hon'ble Mr. Muzharaul Haque.
2. „ Mr. A. Rasul.
3. „ Nawab Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhuri.
4. „ Mr. Fazlul Huq.
5. „ Mr. Wazir Hasan.
6. „ Syed Ali Nabi.
7. „ Syed Reza Ali.
8. „ Mr. Ashraf Ali.
9. „ Mr. Abul Kasim.
10. „ Mr. Yakub Hasan.
11. Mr. Mujibar Rahaman.
12. „ Alimazzaman Chaudhuri.
13. „ Akram Khan.

14. Mr. Abdul Aziz.
15. „ Chaudhuri Md. Ismail Khan.
16. „ Mahamad Yusuf.
17. „ Nizamuddin Ahmed.
18. „ Qutbuddin Ahmed.
19. „ Syed Abulfatah.
20. „ Wahed Hossain.

The following recommendations were adopted.

I.—Provincial Legislative Councils.

1. Provincial Legislative Councils shall consist of four-fifths elected and of one-fifth nominated members^(a).

2. Their strength shall be not less than 125 members in the major provinces, and from 50 to 75 in the minor provinces.

3. The members of Councils should be elected directly by people on as broad a franchise as possible.

4. Adequate provision should be made for the representation of important minorities by election, and that the Mahomedans should be represented through special electorates on the Provincial Legislative Councils in the following proportions.

Punjab—One-half of the elected Indian Members.

United Provinces—One-third^(b) „ „

Bengal—One-third^(c) „ „

(a) An amendment was proposed to the effect that the Provincial Legislative Councils should be wholly elected. This was lost.

(b) Five out of the seven of the U.P. members of the All-India Congress Committee objected to and voted against this proportion. They asked for a reconsideration of the subject.

(c) The members of the All-India Moslem League Reform Committee did not accept this proportion.

Behar—One-fourth of the elected Indian Members.			
Central Provinces—15 p. c. „	„	„	„
Madras—15 p. c. „	„	„	„
Bombay—One-third (a)	„	„	„

Provided that Mahomedans shall not participate in any of the other elections to the Legislative Councils.

Note.—The proportion of Mahomedan members for Assam and Burma was not considered.

5. The head of the Provincial Government should not be the President of the Legislative Council but the Council should have the right of electing its President.

6. The right of asking supplementary questions should not be restricted to the member putting the original question, but should be allowed to be exercised by any other member.

7. (a) Except customs, post, telegraph, mint, salt, opium, railways, army and navy, and tributes from Indian states, all other sources of revenue should be provincial.

(b) There should be no divided heads of revenue. The Government of India should be provided with fixed contributions from the Provincial Governments, such fixed contributions being liable to revision when extraordinary and unforeseen contingencies render such revision necessary.

(c) The Provincial Council should have full authority to deal with all matters affecting the internal administration of the province including the power to raise

(a) Subsequent to the meeting, the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee passed the following resolution on the subject:—"The total number of elected Mahomedan members whether by separate electorates or otherwise shall not exceed one-third of the total number of Indian elected members."

loans, to impose and alter taxation, and to vote on the Budget. All items of expenditure, and all proposals concerning ways and means for raising the necessary revenue, should be embodied in Bills and submitted to the Provincial Council for adoption.

(d) Resolutions on all matters within the purview of the Provincial Government should be allowed for discussion in accordance with rules made in that behalf by the Council itself.

(e) A resolution passed by the Legislative Council shall be binding on the Executive Government, unless vetoed by the Governor in Council, provided however that if the resolution is again passed by the Council after an interval of not less than one year, it must be given effect to.

(f) A motion for adjournment may be brought forward for the discussion of a definite matter of urgent public importance if supported by not less than one-eighth of the members present.

8. Any special meeting of the Council may be summoned on a requisition by not less than one-eighth of the members.

9. A Bill, other than a Money Bill, may be introduced in Council in accordance with the rules made in that behalf by the Council itself and the consent of the Government should not be required therefor.

10. All Bills passed by Provincial Legislatures shall have to receive the assent of the Governor before they become law, but may be vetoed by the Governor-General.

11. The term of office of the members shall be five years.^(a)

(a) An amendment for substituting 'three years' for 'five' years was lost.

II.—Provincial Governments.

1. The head of every Provincial Government shall be a Governor who shall not ordinarily belong to the Indian Civil Service or any of the permanent services^(a).

2. There shall be in every Province an Executive Council which, with the Governor, shall constitute the Executive Government of the Province.

3. Members of the Indian Civil Service shall not ordinarily be appointed to the Executive Councils.

4. Not less than one-half of the members of Executive Council shall consist of Indians to be elected by the elected members of the Provincial Legislative Council.^(b)

5. The term of office of the members shall be five years.

III.—Imperial Legislative Council.

1. The strength of the Imperial Legislative Council shall be 150.

2. Four-fifths of the members shall be elected.

3. The franchise for the Imperial Legislative Council should be widened as far as possible on the lines of the present electorates and the elected members of the Provincial Legislative Councils should also form an electorate for the return of Members to the Imperial Legislative Council.

4. One-third of the Indian elected members should be Mahomedans elected by separate Mahomedan

(a) An amendment for omitting the word 'ordinarily' was lost.

