

A REVIEW OF GOVERNMENT'S POLICY IN CURBING STUDENTS INVOLVEMENT IN QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT
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Abstract

The people of the country responded to the call of the Quit India Movement. The students began strike all over the country and most of the Schools, Colleges, and Universities were closed down for three months. Many students were expelled from the institutions and sent to jail. The paper is an attempt to show the government's repressive policy and the measures adopted to curb the involvement of students and educational institutions in the Quit India Movement. Several measures were adopted by the government authorities to curtail the participation of the students despite that students actively participated and were the soul of the Quit India Movement.

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The students of the country played a leading role in the mass upsurge of August 1942. The 1942 movement was true, a moment of the students. They took the arrest of the top Congress leaders as a national affront. The students accepted the challenge soon, they were in command everywhere. In U.P. the disturbances were in almost all cases started as a result of the activities of schoolboys and college students. After the arrest of Congress leaders at Bombay, the students of UP gave a splendid response at every educational center of the provinces. The students, organized processions and demonstrations on 9th August.

At Meerut, the Student Federation leader of Meerut College Shanti Tyagi, was first to be arrested on 8 August 1942 and was not released till 1946. On 10th August the students held a meeting inside the campus and attempted to enter Kutchery Compound in a procession. The police resorted, to Lathi-charge to disperse it. The students organized themselves into groups and move into the town. They were Lathi charged at various points. Subsequently, they changed their tactics and move into the villages.

On 11th August, a group of students removed, a single chain from the guide wheel on a signal post at the city station. Telephone wires and fish plates, were tampered with and letters boxes were burnt.

The commissioner wrote: "Practically everywhere, the students of the Colleges after doing what damage they could locally have gone off in parties to see the damage they can do in the neighboring towns and in the rural areas". The DM reported: Generally speaking, the moment is directed to sporadic acts of damage to government and railway property. The disturbances were so alarming that the military, police had to be called in and a curfew was imposed throughout the district.

At Allahabad, the students organized sabotage in the town. A delegation of BHU students came to Allahabad University. Incited by them the students, attacked the district offices and police fired on them. Immediately afternoon a well-planned attack was made on the kotwal by the students. In the attack on the district officers, girl students were placed in the forefront of the procession.

On 12th August the students of Lucknow University went on strike and the group of students raided the sub-post office. Some of them entered the office and push the sub-postmaster and a peon, and destroyed, envelopes, stamps, and postcards. The students, then we drew before the police arrived. A meeting of students was held in Lucknow University where it was decided to form a committee of students to guide the movement in the future.

Government's Policy

As soon as it was known that the student world was taking an active part in

the Quit India Movement, the Schools, Colleges, and Universities were closed in the month of August 1942, for three months. The agitating students were fined. They were expelled from educational institutions and were debarred from appearing in the examinations. The students procession and demonstration were caned and fired by the police. Many of them embraced death for the cause of Independence. Thousands of students were arrested by the police and were imprisoned for many years and months. In Bombay's presidency, 294 students were arrested in August and September 1942.

After opening the educational institutions in the month, of November, the educational and administrative authorities launched a severe attack on the students of the country. The educational authorities demanded from parents and students an undertaking to the effect that they would not take part in any political activity. The membership of AISF and all other Student organizations were banned by the authorities. In many provinces, they also banned all patriotic activities and organizations in the institutions and outside during the Quit India Movement.

According to the instruction of the Government of India, the educational authorities, evolved a short-term, and a long-term policy to suppress the student movement. The main features of the immediate or short-term policy as outlined by the Government of India were as follows

1- Government grants to educational institutions any of whose members are known to have been involved in recent troubles, should not be paid until satisfactory proof is forthcoming that normal conditions have been restored and are likely to continue

2- Teachers convicted of breaking the law should be blacklisted so far as future Employments in institutions, maintained or aided out of public funds is concerned.

3- Students similarly convicted should according to the gravity of their offenses, be declared ineligible to proceed for their degree examination either for a specific period or all together.

4- Students, who continue to absent themselves without good cause be struck off the rolls and those who have incurred disabilities through absence should not be relieved.

The long-term policy was outlined as follows:

1- That where it does not clearly exist, the Proctorial system should be introduced and the Proctors given real authority to enforce and maintain discipline.

2- That the tutorial system should be widely extended in all types of universities.

3- That without reducing the total facilities for higher education, individual institutions should be reduced to a size that will make them easier to control their

members more conscious of belonging to a corporate unit to which loyalty is due. This was already being done at Delhi, University .

4- That the recognition of High School System should be taken in hands as soon as possible so that intermediate classes may be abolished and the three years degree course be introduced This was approved in principle by the Inter-University board.

5- That the rules for entry to Government service should be revised so as to discourage unsuitable candidates from seeking admission to universities in hope of improving their chances of passing the examination. The response to the Quit India Movement was varied and different in various provinces and regions while Bengal, Bihar, UP, and Bombay remained in the Vanguard of the struggle. The students from the South, Orissa occupied back seats.

The students of the country played a glorious role in the Quit India Movement, the students gave a great response to the call of Congress and Gandhiji the students alone carried on the Quit India Movement for more than three months. The role of students in the Quit India Movement is particularly impressive and prolonged. However, it did not conform with the bourgeois nationalist idea of non-violent struggle. The Viceroy, correctly wrote to Amery Secretary of State on 22nd August, 1942:

“In all the disturbance students have been prominent and as a particular example, the B.H.U has been working as an organization Centre. In this, the last fact, we should our selves be inclined at present to see the main key to the situation...What matters for the moment is that youth is in command and has been putting into execution a revolutionary program that could hardly have spring into existence at a moment’s notice.

During the movement, Colleges and Schools, became the meeting places where hundreds of students addressed the gatherings. These colleges, schools, and hostels became the meeting places for the revolutionary youths to set all the rational and irrational plans in motion to paralyze the Government.

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