

AUDIT OBJECTIONS

15-Year-Old Orissa Files Still Pending

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BHUBANESWAR, March 27: The Public Accounts Committee headed by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. R. N. Singhdeo, yesterday reported to the Orissa Assembly that it had received "a direction" from the Speaker to comply with the Government's request to examine a special audit report on the transactions of certain firms with the State Government.

The audit was ordered by the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India at the request of the Chief Minister and the Public Accounts Committee was awaiting the audit report, Mr. Singhdeo said.

(The then Chief Minister, Mr. Bijoyananda Patnaik, made the request for the special audit into the transactions of these firms with the State Government following allegations that the Government had shown favour to them and paid inflated prices. The Orissa Agents, which has since been wound up, belonged to the wife of the present Chief Minister, Mr. Biren Mitra, Mrs. Gyan Patnaik, wife of Mr. Bijoyananda Patnaik, is the chairman of the two other companies.)

The committee's report presented to the House yesterday again expressed concern over the "heavy outstandings" disclosed in the audit report for 1962. Some of the inspection reports and audit objections which were over 15 years old still remained undisposed of. The committee, therefore, doubted the sincerity of the departments concerned in dealing with these audit objections.

Recording instances of these departments not furnishing reasons, the committee said this not only impaired the standard of efficiency of the departments but also undermined financial control.