(b) Mahomedan Members of the Conference suggested that the voting should be cumulative.

electorates in the several Provinces, in the proportion, as nearly as may be, in which they are represented on the Provincial Legislative Councils by separate Mahomedan electorates.

Provided that no Mahomedan shall participate in any of the other elections to the Imperial Legislative Council.

5. The President of the Council shall be elected by the Council itself.

6. The right of asking supplementary questions shall not be restricted to the member putting the original question but should be allowed to be exercised by any other member.

7. Any special meeting of the Council may be summoned on a requisition by not less than one-eighth of the members.

8. A Bill, other than a Money Bill, may be introduced in Council in accordance with rules made in that behalf by the Council itself, and the consent of the Executive Government should not be required therefor.

9. All Bills passed by the Council shall have to receive the assent of the Governor-General before they become law.

10. All financial proposals relating to sources of income and items of expenditure shall be embodied in Bills. Every such Bill and the Budget as a whole shall be submitted for the vote of the Imperial Legislative Council.

11. The term of office of members shall be five years.^(a)

(a) An amendment was proposed for substituting "three years" for "five years." This was lost.

12. The matters mentioned hereinbelow shall be exclusively under the control of the Imperial Legislative Council:—

(a) Matters in regard to which uniform legislation for the whole of India is desirable.

(b) Provincial legislation in so far as it may affect inter-provincial fiscal relations.

(c) Questions affecting purely Imperial Revenue, excepting tributes from Indian States.

(d) Questions affecting purely Imperial expenditure, except that no resolution of the Imperial Legislative Council shall be binding on the Governor-General in Council in respect of military charges for the defence of the country.

(e) The right of revising Indian tariffs and customs-duties, of imposing, altering, or removing any tax or cess, modifying the existing system of currency and banking, and granting any aids or bounties to any or all deserving and nascent industries of the country.

(f) Resolutions on all matters relating to the administration of the country as a whole.

(g) A Resolution passed by the Legislative Council should be binding on the Executive Government, unless vetoed by the Governor-General in Council: provided however that if the Resolution is again passed by the Council after an interval of not less than one year, it must be given effect to.

(h) A motion for adjournment may be brought forward for the discussion of a definite matter of urgent public importance, if supported by not less than one-eighth of the members present.

13. The Crown may exercise its power of veto in regard to a Bill passed by a Provincial Legislative

Council or by the Imperial Legislative Council within twelve months from the date on which it is passed, and the Bill shall cease to have effect as from the date on which the fact of such veto is made known to the Legislative Council concerned.

14. The Imperial Legislative Council shall have no power to interfere with the Government of India's direction of the military affairs and the foreign political relations of India, including the declaration of war, the making of peace and the entering into treaties.

IV.—*The Government of India.*

1. The Governor-General of India will be the head of the Government of India.

2. He will have an Executive Council half of whom shall be Indians.

3. The Indian members should be elected by the elected members of the Imperial Legislative Council.^(a)

4. Members of the Indian Civil Service shall not ordinarily be appointed to the Executive Council of the Governor-General.

5. The power of making all appointments in the Imperial Civil Services shall vest in the Government of India, due regard being paid to existing interests, subject to any laws that may be made by the Imperial Legislative Council.

6. The Government of India shall not ordinarily interfere in the local affairs of a province, and powers not specifically given to a Provincial Government, shall be deemed to be vested in the former. The authority of the

(a) Mahomedan members of the Conference suggest that the voting should be cumulative.

Government of India will ordinarily be limited to general supervision and superintendence over the Provincial Governments.

7. In legislative and administrative matters the Government of India shall, as far as possible, be independent of the Secretary of State.

8. A system of independent audit of the accounts of the Government of India should be instituted.

V.—The Secretary of State in Council.

1. The Council of the Secretary of State for India should be abolished.^(a)

2. The salary of the Secretary of State should be placed on the British Estimates.

3. The Secretary of State should, as far as possible, occupy the same position in relation to the Government of India, as the Secretary of State for the Colonies in relation to the Governments of the self-governing dominions.

4. The Secretary of State for India should be assisted by two Permanent Under-Secretaries, one of whom should always be an Indian.

VI.—Other Matters.

1. The military and naval services of His Majesty, both in their commissioned and non-commissioned ranks, should be thrown open to Indians and adequate provision should be made for their selection, training and instruction in India.

2. Indians should be allowed to enlist as volunteers.

(a) An amendment was proposed that the Council of the Secretary of State be re-constituted on the lines of the Congress Resolution of 1913. This was lost.

3. Indians should be placed on a footing of equality in respect of status and rights of citizenship with other subjects of His Majesty the King throughout the Empire.

4. The Executive Officers in India shall have no judicial powers entrusted to them and the judiciary in every Province shall be placed under the highest Court of that Province.

The President appealed to the members of both the bodies to come to an agreement before the ensuing session of the Congress as regards the proportion of Mahomedan representation in Bengal and United Provinces.

The Conference is adjourned with a vote of thanks to the President.

SURENDRANATH BANERJEA,

President.

SYED MAHOMMED,

N. SUBBA RAU,

General Secretaries.