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IA OFFICE

POSITION OF INDIANS, REPRESENTATION ON LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

1920
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Previous Paper

Suggests that seats reserved for Indians should be filled by election. Enquires present position as to Electoral Representation and Nomination Bill and requests two copies of same for transmission to India.

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11.5.20

Present Paper

Any further communication on this subject should be addressed to—
The Under Secretary of State for India,
Public Department,
India Office,
London, S. W.
and the following reference quoted—
J. & P. 2858/20.

INDIA OFFICE,
WHITEHALL,
LONDON, S W 1.
12 May, 1920.

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Sir,

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I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to invite a reference to Sir T. Holderness's letter of the 8th December 1919, No. J. & P. 7277, and the connected correspondence regarding the position of Indians in the East Africa Protectorate.

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2. The question of giving some form of elective representation on the Legislative Council to Indians, which was the subject of that letter and of Sir T. Holderness's previous letter of the 15th August 1919, No. J. & P. 4027, is understood to have been postponed at the time pending discussion of the position of Indians between Viscount Milner and Sir E. Northey.

3. Mr. Secretary Montagu would regard it as unfortunate if no means could be found of satisfying the desire of the Indian community for elective representation on the Council and on municipal bodies, both in view of the reasons which he has suggested for granting an Indian franchise simultaneously with the European franchise, and having regard to the strong representations put forward by the Government of India for consideration at His Lordship's conferences with Sir E. Northey.

4. With reference to Colonel Amery's statement in the House of Commons on the 26th April, in which he suggested a comparison of the conditions of the law franchise in India and the circumstances in East Africa, Mr. Montagu would have supposed that an application to the Protectorate of the very low property qualification proposed for electors in an Indian province

The Under Secretary of State,
COLONIAL OFFICE.

province would result in a considerably higher proportion of Indian voters than in India in view of the proportionately greater number of Indians in East Africa who are engaged in commercial pursuits. If however it is considered preferable that the two communities should be represented separately, he would suggest that the seats reserved for Indian nominees should be filled by election from the Indian community on whatever franchise is deemed most suitable.

5. I am to enquire what is the present position with regard to the Electoral Representation and Nomination Bill which is understood to have been introduced in the Legislative Council, and whether two copies of it may be supplied to this Department for information and transmission to the Government of India.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,



