

## INTRODUCTION

On 22nd December, 1953, the Prime Minister made a statement in Parliament to the effect that a Commission would be appointed to examine "objectively and dispassionately" the question of the reorganisation of the States of the Indian Union "so that the welfare of the people of each constituent unit as well as the nation as a whole is promoted". This was followed by the appointment of this Commission under the Resolution of the Government of India in the Ministry of Home Affairs, No. 53/69/53-Public, dated 29th December, 1953 (Appendix A).

2. The task before the Commission has been set out in paragraph 7 of this Resolution in the following terms:

The Commission will investigate the conditions of the problem, the historical background, the existing situation and the bearing of all important and relevant factors thereon. They will be free to consider any proposal relating to such reorganisation. The Government expect that the Commission would, in the first instance, not go into the details, but make recommendations in regard to the broad principles which should govern the solution of this problem and, if they so choose, the broad lines on which particular States should be reorganised, and submit interim reports for the consideration of Government."

3. Under this Resolution the Commission were required to make recommendations to the Government of India not later than 30th June, 1955. This period was subsequently extended to 30th September, 1955.

4. According to their terms of reference, the Commission were at liberty to devise their own procedure for collecting information and for ascertaining public opinion. After giving careful thought to the procedure to be followed, the Commission issued a Press Note on 23rd February, 1954 (Appendix B), inviting written memoranda from members of the public as well as public associations interested in the problem of the reorganisation of States. The relevant portion of this Press Note is given below:

The States Reorganisation Commission, after giving due consideration to the procedure that would be most suitable for the expeditious execution of the task entrusted to them, have decided to dispense with a questionnaire.

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They invite members of the public as well as public associations interested in the problem of the reorganisation of States to put their views and suggestions before the Commission by submitting written memoranda on matters on which they feel they can assist them. The Commission expect that wherever any concrete suggestions are made they will be supported by historical and statistical data and, if any proposal regarding the formation of any new State or States is made, it will, if possible, be accompanied by one or more maps, as the case may be."

5. It was announced in this Press Note that all memoranda should reach the Commission by 24th April, 1954. However, on account of the keen interest evinced by public organisations as well as the people in general in various aspects of reorganisation, and the nature of our enquiries, we did not adhere to this time limit, and communications ranging from simple telegrams indicating the wishes of particular localities to well-considered memoranda dealing with the problem as a whole continued to come almost to the very end of our appointed task. The total number of such documents received by us reached the figure of 1,52,250. The bulk of these communications is accounted for by simple telegrams, printed resolutions etc., denoting the wishes of particular localities to be included within one or the other unit. The number of well-considered memoranda does not exceed about 2,000.

6. Side by side with the study of these memoranda, we commenced interviewing people from all walks of life. These interviews were held in private to enable the persons interviewed to express their views freely and frankly. The interviews started in New Delhi from 1st March, 1954, and were continued till about the end of July, 1955. We started on 8th April, 1954, on our all-India tour during the course of which we covered virtually the entire country and visited 104 places which involved travelling over thirty eight thousand miles. We have interviewed over nine thousand persons.

7. We made every effort to get a complete cross-section of public opinion. Care was taken to see that all those who represent public opinion were heard unless they were themselves averse to expressing any views. The people interviewed included members of political parties, public associations, social workers, journalists, municipal and district board representatives and other people representing cultural, educational, linguistic and local interests. The purpose of the all-India tour was not only to ascertain public opinion

but also to make on-the-spot studies at different places and to understand the background of the problem and the popular sentiment on various aspects of reorganisation.

8. Under our terms of reference, it was open to us to submit an interim report, but at a fairly early stage we came to the conclusion that the submission of any interim report would not be feasible. The problems in peninsular India and some parts of the country outside it are inter-connected and we, therefore, did not consider it desirable to formulate our views on any question in isolation. We accordingly decided to study the various problems over the entire country before coming to any final conclusions about any particular region. This excluded the possibility of our submitting an interim report.

9. In our examination of the various proposals for reorganisation we have mainly relied on statistical figures as given in the Censuses of various years. The Census figures for 1951 have been compiled according to what are known as "Census tracts". It has, therefore, been difficult to estimate the mother-tongue figures on a taluk or tehsil-wise basis. We were given to understand that it might be possible to make estimates of taluk or tehsil-wise figures on the basis of certain statistical assumptions. Having regard, however, to the controversies which surround such assumptions, we took into consideration only the figures as printed in different Census reports in reaching our conclusions.

10. We have been cautious also with our financial estimates. We have studied in some detail the possible financial position and the economic potentialities of each of the proposed units. We have been reluctant, however, to lay undue emphasis on these estimates as figures of revenue and expenditure depend, to some extent, on imponderable factors. It may be theoretically possible to raise revenue in a particular unit according to a phased taxation programme, but whether such taxation will be imposed depends, at least to some extent, on political considerations. Control of expenditure in the broadest sense is also influenced by non-economic considerations. We did not consider it safe, therefore, to project present figures of revenue and expenditure into the future.

11. On the other hand, these financial estimates have some validity, because no unit will really start from scratch. It will have a certain financial heritage and a pattern of revenue and expenditure to begin with, and the picture of its financial position, at least in the near future, is not likely to be strikingly different from the present

pattern. We have given some weight, moreover, to a study of the potentialities of economic development in the proposed units. Our financial estimates, therefore, represent only broad judgments of what is probable.

12. Our report is divided into four Parts. Part I deals with the conditions of the problem of reorganisation of States and its historical background. Part II deals with the factors bearing on reorganisation. Part III contains our proposals for the reorganisation of the existing units. In Part IV we have discussed briefly the administrative and other implications of reorganisation and measures which might be adopted to minimise the stress of transition.

13. Before we conclude this introductory Chapter we wish to place on record our deep appreciation of the invaluable assistance we have received from the Secretariat of the Commission and all members of the staff. Had it not been for their ungrudging help and devoted work, cheerfully and efficiently rendered, it would not have been possible for us to complete our difficult task within the period at our disposal. We should also like to express our thanks to members of the public and representatives of political organisations and public associations who responded to our Press Note by submitting written memoranda containing much useful information and statistical and other material.