

**BUTLER COMMITTEE (1927)**

In 1927, the British government constituted the Indian States Committee under the chairmanship of Sir Harcourt Butler. The other two members in the committee were S. C. Peel and W. S. Holdsworth. The purpose of the committee was to inquire into the relationship between the Indian states and the British throne; and suggest measures for improvement. The committee submitted its report in 1929, which was subsequently endorsed by the Simon Commission. The committee found that the relations of the British Crown with the Princely states in India was a thriving and growing one, and it was suggested that the states should be transferred to British India without any contract with a new government which would be responsible for an Indian legislature. It also divided the roles of the Governor-General and the Viceroy of India stating that the Viceroy should be the agent of the British Crown in its relation with the princes.

**Transformation of Boycott into a Movement**

It was the Indian National Congress that turned the boycott into a movement. The action began as soon as Sir John Simon and his colleagues landed in Mumbai on 3 February 1928. All the major cities and towns observed a complete hartal and people came out on the streets to participate in mass rallies, processions and black flag demonstrations. Wherever the commission went, they were met with the slogans of 'Simon, go back'. While leading the demonstration at Lahore, Lala Lajpat Rai was severely beaten in a police lathicharge and succumbed to his injuries. It charged a rare political atmosphere in India it was his death that Bhagat Singh and his comrades were seeking, to avenge when they killed a white police official, Saunders, in December 1928.

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