

Rowlatt Act 1919

“Towards the end of the First World War the British decided that firm action was needed to keep a grip on India, especially with the threat of renewed violence. During the war the British had the Defence of India Act to help keep order. Once this Act had expired the Rowlatt Act was introduced”.

Q: Describe the Rowlatt Act. [4]

Ans: In 1918 Justice Rowlatt looked at the situation and recommended tough new laws to deal with those who stirred up protests. In 1919 his proposals became law, known as the Rowlatt Act. Some salient features of the Rowlatt act are that the people could be tried in private by three High Court Judges. There was no right of appeal. People could be ordered to live in a particular place or could be stopped from attending meetings. Moreover, there was also a chance that people could be arrested without warrant and kept in prison without trial.

Indians were furious with the new laws. They caused uproar in India, Gandhi started the *hartal* against it and Jinnah resigned from the Imperial Legislative Council in protest.

