

[25th August 1922]

(b) He was employed on special duty in the Department of Industries from the 6th to the 23rd February 1922, and as officiating Director of Industries from the 24th February to the 7th May 1922.

ISSUE OF PASSPORTS FOR JOURNEY TO HEDJAZ AND MESOPOTAMIA.

261. Maulavi SAIYID ABBAS ALI: Will the Government be pleased to state how many persons in the province obtained passports for journey to (a) the Hedjaz and (b) Mesopotamia as pilgrims during the past and the present year, stating how many applications, if any, were rejected and for what reason in each case?

Mr. G. RAINY: The information is being collected and will be supplied as soon as it is complete.

PETITION TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR REGARDING TENANTS.

262. Swami VIDYANAND *alias* BISHVA BHARAN PRASHAD: Will the Government be pleased to state what steps were taken by the Government on the report which was submitted by me to His Excellency the Governor regarding the grievances of the tenants concerned?

Mr. G. RAINY: The report referred to by the member was sent to the District Magistrate, who submitted a full report dealing in detail with the allegations made. The allegations made against the police formed the subject of a criminal complaint presented in the court of the subdivisional officer, Supaul, on the 25th March by Prem Lal. The District Magistrate, who was then at Supaul, took the case on his own file, made a local inquiry on the 26th and passed orders dismissing the complaint on the 28th. His main reason for dismissing the complaint was that Prem Lal, in order to explain a delay of four days in filing the complaint, had uttered such gross and obvious falsehoods about the despatch of the telegrams that the case had not the least chance of success. He was not satisfied, however, as to the conduct of the sub-inspector and directed that a further departmental inquiry should be made. A full inquiry, in which the witnesses on both sides were examined and cross-examined, was therefore made by the Superintendent of Police, and final orders were passed by the present District Magistrate,

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Mr. Horsfield. He found that no two witnesses told the same story and that they contradicted each other on the simplest questions of fact. The statements made were full of gross and obvious exaggerations. The accusations made against the police were inspired by the local non-co-operators. Whatever occurred in the village that day, in his opinion it is certain that the taking of bribes as alleged is false. The District Magistrate's report deals in detail with the various accusations made, and he gives good reasons for believing that the majority of them are either exaggerated or false. The acts which the police are said to have committed are crimes, and the proper place for their investigation is a court of justice. It has been open to the complainant Prem Lal to move the Sessions Judge at any time to order further inquiry but he has not done so. In these circumstances the Local Government do not consider that any further steps can be taken.

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RESOLUTIONS OF THE SECOND SUPAUL SUBDIVISIONAL TENANTS' CONFERENCE.

263. Swami VIDYANAND *alias* BISHVA BHARAN PRASHAD: Are Government aware that the second Supaul subdivisional tenants' conference adopted many resolutions condemning the police and at the same time, the district officers prayed to Government for immediate steps? If so, what steps have been taken by the Government?

Mr. G. RAINY: The member himself drew the attention of Government to these resolutions. The steps taken are stated in the answer to question No. 262.

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ALLEGATIONS BY TENANTS OF KABIIYAH, ETC.

264. Swami VIDYANAND *alias* BISHVA BHARAN PRASHAD: (a) Are Government aware that allegations are made by the tenants of Kabiya, Semri, and other villages in the jurisdiction of police-station Dagmara, Bhagalpur District, to the effect that they were being looted by the Dagmara police on or about 22nd March 1921?

(b) Are Government aware that the tenants are complaining that the telegrams regarding their grievances sent by them to their leaders and the press were withheld?

(c) If the answer to (a) be in the affirmative, what steps were taken by the Government regarding (a)?

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(d) If the answer to (b) be in the affirmative, how many telegrams were withheld and what were the contents of the telegrams?

Mr. G. RAINY: (a) Government are aware that such allegations have been made by persons claiming to represent the tenants.

(b) The member himself has complained, on behalf of the tenants, of the withholding of the telegrams. Five telegrams were handed in at the Bhaptiahi telegraph office at the same time on Thursday, the 23rd March. Two purported to be sent by Prem Lal, the complainant in the case, against the police, to the District Magistrate and the subdivisional officer.

Three purported to be sent by Rajendra Narayan Misra (the local leader of non-co-operation) to the editor of the *Calcutta Samachar*, the secretary of the district congress committee, Bhagalpur, and the editor of the *Searchlight*. Prem Lal stated at the local inquiry held by the District Magistrate on the 26th March that his telegrams were written for him by the telegraph clerk, and that he signed them himself. The District Magistrate, who saw the originals of all five telegrams, found that all were written on the same paper and with the same pen and ink, and concluded that all had been sent by Rajendra Narayan Misra. It does not appear therefore that the telegrams were sent by the tenantry, and it is certain that Prem Lal who complained before the subdivisional officer against the police sent no telegrams.

(c) The member is referred to the answer to question No. 262 which states what action was taken by Government.

(d) Of the five telegrams mentioned in the answer to clause (b) three were withheld. The telegram to the *Searchlight* reads as follows:—"Dagmara police with 100 chaukidars plunder beaten villagers took bribes in Simri, Karhali, Bagjan, details follow".

The other two telegrams were similar.

CHARGES REFUNDED TO SENDER OF TELEGRAMS.

205. Swami VIDYANAND alias BISHVA BHARAN PRASHAD: Are Government aware that the charges of the telegrams were refunded to the sender after two or three days? If so, under whose instruction the telegrams were withheld and charges refunded?