

BILL TO AMEND INDIA ACT

Draft To Be Shown To Leaders On Monday

EXPERTS ARRIVING TO GIVE FINAL TOUCHES

NEW DELHI, June 20.

THE Viceroy will communicate to the Indian leaders the draft of the amending Bill to the Constitution Act probably on Monday, it is learned.

The draft of the amendments to the Government of India Act, it is understood, has been received here for comments, and is being studied at high official level. It is presumed there will be an exchange of views on the amendments, and in the light of comments from India, the draft might be changed.

Two constitutional experts from the U.K. one of whom is a Parliamentary draftsman, are expected here by this week-end to give the final touches to the amending Bill.

The details of the amendments are, for the time being a "top secret" and are hence not available.

It is believed, however, that in the main, the amending Bill enumerates certain broad principles for the transfer of power and the creation of two Dominions and the necessary changes in the Act. Certain broad principles such as the definition of the areas which would constitute the two Dominions of Pakistan and India would be given effect to by an Order-in-Council.

Power would be transferred to the respective Constituent Assemblies, and it would be competent for such Assemblies in the future to amend the constitution.

The position of the Indian States vis-a-vis the two Dominions is rather obscure, but Congress quarters here express the robust optimism that all the States will ultimately join the Constituent Assemblies. It is anticipated that the initial difficulties will be overcome.

FUTURE OF INTERIM CABINET

With the announcement of Bengal's decision in favour of partition and the certainty of the Punjab following suit, political circles here are again busy discussing the future of the present Government. By August 15, 1947, there will be a complete change, but for the interim period, it is believed, there will have to be certain adjustments in order to enable the seceding areas to build up a nucleus for their State.

Thus, the leaders of Pakistan now in the Interim Government will have some six weeks beginning from July, when the partition issue will have been more or less settled, except for the Frontier referendum (in which the Congress is not likely to participate) at their disposal to organise and set up their separate Government. During the interim period, between the time the verdict of the seceding areas is "officially" known and until Dominion Status is ushered in by the middle of August, the Interim Government will be reconstructed "on a bi-national basis".

The Governor-General-in-Council will continue to be what he is today legally, but the Council will be internally divided.

JOINT MEETINGS

The present Muslim League nominees in the Government will function only exclusively in regard to matters pertaining to the Pakistan areas. On questions affecting both areas, that is India and the seceding areas, decisions will be taken at joint meetings. It is recognised that the present Governmental machinery devised for a united India will find any such bifurcation causing administrative difficulties leading to confusion.

Nevertheless, it is pointed out, once partition becomes a settled fact, there can be no justification for the continuance of the present Interim Government. The changes expected will necessarily involve a reshuffling of portfolios as well.

A division of responsibilities, it is pointed out, will give the Muslim League nominees sufficient opportunity to build up a nucleus Secretariat for the Pakistan State.

This device of a bifurcation of the duties and responsibilities of Government, it is pointed out, is primarily intended to lay the foundation of the two Dominion Governments to be, and it is particularly valuable for the

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