

E. AFRICA
 FIJI
 B. GUIANA
 29/46

20146
 REC'D
 RELY 22 APR 20

INDIA OFFICE

1920

21st April

next previous Paper.

POSITION OF INDIANS IN E.A. FIJI AND BR. GUIANA.

The cuttings from "Leader" Lahore and Madras papers re-

C
 2-014

1/29/10

To get date 27/4

W. B. ...

on 1/29/10 {sent which refers to
 Fiji} arrived.

also copy 41126/18 Fiji with

no number is required as
 regards papers in view of
 recent decisions.

to W. B. ... & W. T. Dept

cut by

Signature
 Mr. ...

W.S. 12.5.20
 C.S. ...

next subsequent Paper.

20231

communications on this subject should be

Reference to previous correspondence: 83

SECRETARY OF STATE,
Public Dept.,

INDIA OFFICE,
LONDON.

Following number quoted:—

J. & P. 2183/20

Letter from the India Office of the 3rd April 1920,
J. & P. 2183/20

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by

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REC 22 APR 20

INDIA OFFICE.

9 April 1920

SIR,

I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to transmit to you for the information of the Secretary of State for the Colonies only of the papers noted below, on the subject of (1) Indians in East Africa, (2) Indians in Fiji and British Guiana.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

~~FRANCIS BURNHAM~~
F. W. Duke.

Secretary of State,
Colonial Office.

3rd March 1920 Extract from the "Leader", Lahore.

Week ending 13th March 1920 Extracts from Madras papers
March 1920

C.O. 533
242
RECORDED
INDEXED
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LONDON

COPY Extract from the "LEADER", Lahore.

6. The Leader of the 3rd March says that the resolutions passed at the recent session of the Indian National Congress abroad. of East Africa show what injustice is being done to the Indians residing in that colony, what feelings of hatred the distinctions of colour and creed observed there have bred for them in the white colonists, and how they are being deprived of their legitimate rights. On the one hand, efforts are being made to ensure further emigration of Indians to the colonies and a committee was appointed for this object only recently. On the other, however, a strenuous struggle is being carried on for the exclusion even of the Indians long settled in the colonies.

C.O. 533
242
ALTY WITH HOUSE OF COMMONS
PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

COPY Extracts from Madras papers.

Referring to the news received in London, that the recent strike in the Fiji Islands was part of a political agitation and that the Indian leaders, who were responsible for it, are sure to be arrested and deported, the Desabnaktan, of the 4th March says:- We had information, only about a strike in these islands and no details about it were forthcoming. We are now suddenly informed of the possibility of a deportation. The majority of the Indians there are ignorant Indian coolies and it is not known which Indian leaders there instigated these men to take part in a dangerous political agitation and commit undesirable acts. It is really surprising that we are not having any information about the occurrences of these islands where live thousands of illiterate Indians.

The Andhrapatrika, of the 3rd March, says with reference to the strike of the Indian labourers in the Fiji Islands:- Under the circumstances above described it is not just on the part of the Bishop of Polynesia to take more Indians to that country. It is necessary that the people and the Government should stop migration till India secures the political independence of the colonies.

x

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x

x

11. Under this heading the Andhrapatrika, of the 5th March, writes:- Mahatma Gandhi has written that under the present dependent condition of India, the emigration of Indian labourers cannot serve any other purpose than compromising the respect of the country and subverting the morals of the people. We publish elsewhere the reply of the Bishop of Polynesia. Whatever be his favourable opinion of the conditions in the Fiji Islands,

there

There has recently been a great commotion among the Indian labourers in the islands. Unrest among the labourers will not come out of nothing. It is clear that the conditions in the islands are not favourable. However much the Bishop may try, he cannot conceal this fact from the view of the people. Without freedom at home, Indians cannot command respect elsewhere. Wherever the Indians betake themselves they are there admitted as mere coolies. They are not afforded opportunities for holding high offices, for acquiring immovable property or for carrying on trade. In the whole civilized world, the Indian is needed for service. A notion prevails in the colonies that the Indian is born to serve, and the white man to rule. It is therefore the opinion of Mr. Gandhi, that until the white races come to see the Indians as their equal the latter will do well to remain in their country, living upon gruel. As the Young India has written, "people will do well to remain where they are. Sufficient for us is the evil that we have".

11. The *Kantharava*, of the 9th March, protesting against the appointment of the committee to inquire into the problem of supplying labour to Fiji and British Guiana at the instance of the deputations from those islands, the Fiji and British Guiana deputations.

paras: - The ever-increasing poverty of India caused by the measures of the India Company which have caused a blot on the British fame and honour by the subsequent policy of the Government in not adopting a protectionist policy for fear of being censured by western merchants, necessitated the Indian labourer to emigrate to foreign countries to eke out their livelihood. But with the advent of the war and with the recommendations of the Industrial Commission for the establishment of factories and industries, the outlook has changed and there is a dearth of labour in India. From the speech of His Excellency the Governor in the Legislative Council, it is easy to infer that the Government of India are not quite against the idea of sending labour to foreign countries. Why should the Government of India be so solicitous about helping these Islands? Why should Indians go there if they are not to be treated there on a footing of equality? When there is enough means in this country to allow our labourers to eke out their livelihood, why should the Government of India co-operate in sending labour outside India? When it is the duty of the people to consult the members of the deputations and decide what is necessary, the attempt of the Government to act without the consent of the people is hardly just. Though the consent of the Governor-General that it is not proper to prevent the Indian labourers from going outside in the event of their getting a better living there, seems quite plausible, will not the security offered by the Committee, appointed on behalf of the Government, tend to expose the illiterate many to an evil deed? When the Government do not intend to interfere in regard to the freedom of such of the labourers as go to foreign countries without making any contact, why should the Government flutter so much for the sake of these labourers who have come from Fiji and Guiana to collect men? When no official member of the Government of India thought fit to take up this question, what does it mean that this subject was mooted by a non-official member? If the country can derive a greater benefit from the native coolies, when it is possible for the Government of India to create all facilities for them in this country, it behoves the Government not to co-operate either directly or indirectly in the matter of sending them to foreign countries.