

Telegram from the Commander-in-Chief in India concerning the riots in India (18 August 1942)


Caption: On 18 August 1942, the Commander-in-Chief in India, Sir Archibald Wavell, sends a telegram to the War Office in London in which he reports on the riots in India, which broke out after the famous ‘Quit India’ appeal launched by Gandhi in July–August 1942. Gandhi encouraged the Indian people to pursue non-violent civil disobedience against the British authorities. However, not all the demonstrations were peaceful and the United Kingdom immediately responded by making mass arrests.

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Last updated: 01/03/2017



MOST SECRET
CIPHER TELEGRAM

068364

From:- C.in.C.India.

Desp.2300. 18 Aug 42.
Recd.2305. 18 Aug 42.

To :- The War Office.
Concentric Colombo.
British Army Staff Washington.
G.H.Q.Australia.
C.G.S.Wellington N.Z.
Army Bangalore.
Army Ranchi.
Army Murree.
Command Agra.
Military Attache Chungking.

MOST IMMEDIATE.

19842/I cipher 18 Aug 42..

Situation Report 45.

Internal India. General situation continues to show improvement. Several main Hindu owned newspapers stopping publication as protest against Govt. restrictions on news on internal situation. Now reported at outset of disturbances two Europeans were pulled from train and killed and in another case 12 (rpt 12) R.A.F. personnel mobbed in railway compartment and attacked with spears and stones. No further report of serious attacks on British personnel.

Madras. Police guard being provided for passenger trains. Serious rioting near Trichinopoly troops called out.

Bombay. All quiet in city and mills working also General Motors. Situation in Allahabad improving.

Bihar. Patna city considered much improved. Communication by telegraph still impossible in places due to destruction of instruments as well as cut wires. All telephone routes cut ex (?Patna) to Gaya. Main road

/end....

- 2 -

and railways ex Patna still cut and saboteurs moving further into Mofussil away from troops. Efforts being made restore railway from coal region as stocks in industrial towns of United Provinces and elsewhere not (repeat: not) plentiful.

Bengal. Student hooliganism continues in Calcutta where telegraphic communication ex city was broken. Mobile patrols having beneficial effect. Minor disturbance: Dacca but troops in control.

Central Provinces. Nagpore quiet. Students leaving for outlying area.

War Office pass S. of S. India. Office.

T.O.O.1330/18.

C.6.(Telegrams) To:- M.O.12 (for action)

Copies to:- S. of S. D.D.M.I.(I).
C.I.G.S. M.I.2 (2 copies, one
V.C.I.G.S. for U.S.M.A.) 2a.2c.
D.M.O. Cabinet War Room.
D.P.(2). Col.Jacob.
D.D.M.O.(O). Duty Captain Admiralty.
M.O.1.2.(5).6.8.(2)12.Head of War Registry,
D.D.I.P. Admiralty.
D.M.I. Duty Officer Upper
Admiralty War Room.
A.M.C.S. Air Ministry
(6)
S. of S. Foreign Office
Burma Office (War
Staff) (5).