

FIRST PROPOSAL ON CENTRAL IRRIGATION AND WATERWAYS ADVISORY BOARD

“The Labour Department formed an opinion that it would be preferable to create a Central Irrigation and Waterways Advisory Board. We want a Board constantly in being and having the necessary authority. Our idea of this Board could be that it should be composed as follows :

Chairman:—Waterways and Irrigation Commissioner to the Government of India. This officer would have to have experience of India and should therefore be a senior officer of the Indian Service of Engineers. He would have required knowledge both of waterways and irrigation, but the strength of the Board as an advisory body would be the collective strength of the Board and not the individual strength of the Chairman. (He would, however, in his individual capacity supervise the working of the Indian Waterways Research Institution.)

Members:—There would be 3 permanent members: 1. Waterways member 2. Irrigation member 3. Hydro-Electric member.

There would also be part-time members—e.g. the Chief Engineers of any Provinces when any matter concerning the Provinces was under consideration, the Agricultural Advisor to the Government of India when any agricultural matters were under consideration. Power would also be given to co-opt members for particular matters.

Note : This constitution leaves the Board without a member for gravity irrigation but it is probable that the Chairman would always have this knowledge.

The responsibilities of the Central Irrigation and Waterways Board would be :

1. A general responsibility for initiating, co-ordinating and pressing forward schemes of river and waterways control with a view to

- (a) prevention of floods ;
 - (b) prevention of erosion ;
 - (c) prevention of waterlogging ;
 - (d) control of water for irrigation purposes;
 - (e) control of water for power purposes ;
 - (f) utilisation by cheap power provision of sub-soil water for irrigation ;
 - (g) dewatering by use of electric power of waterlogged areas ;
 - (h) regulation of flow of water for navigation purposes.
2. Preparation in consultation with Provincial Governments of water control schemes for all major waterways and preparation of project reports.
 3. Organisation of procurement of statistical information regarding waterways, and organisation and control of subsoil water surveys.
 4. Advice to the Government of India on the principles that should be laid down to govern the settlement of disputes between Provinces.

The Board would further require Consulting Engineers on such matters as—

- (i) Dam construction;
- (ii) Barrage construction.

H. C. Prior
Secretary
31.8.44

I agree. The only remark I have to make is whether it would not cause considerable delay if we were to consult the Provinces now. Can we not consult them at a later stage ?

B. R. Ambedkar
9.9.1944”¹

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